State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrives in New Delhi

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Counsellor who recently attended the BIMSTEC Retreat Meeting and BIMSTEC Leaders’ Outreach Summit Meeting, left Goa by special flight and continued her state visit to India, reaching New Delhi at 11:40am local standard time.

The motorcade conveying the delegation led by the State Counsellor arrived at the “Rashtrapati Bhavan”, the Guest House of the Presidential Palace, where they will reside during their stay in New Delhi.—Myanmar News Agency

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with India’s Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitharaman, upon her arrival at the airport in New Delhi, India, on 17 October. Photo: Reuters

RAKHINE: LISTEN, REVIEW

Government reviews Rakhine State issue sector by sector

THE government is still reviewing its findings on recent violent attacks in Rakhine State sector by sector to make a comprehensive review, Union Minister Dr Pe Myint said at a press conference yesterday.

The press conference was held to clarify the recent trip to Rakhine State by a governmental mission comprising Union Ministers Dr Pe Myint and U Thein Swe and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, Union Minister Dr Pe Myint said that they had met with town elders, abbots, leaders of the Islamic community, representatives of political parties and civil society organisations and explained the real situation and provided assistance.

Give thy ears to others
The union minister said they also listened to the opinions of the public because the recent incidents in Rakhine are important for the entire union.
Government reviews Rakhine State issue sector by sector

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Therefore, the union government, the state government, the Tatmadaw, the Ministry of Home Affairs and various ministries are cooperating for Rakhine State, according to the union minister.

According to the union minister, abotts in Rakhine State said that they were sad about the incidents and urged the government not to allow a repeat of such incidents in future, pointing out that such incidents had also broken out in Rakhine State in the past and the incidents got more and more virulent each time. Scores were killed in riots in Rakhine State in 2012.

They also urged the government to reinforce the police in the state and to retrieve the looted arms so that worries of the people in the state could be alleviated, and to continue to provide assistance to local villages, the union minister was quoted as saying at the press conference.

Effective enforcement of the 1982 Citizenship Law

Locals also urged the government to effectively implement the 1982 Citizenship Law to disarm people’s militia by arming the locals, to strictly check the movement of people and to restore the rule of law in villages, the union minister said.

Some locals were more analytic and urged the government to develop and implement a security strategy with which to cooperate with the government in accordance with the law, the union minister said. They promised to provide information to the government and called for security measures to protect them.

Sector-wise reviews in progress

The delegation led by the union minister reported their findings to the State Counsellor on 15 October and the government is still reviewing the findings sector by sector to make a comprehensive review, the union minister added, saying that the government will handle the issue in a transparent and timely manner.

Concerning contacting of terrorism-connected nations, Union Minister Dr Pe Myint said that EU decided not to submit Myanmar human rights proposal to the third committee as Myanmar has now a democratic government, which is exerting its utmost effort to improve situations in terms of democracy and human rights. But, this decision of EU has displeased some Islamic countries.

Concerning diplomatic and the United Nations diplomatic channel in order that no nation can interfere. In this regard, we’re cooperating with Bangladesh, which said that their attitude (towards Rakhine affair) is no acceptance of terrorism. They have already handed over two attackers. OIC is attempting to submit Myanmar human rights proposal (draft), and in this regard, we’ve made the whole true story known, enforcing the rule of law. As said by Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint, we’ve exercised restraint over the use of force. There are three Islamic countries in ASEAN-Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. We’ve called the ambassadors from the three countries to explain the true situations.

During the meeting, the Indonesian ambassador said Myanmar’s political freedom is sovereign and that they did not want to interfere in Myanmar’s internal affairs.

Regarding our response, the Indonesian ambassador said that measures taken by Myanmar government are legal and in accord with the authorities of a sovereign country. They also said that they believe Myanmar is protecting human rights. Indonesian Ambassador was supported by ambassadors from Brunei and Malaysia.

The union minister also quoted the ambassador for EU as saying that the diplomat would explain the government’s response to member nations.

In relation to the plans for the continued existence of Rakhine villages, Union Minister Information Dr Pe Myint told the journalist that Rakhine is minority in this region, thus concerning over outbreak of conflicts.

Concerning moving out of Rakhine ethnic people, he continued to say that people gave out in times of instability but they are very reluctant to come back when situation has become normal again. It is quite uncertain that they will all come back. In that case, the Rakhine village will find it difficult to survive. This problem needs a longer-term solution. From our findings on ground, we know that we need to make arrangements to enable them to live a peaceful and secure life and to earn a livelihood.

And recovery of arms and ammunition as well as annihilation of terrorist insurgents are being done according to the existing laws of Myanmar and international laws.

Union Minister Dr Pe Myint.

Union Minister U Thein Swe.

Maj-Gen Aung Soe.

We are also of the opinion that we need to restore law and order in the problematic villages and take necessary measures to keep the administrative machinery fully operational.

The refugee camps in Natmyitwa are required to be checked. More funds need to be spent upon strengthening of the border fence between Myanmar and Bangladesh. It is also needed to take measures for the development of indigenous villages and for ensuring their security.

Although some political parties in Rakhine State did not fully cooperate with the incumbent government, they showed willingness to cooperate after October 9 attacks. Besides, the social network organizations within Rakhine State are also found to have changed their altitude.

Concerning causalities, Deputy Home Minister Maj-Gen Aung Soe said altogether 14 people have been sacrificed their lives for the country—Five Tatmadawmen and nine policemen inclusive of an officer, that four other policemen were injured while 30 attackers were killed—28 men and two women. And those who are captured alive are being interrogated according to police procedures.

Then Myanmar Police Chief Maj-Gen Zaw Win said 29 attackers are being detained—two in Sittwe Correctional Facility while the remaining 27 are being kept in the police lock-ups in Maungtaw area. The detainees are being granted their due rights and interrogations are being made according to the police procedures.

Next, the deputy minister Maj-Gen Aung Soe said that the police commander of Maungtaw Border Guard Force has been temporarily suspended and a police Brig-Gen has been assigned to control and command the border guard force.

HQ. The previous commander has been attached temporarily to another department.

Security of the Area

In answer to the question as to the present situation in Buthidaung Maungtaw area and as to how to resettle displaced locals and their education in the future, Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Aung Soe replied that the authorities are presently taking the responsibility of the security of the area and the Tatmadaw-police force combined troops met head-on attacks with violent attackers occasionally during the area clearance operations, but any separate armed attacks did not occurred in main camps, towns and villages, thus it can be said that the area security is under the control.

He added that being school holidays, teachers returned home as usual. The remaining administrative officials are serving their duties at places they are assigned. Mechanism of Administration is running as normal. The Rule of Law can be said to be stable to some extent. After Thadingyut Holiday, schools will be reopened in the previous villages, depending on the situation of the area. For living on inseparably-populated area, some local ethnicites were assembled in temporary camps in Buthidaung Maungtaw region to be provided with basic necessities by the Rakhine State Government and the Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Ministry and Ministry of Border Affairs.

Deputy Minister for Border Affairs, Brig-Gen Than Htut replied that the Ministry is building two more villages during 1991 to 2011, so the region has 36 villages in all.

They are divided into two groups: the displaced village and the assembled one. Now displaced village has a population of 14,000, provided by two ministries. The State Government and the Ministry are carrying out to build more villages and to create job opportunities.

Relation with RSO

In reply to the query as to there is a relation with RSO, any information was received about the armed attack before hard and as to how the negligent authorities are to be taken action against, Maj-Gen Aung Soe replied that the government came to know from their confession of the detainees that the so-called leader of the attack had relation with RSO, training courses and subsidy from them. The authorities released the news as confessed by them. Some weakness can be found in receiving news and information.

Around 400 armed attackers which took part in the attacks are dispersing in different directions, and at the time when the Tatmadaw and police force combined, collective attacks was not found anywhere.

In reply to the question as to potential cooperation of Islam believers was possible, Dr Pe Myint replied that the authorities found it difficult to say whether they are to cooperate, to be non-alligned or to be involved in the attacks. According to some Islamist believers in Buthidaung, they would cooperate and they did not like terrorism and they are willing and ready to cooperate and to inform news and information as much as they can, said the Union Minister.

He continued to say that however, the governmental mission only met with remarkable ones of the townfolk, approximately 40/50/60 people. For this, it is difficult to answer exactly in regard to the question, he added.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Chinese President Xi Jinping

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China met at the Hotel Leela in Goa, India at 10:40pm local standard time yesterday.

During their meeting they cordially discussed upgrading bilateral relations and co-operation, continuation of the implementation of agreements that both countries reached in the State Counsellor’s previous August visit to PRC, exchange of friendship visits at every level, continued co-operation in regional organisations and commencing to discuss security and stability at border areas of both countries.

In answer to the clarification of the peace process and the latest events in the northern part of Rakhine State by the State Counsellor, President Xi replied that he was well convinced of the matters and would provide constructive help.

Present at the meeting were the State Counsellor, Union minister U Kyaw Tin, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and responsible officials. On the Chinese side were President Xi, together with Mr Wang Huning, a member of the politburo and of the Party Central Committee, Mr Li Zhanhua, politburo member, Mr Yang Jiechi State Council member, and minister of the PRC.—Myanmar News Agency

Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe extends condolences to wives of slain police officers in Maungtaw

UNION Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe provided Ks20 lakhs each to the wives of four police officers killed during violent armed attacks by terrorists last week, expressing his condolences to them at the airport on Sunday.

Afterwards, the Union Minister met with families of the police force at the Kyikkanpyin border outpost, which was attacked by armed men on October 9.

At the meeting, he urged everyone in the country to abide by the constitution of Myanmar and its existing laws, pledging that the authorities would take swift and effective action against those who fail to follow the country’s laws.

He also said that police forces are co-operating with the Tatmataw not to lose even an inch of the country’s territory to aggressors.

The Union minister also presented the promotion badge to Inspector of Police Tun Tun Soe, who fought with valor in the attack of the Ngakhuya border outpost to become the Deputy Super-intendant of Police.—Myanmar News Agency

14 dead and 100 missing after overcrowded Myanmar ferry capsizes

A ferry boat carrying as many as 300 people on the Chindwin River capsized, killing at least 14 people.

About 100 people aboard the Aung Soe Moe Kyaw ferry boat were rescued Saturday, with many more unaccounted for. Teachers, students and civil service workers were also on board when the accident happened.

The crowded passenger ferry capsized in the Chindwin River in Sagain Region, after hitting a rock on the way from the town of Homalin to the city of Monywa in the Sagaing region of central Myanmar.

The ferry was reportedly carrying about 300 passengers, and so far 155 survivors have been pulled from the river after the ferry capsized. Four were confirmed dead, according to local authorities.

Search-and-rescue operation is being carried out in the river.

VP U Myint Swe attends Co-ordination Meeting for Kathina Yellow Robe Offering Ceremony Leading Committee

Co-ordination Meeting for Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony Leading Committee held at 9:30am in the assembly hall of the Ministry of Religion and Culture was attended by Vice President U Myint Swe, the patron of the thinly attended event.

VP U Myint Swe addressed the meeting, “As per Vinaya rules laid down by the Gotama Buddha, offering of Kathina Yellow Robe is granted during one month of 29 days (from 1st Waning of Thadingyut to the Full Moon of Tazaungmon), and the recipient of the Kathina Yellow Robe is to accept the offertory once a year only, hence the importance of the donation because of its nobility. This being the State Level Offering Ceremony, systematic arrangement for convening needs to be done. Respective committees are required to carry out their tasks without any hints of errors or difficulties, depending on their experiences received from annually-held ceremonies in consultation with committees and sub-committees. The ceremony will be held in Sasana Maha Beikman in the campus of Upata Santi Pagoda. Respective committees are to co-operate with each other for the hotels in which respected Sayadaws are to be furnished with basic necessities and to be surrounded with green environment,” followed by VP’s call for the attendants to suggest for convene pomp and circumstance.

Afterward, Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko clarified the process of the convening the ceremony. In the end, VP made a closing speech, combining suggestions submitted respectively by committees and sub-committees.—Myanmar News Agency

Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe presents cash assistance to the wives of four police officers killed by terrorists. —Myanmar News Agency

Vice President U Myint Swe addressing the Co-ordination Meeting for Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony Leading Committee. —Photo: MNA
VICTIMS of a recent ferry disaster in the Chindwin River were provided with cash assistance and clothes by the KBZ’s Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation on Saturday.

Following the capsizing of the crowded passenger ferry in the river in the early morning hours of 15 October, the BFM donated Ks30 million and 300 articles of warm clothing to the survivors of the accident being sheltered at a local hospital and temporary camps through the Sagaing Region, Chief Minister Dr Myint Naing, has brought back more than 4,200 workers since 2013 from Indonesia, Malaysia and India by chartered flights also providing them with Ks100 each and new clothes.

Meanwhile, the foundation imported 200,000 warm clothes worth more than US$2 million and has distributed warm clothing to the people who are expected to experience extreme cold weather due to La Nina in the coming months, including internally displaced persons. —Thura Lwin (Eco)

The car being overturned. Photo: MMK

Government reviews Rakhine...

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In response to the question as to how action will be taken against dereliction, Maj-Gen Zaw Win replied that service-men who performed with bravery were promoted to higher positions. Chief of Police Training inspected all border outposts, he added.

Firstly, the Myanmar Police Force would take lesson and secondly would take action against those who practice dereliction of duty so much so that they lost arms and ammunition to enemies and even lives of the police.

Regarding the measures taken to prevent terrorist attacks, Maj-Gen Aung Soe replied that Pyidaungsu Hluttaw promulgated the law on Anti-Terrorism so as to be able to fight terrorism in Myanmar.

The government has also formed a 34-member central committee for fighting the terrorism and plans are being drawn to quickly respond to possible attacks to Myanmar.

Regarding the evacuation of teachers and departmental personnel from the vulnerable areas, Col Zaw Min Tun of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) replied that a total of 482 including 254 teachers, 122 departmental staff with 69 family members, two Buddhist monks and 35 civilians have been evacuated. When the situation in the areas return to normality, they will be assigned to their previous positions in the areas.—Myanmar News Agency

Survey aims to improve country’s farming businesses

A SURVEY to get exact information about crop production will be conducted in over 300 townships across the country, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

As part of its programme to promote the country’s agriculture sector, the new study will be conducted by the ministry in cooperation with the Myanmar Rice Federation on a national scale.

The research will be the largest observation focusing only on development of a wide variety of crops in the country.

Some growers say that they are facing difficulties to make a healthy profit from selling their products because of heavy agricultural expenses and an input problem.

The new survey will help policy makers, entrepreneurs and growers settle the problem of how to make money from the sale of quality products.

Agriculture is the major industry in Myanmar, employing over 60 per cent of the labour force. The country is also recognised as Asia’s largest exporter of rice, which remains the main staple food of the Myanmar people.

Local growers mostly cultivate crops including beans and pulses, sesame, groundnuts, sugarcane and other marketable crops.—200

Crime NEWS

One dead, 16 injured after vehicle overturns

A TRAFFIC accident that occurred on Monday in Paung Township in Mon State left one dead and 16 injured, most of whom are women, according to a police report.

A Toyota Town Ace driven by U Myint Oo, 60, carrying 17 passengers was heading from Wundwin Township, Meiktila District, Mandalay Region to Paung Township when it overturned on Yangon-Mawlamyine Road near Mukyi Village in Paung Township after the driver lost control when the left tyre had a blowout. U Htay Aung, 50, one of 17 passengers, died in the hospital. Most of the rest are receiving medical care in a hospital in Paung Township, but two have been sent to Mawlamyine hospital due to serious injuries.

Action will be taken against the reckless driver, who will face legal charges under Section 304 (a) 338/337 of the Penal Code, said Police Captain Win Htain.—Myitmyo News Agency

Two men arrested with more than 1,500 yaba pills in Mongyu

LOCAL police arrested two men together with 1,542 yaba pills in Mongyu on 15 October, according to the police source.

A combined team comprising members of a local police force and an anti-drug squad, acting on a tip-off, searched a house in Mongyu and found Maw Htoo, 46, and Hla Win, 36, and discovered 1,542 yaba pills from them. Action has been taken against them under the Anti-narcotic and psychotropic substances law by the Mongyu Police Station.—GNLM
Businessmen request to have legal import of aqua feedstuff

ENTREPRENEURS have requested to have legal import of aqua feedstuff, due to the high cost of fish and prawn feedstuff production, it is learnt from the Myanmar Fish Federation.

A local company has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation in order to be allowed to import 800 tonnes of fish and prawn feedstuff from Thailand. The import is needed to present the certificate to ensure the quality of feedstuff and the security of health. They have also suggested putting a levy on importers.

Currently, feedstuff illegally flows into Kayin and Mon states from Thailand through border channels. Those who violate the rules are penalised, it is learnt from the Fisheries Department. Imported feedstuff is to be systematically produced. Manufactured feeds are an important part of modern commercial aquaculture, providing the balanced nutrition needed by farmed fish.—200

Commerce ministry allows re-export licensing for more commodities

THE Ministry of Commerce will continue to issue licences for re-export because of the foreign market’s demand and the local production process.

Over 20 categories of commodities are re-exported to other foreign countries after being locally reproduced at its origin. The main categories of re-export are sugar, fuel oil (diesel) and betel nut. Sugar exports are the most common, with over 100,000 tonnes sent mainly to China.

The Commerce Ministry allows 14 more categories under the re-export system, including car tyres, white sesame seeds, dried pepper, peanuts, cotton, soya beans, cotton fibre, fruit, electrical appliances, cosmetic products, beverages, food, clothes, fuel oil and garlic.

These fourteen categories imported through sea trade have been planned for re-export to China via the Muse border trade camp, it is learnt.

Myanmar’s export is eclipsed by the increased imports. Therefore, the Commerce Ministry is making efforts to triple the export volume in each sector.—200

Myanmar plans to increase FDI in agriculture sector

IN A BID to increase investments in the local farm sector, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration is planning to link the agriculture and industry sectors, its deputy director-general said.

Currently, only 0.15 per cent of foreign direct investment flowed into the country’s agriculture industry. That is why the government has arranged to link the two sectors to attract more FDI, which is one of the main drivers to improve trade in any country.

Agriculture is the major industry in Myanmar. The sector continues to play an important role in the country’s economy, with about 60 per cent of the country’s 24 million working population employed in the agriculture sector.

According to the official figures of DICA, the sector received only US$7.180 million in foreign investments last financial year. In fiscal year 2010-2011, over $138 million of FDI flowed into the sector, but the country saw no further investment in the farm sector in 2011-2012.

Myanmar attracted a record amount of foreign direct investment — US$9.4 billion — last fiscal year for 217 projects in 11 sectors — agriculture, livestock and fishery, mining, manufacturing, energy, oil and gas exploration, transportation, communication, hotel and tourism, real estate industry and other service businesses.

The country received $8 billion FDI in 2014-2015 FY, compared with $4.1 billion in 2013-2014 FY.

Between 1988-1989 FY and to date, the total value of FDI reached over $64 billion, of which nearly $250 million went to the agricultural sector.—Kyu Kyu

GE’s Advanced F-Class Turbine to Power Thaton Combined-Cycle Power Plant

General Electric (NYSE: GE) announced yesterday the order of two high-efficiency 6F.01 gas turbines and associated equipment by China Energy Engineering Group HEPODI (CEEC) that will power a new 119 MW combined-cycle power plant in Thaton, Myanmar.

This project was administered by the Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE), a state-owned utility under the Ministry of Electricity & Energy, and funded by The World Bank Group.

CEEC was awarded the project as the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) provider based on the lowest cost of electricity using GE’s F-Class high—efficiency technology, and the plant will be owned and operated by EPGE.

The site is expected to be commissioned by early 2018 and will supply the national grid with reliable power, thereby improving the country’s electrification rate.

“Ensuring Myanmar’s homes, businesses and people have access to reliable electricity is pivotal in sustaining our country’s rapid economic growth,” said U Pe Zin Tun, Union Minister of Electricity and Energy. “This deal, which includes GE’s F-Class technology, marks another step forward in achieving our goal of 100 per cent electrification by 2030.”

“The Thaton project will play a crucial role in bringing additional power to those who need it,” said Lva Qing, Chief Representative, CEEC. “We look forward to working with GE towards achieving this important goal, and their gas turbine technology will be a vital component of the plant’s future success.”

The deal follows a similar announcement made on July 5, 2016, that GE will also provide two 6F.03 gas turbines for the Myingyan power project in the Mandalay Region. Together, the two sites will be the most efficient combined-cycle plants in Myanmar in the 100 - 250 MW range, and will provide the most economical use of the country’s natural gas.—GNLM
Thai king’s death will not delay election

BANGKOK — The death of Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej will not affect plans to hold a general election in 2017, media reported on Monday, scotching speculation that the military government would delay the poll as the country enters a year of mourning.

Mourners continued to flock from across the country to the Grand Palace in Bangkok to pay their respects to the king, a beloved father figure for the Thai people who died on Thursday after seven decades on the throne.

Officials said they expected tens of thousands every day at the palace and, with so many arriving in Bangkok from the provinces, the city administration has ordered youth centres and public gyms to provide accommodation for free.

The death of the world’s longest-reigning monarch had raised questions over whether the junta would delay elections paving the way for a return to civilian rule. However, the Bangkok Post newspaper reported that the poll would proceed as planned. “The government has reaffirmed its commitment to following the roadmap for general elections scheduled for late next year,” the paper said.

Weerachon Sukondhapatipak, a spokesman for the military government, declined to comment on the matter. “This is not the time to discuss politics,” he told Reuters. The government has stressed since the king’s death that the economy and government will work as normal, and it has sought to dispel uncertainty over the succession.

King Bhumibol earned the devotion of Thais for his efforts to help the rural poor, including agricultural development projects. He was also seen as a stabilising figure in a country often racked by political turmoil. Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn is expected to be the new king but he does not command the same adoration that his father earned over a lifetime on the throne. The head of the royal advisory council will stand in as regent for an unspecified period until the prince is invited by parliament to become king. His formal coronation will take place after the king has been cremated following a year of mourning.

The Thaibah and the stock market, which fell sharply last week as investors worried about the country’s stability after King Bhumibol, were stable on Monday. “We think that market volatility will ease as the government continues to communicate clearly and cautiously to the public on how the transition will be, and reaffirms that general elections will continue under the roadmap,” Pimonwan Mahujchariyawong, deputy managing director of Kasikorn Research Centre, said. Media have stuck to rigorous reporting guidelines since the king’s death, and strict lese-majeste laws forbidding insults to the monarchy have discouraged discussion of the succession.

On social media, however, some Thais voiced anxiety. “I’m afraid for only one thing: Thailand’s future,” @SABENZZ said in a post on Twitter.

The government has heightened censorship of foreign media since the king died. Coverage on Thailand by BBC World television was repeatedly blocked over the weekend. Thailand’s foreign ministry in a note at the weekend criticised foreign journalists’ coverage, describing some reports as “manipulative and provocative”. The cabinet has asked that “festivities” be avoided for 30 days and requested people to wear black during this period. Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak said he had asked garment manufacturers to accelerate production of black shirts and other clothes, and the finance ministry said state banks would cover the cost of producing 8 million black T-shirts.—Reuters

China to help Cambodia modernise its armed forces — government

PHNOM PENH — China has agreed to help modernise Cambodia’s military, Cambodia’s defence minister said on Monday, after the two countries signed new agreements to boost military aid.

Cambodia is China’s loyal ally in Asia, routinely backing Beijing’s position at international forums in a region where China and United States vie for influence.

Cambodia has shielded China from criticism by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) over the South China Sea. ASEAN members Viet Nam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei are in disputes with China over rival claims to the waters.

“We signed some protocols with each other in providing supplies in order to modernise our work and as a contribution to strengthen our capacity of our national defence,” Defence Minister Tea Bahn, who returned from an official visit to Beijing over the weekend, told reporters on Monday.

His comments follow a visit to Cambodia by Chinese President Xi Jinping last week in which Xi praised the close ties between the two countries. China and Cambodia signed 31 agreements during the visit, including soft loan deals worth around $237 million.

The Chinese leader also cancelled around $89 million in debt and pledged another $14 million in military aid to Cambodia.

Banh said that Cambodia plans to acquire fighter jets from China in the long term but that the military needs to focus now on strengthening its airspace.

Cambodia has had border disputes with neighbouring Viet Nam and Thailand. A border dispute with Thailand has in recent years resulted in sporadic exchanges of fire.—Reuters

Typhoon Sarika heading for Viet Nam: meteorological agency

HANOI — As the Vietnameses are still coping with the consequences caused by heavy rains over the past days, a new typhoon is heading for Viet Nam, according to the National Center for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting (NCHMF) on Monday.

“Super storm” Sarika, with winds of up to 150 km per hour, is likely to approach the Beibu Gulf and make landfall on Viet Nam’s mainland on Wednesday, said the center.

The typhoon is forecast to land on Viet Nam’s northern coastal provinces of Quang Ninh and Nam Dinh. According to NCHMF chief Hoang Duc Cuong, Sarika might be the most hazardous and the strongest typhoon to lash Viet Nam over the past few years.

The typhoon is said to bring downpours to Viet Nam’s northeastern and north-central regions with rainfall of 200-300 mm. The landfall may coincide with this year’s strongest tide, so waves up to 2 metres are anticipated in coastal areas. Cuong was quoted by local VN Express online newspaper on Monday.—Xinhua

Mourners gather outside the Grand Palace to pay respects to the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej in Bangkok, Thailand, October 17, 2016. Photo: Reuters

CHINA TO HELP CAMBODIA MODERNISE ITS ARMED FORCES — GOVERNMENT

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China defends Pakistan after ‘mother-ship of terrorism’ comment

BEIJING—China sprang to long-time ally Pakistan’s defence on Monday after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi branded Pakistan a “mother-ship of terrorism” at a summit of BRICS nations.

Modi’s remarks to a meeting of leaders from BRICS — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — escalated his diplomatic drive to isolate Pakistan, which India accuses of sponsoring cross-border terrorism.

Tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbours have been rising high since a 18 September attack on an army base in Kashmir, near the disputed frontier where Pakistan killed 19 Indian soldiers in the worst such assault in 14 years.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying, asked about Modi’s comments, said China opposed all forms of terrorism and that the international community should increase counter-terrorism cooperation.

“We also oppose the linking of terrorism to any specific country, ethnicity or religion. This is China’s consistent position,” she told a daily news briefing in Beijing. “Everyone knows that India and Pakistan are victims of terrorism. Pakistan has made huge efforts and has made great sacrifices in fighting terrorism. I think the international community should respect this,” Hua added.

China and Pakistan consider each other “all-weather friends” and have close diplomatic, economic and security ties.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (L) and Chinese President Xi Jinping arrive for a photo opportunity ahead of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) Summit in Benaulim, in the western state of Goa, India, on 15 October 2016. REUTERS

Japan may accelerate missile defence upgrades in wake of North Korean tests

TOKYO — Japan may accelerate around $1 billion (804.1 million pounds) of planned spending to upgrade its ballistic missile defences in the wake of rocket tests suggesting North Korea is close to fielding a more potent medium-range missile, three government sources told Reuters.

The outlays, currently in a budget request for the year starting April, includes money to assess a new missile defence layer — either Lockheed Martin Corp’s Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system or Aegis Ashore, a land-based version of the ballistic missile defence system used by vessels in the Sea of Japan.

It also covers money to improve the range and accuracy of PAC-3 Patriot batteries, said the sources familiar with the proposal, who asked not to be identified because they are not authorized to talk to the media.

Any rollout of THAAD or Aegis Ashore could, however, still take years, the sources noted. Accelerated spending on Patriot missile batteries is also unlikely to deliver upgrades much quicker because of the limited capacity of the companies involved — Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Raytheon Co — to speed up already tight production schedules.

“It nonetheless has symbolic value,” said one of the sources.

As much as 300 billion yen (2.33 billion pounds) of defence funding will be included in a third supplementary budget, the Sankei Shimbun newspaper reported earlier.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s government has yet to say whether it will ask lawmakers to approve additional outlays before deliberations begin on next year’s budget.

Officials at Japan’s Ministry of Defence were not immediately available to comment. Pyongyang’s apparent technological progress on missiles has been faster than anticipated, exposing Japan to a heightened threat, a senior Japanese military commander told Reuters earlier this month.

Tokyo and Pyongyang have been locked in an arms race for two decades after North Korea fired a missile over Japan in 1998.

North Korea has test fired at least 21 ballistic missiles and conducted two nuclear tests so far this year. On 22 June, a medium range Musudan rocket reached an altitude of 1,000 km (620 miles) on a lofted trajectory, potentially beyond the range of Aegis destroyers the Sea of Japan that are armed with SM-3 missiles designed to hit warheads at the edge of space. —Reuters

BANGKOK — Thailand’s military government urged people not to take the law into their own hands on Monday after three videos surfaced on social media of angry mobs accusing people of insulting the monarchy following the death of King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The death of the revered king last Thursday after seven decades on the throne plunged the South-east Asian country into mourning and heightened sensitivities to any negative comment.

Criticism of the monarch, the regent and the heir, known by the French term lèse majesté, is a crime that carries a jail sentence of up to 15 years in Thailand.

On Friday, a crowd of around 400 people gathered in front of a soya milk shop in Phuket province to protest a Facebook post by the vendor’s son that they deemed insulting to the king. “They wanted to make a stand that no one could insult the king they love,” Police Major General Tererao Tipcharoen, commander of Phuket Provincial Police, told Reuters. Video of an incident on the southern island of Samui that was posted on Sunday resulted in a woman being made to prostrate herself before a portrait of the late king while an onlooking crowd jeered “Get out!”.

In the third incident, in the southern province of Phang Nga, hundreds of people gathered outside the house of a man, angry over a comment he had posted on Facebook.

The man remained inside as the people shouted at him — one was heard saying “If you live in Thailand you have to love the king” — and then the crowd dispersed when police assured them that they would look into the case. —Reuters

Japanese PM’s remarks to a meeting of leaders from BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) Summit in Benaulim, in the western state of Goa, India, on 15 October 2016. Photo: Reuters

Thai junta urges restraint after crowds mob royal insult suspects

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Japanese PM’s remarks to a meeting of leaders from BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) Summit in Benaulim, in the western state of Goa, India, on 15 October 2016. Photo: Reuters
Should owners be involved in managing a business

Khin Maung Aye

MANY a business owner believe that they ought to have an answer for every question and a solution for every problem concerning their business. After all, they are the proprietors or proprietresses. Nevertheless, merely owning a business cannot make them Mister and Mistress-Know-all.

A good way to escape from this rather awkward mindset is to recognize the difference between management issues and ownership issues—the former issues are the daily, weekly and monthly things that must be done to ensure the smooth running of the business, ranging from staffing the business to cope with seasonal variations to stock control to taking orders and chasing up debts. All of the daily processes needed for making operation of the business a success come under management issues. If these are executed effectively, the business will then succeed.

On the other hand, ownership issues are the things that only an owner can do. They tend to be more strategic and might include dealing with the bank or finance company to ensure sufficient capital to grow, negotiating on suitable freehold or leasehold premises for the business to operate out of, maintaining of relations with other proprietors or investors in the industry, deciding on future strategy and creating a compelling vision of the future. Last but not the least, they have to look for talented people with great attitudes to join the business and help to serve your customers. Without talented people, no business can have a competitive advantage.

When the business is small, owners can manage well but as the business firms grow in size, the owners cannot manage the whole business very well. And the key decisions will be delayed when owners are away either on business or on vacation. Because no one but the owner is accountable, lots of things never got done. This being so, owners should empower their staff at the management level.

It is worth noting that when the owners are doing whatever needs to be done, CEOs don’t do work, delegating everything, hiring talent with high pay, always recruiting and raising funds, defining objectives, providing, resources and stepping aside, giving praise, sharing credit, encouraging critique, cultivating culture, holding others accountable for results, coaching, cheering and directing.

State Sangha Vinicchaya (Judicial) Committee

Be Sein (Religious Affairs)

THE members of the Sangha Orders residing in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar are like the sons of the Buddha, who consequently succeeded Maha Thera Kassapa of the First Buddhist Synod.

When the five rivers namely, Ganga, Yamuna, Aciravati, Sarabu and Mahi flow into the ocean, their respective names disappeared, and then they received the one name, ocean. Similarly, the respective names of four castes also disappeared when they were ordained as Bhikkhus. They are regarded as the sons, as well as the disciples of the Buddha. According to the Fourth Wonder of the Sasana, the members of the Sangha received only the name of the sons of Sakya.

Therefore, all the members of the Sangha are united under the Rules of Vinaya expounded by the Buddha. In this way, members of the Sangha Orders have consequently to carry out the benefits of the Sasana. To settle peacefully the disputes of the Vinaya-dhammakamma Adhikarana, the following four main principles were drawn up and passed by the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. They are:

1. These procedures of the Settlement on the Vinayadharama Adhikarana Disputes Act shall be applicable to the members of the Sangha residing in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
2. The Vinayadharmakamma Adhikarana disputes shall be heard and decided only at the courts of the Sangha Vinicchaya and shall not be decreed as civil cases at the public courts.
3. The Vinayadharmakamma Adhikarana disputes arising from among the respective official sects may be heard and decided by the respective sects of Vinayadharamas (Sangha Judges).
4. These procedures of the Settlement on the Vinayadharmakamma Adhikarana Disputes Act shall be received and approved only by the majorities of the representatives of the assembly of the Sangha of All Orders.

The above-mentioned four main principles and the procedures and the procedures of the Vinayadharama Adhikarana Disputes were unanimously approved by the 1218 Sangha representatives of the First Congregation of the Sangha of All Orders of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana which was successfully held on the 27th May 1980.

In accordance with the four main principles and the procedures of the Vinayadharmakamma Adhikarana Disputes Act, the First Congregation of the Sangha of All Orders of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the following different levels of the Sangha Vinicchaya committees were formed throughout the country.

1. The State Sangha Vinicchaya Committee (the highest level)
2. The State/Region Sangha Vinicchaya Committees.
3. Township Sangha Vinicchaya Committees.

The State Sanghamahanya Committee has to nominate the name-list of the limited numbers out of the members of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders to act as the Vinayadhara (Sangha Judges) of the State Sangha Vinicchaya Court on an alternate turn. The members of the State Sangha Vinicchaya Court take office at Apara Goyanna Hall, Srimangalar Kaba Aye Hillock, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region. The State Sangha Vinicchaya Court consists of (45) members and each (15) members take office for four months.

The complainant or defendant may submit their statement of appeal to the State Sanghamahanya Committee within 30 days together with the prescribed form (12) according to the procedures, if the decision of the State or Region Sangha Vinicchaya Committee is not satisfactory. The statement of appeal must be attached to a true copy of the judgement of the State or Region Sangha Vinicchaya Committee. The following cases may be submitted to the State Sanghamahanya Committee for appeal:

1. A dispute occurring between the two different sects (ganas)
2. A dispute occurring between any State and Region.

A dispute relating to the four offences (Parajikas)
A dispute relating to pagondas and their Images and financial matters.

After accepting the statement of appeal and its case file, the State Sanghamahanya Committee shall form a State Vinayadhara Appellate Court within (15) days consisting of (5) members of the Vinayadhara Sayadwas who were neither members of the primary court nor the Vinayadhara Sayadaws of the State or Region in which the disputes originated.

Besides, the State Sanghamahanya Committee shall directly form the State Special Vinicchaya Committee comprising suitable members who are members of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to hear and decide the dispute relating to Dhamma (lawful view) or Adhamma (unlawful view) out of the four kinds of disputes, concerning the whole Sasana affairs.

The judgement of the State Special Court of the Vinayadhara shall be final and conclusive.

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Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives VOA director

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Director of Voice of America-VOA Washington DC Ms Amanda Bennett and party at the Bayintnaung Guest House in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed cooperation by the VOA in clearing up misunderstandings about the Tatmadaw by people from the US, with cooperation in the broadcast sector. They also discussed what happened in terms of giving advice due to misunderstandings during the transitional period in the country.—Myanmar News Agency

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Service leaves for Russia, accompanied by his delegation

AT the invitation of Colonel General Oleg L. Salyukov, a delegation led by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win left Yangon International Airport for the Russian Federation on a friendship visit this morning.

Vice Senior General Soe Win and delegation were seen off at the airport by Maj-Gen Myo Zaw Thein, Commander of the Yangon Command and Tatmadaw officers, Russian ambassador to Myanmar Mr Nikolay A Listopadov, military attaché Colonel Eduard N Okladnikov, deputy military attaché Commander Vitaly V Luchshev and responsible officials.

Vice Senior General Soe Win was accompanied by responsible officials of the Office of Chief of Staff (Army), it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

Poem:

“The Celebrities’ Words That Hit My Heart”

* Sidagu Sayadaw Ashin Nyaneithara said, “People are writing their own history” “Take the examples of Lord Buddha and Daywadat. Each of them left an unsimilar kind of history”.

* Sayadaw continued his excellent preaching, “What have you done for your country?” he said.

* “Have you done something good for the human beings”? These are the memorable words Sayadaw said.

* Dhamaduta Dr. Ashin Sayakaneda said, “If you want to have a good friend. You yourself have to be a good friend to others”. Sayadaw’s words are good from the beginning to the end.

* Myauk. O Sayadaw thoughtfully said, “Octogenarians are out of date, As they’re over —date, they can’t meditate properly, You’ve to do what you should, before it’s too late.”

Daw Aye Aye Pyone
(Retired Teacher)

Special agricultural zone to be established in Kyaikhto to grow pomelo

A SPECIAL agricultural zone project will be implemented in Kyaikhto in Mon State by the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association with the aim of boosting production of good quality pomelo for the export market.

The association plans to grow the marketable pomelo, a large natural citrus fruit, across the project area with the use of state-of-the-art technology so as to manufacture export-quality fruits.

Local merchants estimate that the mass production of pomelo fruits produced from the special agricultural zone may have a little impact on Mawlamyine market, which currently produces first class pomelo.

Pomelo is sweeter in taste than grapefruit. It has a thick, green rind with pink, white or yellow flesh and it contains high levels of potassium, a mineral required for proper functioning of the heart.

Increased consumption of Pomelo can help consumers to fight urinary tract infection. Pomelo juice also helps to clear arterial deposits in the body, thereby reducing the risk of strokes and heart attacks.

— Kyu Kyu

Voices from government employees, local people in Maungtaw over deadly attacks

WITH the recent violence in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State, terror has struck again to teachers and government employees serving in Maungtaw and nearby areas. As a result, Tatmadaw helicopters had to evacuate them to safe places. Myanmar News Agency interviewed some of the evacuees.

Government employees in Maungtaw were worried about the situation before the Tatmadaw reinforced the police.

“I had just moved to Maungtaw when the violence broke out. I haven’t slept for four days since it started, we are even afraid to go to the market,” said Daw Khin Mar Zin.

A teacher from Kyaingchaung Basic Education High School said she was trying to teach the Tatmadaw evacuated us to a safe place,” she said.

As the area is mostly populated by Muslims, government employees there said they were worried about their security because there was no safe place for them to escape.

“Over 90 per cent of my students are Muslims and I had to teach them with gestures because they could not understand Myanmar and I could not understand their language. We were amidst Muslims. We were worried about our safety,” Teacher Daw Win Win Kyi of Kyaingchaung Basic Education High School.

Not just government employees but also non-Muslim people in the area are afraid to go back to their native village and have moved to safe areas such as Sitwe.

“I lived in Aine Village in Maungdaw together with my daughter and her husband for many years, but we always had to worry about our safety and couldn’t even sleep. Now we moved to Pauktaw Village near Sitwe,” said Daw Moe Sein from Aine Village.—Myanmar News Agency

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Daw Khin Mar Zin.

“They are learning from us and some of them were not educated. Now, they are educated to worry about our safety and many years, but we always had to worry about our safety and couldn’t even sleep. Now we moved to Pauktaw Village near Sitwe,” said Daw Moe Sein from Aine Village.—Myanmar News Agency

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WASHINGTON — Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump dug deeper in his efforts to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the US election, saying on Twitter on Sunday that he believed the results were being “rigged” at many polling places.

His tweets came hours after his vice presidential running mate, Mike Pence, said Republicans would accept the outcome of the 8 November contest between Trump and his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton.

“The election is absolutely being rigged by the dishonest and distorted media pushing Crooked Hillary — but also at many polling places — SAD,” Trump wrote on Twitter, in the latest of a series of comments he has made over the past several days calling into question the fairness of the election.

Trump, who is trailing Clinton in opinion polls, did not provide any evidence to back his allegations of impropriety at the voting booth. Early voting and allegations of impropriety at the ballot box over the past several days calling into question the fairness of the election both from Republicans.

Republican nominating contests, when he disputed the method for winning delegates to the Republican National Convention.

His latest complaint of media bias stems from allegations by women that he groped them or made other unwanted sexual advances, after a 2005 video became public in which Trump was recorded bragging about such behaviour. He apologised for the video but has denied each of the accusations.

“Election is being rigged by the media, in a coordinated effort with the Clinton campaign, by putting stories that never happened into news!” Trump tweeted on Sunday, a sentiment he also expressed in posts and during news conferences. “We’re going to see what happens.”

He has also urged his supporters to keep an eye on voting locations to prevent a “stolen” election, which some critics interpreted as encouraging them to intimidate voters.

Pence said on Sunday he and Trump would respect the will of the voters.

“We’ll respect the outcome of this election,” said Pence, the Indiana governor. “Donald，“horrible and unacceptable” in her own tweet, adding: “Very grateful that everyone is safe.

Trump, a New York businessman who has never held elective office, has often said the electoral process is skewed against him, including during the Republican nominating contests, when he disputed the method for winning delegates to the Republican National Convention.

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“We’ll respect the outcome of this election,” said Pence, the Indiana governor. “Donald Trump said in the first debate that we’ll respect the will of the American people in this election. The peaceful transfer of power is a hallmark of American democracy.”

In a weekend statement quoted by media, a spokeswoman for US House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan, the top US elected Republican, said: “Our democracy relies on confidence in election results, and the speaker is fully confident the states will carry out this election with integrity.”

On Sunday, Pence for the second time in recent weeks broke from Trump on Russia, this time on that country’s possible involvement in election hacks tied to the US election, saying Moscow should face “severe consequences” if it has compromised US email security.

“I think there’s no question that the evidence continues to point in that direction,” Pence said. “There should be severe consequences to Russia or any sovereign nation that is compromising the privacy or the security of the United States of America.”

Pence said on “Fox News Sunday.”

Russian President Vladimir Putin said last week his country was not involved in trying to influence the US election.

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Iraq launches Mosul offensive to drive out Islamic State

BAGHDAD — Iraqi government forces, with air and ground support from the US-led coalition, launched an offensive on Monday to drive Islamic State from the northern city of Mosul, the militants’ last major stronghold in the country.

Helicopters released flares overhead and explosions could be heard on the city’s eastern front, where Kurdish fighters moved forward to take outlying villages, a Reuters correspondent said.

The United States predicted Islamic State would suffer “a lasting defeat” as Iraqi forces mounted their biggest operation since the US withdrew its own troops in 2011. Some 30,000 Iraqi soldiers, Kurdish Peshmerga militia and Sunni tribal fighters were expected to take part in the offensive to drive an estimated 4,000 to 8,000 Islamic State militants from Mosul, a city of 1.5 million people.

“I announce today the start of the offensive operations to free you from the terror and the oppression of Daesh,” Prime Minister Haider Abadi said in a speech on state TV, using an Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

“We will meet soon on the ground of Mosul to celebrate liberation and your salvation,” he said, surrounded by the armed forces’ top commanders.

Qatar-based al-Jazeera television aired video of what it said was a bombardment of Mosul that started after Abadi’s speech, showing rockets and bursts of tracer bullets across the night sky and loud sounds of gunfire.

“This operation to regain control of Iraq’s second-largest city will likely continue for weeks, possibly longer,” said the commander of the coalition, US Lieutenant General Stephen Townsend, in a statement. The Mosul offensive is one of the biggest military operations in Iraq since the 2003 US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein.

“This is a decisive moment in the campaign to destroy ISIL a lasting defeat,” US Defence Secretary Ash Carter said in a statement, using an acronym for Islamic State.

“We are confident our Iraqi partners will prevail against our common enemy and free Mosul and the rest of Iraq from ISIL’s hatred and brutality.”

In 2014, Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi proclaimed from Mosul’s Grand Mosque a “caliphate” in Iraq and neighbouring Syria. If Mosul falls, Raqqa in Syria will be Islamic State’s last city stronghold.

Islamic State has been retreating since the end of last year in Iraq, where it is battling US-backed government and Kurdish forces as well as Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi’ite militias.

The Iraqi Kurdish military command said 4,000 Peshmergas were taking part in an operation to clear several villages held by Islamic State to the east of Mosul, in an attack coordinated with a push by Iraqi army units from the southern front.

In its first statement on the Mosul operations, the Iraqi army media office said the advancing troops destroyed a number of Islamic State defence lines.

Strikes carried out by the Iraq and coalition jets hit an unspecified number of the militants’ positions, it said. A column of black smoke was rising from one of the insurgents’ positions on the eastern front, the Reuters correspondent said, and seemed to be from burning oil being used to block the path of the Kurds and obstruct the jets’ view.

“We are the real Muslims, Daesh are not Muslims, no religion does what they did,” said a young Kurdish fighter in battle dress as he scanned the plain east of Mosul from his position on the heights of Mount Zertik.—Reuters

Britain, France seek EU condemnation of Russia over Syria

LUXEMBOURG — Britain and France sought to persuade the European Union on Monday to condemn Russia’s devastating air campaign in Syria and pave the way for imposing more sanctions on President Bashar al-Assad’s government.

After a weekend of US-led diplomacy that failed to find a breakthrough, EU foreign ministers met in Luxembourg to seek for an end to the bombing of rebel-held east Aleppo, where 275,000 people are trapped, as well as Shi’ite fighters and civilians this year as it loses territory to US-backed Iraqi government forces and Shi’ite militias.

“We will meet soon on the ground of Mosul to celebrate liberation and your salvation,” he said, surrounded by the armed forces’ top commanders. The Mosul offensive is one of the biggest military operations in Iraq since the 2003 US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein.

“His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan, representing the Islamic umma and the Arab nation, denounces any final solution that is not agreed upon and acceptable to the Palestinian people and its leadership,” the statement said.

The ultra-hardline Sunni group intensified bomb attacks in government-held areas this year as it loses territory to US-backed Iraqi government forces and Shi’ite militias.—Reuters

Suicide bombing kills 10 at security check-point south of Baghdad

BAGHDAD — A suicide driver detonated a car packed with explosives at a security check-point south of Baghdad on Monday, killing ten people and wounding 25, police and medical sources said.

The blast happened as a convoy of Shi’ite paramilitary fighters drove past the check-point in Yusufiya, 15 kilometres (9 miles) south of the Iraqi capital, the sources said.

It caused casualties among police and army personnel manning the position, as well as Shi’ite fighters and civilians, they said.

The bombing comes as US-led forces launched earlier today an offensive on Mosul, the last city that remains under control of Islamic State in Iraq.

The ultra-hardline Sunni group intensified bomb attacks in government-held areas this year as it loses territory to US-backed Iraqi government forces and Shi’ite militias.—Reuters

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS
MYANMA RAILWAYS

INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Sr No. | Tender No. | Description
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1. | 15(T)/5(E) | Spare Parts for Concrete Sleeper Plant (17) Items
2. | (b) | Spare Parts for Rail Clip Production Machine - (5) Items
3. | (c) | Spare Parts for Batching Plant - (8) Items

Closing Date & Time - 17.11.2016 (Thursday) (14:30) Hrs

Tender documents are available at our office starting from 17.10.2016 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Deputy General Manager Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botataung, Yangon.
TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe sent a ritual offering Monday to the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, a source of diplomatic friction between Japan and some of its Asian neighbors.

Abe made the “masakaki” tree offering under the name of the prime minister, the shrine said.

Abe is likely to refrain from visiting the Shinto shrine during its four-day annual autumn festival through Thursday, ahead of expected summit talks with China and South Korea later this year.

Yasukuni Shrine honors convicted World War II war criminals, along with millions of war dead.

“We firmly oppose Japanese politicians’ wrong practices,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular press briefing.

“We also urge Japan to face squarely and deeply reflect on its history of aggression...and take practical action to win back the trust of its Asian neighbors and the international community,” she said, without elaborating.

China’s response to Abe’s offering to the shrine this time was much subdued, compared with that in the past several years, as the two countries seek to improve bilateral ties.

Abe visited the shrine in December 2013, drawing immediate rebukes from China and South Korea, which suffered from Japanese wartime brutality.

— Kyodo News

**European Union prepares sanctions over Congo vote delay**

LUXEMBOURG — The European Union will prepare economic sanctions on the Democratic Republic of Congo unless it holds its delayed presidential and parliamentary elections next year, foreign ministers agreed on Monday.

President Joseph Kabila was due to leave office at the end of his mandate in December but authorities have postponed the votes until April 2018, citing logistical problems.

The delay sparked two days of protests in the capital Kinshasa last month that killed dozens of people. “There is a delay to elections that is not acceptable and I hope elections can take place in 2017,” Belgium’s Foreign Minister Didier Reynders told reporters. “We need an inclusive dialogue and not to resort to violence,” said Reynders, whose country is Congo’s former colonial power.

EU foreign ministers said in a statement: “The EU will use all the means at its disposal, including individual restrictive measures” — diplomatic language for travel bans and asset freezes.

Anysanctions would target “those responsible for serious human rights violations, those who promote violence and those who would try to obstruct a consensual and peaceful solution to the crisis.”

Foreign ministers tasked EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, who coordinates the bloc’s diplomacy, to draw up sanctions. Diplomats said these could target senior police and other members of the security forces, and potentially government officials at a later stage.

The EU, a major donor of foreign aid as well as a big foreign investor and trade partner, is seeking an independent inquiry into the violence last month and wants talks on a new timetable for presidential and parliamentary elections.

— Reuters

**Abe sends ritual offering to war-linked Yasukuni Shrine**

Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe speaks at a parliamentary session in Tokyo on 17 October 2016.

**Chinese plays down Philippine leader’s comments on arbitration case**

BEIJING — China on Monday sought to play down comments by Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte that he would raise a controversial arbitral ruling on the South China Sea with China’s leaders, ahead of his visit to Beijing this week.

Speaking on Sunday, Duterte vowed not to surrender any sovereignty or deviate from the July awards by the tribunal in The Hague.

The ruling dealt a blow to China’s extensive claims in the South China Sea.

China has refused to recognise the case and has chided any nation telling it to obey the ruling.

Asked about Duterte’s remarks, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that as he is the country’s leader, Duterte will make his policy based upon the best interests of his country and people.

China’s position on the arbitration case is extremely clear and consistent, and China advocates peaceful talks between the parties directly involved to resolve the South China Sea issue, Hua added in a daily news briefing.

“China’s door has always been open to the Philippines, and I think you’ve also noticed that President Duterte has many times said he wants dialogue with China and his positive desire to appropriately resolve relevant issues,” she added.

China is willing to work with all parties in the South China Sea, including the Philippines, to maintain peace and stability in the waters, Hua said.

The unpredictable president’s moves to strongly engage China, just a few months after the arbitral award that sparked fears in the region of a backlash by Beijing in the South China Sea, mark a striking reversal in Philippine foreign policy since he took office on 30 June.— Reuters

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Hiroshima company reviving seaplanes as transport alternative in Japan

TOKYO — Seaplanes used to be a common form of transport in the Japanese archipelago, with scheduled cargo and passenger flights operating mainly in western Japan until the mid-1960s.

The development of shinkansen bullet trains and regional airports enabled faster transport links with greater capacity, leading to the phasing out of seaplanes.

Decades later, however, seaplanes are drawing renewed attention, chiefly for tourism in remote areas of the country where infrastructure costs are prohibitive.

A company in Onomichi in Hiroshima Prefecture, on the Seto Inland Sea coast, launched seaplane services for sightseeing on 1 October 2016, the first such business started in Japan for roughly half a century.

A Setouchi Seaplanes amphibious Kodiak 100 took off in early September with five passengers from Onomichi Floating Port, flying around 500 metres high over the isles of Innoshima and Noshima for nearly an hour.

The trip costing around 24,000 yen ($230) per person—a weekend day trip from September through to February—provided views of these and other islands in the emerald green inland sea.

Setouchi Seaplanes Vice President Takenori Matsumoto explained that the business is aimed chiefly at revitalizing the economies of rural areas such as Onomichi and Fukuyama, also in Hiroshima Prefecture.

The company is a unit of Setouchi Holdings Inc., which belongs to the Tsuneishi major shipbuilding holding company. The group company acquired Quest Aircraft, the US maker of Kodiak planes, in February.

Matsumoto is confident about the future of Setouchi Seaplanes’ sightseeing business that operates a fleet of four Quest aircraft.

“The landscape of the Seto Inland Sea islands from a low altitude is magnificent,” he said. “We will be profitable in the long run.”

Although seaplanes are susceptible to high waves and are restricted to daylight operations due to visibility, the company is considering starting passenger flights linking Seto Inland cities with Tokyo or Osaka, and envisages eventually building a nationwide network of seaplane services.

Tomoyuki Todoroki, a Nihon University professor of transport system engineering, said Setouchi Seaplanes’ launch has given momentum to seaplane projects in other parts of Japan.

Working with Setouchi Seaplanes, Matsue, the capital of Shimane Prefecture on the Sea of Japan coast, for instance, is planning a full-fledged service at Nakaumi, one of the largest brackish lakes in Japan, sometime in the next fiscal year starting April.

Yui Fukuma, who heads the city’s regional promotion division, says he hopes for sightseeing flights over the Shimane Peninsula, saying, “We hope to provide a tour (using seaplanes) because (adjacent) Sakata port accommodates cruise ships from abroad.”

The city of Matsue is responsible for providing infrastructure such as a pier, while Setouchi Seaplanes will oversee flight operations and marketing.

According to Todoroki, other regions in Japan have also shown an interest in seaplanes.

The city of Kamiamakusa in Kumamoto Prefecture recently contemplated island-hopping flight tours, while local governments in Ibaraki Prefecture are considering inviting a seaplane operator.

They are located around Kasumigaura, a lake where seaplane services originated in Japan in the early 20th century.

Todoroki says he sees a role for seaplanes in Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s push to revitalize regional economies because the aircraft can provide swift transport to destinations off the grid of the nationwide network of shinkansen bullet trains.

“They can take off and land if there is an inert 1,000 meters long,” Todoroki said.

There are also other potentials for tourism. The trip from Tokyo to the Lake Chuzenji region in Tochigi Prefecture, which draws throngs of tourists for its autumn colours, for instance, could be cut to half an hour from around five hours by car.

Todoroki noted that seaplanes can also be an asset in emergency situations such as providing relief and transporting sick people from remote areas in the event of an earthquake.

Kyodo News
Ben Affleck’s ‘The Accountant’ dominates with $24.7 million

LOS ANGELES — Underlining Ben Affleck’s star power, “The Accountant” dominated movie-going with a solid $24.7 million opening weekend at 3,222 North American sites.

Sunday’s estimate came in significantly above expectations, which ranged from $18 million to $20 million at the start of the weekend.

Comedy concert film “Kevin Hart: What Now?” delivered about half of “The Accountant” total with $12 million at 2,568 locations. But the debut of sci-fi adventure “Max Steel” was ignored by moviegoers with $2.1 million at 2,034 screens for a dismal $1,049 per-screen average.

Warner Bros.’ “The Accountant” took in $200,000 more than “Tu Hai Mera Sunday,” with $2.8 million from 1,190 screens, led by $755,000 in Brazil, Germany and Spain.

Open Road is handling “Max Steel,” based on Mattel’s line of action figures and starring Ben Winchell of MTV’s “Find- ing Carter.” The film, produced focuses on the teenage Max McGrath and alien companion Steel, who evolve into the super-hero Max Steel.

Fox’s third weekend of “Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children” finished fourth with $8.9 million at 3,538 locations, giving the Tim Burton fantasy $65.8 million after 17 days. Lionsgate’s third frame of Mark Wahlberg disaster drama “Deepwater Horizon” followed in tenth with $6.4 million at 3,403 sites for a $49.3 million domestic total.—Reuters

Indian film gets world premiere at London Film Festival

LONDON — A light-hearted Indian film “Tu Hai Mera Sunday,” had its world premiere at the London Film Festival (LFF).

The movie, which was screened on Saturday, is based in Mumbai and revolves around amateur footballers.

The film stars popular TV actor Barun Sobti and actress Shahana Goswami.

“Tu Hai Mera Sunday” is based on real football group called Juhu Beach United.

“As a filmmaker, when you’re making a film, you’re not thinking of the audience. The first time the film meets the audience is the tense moment. How the audience reacts makes you feel like you make it or break it.—PTI

Taylor Swift donates for Louisiana flood victims

LOS ANGELES — Singer Taylor Swift has donated the remainder of her USD 1 million pledge to charities working for the victims of Louisiana floods.

The 26-year-old pledged in August to help the victims of the historic floods by donating to deserving causes across the state, reported Us magazine.

The “Shake It Off” hitmaker has allocated the funds to Convoy of Hope, The Life of a Single Mom and YWCA Greater Baton Rouge.

“Our hearts are overwhelmed by the outpouring of support for single moms. We are grateful to Taylor Swift for reaching out to help us ensure that no single mom walks alone during this very difficult time.”

“The devastation across southeast Louisiana has been unbelievable. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve more single moms with this gift,” a statement on The Life of a Single Mom’s website reads.

She also gifted USD 100,000 to Habitat for Humanity.—PTI

Children are becoming a big focus in my life: Katy Perry

LOS ANGELES — Singer Katy Perry says kids have become a major focus of her life.

The 31-year-old songstress, who is currently dating actor Orlando Bloom, was speaking at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles’ “Once Upon a Time Gala,” reported Eonline.

“I see the amazing thing of birth and children and the vulnerability and we just have to take care of them and how big of an impression we have. We have such a responsibility! ‘Children to me are becoming a big focus. I don’t even have mine but I see it in my sister’s kids and just how much nurturing and love they need...’” Perry said.

Almost a year after the duo’s romance first went public at the 2016 Golden Globes, a source said that they have discussed marriage and children.

Perry also believes a second chance at marriage is in her future since divorcing comedian Russell Brand in 2011.—PTI
Halloween parade held in Vancouver

Performers in costumes attend the Halloween parade in Vancouver, Canada, on 16 October 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA

Los Angeles — What looks like behind “Finding Dory”, “Toy Story 2”? How the technology make cartoon characters vivid and lovely?

The Science Behind Pixar Exhibition debuted to public at the California Science Centre for the first time in the west coast of US on Saturday.

Audience can take a close look at the science and technology behind some of the most beloved animated films and their characters throughout a 12,000 square foot (about 1115 square metre) hands-on exhibition. The exhibition shows the science, technology, engineering and math concepts used by the artists and computer scientists who helped bring Pixar’s award-winning films to the big screen.

From Modeling, Rugging, Surfaces, Sets & Camera, Animation, Simulation, Lighting to Rendering, the exhibitions featured more than 40 interactive elements which demonstrates the technology that supports the creativity and artist of Pixar’s storytellers, and illustrated different steps of the filmmaking process.

The current carpark, located next to the market on the site of Melbourne’s first cemetery, would be converted into a community green space.

A study funded by advocates of the redevelopment found the project would create 1,200 new jobs and generate 910 million US dollars in economic activity.—Xinhua
MADRID — Yannick Carrasco produced one of the displays of the season, scoring a hat-trick and giving two assists as Atletico Madrid retained their leadership of the Primera Liga in fine style with a 7-1 win at home to Granada on Saturday.

Granada visited the Vicente Calderon Stadium at the bottom of the table, but with new coach Lucas Alcaraz at the helm and they looked a much more compact outfit in the first half and even took an 18th minute lead thanks to a fine Isaac Cuena volley.

They held their lead until Carrasco fired home through a crowd of players 10 minutes before halftime and he put Atletico ahead with a deflected shot seconds before the break.

The Belgian then completed his hat-trick after 60 minutes, before Nico Gaitan sealed the win with his first goal two minutes later.

Atletico kept the pressure on and were rewarded by three late goals: Gaitan, Angel Correa and Tiago putting the icing on the cake in the 81st, 84th and 86th minute to make it clear that Atletico are serious title contenders.

Not to be outdone, Real Madrid ended a four-game run without a win with a 6-1 victory away to Betis. An Alvaro Cejudo own goal put Madrid on their way before goals from Karim Benzema, Marcelo and Isco made it 4-0 at half time against a woeful rival.

Isco’s second and a late goal by Cristiano Ronaldo ended the route and completed Betis’ worst ever home defeat in La Liga.

Leo Messi returned to action after injury but Rafinha was the hero with the first two goals as Barcelona beat Deportivo la Coruna 4-0 in the Camp Nou Stadium.

The Brazilian was on hand in the 20th and 30th minutes to put Barca on track and Luis Suarez made the result safe before halftime when he scored the third of the game.

Messi came on 10 minutes after halftime and almost immediately scored Barca’s fourth and after Deportivo captain, Laure was sent off in the 65th minute, only a series of fine saves from visiting keeper, German Lux kept the score to a respectable level.

Pablo Sarabia’s 84th minute curling shot finally ended Sevilla’s 16 month drought without an away win as they took a thrilling 3-2 victory away to Leganes.

Fran Vazquez and Samir Nasri had looked to have given Sevilla the points as they put the visitors 2-1 up before David Timor and Alexander Szymanowski leveled the score in just two minutes to give Leganes hopes of their first home win of the campaign, only for Sarabia’s goal to send Sevilla home happy after what has been a long wait.—Xinhua

Murray beats Bautista Agut to win third Shanghai Masters title

SHANGHAI — Andy Murray powered his way to a third Shanghai Masters title by beating Spanish 15th seed Roberto Bautista Agut 7-6(1), 6-1 in Sunday’s final to close in on Novak Djokovic at the top of the world rankings.

Bautista Agut beat world number one Djokovic in the semi-final on Saturday but was brought back down to earth by three-times grand slam champion Murray, who converted all his four break points to wrap up the match in one hour 36 minutes.

Bautista Agut forced a tight opening set into a tie-break, but the 29-year-old Briton raised his level to then win seven points in a row.

World number two Murray took control of proceedings in the second set as an aggressive Bautista Agut, who hit 25 unforced errors during the match, failed to maintain his intensity.—Reuters

Murray poses with the trophy after winning tournament during Shanghai Masters tennis tournament final in Shanghai, China on 16 October. Photo: Reuters

Rakitic predicts Neymar will be ‘next Messi’

MADRID — Brazilian Neymar is set to become the next best player in the world after Argentina’s Lionel Messi, according to Barcelona midfield Ivan Rakitic.

Since arriving at Nou Camp in June 2013, Neymar has netted 59 goals in around 100 La Liga appearances and has won two top flight titles as well as the Champions League.

He also came third in the FIFA Ballon d’Or awards behind team mate Messi and Real Madrid’s Cristiano Ronaldo in January.

“If we speak about the best, it is Leo Messi. Neymar is on the way to be the next best,” Rakitic told the Times.

“Barca will do the best thing to sign a new contract with him and maybe they can put a buyout clause as high as possible, because he will be the next Messi for sure.”

He’s scored (nearly) 300 goals and he’s only 24. He’s really special.”

Croatia international Rakitic, who joined Barca in June 2014, believes striker Luis Suarez’s spell at Liverpool made him the most feared striker in the world.

Suarez was top scorer in the Premier League and claimed the Professional Footballers’ Association and Football Writers’ Player of the Year awards at Liverpool in the 2013-14 season, inspiring the club to second-place top flight finish.—Reuters

PHOTO: REUTERS