History of peaceful coexistence among Buthidaung, Maungtaw students

Ko Ko Thet

ABOUT 90 per cent of students in Buthidaung and Maungtaw have returned to school as security has improved in the area. Teachers are also encouraging parents to send their children back to school.

“I moved here just in August, but I am trying my best to educate students in cooperation with other teachers,” said U Aung Kyaw Zan, who was appointed headmaster of Buthidaung Basic Education High School three months ago.

There is only one high school in Buthidaung with over 2,000 students, including about 570 ethnic students.

Administrators said there have never been any conflicts in the history of the school, where students have been learning together for decades.

“They have always lived together. There is no problem,” the headmaster said.

Peaceful coexistence helps students learn in peace as 90 per cent of students in Buthidaung and Maungtaw have returned to school. Photo: Min Htet

One officer, one soldier dead, several injured in fighting continuously erupts in Rakhine

WHILE conducting the area clearance operations in Maungtaw and Yathedaung townships, Rakhine State, the government troops were ambushed by about 60 attackers armed with guns, knives and spears near Mayinthaung village at about 6:45am yesterday.

The troops fought back in forcing the attackers to move back to Gwason village which is located in the southwest of Mayintau village.

After the skirmish, the bodies of six attackers were found along with one BA-94 weapon and ammunition which are similar to arms taken away by the attackers in the 9th October attacks at the Headquarters of Kyikanpyin Border Guard Post. One soldier died and several were injured in the fighting.

Government troops continued their clearance operation around the village. When they arrived near Pwintphyuchaung village, they were under fire by the attackers in the village.

When the troops fired back, the attackers set fire to the village and withdrew to Gwason village.

In the area clearance operation, the troops arrested 36 men believing to be the attackers in Pwintphyuchaung village and handed over them to the No. 1 Border Guard Post Headquarters.

Troops who approached Gwason village in search for the attackers were shot by about 500 men armed with small guns, knives and spears near the village.

The troops divided themselves into groups and returned fire.

The troops found themselves under attack and outnumbered by the other enemy until two helicopters from Air Force fired on the attackers, forcing them to withdraw to Gwason village. One officer from the military dead in the encounter near Gwason village.

The troops have stepped up its clearance operations and are actively searching for the attackers.—Myawady
THE Obstetrical and Gynecological Society of Myanmar Medical Association – (ObGyn Society/ MMA) and Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association (MNMA) signed the joint statement on Friday, affirming maximum coordinative and collaborative efforts.

In the opening remark, Dr. Tin Tin Lay, Director-General, Department of Health Professional Resource Development and Management, Ministry of Health and Sports, said “With particular regards to in-service capacity building and continuous professional education (CPE) for midwives, the role of the Obstetrical and Gynecological Society of Myanmar Medical Association and Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association are playing in critical role as in other countries where these associations are working closely to make policy advocacy and to work with Ministry of Health and Sports to improve the skills and competencies of midwives”. In the introductory remarks, Dr. Mya Thida, the president of ObGyn Society/MMA, said, “Midwifery services play the most important role in reducing maternal and perinatal death in Myanmar. As we all know that maternal mortality and infant deaths are still high in our country according to 2014 census. In order to improve maternal and neonatal health is an unfinished agenda and we need to meet the target of sustainable development goals in 2030”.

Obstetrical and Gynecological Society was established in February 1964 under Myanmar Medical Association. Now it has active members of 350 and the society has involved in midwifery care and Reproductive Health care of Myanmar in many aspects in collaboration with MOHS, NGOs, INGOs, UN Agencies and other partners including Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association (MNMA). Obstetrical and Gynecological Society of Myanmar Medical Association – (ObGyn Society/ MMA) and Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association (MNMA) are aimed at improving maternal and newborn health in Myanmar. (Photo: Supplied)

History of peaceful coexistence among Buthidaung, Maungtaw …

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“Recent violent attacks in Maungtaw did not have much impact on Buthidaung’s education sector,” Dignitaries and officials open the school building for the No 1 Basic Education Middle School in Pyay. (Photo: Yati)

A NEW school building was handed over to Pyay No 1 Basic Education Middle School in Pyay on Friday by Shwetaung Group of Companies to the Pyay Township Education Officer. The two-storey building which has a seating capacity of 240 school children cost more than 90 million. The handing over of the school becomes the 89th school donated by the Shwetaung group of companies. — Yati

School Building handed over to Pyay No 1 BEMS

Diplomatic and official hands over the school building for the No 1 Basic Education Middle School in Pyay. (Photo: Yati) 

A combined team comprising of members of the Myanmar Police Force and a local anti-drug squad, discovered 6,400 yaba pills from a motorbike in Mogok on 10 November, according to the Myanmar Police Force. The team arrested Yaw Na who was driving the motorbike when the surprise check was carried out. Similarly, the team also found 4,100 yaba pills from a motorbike driven by Yaw Shu in Mogok on the same day. Ma Aye Saw Mi was on board when the motorbike was searched by the police.

Yaba pills seized in Mogok

The Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association (MNMA) is one of the largest local NGOs in Myanmar and has a diverse range of experience on maternal and child health services in Myanmar such as Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), Food Security Project, Child Protection and Nutrition Support for children Sexual and Reproductive Health programme providing training for pre-service midwives on maternal, newborn, and child health.

Three traffic accidents happened on Yangon-Mandalay Highway, kills seven

THREE accidents of passenger buses happened on the Yangon-Mandalay Highway yesterday, leaving seven passengers dead.

In the first accident which happened at about 12.15 hrs yesterday between the Mile post Nos 254/3 and 254/4, Yethu-aung Express Bus carrying 49 passengers driven by Thet Naiing Swe crashed into the back of Starex vehicle driven by Hla Thein, left one passenger on board of the Starex bus dead and injured two women.

In the second accident, a passenger bus skidded on the road between mile post Nos 149/2 and 149/3 and plunged into a roadside ditch, killing six passengers and injuring 17. There were 53 passengers on board when the accident happened.

In the third accident, a fire broke out due to overheating of engine of a chartered bus en-route from Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw between the mile post Nos 193/7 and 194/0. No casualties or injuries were reported. Action have been taken against the drivers who involved in the three separate accidents. — Than Oo (Lay Hmyat Nar)

Rescuers are seen at the scene of traffic accident which kills six passengers.

Crime NEWS

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School Building handed over to Pyay No 1 BEMS
Bridge linking Buthidaung and Rathedaung in Rakhine to be opened next year

Maung Sein Lwin

PANZINCHAUNG Bridge, which will link Buthidaung and Rathedaung townships in Rakhine State, is expected to be put into service in early 2017.

The bridge, which is the longest span on the route, will contribute to development and flow of goods into Rakhine State. The government is planning to build ten bridges along the route for increased regional development. The 960-foot long bridge was built on 1 April, 2015 and can withstand 60 tonnes of weight.

"The main cause of underdevelopment is poor transportation. Everything, including health, education, economy and social conditions, lags behind other states because of the poor transportation," said U San Mra Tha, a local resident. "The population decrease of ethnic people in Rakhine State was also caused by poor transportation. Many ethnic people have left the state in search of greener pasture". "The government needs to give more support to the state," he added. Buthidaung-Rathaedaung road is 36 miles long and it is the first land route between the two townships. It will also contribute to the interests of local residents along it.

At present, local people have to rely on ferries and hovercraft for transportation and spend a long time travelling. Now the two townships will be linked by the road and local people can travel from one township to another within a very short time thanks to the road and bridges. "As transportation is poor and it takes a long time to travel from a place to another by boat, commodity prices also rise," another local resident said.

Local residents hope that their lives will improve when the road and bridges along it are put into service.

Rakhine state minister inspects roads and bridges in Maungtaw

RAKHINE State Electric Power, Industry and Transportation Minister U Aung Kyaw Zan and party inspected erosion of the river bank in Maungtaw and roads and bridges along Maungtaw-Taungpyoletwe Road yesterday.

In the morning, the state minister inspected the eroded river bank in Kyainchaung Village before proceeding to the Kyainchaung-Bandoola road and Watkyein bridges, whose approaches are being washed away.

Later, the minister and party inspected Maungtaw-Taungpyoletwe Road and met with members of the Myo ethnic group to discuss stability in the area.

Afterwards, the minister and party inspected the border bridge between Bangladesh and Myanmar and the erosion of the river bank on the Myanmar side of the Naf River.

Workers construct Panzinchaung Bridge linking Buthidaung and Rathedaung townships in Rakhine State. Photo: MNA

Minister U Aung Kyaw Zan inspects erosion of the river bank in Maungtaw Township. Photo: MNA

NLD’s central committee meets

THE morning agenda of the sixth regular meeting of the first central committee of the National League for Democracy began at the party headquarters in Yangon yesterday morning.

U Tin Oo, patron of the party, U Win Hein, U Nyan Win and U Thanlar Myint, members of the party’s secretariat, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint, Mandalay Region Chief Minister Dr Zaw Myint Maung, chief ministers of states and regions, speakers of state/region Hluttaws, state/region chairmen of the NLD and central committee members attended the meeting.

Patron U Tin Oo of the NLD delivered the opening address, and the political report and work report were submitted by NLD executive secretaries. U Mahn Johnnie, U Phyo Min Thein and U Aung Soe were approved as NLD’s central executive committee members. U Win Hein submitted five future plans of the NLD and the chairman of the meeting approved them.—Ko Latt (Myanmar News Agency)

Union Attorney-General attends 10th ASEAN-China Prosecutors-General Conference

UNION Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo attended the 10th ASEAN-China Prosecutors-General Conference which was held in Laos from 9th to 10th November.

In his discussion at the conference, Union-Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo said that Myanmar has taken measures to adapt the country’s law for fighting drug and human trafficking to international norms while actively participating in fighting the transnational crimes.

Transnational crime includes drugs and human trafficking which are increasing in scale as reflected by the large number of young people that fall victim to these crimes. The 10th ASEAN-China Prosecutors-General Conference was held in Vientiane under the theme: Strengthening Cooperation to Effectively Combat Transnational Crime.

At the conference, the representatives of the China and ASEAN member states signed the joint statement, agreeing to do further boosting their joint efforts through bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms to tackle transnational crime.—Myanmar News Agency

Prosecutors-General from ASEAN countries and China pose for a group photograph in ASEAN way at 10th ASEAN-China Prosecutors-General Conference. in Vientiane, Laos. Photo: MNA
JADE mining businesses in Hkanti are struggling to deal with a lack of enforcement of laws against those who dig for jade without a permit, said U Tun Lin Shein from the Myauk Kyun Thu Ma company recently.

There are 18 legal companies in Namepun Hmaw and 16 legal companies in Ma Kyan Hmae in Hkanti. But hundreds of people who are not employed by mining companies forcibly enter the jade mines and illegally dig for jade, officials said. This leaves the companies with not many jade stones to find, officials said. The companies are struggling even to pay salaries, U Tun Lin Shein said.

“We are interdependent, and so we want to give jobs more to the local people”, he said.

“We can take legal action against those who are digging for jade without a permit. Also, we can take action against them will find them not holding a license”, said assistant director U Tun Wai from Hkanti jade mining camp.

U Tun Wai said the violators cannot be arrested because he does not have enough staff. But video recordings of the unlicensed people digging for jade have been compiled.

Only about 200 out of 3,000 illegal miners are local people. The rest are from other regions. They trespass on the companies’ land, said U Soe Soe from Paw Mai ward, Hkanti town.

The companies from Hkanti town have donated funds to build classrooms and are also actively participating in the community’s social activities by donating cash and in kind donations. — Aung Thanti Khine

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**Japanese firm opens steel factory in Myanmar’s Yangon**

**Decline in inshore, offshore fishing causing financial hardships to Mon State fish firms**

FISHING businesses in Mon State have suffered losses this season due to rising costs, fishing restrictions and a decline in supply from both inshore and offshore fishing.

Frequent storms at the beginning of the season prevented workers from going out to sea to catch fish, resulting in a smaller stockpile of fish. “The decline in fish this year is 70 per cent lower than that of the previous year. Besides, the labour costs have dealt a severe blow to the fishing businessmen,” said an entrepreneur in Ye, Mon State.

“We have not been able to get the fishing season in full-swing yet due to climate change and storms,” he added.

A businessman has to invest from Ks50 million to Ks100 million to start up a fishing business. Last month, the fishery department designated some islands in Kyun-su, in the southern Tanintharyi region, as restricted areas for fishing, clarifying that the move is aimed at protecting the fisheries near these islands by preventing fish larvae from being caught.

The authorities said it will carry out patrols around the restricted areas to make sure there is no illegal fishing, adding that violators will face penalties. — Nay Myo Htut (Ye)

A fruit zone will be built in Mawlamyine with the aim of making it easier for fruit and related products to enter local and international markets, said U Soe Than Min Din, Chairman of the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (FFVEPA) at a ceremony held yesterday at UMFFCCI.

The fruit zone is expected to be built on a 1,000-acre plot of land in Mawlamyine. The association will submit a proposal to the regional government by the end of December.

Building the fruit zone will enable the growers to systematically cultivate fruit and foster better conservation habits.

Currently, around 0.6 million tonnes of watermelon, over 0.1 million tonnes of musk melon and over 0.04 million tonnes of mangoes are being exported, it is learnt. — 200

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**Fruit zone to be built in Mawlamyine**

**E-licenses for hotel and tourism not very popular yet**

RELATIVELY few people have applied for the e-license for the tourism industry, according to U Tint Thwin, director-general of the ministry of Hotels and Tourism at Panda Hotel on Friday.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has been offering online registration since July with the aim of faster and easier issuance of licenses. The e-license reduces tax

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**Over 200 apply for temporary licenses for oil refineries**

Over 200 businessmen have applied for a temporary license to operate oil refineries in various regions and states, according to the Ministry of Electrical Power and Energy.

Ministry of Electrical Power and Energy approved applications starting on 25 September, receiving a total of 237 applications, it is learnt from the ministry on 10 November. The Ministry of Electrical Power and Energy started verifying the applications on 16 November and will complete the process on 31 March. After further scrutiny, the ministry will issue the temporary licenses.

The Ministry has launched awareness discussions for the businessmen to ensure that they abide by the rules and regulations. The awareness programmes were launched by the ministry in co-operation with regional authorities.

A license issuance team will be formed with officials from the Union government on 16 November, it is learnt. Businessmen who wish to apply for the license must submit an application to regional offices no later than November 15. — Min Min
India PM visits bullet train plant on final day of Japan stay

KOBE— Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited a bullet train plant in western Japan on Saturday after Japan and India agreed to cooperate on the construction of a high-speed rail link in the South Asian country.

Abe traveled with Modi on his trip from Tokyo to Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture, by shinkansen train on the last day of the Indian leader’s three-day visit to Japan. Modi’s visit to the plant of Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd., a maker of shinkansen cars, came at the request of the Indian government.

And Modi were briefed by Kawasaki Heavy Industries President Yoshinori Kanehana in front of an E5-series shinkansen train being built at the plant and listened to the history of the company’s railway business.

They also viewed the inside of the Hayabusa shinkansen train to be delivered for use on the Tokohinkansen Line of East Japan Railway Co. The visit “gave me a firsthand view of aspects relating to high speed rail, which we are bringing to India,” Modi said in his Twitter message, while Abe told reporters, “Prime Minister Modi very much liked the visit.”

Before boarding a shinkansen train at Tokyo Station for the trip to western Japan, Abe and Modi smiled and posed for photos in front of an E5-series shinkansen train at Tokyo Station on 12 November 2016, before boarding a shinkansen bullet train together to travel to Hyogo Prefecture, western Japan.

NEW DELHI — Anger was rising across India on Saturday as banks struggled to dispense cash after the government withdrew large denomination notes in a shock move aimed at uncovering billions of dollars of unaccounted wealth hidden from the taxman.

Hundreds of thousands of people stood outside banks for a third day for long hours trying to replace 500 and 1,000 rupee bank notes that were abolished earlier in the week.

These bills made up more than 80 per cent of the currency in circulation leaving millions of people without cash and threatening to grind large parts of the cash-driven economy to a halt.

“There is chaos everywhere,” said Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, a bitter foe of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said Modi’s move had upended the lives of the poor and working while the rich—whose wealth he had sought to target—had found loopholes to get around the new rules.

People argued and banged the glass doors of a branch of Standard Chartered in southern Delhi after the security guards blocked entry, saying there were already too many people in line. Others turned on Modi, criticizing his ongoing visit to Japan while countrymen suffered at home. “He is taking bullet train rides in Japan and here you have old people knocking on bank doors for cash,” said Prabhat Kumar, a college student who said he had spent six hours at the line.

“He has made a terrible mistake.”

Nearly half of India’s 200,000 ATMs were shut on Friday and those that operated quickly ran out of the new notes as scores of people descended upon them.

Traders in Delhi’s vegetable market said they were considering to shut down the market as cash was running out and banks were dispensing a limited amount.

“We might have to close down until the situation stabilizes,” said Metharam Kripalani, the president of the Chambers of Azadpur Fruit and Vegetable Traders.

People in Mumbai said grocers were charging ten times the price of salt in return for accepting the old notes, while in Bengaluru many people were using their old notes to buy one-time insurance policies. The government has asked people to redeem the old 500 and 1,000 rupee notes by 30 December. The central bank said there was enough cash available with banks and that it had made arrangements to deliver the new bank notes all over the country.

But in Duduk, about 75 kms (45 miles) from Delhi, villagers said they were struggling to pay for food and fuel, four days into the cash crunch.

One family was marrying off their daughter later this month and were worrying about their money stuck in the bank. “Bank officials are saying they will give the money on Monday. How will we make purchases,” said Sunita, the mother.

Much of India’s rural economy is powered by cash transactions with few people having bank accounts or operating one even if they have an account.

“Modi’s move was aimed at shrinking the ‘black economy’, the term widely used to describe transactions that take place outside formal channels and which could be as high as 20 per cent of gross domestic product, according to investment firm Ambit.

Bribe and crime proceeds also go into this underground economy. Modi said he also wanted to strike against counterfeit 500 and 1,000 rupee notes that are India’s militants were using to finance acts of violence.

—Reuters

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (L) and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi pose at JR Tokyo Station on 12 November 2016, before boarding a shinkansen bullet train together to travel to Hyogo Prefecture, western Japan. PHOTO: Kyodo News

Anger rising in India as banks slow to dispense cash to millions

JAKARTA — More than 3,000 houses and 100 bridges have been damaged as floods and landslides hit West Java province in western part of Indonesia, a senior official of local disaster agency said on Saturday.

Heavy downpours had triggered the waters submerged four sub-districts at Sukabumi district since Wednesday, Yana Rusiana, coordinator of emergency operating center at the local disaster agency told Xinhua by phone from the district.

The official said a total of 3,356 houses were damaged by the disaster and 1,496 of them suffered from serious damages.

“The transportation has been hampered as the landslides block some roads,” he said.—Xinhua

Floods, landslides in western Indonesia
damage over 3,000 houses, bridges

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Factory blaze kills at least 13 Indian garment workers as they slept

NEW DELHI — At least 13 garment workers were killed after a fire broke out in a factory on the outskirts of the Indian capital, police and witnesses said on Friday.

The blaze, which started in the early hours of Friday as the workers slept inside the leather factory workshop in Uttar Pradesh state, also critically injured eight more people.

Police investigating the cause of the fire in Ghaziabad district said preliminary findings suggested it may have been sparked by an electrical short circuit.

“We are reason to believe that it may be linked to an electrical short circuit, but we are still looking into it,” Deepak Kumar, Ghaziabad’s Senior Superintendent of Police, told reporters.

“Everyone worked together to rescue the people inside the building. These included local residents, police, fire and ambulance services,” he said.

Police said they were also investigating the possibility the factory, was illegal and did not have a license to operate in the congested residential area.

Television pictures showed large crowds outside the gutted three-storey building, located in a narrow-laned area lined cheek-by-jowl with similar structures in Sahibabad.

The fire, which started at around 4 am local time, spread from the ground floor housing the stitching unit to the upper two storeys, where the labourers were sleeping, said witnesses.

Fire engines were rushed to area and managed to rescue 16 workers, said witnesses, many of whom were taken to a nearby hospital suffering from burns and respiratory problems.

Activists say the incident is one in a series illustrating the neglect of workplace safety in South Asia’s industrial sector, even in the wake of Bangladesh’s 2013 Rana Plaza disaster, in which more than 1,100 garment workers were killed.

The Rana Plaza tragedy, where an eight-storey building housing several garment factories supplying global brands collapsed on the outskirts of Dhaka, was one of the world’s most deadly industrial accidents.

In India, as well as Bangladesh, such accidents are common.

Eight people were killed in October in an explosion at a fireworks factory in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, while in May 2014, 15 others were killed in a similar accident in the central state of Madhya Pradesh.

Campaigners advocating for better living and working conditions in the textile and garment sector said the incident showed the plight of workers were still being ignored.

“Despite the many disasters we have seen before, and the great amount of attention to the dangerous working conditions in the South Asian garment industry, factories there largely remain unsafe.

These workers were killed because they were sleeping in the factory,” said Carin Lefler of the Clean Clothes Campaign.

“The deep tragedy that took 13 peoples’ lives in Sahibabad this morning shows that there is still a long way to go before workers can feel safe,” Reuters.

China urges EU not to abuse trade remedy measures

BEIJING — The Ministry of Commerce said Saturday that the European Union should avoid abuses of trade remedy measures, after the latest decision by the European Commission to impose anti-dumping duties on some Chinese steel products.

The European Commission Saturday decided to impose provisional anti-dumping duties on imports of seamless steel tubes from China for six months.

China is highly concerned about the increasing steel trade protectionism from the EU, and hopes the EU will strictly respect relevant World Trade Organisation rules, the ministry said in a statement on its website.

“The ‘analogue country’ investigation method used by the EU, a practice using price data in a third country to calculate the value of products from a non-market economy country, is unfair and unreasonable and has seriously damaged the interests of Chinese companies, it said.

It reiterated that the root cause of Europe’s steel industry woes was not imports from China but weak economic growth.

NEW DELHI — Worried shoppers rushed to stores in many Indian states Friday to buy iodised salt packets, officials and locals said.

The panic shopping was triggered by rumours of impending salt shortage across the country with crowds throwing stores to take enough supplies home. The rumours about imminent salt scarcity were reported from Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, New Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai.

These rumours have come at a time when people are already perturbed over poor cash flow in the country after the Indian government’s announcement to demonetise currency notes of 500 and 1000 Indian rupees. Reports said salt prices skyrocketed, with a packet weighing one kilogram sold between 3 US dollars (200 INR) to 6 US dollars (400 INR) in Uttar Pradesh’s Moradabad district.

Ordinarily a kg of iodised salt cost 22 cents in India. Despite assurances from local authorities, people were reported to be queuing outside stores to buy packets of the essential dietary ingredient. Lobbies said some shopkeepers also panicked after hearing the rumours and closed their shops.

Police in Uttar Pradesh said stringent action would be taken against people responsible for spreading rumours. In New Delhi, police issued advisory and dispatched teams for patrolling to dispel rumours and inform the crowds outside stores that there was no shortage of salt in India.

India’s Ministry for Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan said there was no shortage of salt and urged people not to heed the rumours.

“There is no scarcity of salt in the country and also no increase in its price. I appeal to the people to not pay attention to the rumours,” Paswan said. “If somebody spreads the rumours of price rise of salt or sells it at high price, state government should immediately take stringent action,” he said.

Hundreds of thousands to march in South Korea to call for president’s resignation

SEOUL — Hundreds of thousands of South Koreans are expected to march in Seoul, the capital city of South Korea, on Saturday night over a scandal involving President Park Geun-hye’s longtime confidante and former key aide.

After noon, a number of people began to gather around two squares in central Seoul to attend smaller rallies before the major event that kicked off at 4:00 pm local time.

One hour later, attendees are scheduled to march along the road to pre-determined locations near the presidential Blue House.

A private association to demand Park’s resignation, which is composed of about 1,500 civic groups, held a pre-official event in the Gwanghwamun Square, just 1 km away from the Blue House where the presidential office and residence are located.

The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, another organisers and one of the country’s two umbrella labour union groups, held an occasion in a Seoul Plaza in front of the city hall, close to the Gwanghwamun square.

The number of demonstrators to attend the Seoul rally is expected to keep rising as labour unions, youths, university students, scholars, the urban poor, the disabled and farmers plan to join the event after separate protests across downtown Seoul. Almost all of train tickets for Seoul were sold out, and chartered buses became hard to find as at least 100,000 people left for the capital city to join the mass rally.

South Koreans living abroad reportedly plan to hold protest rallies.

Police estimated that 160,000-170,000 people would rally in Seoul, almost quadrupling a crowd of 45,000 turning out a week earlier. The number would be the largest since at least 2008 when around 80,000 protested against then-President Lee Myung-bak over his decision to lift a ban on US beef imports.

Organisers said as much as 1 million demonstrators would take to the streets, far surpassing last Saturday’s turnout of some 200,000 in Seoul alone. Police reportedly deployed some 25,000 officers to prevent any march on the presidential office. Two previous protests on Saturdays were peaceful and calm as ordinary people from couples wheeling a baby carriage to high school students and gray-haired old men marched peacefully.

China urges EU not to abuse trade remedy measures

BEIJING — The Ministry of Commerce said Saturday that the European Union should avoid abusing trade remedy measures, after the latest decision by the European Commission to impose anti-dumping duties on some Chinese steel products.

The European Commission Saturday decided to impose provisional anti-dumping duties on imports of seamless steel tubes from China for six months.

China is highly concerned about the increasing steel trade protectionism from the EU, and hopes the EU will strictly respect relevant World Trade Organisation rules, the ministry said in a statement on its website.

“The ‘analogue country’ investigation method used by the EU, a practice using price data in a third country to calculate the value of products from a non-market economy country, is unfair and unreasonable and has seriously damaged the interests of Chinese companies, it said.

It reiterated that the root cause of Europe’s steel industry woes was not imports from China but weak economic growth.
Trump ignorant of Europe, poses risk to relations: EU’s Juncker

BRUSSELS — Donald Trump’s election as US president poses risks for the relationship between the European Union and the United States, EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said on Friday.

The shock winner of Tuesday’s US election was ignorant of the EU and its workings, Juncker told students at a conference in Luxembourg which can be viewed on the EU’s website.

“The election of Trump poses the risk of upsetting intercontinental relations in their foundation and in their structure,” said Juncker, who as head of the EU’s executive is one of Europe’s most powerful political figures.

His blunt remarks reflected widespread shock and concern among Europeans at the election of Trump, who among other statements has praised Russian President Vladimir Putin and questioned the principle of collective defence in NATO.

His comments contrasted with the more diplomatic reactions of European leaders who have said they look forward to working with the next Republican president.

Juncker warned against the “pernicious” consequences of Trump’s statements on security policy.

He also recalled a Trump statement in which he seemed to think that Belgium, the country that hosts the headquarters of the EU and NATO, was a city.

“We will need to teach the president-elect what Europe is and how it works,” Juncker said, adding that Americans usually had no interest in Europe.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (C) poses for photographers with Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci (L) and Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades during the Cyprus reunification talks in the Swiss mountain resort of Mont Pelerin, Switzerland, on 7 November 2016. Photo: Reuters

Talks on uniting Cyprus make progress, to resume on 20 November — UN

MONT PELERIN (Switzerland) — Talks on reuniting the divided island of Cyprus have achieved significant progress and will resume on 20 November, the United Nations said Friday, at the end of a fifth straight day of negotiations in the Swiss mountain resort of Mont Pelerin.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon opened the round of talks between Greek Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades and his Turkish Cypriot counterpart Mustafa Akinci on Monday, saying they were both committed to trying to reach a deal this year.

“During these past five days, the chapter on territory and all other issues were discussed interdependently. Significant progress has been achieved,” the United Nations said in a brief statement released after 11 pm local time on Friday.

“Upon request of the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Anastasiades, it has been decided by the two leaders to take a recess and reconvene in Geneva on Sunday, 20 November 2016, to continue their deliberations from Mont Pelerin.”

Cyprus’ 800,000 Greek Cypriots and approximately 220,000 Turkish Cypriots live on the divided island with a UN-patrolled ceasefire line splitting the island east to west.

The island was split in a Turkish invasion in 1974 triggered by a brief Greek-inspired coup. But friction between the two sides dates back at least a decade when Turkish Cypriots pulled out of a power-sharing government at perceived attempts by Greek Cypriots to limit their say.

Anastasiades and Akinci are both moderates leading their respective communities and the negotiations are directed towards reuniting Cyprus as a loose federation of two constituent, largely self-governing states.

In addition to territorial swaps, Greek Cypriots who represent Cyprus in the European Union are adamant that a deal see the withdrawal of Turkish forces from the island. Thousands of Turkish troops are stationed in Cyprus’ north, a breakaway Turkish Cypriot state recognised only by Ankara. — Reuters

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. Photo: Reuters

“I think we will waste two years before Mr Trump tours the world he does not know,” said Juncker, who on Thursday had already raised doubts about Trump’s views on global trade, climate policy and Western security. — Reuters

University of Sydney launches new facility in China

SHANGHAI — The University of Sydney opened its first major offshore education and research facility — the University of Sydney Global New Light of Myanamar campus — on Monday.

The new facility opened Friday at Suzhou Industrial Park in east China’s Jiangsu Province. The centre will increase intellectual and creative exchanges between Chinese and Australian researchers, academics and students, according to University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor and Principal Michael Spence. He hailed the centre as an important milestone in the university’s relations with China.

The centre will facilitate work placements, internships and other learning opportunities for Australian students in China, host research seminars, conferences and conventions, as well as providing a teaching and learning environment for collaborative programmes with Chinese universities, institutes and industries.

The University of Sydney, Australia’s first university established in 1850, has about 12,000 Chinese students on campus and more than 200 academic staff specializing in China directly or collaborating with Chinese researchers. — Xinhua

Four killed in blast in US Bagram airbase in Afghanistan

KABUL — Four people were killed and 14 others injured in a blast inside Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan’s eastern province of Parwan early on Saturday, sources said.

“On 12 November, an explosive device was detonated on Bagram Airfield resulting in multiple casualties. Four people have died in the attack and approximately 14 have been wounded. We will provide updates as appropriate,” the NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) said in a statement.

The Bagram Airfield, some 50 km north of Afghan capital of Kabul, has been serving as a main US military base in Afghanistan over the past 15 years.

Earlier on Saturday, a provincial government spokesman told Xinhua that the nature of the blast was a suicide bombing.

“The initial probes found that a man disguised as a daily worker made his way into the base, released his explosive jacket inflicting casualties,” spokesman Wahid Seddqi told Xinhua. — Xinhua

Shanghai to strictly ban smoking in indoor places from March

SHANGHAI — Shanghai’s legislature voted Friday to ban smoking in indoor public places, workplaces and public transport, as well as many outdoor areas, from next March.

The new regulation passed by the standing committee of Shanghai People’s Congress closes loopholes that currently allow smoking in designated indoor areas of hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues, as well as airports and train stations.

It also bans smoking in outdoor areas of historic sites, stadiums, public transport waiting areas, children’s hospitals and schools, among others, according to information posted on the legislature’s website.

Under the current regulation, introduced ahead of the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, hotels can offer smoking rooms in addition to non-smoking ones, but that will no longer be the case, nor will restaurants and other venues be allowed to offer smoking areas or rooms, the Shanghai Daily reported. — Kyodo News

Brazilians protest against government spending cap in 17 states

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazilians on Friday held protests against the government’s constitutional amendment bill which establishes a spending cap on government expenses.

Protests were registered in 17 states and were mostly peaceful. Workers blocked highways and attended large political gatherings.

In several states, teachers, bus drivers and bank workers declared a day of strike.

The controversial proposal foresees that for the next 20 years the government’s expenses, which include investments in key sectors such as education, public healthcare, housing and sanitation, will only be allowed to increase up to the inflation rate of the previous year.

The government says the measure is necessary to regain fiscal balance. Critics say that, in times of crisis, government investments are often the ones which give the initial boost to put the economy back on track. — Xinhua

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The University of Sydney, Australia’s first university established in 1850, has about 12,000 Chinese students on campus and more than 200 academic staff specializing in China directly or collaborating with Chinese researchers. — Xinhua
MUCH has been said about education, like higher education is key to economic development; a country without sustainable development in education of its citizens cannot achieve the sustainable progress in economy; and so on. It is quite right in saying so, but I want to assert that it is important to develop education and moral standard of the citizens in building a nation. To put it simply, a wrong system led our nation to a poor state. Most surrendered themselves to malpractices in their daily routines, fighting against poverty. In my opinion, that is an excuse. In fact, matters most. Strictly speaking, all involved in the vicious circle of bribery-corruption-for-free-dom-from-poverty are culprits of society of debauchery. Now is the time for us to build a modernized federal democratic union under the leadership of a good leader in unity, not to argue and find fault with each other. Something is urgently needed to be done. It is to nurture and shape younger generation into well-adjusted-and-well-advised leaders.

Admittedly, our country lagged far behind other nations, but I never mean that our people are poor in ability. Our country abounds in distinguished lawyers, economists, technicians and scientists. Plus, it is rich in natural resources. We all believe that a country’s prosperity wholly depends upon the leadership of its leader. Some time in the past, Singapore was a relatively less developed colonial land with no natural resources. From that state, it became a “First World” Asian Tiger. Much as the country lacks natural resources, its leader could manage to build up a prosperous world-class nation by using his abilities and the country’s human resources combined.

If preparedness for producing qualified youths to succeed the incumbent leaders goes unconsidered since now, our country would surely face intellectual bankruptcy to lead the country. We can imagine what will happen to us if the country would be void of educated persons in this intellectually challenging age. In my opinion, these may be attributed to lack of reading habit among them. Moreover, books give us moral lessons that will teach us to avoid any morally unacceptable deeds. Victor Hugo said, “He, who opens a school and library, closes a prison.” F. Kennedy once said, “Libraries should be open to all—except the censor.” Admittedly, schools and libraries are the important places for sharing knowledge and vision, but there are many school-age children without even didactic lessons, on the street or as child labor in cafes. In spite of claiming that youths need reading, book-cases in libraries are closed.

Annually-held festivals of well-known writers are tantamount to inviting audience just to listen to mot juste words. Above-said children dare not access libraries even if they want to. How could they understand the bad effects of glue sniffing, chewing betel-quid and abuse of intoxicants and drugs? It is not an exaggeration to say that every individual can be the one who establishes a library, which needs no buildings and staff. People are never reluctant to donate much money to social, religious or humanitarian institutions, but they may be hesitant to set up self-help libraries mentioned above. Why? Some people have no idea about it, others have old books and even back issues. They seldom throw those away, even when they move to new locations.

Book-crossing is defined as the practice of leaving a book in a public place to be picked up and read by others, who then do likewise. In this way, we could increase the reading enthusiasm, because we are enjoying to perform preparations for producing youth to succeed the incumbent leaders. In this way, an unaffordable book—especially for poor populace, will be relayed to many hands in a short period of time. It is through this seeming-easy-but-time-consuming practice, we need organizers and enthusiasts. If this will be successful, I dare say it will help the government’s plan of sharing knowledge, edge and vision to all by building libraries and sending school-age children to schools. If we recognize the value of potential benefits of book-crossing, it is a matter of time before our country will have numerous good results from it.

Libraries and Book-Crossing Practice

Khin Maung Oo

M YANMAR Buddhists never hesitate to perform any meritorious deeds either individually or communally and they are earnest to do whole-some actions in groups for this is the generous spirit of Myanmar Buddhist community by joining hands together to lead the spiritual path in this life and the life after. Even though least developed country in the world, Myanmar is recorded as the richest one in generosity: donation and offering any merit due to Buddhist spirit which is latent in every Buddhist’s heart and soul. People are enjoying for doing charity both in social and spiritual affairs. Among those religious festivals, Communal Kathina Ceremony is the most precious one for Buddhists to invest their generous spirit as well as competition one another in their generosity. From Buddhist point of view, doing meritorious deeds is one of the investment for our life career in this very life and the life after that leads positive sign in our heart. So, Buddhists are investing their labor and wealth in performing merit.

The Kathina ceremony gives the chances to all walks of Buddhists people to participate and join hands together to provide religious leaders, Buddhist monks, the pre-requisites for promotion and prop-
Myanmar Senior General meets
General Claudio Graziano in Italy

THE Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who is on a goodwill visit to Italy, met on Friday with General Claudio Graziano, Chief of Defence Staff of the Italian Armed Forces.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to promotion of the relationship between the two militaries and bilateral cooperation, exchange of goodwill visits and future plans for possible cooperation in some sectors.

On Friday evening, the Senior General and party visited Trevi Fountain in Rome. The Senior General and party also visited the Myanmar Embassy in Rome, where the general spoke to the members of the embassy and their families. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presented gifts and foodstuff to embassy staff and their families.

Later, the Senior General and party were hosted with a dinner by the embassy. — Myanmar News Agency

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who is on a goodwill visit to Italy, met on Friday with General Claudio Graziano, Chief of Defence Staff of the Italian Armed Forces. Photo: MNA

Kathina Offering and Generous Spirit of Myanmar Buddhist Community

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The word ‘kathina’ in Myanmar is derived from the Pali word ‘Kathina’. In those days, making a robe required spreading cloth on a frame called a “kathina.” The word literally means “hard,” and “firm” because it can be offered once in a year and the benefits of Kathina offering for donors can be gain firmly besides it also connotes stability and durability. So, Kathina is not just about cloth; it is also about firm commitment to monastic life.

The historical back of Kathina can be stepped that once thirty forest-dwelling monks wished to spend the rainy season with the Buddha, and they traveled together to where he would be staying. Unfortunately, the walk took longer than they anticipated, and the monsoon began before they had reached the Buddha’s summer dwelling. The thirty monks were disappointed but made the best of it. They found a place to stay together, and they meditated and studied together. And after three months, when the monsoon season ended, they hurried to find the Buddha. But the roads were thick with mud, and rain still drizzled from the clouds and dripped from trees, and by the time they reached the Buddha their robes were muddy and drenched. They sat some distance from the Buddha, uncomfortable and probably embarrassed to be wearing such wet, dirty robes in the presence of their revered teacher. But the Buddha greeted them warmly. The Buddha perceived the sincere dedication of the forest-dwelling monks and felt compassion for them. A layperson had just given him a donation of cloth, and he gave this cloth to the monks to make a new robe for one among them. Due to the difficult situation faced by the monks, the Buddha allowed people to offer robes to the Sangha.

In conclusion, Myanmar people who are pious and generous in performing will keep on offering their generous spirit whenever they set down either in the East or in the West because they believe that they have a duty to support the Sangha all over the world who are spreading the message of the Buddha for the welfare and happiness of the entire people.

Salient Points of New Myanmar Investment Law (2016)

Zaw Nyunt

INTEGRATING and merging two separate investment stipulations for nationals and foreign entities, new Myanmar Investment Law was enacted on 18th October 2016. From bird’s eye view, it seems the new law is the outcome of refining the old and existing investment laws with accumulated experiences during the last three decades starting from 1988 Foreign Investment Law. While some articles which has passed the acid test of 28 years still remain, some new considerations and approaches are also introduced in this new law. Both old and new alike, the salient points of newly-enacted Myanmar Investment Law 2016 can be summarized as below:

(1) National treatment as well as same corporate/personal tax rate is extended to foreign investors. (2) Two-channel system, direct channel and channel through line ministries, are preserved. (3) All-must-submit-proposal approach is written off. Previous MIC permits can now be sub-categorized into MIC Permit and MIC Endorsement. Most of the small and medium investment which do not fall in strategic, capital-intensive, high environmentally impacting and state-owned facilities, namely, using business activities will no longer need to submit proposals and they just need MIC Endorsement reducing many lengthy procedures. (4) All sectors are freely open to unrestrained foreign investment after defining four restricted categories, namely, State-only businesses, prohibited businesses for foreign investment, businesses allowed only for JV with Myanmars and businesses that require the recommendation from relevant ministries. (5) Basic land lease terms are the same: initial 50 years, additional 10 years plus 10 years.

Zaw Tun

Through Meditation

* Through meditation, a poet may not gain concentration since his big heart is full of feelings, and his small head is full of thoughts, but meditation gives no room for feelings nor for thoughts.
* During meditation, his feelings surge like the sea, his thoughts fit and fly like the meteors in the night sky; he is here, but his mind is not here. It is not through meditation, but through the absorbing task of writing poetry, a poet can gain concentration.

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Russia says will need UN guarantee for new Aleppo humanitarian pauses

MOSCOW — The Russian Defence Ministry said on Saturday it would need the UN mission in Syria to formally confirm its ability to deliver aid to eastern Aleppo before Moscow agreed to any new humanitarian pauses in fighting in the shattered Syrian city.

Moscow says previous temporary ceasefires on the ground, called to allow aid deliveries and the evacuation of the wounded and civilians, have come to nothing because rebels have opened fire on anyone trying to come in or out.

Rebels contest that and say it is the Syrian army and its allies who have sabotaged the humanitarian pauses.

“The Russian Defence Ministry will be ready to consider introducing new ‘humanitarian pauses’ at any time as soon as representatives of the UN mission in Syria officially confirm their readiness and possibility to deliver humanitarian aid to eastern Aleppo and to evacuate wounded and sick civilians,” Major-General Igor Konashenkov said in a statement.

The occasional humanitarian pauses on the ground are distinct from a unilateral moratorium on Russian air strikes on rebel targets inside Aleppo, which remains in place for now.—Reuters

Egypt imposes big security clampdown, protests fail to materialize

CAIRO — Egypt imposed a big security clampdown in its cities on Friday as mass demonstrations called to protest against austerity measures failed to take place.

Riot police and armored vehicles filled the otherwise empty streets of central Cairo, but most people stayed at home.

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has urged Egyptians not to protest and warned that there would be no going back on economic reforms, no matter how much pain they might cause.

In a boost for the government, the International Monetary Fund’s executive board approved a three-year, $12 billion loan to Egypt aimed at supporting the reforms, and the central bank said it received a first tranche of $2.75 billion.

A little-known group calling itself Movement of the Poor had called for Egyptians to protest on 11 November against deepening austerity measures the government says are required to save the Arab world’s most populous nation from financial ruin.

But big protests failed to materialize across the country by 8:30 pm (1830 GMT). Police dispersed several small gatherings and there were some minor clashes. No one was killed or injured.

“The Egyptian people chose stability and development and rejected any calls against that,” state television quoted Prime Minister Sherif Ismail as saying.

The calls to protest began to die down in August, but gained traction on social media last week after Egypt raised fuel prices and floated its currency — a move welcomed by bankers but condemned by ordinary people as the latest blow to their diminishing spending power.

The usually busy Tahrir Square was deserted except for security personnel, and the street politics helped to unseat two presidents within two years, street politics helped to unseat Hosni Mubarak’s 30-year rule in 2011.

The protests won little support from prominent activist and opposition groups, though they have been backed by the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood.

But in a country where street politics helped to unseat two presidents within two years, authorities were keen to deter protesters. Dozens of people were detained in recent weeks, accused of inciting unrest.

Protesters camped in Tahrir Square in an 18-day demonstration that ended Hosni Mubarak’s 30-year rule in 2011.

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Watchdog condemns Syrian government, IS use of banned chemical weapons

AMSTERDAM — The executive body of the global chemical weapons watchdog voted on Friday to condemn the use of banned toxic agents by the Syrian government and by the militant group Islamic State, a source who took part in the closed session said.

Roughly two-thirds of the 41 members on the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), endorsed a text compiled by Spain, sources told Reuters.

An initial US draft was replaced with a compromise text drafted by Spain, which dropped a reference to sanctions against those responsible for violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention, sources added.

The OPCW’s Executive Council, which meets behind closed doors, seldom votes on such matters, generally operating through consensus. But this text was supported by 28 members, including Germany, France, the United States and Britain.

It was opposed by Russia, China, Sudan and Iran. There were nine abstentions. Russia and Iran are Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s main allies against rebels seeking to overthrow him. Western and Gulf Arab states backed the rebels.

“There is a clear determination across the international community to hold those who have used these heinous weapons to account,” said British Foreign Minister Boris Johnson in a statement responding to the vote.

But a US-Russian split over Syria highlighted continuing divisions. It was these two countries that in 2013 took the lead in getting the Damascus government to join the OPCW and avert threatened US-led military intervention in Syria’s civil war.

A 13-month international inquiry by the OPCW and United Nations concluded in a series of reports that Syrian government forces, including helicopter squadrons, were responsible for the use of chlorine barrel bombs against civilians.

The OPCW-UN mission found that the Syrian government carried out three toxic attacks in March and April of last year, while Islamic State militants had used sulphur mustard gas.

The findings set the stage for a UN Security Council showdown between the five veto-wielding powers, likely pitting Russia and China against the United States, Britain and France over how those responsible for the attacks should be held accountable.—Reuters

A view shows car parts, which according to Syria Democratic Forces fighters were used by Islamic State militants to prepare car bombs, at a workshop in Manbij, Syria. Photo: Reuters

Members of security forces secure Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt, on 11 November 2016. Photo: Reuters

Security sources said police chased dozens of protesters away from Tahrir Square in Suez near the place where the first protester was killed in 2011. Protesters on Friday chanted against high prices.

In the coastal province of Beheira, police fired tear gas at protesters who threw rocks back. Security sources said 98 suspected Brotherhood supporters were arrested in three cities in Beheira, 14 in Alexandria, and 10 in Suez.

Muslim Brotherhood activists held a limited protest in the hometown of former President Mohamed Mursi but did not clash with police.—Reuters
Night delight: ‘supermoon’ to grace Earth’s skies

CAPE CANAVERAL (Fla.) — The largest, brightest full moon in nearly seven decades will be on display in the coming days, promising Earth-bound sky-watchers a celestial “supermoon” spectacle.

The full moon will come nearer to Earth than at any time since 1948, astronomers said. At closest approach, which occurs at 6:23 am. EST on Monday, the moon will pass within 216,486 miles (348,400 km) of Earth’s surface, about 22,000 miles (35,400 km) closer than average, they added.

The moon’s distance from Earth varies because it is in an egg-shaped, not circular, orbit around the planet. If skies are clear, the upcoming full moon will appear up to 14 per cent bigger and 30 per cent brighter than usual, making it what is called a supermoon, according to NASA.

A supermoon occurs when the timing of a full moon overlaps with the point in the moon’s 28-day orbit that is closest to Earth. About every 14th full moon is a supermoon, said University of Wisconsin astronomer Jim Lattis.

The next time a full moon comes as close to Earth will be in 2034. “If you could stack up full moons next to each other, there is clearly a difference,” Lattis said, but to a casual observer it is going to look very similar to a regular full moon.

Weather permitting, sky-watchers in North America and locations east of the International Dateline will have a better view on Sunday night since the moon will set less than three hours after closest approach on Monday.

“The difference in distance from one night to the next will be very subtle, so if it’s cloudy on Sunday, go out on Monday. Any time after sunset should be fine,” Noah Petro, deputy project scientist for NASA’s Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, said in a statement.—Reuters

New ‘brain-spine’ device tested in monkeys may help cure paralyzed humans

GENEVA — Swiss scientists have developed a new implantable device to help monkeys with spinal-cord injuries regain the use of their legs, which may eventually lead to a cure for paralyzed humans.

The device, which is a neuro-prosthetic interface, can function as a brain-spine connector, transmitting signals wirelessly from the brain to stimulate electrodes in the legs, said the researchers at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL). It means the interface can relay the movement instructions while bypassing the damaged area of the spine causing the paralysis, according to their study released Wednesday by the scientific journal Nature.

The treatment used in monkeys is seen as a potential boon for immobile patients. “For the first time, I can imagine a completely paralyzed patient able to move their legs through this brain-spine interface,” said Jocelyne Bloch, a neurosurgeon at the Lausanne University Hospital, in a press release from EPFL.—Xinhua
Supporters to Trump: break campaign promises at your peril

WASHINGTON — Kath-ryn Stellmack expects the world from Donald Trump. After listening to his speeches and giving him her vote for him, she expects Trump to toughen immi-gration laws, restore lost jobs, uproot a corrupt system, build a wall on the border, and be, as the millionaire put it, the greatest jobs president that God has ever created.

“We expect him to move forward on all the items he has promised to move forward on,” said Stellmack, 69, a retiree in West Palm Beach, Florida. “And if he doesn’t, we will hold his feet to the fire.”

After a presidential race fueled by brash but constantly shifting policy proposals, Trump’s million-dollars followers — from social conservative activists to struggling blue-coll ar workers to hardline militia groups — say if he does anything less than he promised to those who voted for him, he will lose the race.

That inspired hope that Trump can break through Washington’s gridlock to make progress on plans to invigorate the economy, eliminate terrorist threats, rip up trade agreements and repeal President Barack Obama’s healthcare plan known as Obamacare. “I totally trust him,” said Laura Czarnecki, 56, of Manistee, Michi gan, a Rust Belt state that leans Democrat in presidential elections but which flipped to Trump on Tuesday.

“I know he’ll build the wall. I know he’ll take care of the Syrian refugee problem. I know he’ll get rid of Obamacare. There is not a chance in hell he won’t do those things,” she said.

But even with Repub-licans retaining control of Congress, Trump will have to accept limits and compromises on some of his plans. Many Repub-licans, for example, are wary of his proposals to scrap trade deals and boost spending on infrastructure improvements.

Some of his plans have already been rolled back. Trump faces his high-est expectations on the is- sue of immigration, given his intense focus on atten-tion-grabbing campaign proposals like forcing Mexico to pay for a border wall, and temporarily ban-n ing Muslims from enter-ing the country.

But he recently in-dicated he would at first deport only criminal un-documented immigrants, after previously pledging to deport all undocumented aliens, while the Mus-slim ban has softened into “extreme vetting” of im-migrants from some coun-tries.

He told the Wall Street Journal in an in- terview on Friday that he would consider keeping parts of Obamacare intact — easing off his calls for a total repeal — after Oba-ma spoke to him on the is-sue at the White House on Tuesday.

Mark Morris, a lead-er of the Colorado-based Three Percent Patriots militia group, said he understood Trump would need time on some issues, but he expected quick movement on re-peal, Obamacare and appointing a conservative Supreme Court justice to fill the seat of the late An-tonia Scalia.

He said he hoped Trump would stand with ranchers in their disputes with the federal govern-ment over fees charged for cattle grazing on pub-lic land — a call to arms for many in the patriot and militia movement.

Morris warned Trump should not count on his followers to stay with him if he did not produce re-sults.—Reuters.


Migrants stranded in Serbia march toward Croatian border

BELGRADE — Some 150 migrants, trapped in Serbia, set out on Friday to walk about 125 km (80 miles) to the Croatian border, de-manding free and secure passage toward Western Eu-rope, police said.

Police are following the group along the highway connecting Belgrade and the border. “We started marching toward the border with Croatia. The camps are full, we sleep in parks, we cannot stand it any more,” said a migrant from Pakistan who gave his name as Habib.

According to the UN refugee agency, around 6,400 migrants from coun-tries such as Syria, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan are currently registered in Serbia, while local non-gov-ernmental organisations say their number is close to 10,000. They mostly arrive from Bulgaria and Mace-donia. Last month another group tried a similar protest march toward the Hungarian border, but eventually de-cided to return to Belgrade.

Hungary has practically sealed its borders to mi-grants.

Last year a total of 579,518 migrants and asyl- lum seekers were registered arriving in Europe, out of more than a million who made it to Europe by land and sea.

A deal between Turkey and the European Union, struck in March, has largely shut off the flow of people reaching Greece and the Bal-kans, but Austria kicked off consultations with Balkan states this month to see what measures can be taken if the deal collapses.—Reuters.

Austrian presidential hopeful aims to hammer far right with Trump’s own message

VIENNA — The independ-ent candidate in Austria’s tight presidential run-off plans to use the far right’s support for Donald Trump in Vienna’s presidential election to win the US election outcome will not help his opponent as much suspect.

Morris warned Trump should not count on his followers to stay with him if he did not produce re-sults.—Reuters.

Austrian presidential candidate Alexander Van der Bellen, who is supported by the Greens, addresses a news conference in Vienna, Austria, on 10 November 2016. (Reuters)

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Germany cuts CO2 targets for industry ahead of Morocco talks

BERLIN — The German government has bowed to pressure to water down its CO2 reduction targets for industry in the final version of its climate action plan, a document seen by Reuters showed.

Chancellor Angela Merkel’s government is determined to hammer out the final details this week so that Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks can present the plan at global climate talks in Morocco next week.

The government is now calling for German industry to cut its CO2 emissions by 20 rather than 30 per cent by 2030 compared with 2014, according to the document which was seen on Friday.

The plan sets out how Europe’s biggest economy expects to move away from fossil fuels and cut CO2 emissions by 95 per cent by 2050 to implement pledges made as part of a global climate treaty agreed in Paris in September 2015.

A leader of the Greens, Anton Hofreiter, said the watered-down goals as showed how Germany, which once considered itself a leader in climate protection, has gone off course.

“The climate protection plan remains just a skeleton,” he said. “There still aren’t any clear goals or measures. This government is afraid to tackle issues like coal-burning plants and factories for 20 years. This government has bowed to pressure to water down its own climate targets.”

The German document suggested 10 per cent of the market that will reduce the share of free carbon dioxide they emit, but to stop industries moving their operations to countries with loser environmental regulations, many firms have been handed free permits. The German document suggested 10 per cent of the market that will reduce the share of free carbon dioxide they emit, but to stop industries moving their operations to countries with loser environmental regulations, many firms have been handed free permits.

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Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page among stars in Tokyo for Classic Rock awards

TOKYO — A host of rockers gathered in Tokyo for this year’s Classic Rock Roll of Honour on Friday, an annual awards ceremony hosted by Classic Rock magazine.

Led Zeppelin’s Jimmy Page, Aerosmith guitarist Joe Perry and heavy metal band X Japan co-founder Yoshiki Hayashi were joined on the red carpet by Hollywood actor and musician Johnny Depp.

Other attendees included guitarist Jeff Beck, who was presented with The Icon award.

The event, which began in 2015, was being held in Japan for the first time.—Reuters

Why Ang Lee chose ‘Billy Lynn’ to showcase new movie technology

NEW YORK — It’s usually comic book or adventure movies that get advanced technology treatment but when Oscar-winning director Ang Lee was looking to showcase groundbreaking extra-fast, high-resolution imagery, he chose a drama about American soldiers returning home from Iraq.

“Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk,” based on the satirical 2012 novel by Ben Fountain, is shot in 3D, 4K resolution and 120 frames per second - five times faster than an ordinary movie. The aim was to immerse the audience in the experience of the film’s conflicted 19-year-old protagonist.

The movie follows young soldier Billy Lynn, portrayed by newcomer Joe Alwyn, who returns from Iraq with his squad in 2004 for a victory tour of the United States after being hailed as heroes.

The soldiers take part in the surreal spectacle of a Thanksgiving football halftime show on the eve of their return to war.

Lee said the high-definition technology aimed to underline the contrast between the soldiers’ sensation of being on the battlefield and the noisy patriotism of their reception back in the United States.

“I think it makes it easy to see things through his (Billy’s) eyes,” Lee said. “One of the hardest things was translating from the book to the film. It’s very internal. One day the boy is experiencing bullets and the next the halftime show and the still fresh memory of battle.”

The movie opens in New York and Los Angeles on Friday — Veterans’ Day in the United States — in a tribute to the military.

It comes a decade after a slew of films about the Iraq war that largely failed at the US box-office a decade ago. Yet Lee said he hoped his movie will give audiences “a little more understanding of what soldiers experience. They are the people who do things we don’t want to do.”

Only a handful of US movie theaters are equipped to handle the new technology, meaning most Americans will see the film in regular format or 3D when the opening expands on 18 November. The movie also has Kristen Stewart as Billy’s cynical sister, Steve Martin as a football team owner and Vin Diesel as Billy’s military mentor.

Stewart said Lee wanted “to get closer to the honesty in the situation.”

“Usually technically advanced movie are a little more fake - they are about superheroes or about things that don’t exist, and this is the absolute opposite of that,” she said.—Reuters

After 15 years, Beatty returns to cinema in ‘Rules Don’t Apply’

LOS ANGELES — Hollywood actor Warren Beatty returns to cinema screens after a 15-year absence in the romantic drama “Rules Don’t Apply”, playing billionaire Howard Hughes.

The Oscar winner, known for movies such as “Bonnie and Clyde”, “Bulworth” and “Dick Tracy”, also wrote and directed the film about a young actress, played by Lily Collins and her driver, portrayed by Alden Ehrenreich.

The movie, which had its world premiere at the American Film Institute festival in Los Angeles on Thursday, is Beatty’s first film appearance since 2001’s “Town and Country”.

“I always take a long time to finally begin a movie,” the 79-year-old said at the premiere. “I’ve had this in the back of my mind for a long time and... so to be able to finally go ahead and do it is very satisfying, and I got lucky with a terrific cast.”

Beatty walked the red carpet with his wife, actress Annette Bening, who also stars in the movie alongside Ed Harris, Alec Baldwin and Matthew Broderick.

“I think that the sexual puritanism of America and the rise of feminism in the late ’50s and the early ’60s which occurs in this movie is meaningful,” Beatty said.

The AFI Fest runs until Nov. 17 and will feature premieres of such other films as “The Comedians,” starring Robert De Niro, and Disney’s “Moana.”—Reuters

Robert Redford plans ‘goodbye to all that’ acting

LOS ANGELES — Robert Redford says he is planning on retiring from acting soon to focus on directing and on his first love - art.

The 80-year old star of “Out of Africa” and “The Sting” told his grandson Dylan in an online interview that he was getting tired of acting.

“I’m an impatient person, so it’s hard for me to sit around and do take after take after take,” Redford said in the interview published on Thursday for the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. “Going back to sketching—that’s sort of where my head is right now.”

Redford, who has never won an Oscar for acting despite a storied 50-year career, will not be departing from the big screen any time soon.

He said he has two more acting projects in the works. One is a love story for older people with Jane Fonda, his co-star in the 1967 romantic comedy “Barefoot in the Park,” and the other is a lighter movie with Casey Affleck and Sissy Spacek. According to movie website IMDB.com, both movies are expected to be released in 2017.

“When they’re done then I’m going to say, ’Okay, that’s goodbye to all that,’ and then just focus on directing,” he said.

Redford recalled that his first love was art and that he spent time in Europe as a teenager “exploring story-telling through painting.”

Movies like “All The President’s Men”, “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid” and “The Way We Were” made Redford into one of the world’s biggest movie stars of the 1970s and 1980s.—Reuters
Cuba tourism revenue jumps 15 per cent in the first half of 2016

HAVANA — Revenues from tourism in Cuba rose 15 per cent in the first half of 2016 compared with the same period last year, official data showed on Friday, with the number of visitors from the United States soaring around 80 per cent.

Tourism income rose to $1.2 billion in the January to June period, the National Statistics Office data showed, helping sustain an economy struggling with lower global commodity prices and a crisis in key ally Venezuela.

The sector is expected to boom further over coming years given easing US restrictions on travel, the return of US cruise ships to the Caribbean island and regular commercial flights between the two countries.

While Canadians still make up the largest group of tourists to Cuba by far, Americans came in third place after Cubans living abroad in the first half of this year, the data showed.

Until very recently, there were more visitors from Germany, Italy, France and Britain than from the United States.

But the tourism sector in a country famed for its beaches, classic cars and fading glamour has changed last since US President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro decided to put an end to half a century of Cold War hostility in December 2014.

While the trade embargo still prohibits Americans from visiting Cuba as tourists, the Obama administration has approved 12 categories of exceptions to the ban ranging from cultural travel to business, within which many visitors fit.

The total number of visitors to Cuba was up 11.8 per cent, the data showed.

The boom in the tourism sector contrasts starkly with the gloomy picture in the broader economy. Cuba’s trade surplus fell more than 40 per cent last year, according to data released on Thursday.

Service exports, despite an increase in tourism, were down $1.3 billion. While tourism is becoming increasingly important, receipts from healthcare and other professional workers sent overseas still make up the bulk of Cuban service exports.—Reuters

Handwritten manuscripts of novelist Mishima’s early works found

KUMAMOTO (Japan)— Handwritten manuscripts of four early works by renowned novelist Yukio Mishima (1925-1970) have been discovered, a literature museum in southwestern Japan said Friday.

The museum in Kumamoto city said the four works include Mishima’s debut piece entitled “Hanaakari No Mori,” which he wrote in 1941 as a 16-year-old junior high school student. The short story was published in a literary magazine that year.

In addition to the 56-page manuscript of Mishima’s debut piece, the manuscripts of two other short stories and an 11-page essay were found.

The manuscripts were among the possessions of literary scholar Zzemmo Hasada, and were donated to the museum by Hasada’s surviving kin.

Hasada, who died in 1945, had close ties to Mishima. The whereabouts of these manuscripts were unknown after Hasada went to war abroad and died there.

The discovery is “very significant for research” about Mishima and Hasada, a museum official said, adding that while the manuscripts cannot be made public for now due to copyright reasons, the museum is looking into its options.

Mishima, whose real name was Kimitake Hira-da, wrote fiction, plays and essays. His famous works include “Spring Snow,” “Confessions of a Mask” and “The Temple of the Golden Pavilion.”—Kyodo News

Bowie artworks fetch $30 million in first round of auction

LONDON — A first auction of items from late rock star David Bowie’s private art collection has fetched more than $30 million (24 million pounds), with some going far above their estimated prices.

In a packed saleroom on Thursday evening, auction house Sotheby’s held its first of three “Bowie/Collector” sales of art owned by the music icon, who died in January at the age of 69, raising 24.3 million pounds ($30.66 million).

“David always enjoyed sharing the works in the collection, loaning to museums and actively supporting the art and artists that were part of his world,” a Sotheby’s statement said. “While the hoopoe has kept certain pieces of particular significance, now was the time for others to share David’s love for these remarkable works and let them live on.”

Among the works under the hammer was late American artist Basquiat’s painting “Air Power,” which sold for 7.1 million pounds ($9.86 million) including the buyer’s premium — far more than its estimated 2.5 million-3.5 million.

British artist Frank Auerbach’s “Head of Gerda Boehm” went for 3.8 million pounds. Its estimate had been 300,000-500,000.

“Beautiful, hallo, space-boy painting” by British artist Damien Hirst with Bowie, sold for 785,000 pounds, after being estimated at 250,000-350,000.

Around 350 items are up for sale including sculptures and design furniture. Two further auctions of items from Bowie’s collection take place on Friday.—Reuters

BELGRADE — “Wind,” a feature film by Tamara Drakulic, will premiere as part of the main selection of the 34th international film festival in Turin on 18-26 November.

The film is based on the coming-of-age story “Kites” by screenwriter Ana Rodic.

The relationship between platonic and physical love is explored while discreetly addressing a father-daughter conflict. Colourful kites in the wind, endless sandy expanses and hidden corners of Montenegro’s Ulcinj, as well as the magical flora and fauna of the Bojana River delta, make the foundation of the specific poetics of “Wind.”

Tamara Stajic, Erol Bilibani, Darko Kastratic and Tamara Pjevic make their acting debuts in this film. — Tanjug
**England keep their heads to down Scotland 3-0**

LONDON — A trio of thundering headers gave England a thumping victory over their oldest foes as Scotland put up a fight before being swept aside 3-0 in Friday’s World Cup qualifier at Wembley.

Daniel Sturridge’s bullet header in the first half and equally impressive efforts after the break from Adam Lallana and Gary Cahill ensured England emerged from international football’s oldest fixture having consolidated their lead at the top of Group F.

With his side having moved into 10 points from four matches, two clear of nearest rivals Slovenia, Southgate now looks almost certain to be appointed the permanent replacement to Sam Allardyce.

“Tonight is down to the players they have shown what they are capable of,” he told reporters after and although he was equally keen to stress his side had almost been the architects of their own downfall when Scotland put them under pressure in the second half.

For his counterpart Gordon Strachan, though, the future looks increasingly bleak, his side sitting second bottom in the standings with four points.

However, he was adamant, that he would not be rushed into decisions about his role.

“If you think I’m thinking about myself now, or worrying about myself, you don’t know me,” was his response to questions about his future.

Strachan had made sweeping changes to the side that lost to Slovakia in their previous qualifier and had clearly set his team up to make England uncomfortable and it was a gameplan that worked to perfection until 24th minute.— Reuters

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**Back to business for Murray as he aims to end year on high**

LONDON — Andy Murray’s climb to the top of the world rankings took a while longer than it takes thrill-seeking tourists to reach the summit of the O2 Arena roof walk. Ten years in fact.

Which is why the 29-year-old Scot will be the man to beat next week as he attempts to win the ATP World Tour Finals for the first time to seal the year-end number one ranking.

The distinctive domed arena next to the River Thames, home of the season-ending showpiece since 2009, has never been the happiest hunting ground for Murray.

He has never made the final but knows that must change if he is to stop Djokovic from snatching back the crown.

“I’ve said over the last few months I expect Novak to start playing his best tennis again,” Murray, who boasts a 19-match winning streak, told reporters on Friday.

“The last couple of months he hasn’t but before that it wasn’t just months it was years of him playing his best tennis.

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**Hamilton fastest in Brazilian practice**

SAO PAULO — Triple world champion Lewis Hamilton rekindled Mercedes team mate Nico Rosberg that he will not hand over his Formula One title without a fight after dominating Friday practice at the Brazilian Grand Prix.

The Briton, 19 points behind the German with two races remaining, was fastest in both sessions at a hot and sunny Interlagos with his best lap of one minute 11.895 seconds set on soft compound tyres in the morning.

Rosberg was third, and 0.290 off the pace in that session, but ended the day second on the afternoon timesheets and just 0.030 slower.

“It’s been a good day. We got through all of our run programmes and the car is feeling really good,” Hamilton, who is seeking his third win in a row, told reporters.

“It’s pretty tough out here physically right now with the heat as high as it is—finding the right balance isn’t easy either in these conditions as the tyres are getting really hot.”

Red Bull’s Dutch teenager Max Verstappen was second in the morning but sixth after lunch, when the Williams pair of Valtteri Bottas and home favourite Felipe Massa were Mercedes’ closest rivals.

Rosberg, who described his day as “pretty normal Friday”, can clinch his first championship title if he wins on Sunday, wherever Hamilton finishes.

“Our car looks quick but Red Bull are definitely close. The soft tyre is degrading quite a lot on the long runs, with blistering on the rear,” the German said.

“There’s a surprising amount of degradation on the medium tyre too — but I think overall we’ve got decent pace on the long runs.”

On paper Rosberg has a good chance, having won the last two Brazilian Grands Prix from pole position, but Hamilton — wearing an Ayrton Senna themed helmet this weekend — has the momentum after victories in Texas and Mexico. The weather at Interlagos can change from sunshine to torrential rain in a matter of minutes and the race has a history of surprises and drama, meaning there is still everything to play for.— Reuters