State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi enjoys breakfast hosted by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, who is currently in Singapore, attended the breakfast at Grim Moh Hawker Center & Market, Mr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore.

Afterward, State Counsellor replied to the queries raised in the interview with the Channel News Asia at the Shangri-La Hotel at 11 am.

State Counsellor and party who will leave for Myanmar were seen off at the Changi Airport by Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, State President of Singapore, and responsible personnel of the Myanmar embassy and military attaché office.

On arrival at the Yangon International Airport, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and party were welcomed by U Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region, U Maung Maung Soe, Yangon Mayor and responsible officials.

Together with the State Counsellor, Union Minister Dr Than Myint, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and officials came back, it is reported.—Myanmar News Agency

Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues press release on State Counsellor’s Singapore visit

The following is an unofficial translation of the press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the official visit of the State Counsellor to Singapore.

1. At the invitation of Prime Minister of Singapore Mr Lee Hsien Loong, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi paid an official visit to the Republic of Singapore from 30-11-2016 to 2-12-2016 and arrived back in Yangon on 2-12-2016.

2. The State Counsellor met with businesspeople in Singapore at the Shangri-La Hotel on 30 November afternoon and clarified economic and investment policies and investment opportunities of Myanmar to them. The State Counsellor told them that the new Investment Law of Myanmar is transparent and provides socioeconomic development.

3. At 17:30 in the evening, the State Counsellor attended welcoming ceremony held at the Istana Presidential Palace and held talks with Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong. The two leaders discussed signing of the investment treaty to promote trade and investment, update of an avoidance of double taxation agreement signed by the two countries in 1999, the start of bilateral negotiations between authorities concerned to allow a 6-month period of own-stopover rights for Silk Airs to operate Singapore-Yangon-Mandalay flights to promote tourism for Myanmar, 3-year extension of the MoU on vocational training between the two countries and implementation of visa exemption starting 1st December in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Then, the State Counsellor and the delegation attended the dinner hosted in her honour by the prime minister of Singapore at the Istana Presidential Palace.

4. On 1-12-2016, the State Counsellor attended the working breakfast with Senior Minister of Singapore Mr Goh Chok Tong at the Shangri-La Hotel and held frank discussions with the senior minister on promotion of economic cooperation between the two countries, penetration of Myanmar entrepreneurs into the international market and regional and international issues. Then, the State Counsellor and the delegation attended the Orchid Naming Ceremony at the National Orchid Garden. At the ceremony, a new species of orchid was named Papilionanda Aung San Suu Kyi after the State Counsellor in accordance with the tradition of Singapore that was introduced in 1996.

5. At 11:00, the State Counsellor paid a courtesy call on Acting President HE Mr Joseph Yuwraj Pillay (Chairman of Presidential Advisory Council) at Istana Presidential Palace and discussed promotion of cooperation in education, health, urban development and socioeconomic development.
AS regards the question raised by U Aye Bo of constituency 11 of Yangon Region, Brigadier-General Aung Soe, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs clarified, “In Hlinethayar township, the most populated in Yangon Region, police forces are positioned more than the number allowed, with police forces from Yangon Region and the office of northern district added to the actual number. And, community policing with local residents joining in security work of the area is being performed, in ensuring the security, peace and stability of the area and enforcing rule of law.”

In addition, the deputy minister went on to say, “Hlinethayar township consists of 20 wards, 9 village tracts, 134,036 houses, 1,493,177 households and 686,848 population. There are 838 factories and 686,686 labour force. Being a place which is abundant with job opportunities, most come here for jobs, thus those coming in and going out of the area are enormous. According ly, there were 47 major crimes and 1156 were others in 2014 with 48 major crimes and 1131 others in 2015 and up to October 2016 52 major crimes and 1118 others. For crimes not to take place in the township, 11 kinds of prevention were carried out, 2041 cases can be arrested as a prevention of crimes, up to the end of September 2016. “Police forces are cooperating with ward administration members, village and ward elders, youths with a view to implementing peace and stability of the area, preventing and reducing crimes and rule of law. Up to the end of October 13 lectures on educating the danger of drugs, 21 lectures on crimes including child rape,” the deputy minister said.

Dr Aung Thu, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and Brigadier-General Aung Soe, the deputy minister replied to the questions raised by parliamentarians U Min Oo, U Thet Tun Aung and U Win Aung.

11th Meeting of the 3rd Regular Session of 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw will be held on December 5, it is learnt. —Myanmar News Agency

DEFENCE minister urges Pyithu Hluttaw to announce four armed groups as terrorist organizations

UNION Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe told the Pyithu Hluttaw session yesterday that four armed groups that launched attacks in Shan State including the KIA, the MNDA, the TNL and the AA can be announced as terrorist organization in accordance with the law.

The session was discussing the emergency motion urging the Hluttaw to express concerns over sovereignty, stability and peace process of the country due to attacks of the four armed groups in Shan State that led to the losses of lives and property submitted by Dr Maung Thin, Pyithu Hluttaw Representative of Meiktila Constituency.

Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe also explained the activities of the four armed groups, saying the four armed groups launched attacks on people and vehicles of social service organizations and towns with the use of heavy weapons, blew up bridges and roads, destroyed vehicles, extorted people of money and abducted people.

Delegation led by Kofi Annan, chairman of Advisory Commission On Rakhine State, Arrives At Rakhine

The attacks claimed 18 lives including army troops, members of the police, local militiamen and civilians and injured 73 people, the union minister added.

Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Sein Win also echoed the claims of the union minister for home affairs and urged the Hluttaw to announce the four armed groups as terrorist organization.

Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun replied to questions on education including president’s scholarships. —Myanmar News Agency

The advisory commission on Rakhine State has been meeting with those involved in the current issue and international experts on the matter and very important persons from international institutions in order to seek their opinion with a view to solving deep and sober affairs in Rakhine State and finding the best ways.

The advisory commission on Rakhine State chairman and party will move on to Maungtaw, Buthitaung, Mrauk U and Mayabon, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

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The certificate course in basic diplomatic skills (ADS – 4/2016) concluded at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

U Kyaw Zeya, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, delivered the closing remarks at the Graduation Ceremony of the Certificate Course in Advanced Diplomatic Skills — ADS (4/2016) held at the LawKaNat Hall of the Ministry, at 3 pm today.

Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General and responsible officials from the Ministry and fifty trainees were present at the ceremony.

This course comprises the prevailing issues and subjects relating to diplomacy, international relations, international law, economy, general knowledge and some of these subjects were conducted in the form of simulated exercises. And the duration of the course is seven weeks.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs is carrying out its duties in enhancing capacity of private and public sectors by conducting the advanced and basic diplomatic skills courses. With this objective, the Certificate Course in Advanced Diplomatic Skills (ADS) is conducted and targeted for graduates of the Certificate Course in Basic Diplomatic Skills (BDS). —Ministry of Foreign Affairs

THE delegation led by Kofi Annan, chairman of the advisory commission on Rakhine State and former secretary-general of the United Nations, left Yangon by Myanmar National Airways, arriving at Sittwe at 8:25 am yesterday.

The commission met with Rakhine State Cabinet members led by Chief Minister U Nyi Pu at the State Guest House of the Rakhine State Cabinet at 10 am on December 2.

In addition, the commission met with 10 people from Rakhine Civil Societies at 1 pm, and 4 muslims from Thetkepin rescue camp at 2:45 and 10 members from Rakhine Fisheries Allied Association, Rakhine Thaharya Association and Arrakka Foundation at 4 pm.

In the evening, Kofi Annan replied to questions raised by news media from home and abroad as to where the commission will go and what kind of tasks the commission will perform.

Afterward, the delegation led by Kofi Annan went to Bodhimar shrine for a god and viewed points of prominence in the town.

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The advisory commission on Rakhine State chair man and party will move on to Maungtaw, Buthitaung, Mrauk U, and Mayabon, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency
Vice President U Henry Van Thio attends Mingalarbar Cultural Festival

PEOPLE of Myanmar always appreciate the friendship with the people of France, Vice President U Henry Van Thio said in his opening speech at the Mingalarbar Cultural Festival to commemorate the 55th anniversary of cultural exchange between Myanmar and France organized by the French Cultural Section and the Yangon Region Government yesterday.

The festival was held at Wardan Jetty in Seikkan Township in the evening.

Then, the vice president said that he was glad to see the promotion of cooperation between the two countries. French Foreign Minister Mr Jean-Marc Ayrault visited Myanmar after the new government assumed office, he said.

 Afterwards, the vice president expressed his hope for further strengthening of relations between the two countries and promised closer relations with France.

In conclusion, the vice president thanked the French Embassy for their efforts for promotion of cooperation in various areas and relations.

Later, Mr Olivier Richard, the Ambassador of France to Myanmar delivered a speech.

Then the festival was formally opened by the vice president, Union Ministers Dr Pe Myint and U Ohn Maung, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Deputy Minister Maung Soe, Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Tin Maung Tun, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of France Mr Gautier Migmot and the French ambassador.

The vice president also enjoyed the entertainment programs of the festival.

Ceremony for paper reading on contemporary historical literature held for 2nd day

UNDER the sponsorship of the Ministry of Information, ceremony for paper reading on contemporary historical literature and winter season book fair festival was held at 9 am on December 2 for the second day in the compound of the central press of the Printing and Publishing department on Theinbyu Road in Botataung Township.

The morning session of the paper reading ceremony was co-chaired by U Ko Lay (Ko Lay-Imrwa Gonyi penname), U Aye Cho (U Aye Cho-MA) and Dr Kyaw Win with Dr Toe Hla, the presenter of the paper introduced by U Ko Lay.

Dr Toe Hla read the paper titled, “History & Politics,” and replied to the questions raised by the audience. Afterward, the presidents made their respective conclusions.

The afternoon session of the paper reading ceremony was co-chaired by U Kyaw Win (Mano-tetha-Kyaw Win/Anthropology), U Mya Han (Mya Han) and U Aung Kyaw with U Aye Cho, the presenter of the paper introduced by U Kyaw Win.

U Aye Cho read the paper titled, “The Contemporary Literary works & Chronicles’ Outlook toward 1948 Independence,” and replied to the questions made by those present at the ceremony.

In the session co-chaired by U Aung Kyaw, U Kyaw Win and U Mya Han, U Ngwe Toe(Maung Kyaw Kyaw/kiwon kauk) read the paper titled, “Analysis of Basic Education Sector.”

Afterward, responsible persons presented panel of chairman of the ceremony and those who read the papers with gifts and honors respectively.

Third-day paper reading ceremony will be held on December 3, it is learnt.—Yee Yee Myint, Ohnmar Thant

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker receives Ms Faith Doherty

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khine Than received a delegation led by Ms. Faith Doherty, Forest Team leader of Environmental Investigation Agency based in London at the Amyotha Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed environmental conservation and forest depletion.

Present at the call were U Aye Tha Aung, vice speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, the chairman of Metal and Environmental Conservation Committee, the Secretary and officials of Amyotha Hluttaw Office.—Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar Gazette

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the appointment of following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each on the expiry of one-year probationary period.

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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<td>U Ko Ko Naing</td>
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<td>U Win Naung</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs Principal</td>
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<td>Myanmar Transport and Communications School</td>
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Corrigendum

PLEASE read attacks that occurred on 9 October and 12-13 November in the Notification issued by the President’s Office on columns 1 and 2 of Page 4 of 2nd December issue.
Home News

U Aung Lynn concurrently appointed as ambassador of Panama

THE PRESIDENT of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Aung Lynn, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United States of America, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Panama.—Myanmar News Agency

Mass walking to mark the World AIDS Day

A MASS walking to mark World AIDS Day was held on 2nd December under the organization of anti-HIV and venereal diseases project office under the Mandalay Region Public Health Department. The event kicked off in front of Mandalay City Hall at the corner of 26th street and 71 street, Chanayethazan Township, attended by Dr Zaw Myint Maung, Chief Minister of Mandalay Region, Dr Yu Yu May, Patron of Region Maternal and Child Welfare Association Supervisory Committee, Dr Win Naing, Head of Mandalay Region Public Health Department, U Myo Myint Aung, Principal of Sport and Physical Education Institute (Mandalay), the students from Universities and Colleges, staff from medical companies and the interested people.

The activity was launched by Dr Soe Than, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation. The mass walk involves entertainments and distribution of educative pamphlets.—Thha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Crime News

Highway accidents this year edge toward 700

THE number of traffic accidents along the Yangon-Mandalay expressway over the past 11 months has reached nearly 700, according to the Myanmar Highway Police.

Between January and November of this year, there were 649 road accidents, according to traffic police.

The total number of people killed on the road was 149, with 1,191 people suffering injuries.

In November alone, 61 cases of vehicle accidents occurred on the expressway, leaving 15 people dead and 117 others injured.

Investigators say 23 traffic accidents out of 61 happened last month due solely to tyre explosions, prompting officials to urge drivers to check their wheels and tyres before driving on the highway.

Drug and alcohol use, fatigue and speed are the most common causes of traffic accidents, said Police Major Yan Naing Win from Myanmar Highway Police.

To reduce traffic-related deaths, highway police frequently conduct traffic rules enforcement programmes and educative activities along the road.—Than Oo (Lay Myathnar)

Job opportunities to create for the women in Shan and Kachin States

A CANADA-BASED Menonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) will implement an agricultural project for five years to create the job opportunities for women in Shan and Kayin States.

“We launched the project for women to get the jobs. We will conduct the agricultural training courses, too. Also, we will connect with the agricultural companies to enable access to the market. We have been implementing the project since 2015, said Allan Sauder, Chairman of MEDA.

We have professionals to conduct the agricultural training courses. Also, we have a plan to export our products, he added.

Currently, MEDA has already contacted over 200 women from Shan and Kayin. The project will be implemented in five townships of Shan State and three townships in Kayin State.

If more women from rural areas participate in agriculture, we can plant more crops, I want it the same nationwide,” said Daw Nan Yee, a local from Myawady township.

The project will spend US$16 billion. Those interested in this project, can contact www.med.org.

MEDA was founded in 1953 and has been operating in 62 countries since its foundation. Myanmar is the first country to implement the project among the Asian ten counties.—Myitmakha News Agency

Mosaic of Scenes in Maungtaw

IT has been nearly two months since the violent armed attacks occurred in Maungtaw district, Rakhine State. In this time we have the area become active again.

As dawn broke, there were morning meal takers seen sitting at breakfast tables in tea shops. Most of the customers in the shops belong to the departmental staff — permanent jobs in Maungtaw as well as those coming to temporarily work for the departments. As there are not many stalls here for fried rice, tea and coffee, Myanmar traditional foods such as Moonthinka, Nangyithote, and other kinds of food are available in one place, making it a natural gathering place for many people to assemble. Some were found having their meals in the eatery while enjoying the premier league soccer match that was played last night.

Some of the staff were found to have been sharing their experiences while chatting. Inside the Myoma monastery nearby, we heard a group of women reciting series and beauty salons that become in Maungtaw and nearby areas. Most of the customers in the shops belong to the departmental offices located on this street. In Maungtaw, there are four main streets —Aungghaya Street, U Ottama Street, Zay Lan and Construction Street. Of these, U Ottama Street and Zay Lan are mostly crammed with people. Departmental offices are located on the way to Buthitau in the eastern part of Maungtaw. The clock tower at the top of Zay Lan is a grand feature of the town. In the evening, we saw trucks loading and unloading at the corner of Myoma Zay and U Ottama Street and passenger buses bound for Buthitau. Air tickets and waterway ticket selling depots are found in U Ottama street. Privately owned cars are rare in Maungtaw with departmental vehicles, bicycles, motorcycles and trishaws mostly used.

A breeze comes after a storm. Now we are seeing the atmosphere of peace and stability in Maungtaw and nearby areas.—Myo Myaung Soe
Tenders to invite for Myitsone resort in mid-December

MYITKYINA Township Municipal Affairs Committee announced it will invite tenders for running a Myitsone resort at a floor price of Ks6 million in mid-December.

The committee hopes to see competitive participation of local firms than before, said the deputy head of the Revenue Department of the committee, saying that the department yearly received about extra Ks500,000 tax from the resort business because only a few companies involved in the tender process previous years.

New entrepreneurs have been encouraged to apply for the resort project permit. Winner will have the right to impose taxes on commercial filmmakers and photographers who capture the beauty of the resort. The winning firm will also be permitted to collect toilet fees and to make a sale in some parts of the resort.

The winner will have to carry out sanitation across the resort without collecting any other fees.

The Myitsone recreation resort has been established in Tanpahye and Myitsone villages within the Myitsone hydropower development project. The resort area was divided into two parts—prohibited area and restricted area.

The state government has the right to cancel the resort business in restricted area. The Myitkyina District General Administration Department announced that action will be taken against those who enter the prohibited area of the resort.

—Myitmakha News Area

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—Myitmakha News Area

First Private Bank’s stock trading to commence in December

FOURTH-listed First Private Bank at the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) will reportedly start its stock trading in December, with a price of around Ks40,000 per share, said U Myint Zaw from the First Private Bank.

The company is gearing up to commence its stock trading at YSX as soon as possible. However, the exact date of stock trading has not yet been released. The company is helping to open security accounts for its shareholders.

Shares of First Private Bank were traded at Ks30,000 per share over the counter (OTC), which is currently closed.

When listed at YSX, First Private Bank will initially trade 500,000 shares, with a total capital of Ks74,664.49 million. The bank is also engaged in international banking enterprises, My Kyaing and other bank operations, it is learnt.

The anticipated initial price surprised some stockholders. “As far as I am concerned, this share price is high when compared to that of the other three listed companies”, said U Maung Myint, a shareholder. “Besides, stock trading has not attracted much attention these days”.

Currently, three listed companies—First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH) and Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB) are trading shares at YSX—Myitmakha News Agency

Sugarcane price high in domestic market

LOCAL sugarcane growers get a handsome profit for their product this season because of high domestic demands, farmers say.

A grower from Yedashe Township, Bago Region, said local farmers received Ks55,000 per tonne of sugarcane this season. This year’s sugarcane price increased to over Ks50,000 from Ks40,000 per tonne, said a female grower from Ayethaya Village.

She continued to say that an acre of sugarcane plantation normally produces at least 30 tonnes worth over Ks1.6 million. According to a broker, the price of sugar is steadily high in global market as the production of sugarcane from the neighbouring India and China, the world’s leading producers, declined this year.

“That is why sugarcane price is high in local market,” he added.

There were a total of 25,000 acres of sugarcane plantations over the past three years in Yedashe Township. Authorities are now arranging to disburse agricultural loans to sugarcane growers.

Sugarcane is one of the major industrial crops under cultivation in Myanmar. The sugarcane has become part of the crop production of more than half of the world, including Asia and America because of its health benefits. Sugarcane includes proteins, phosphorus, iron, zinc, and potassium, and vitamins A, B-complex, and C.

—Rhine Wah
THAILAND’S NEW KING MAKES FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE

BANGKOK — Thailand’s new king on Friday made his first public appearance since ascending the throne the previous day, ending a period of uncertainty since the death of his father, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, on October 13.

King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun, 64, took part in a merit-making ceremony at Bangkok’s Grand Palace to mark 50 days since his father’s death. The ceremony was the king’s first public appearance since ascending the throne.

Civil servants dressed in black and white, the official colours of mourning, lined the streets to the palace to mark 50 days since his father’s death. It is the king’s first public appearance since ascending the throne.

Some 7.87 million Cambodians register to vote in upcoming elections

PHNOM PENH — Some 7.87 million out of total 9.66 million eligible voters had registered to cast their ballots in two major elections in upcoming years, according to a National Election Committee (NEC) press release on Thursday.

The NEC launched a nationwide computerized voter registration on 1 September and ended on 30 November. According to the press release, about 7.87 million citizens, or 81.47 per cent of the eligible voters, had registered during the three-month voter registration period.

The NEC’s member Em Sophat estimated on Wednesday that more than 1 million citizens have not come to register for the upcoming elections.

“Over one million migrant workers living abroad have not returned to register to vote in the upcoming elections,” he said in a meeting with stakeholders.

He added that some hospitalized patients, elderly people, and disabled persons have also failed to register.

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South Korea, Japan impose new unilateral sanctions on North Korea

SEOUL/TOKYO — South Korea and Japan said on Friday they would impose new unilateral sanctions on North Korea over its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, following a fresh UN Security Council resolution imposed on the reclusive country this week.

North Korea has rejected the UN resolution, aimed at cutting Pyongyang’s annual export revenue by a quarter after its fifth and largest nuclear test in September, as a conspiracy masterminded by the United States to deny its sovereignty.

Both South Korea and Japan already have comprehensive unilateral sanctions in place against North Korea. South Korea said in a statement its expanded measures would blacklist senior North Korean officials, including leader Kim Jong Un’s closest aides, Choe Ryong Hae and Hwang Pyong So.

Hwang, at one point considered North Korea’s second-most powerful official outside the ruling Kim family, is already subject to US Treasury sanctions.

South Korea also said it would ban entry from the South by foreign missile and nuclear experts if their visits to North Korea were deemed to be a threat to South Korean national interests.

Japan said on Friday it too would add to its own list of unilateral sanctions, including a ban on all ships that have called at ports in North Korea, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a news conference.

"It is a new phase of threat that North Korea forced, carrying out nuclear tests twice this year and launching more than 20 missiles, and it is enhancing capability. Japan absolutely cannot tolerate these acts of violence," Suga said.

"Japan will consider further measures depending on moves by North Korea and the international community," he said. Tokyo will freeze the assets of more groups and individuals connected to North Korea’s nuclear and missile programmes, he said.

The US Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, told the Security Council on Wednesday the United States was realistic about what the new sanctions on North Korea could achieve.

“No resolution in New York will likely, tomorrow, persuade Pyongyang to cease its relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons. But this resolution imposes unprecedented costs on the DPRK (North Korea) regime for defying this council’s demands,” she said.

In February, Seoul suspended operations at a jointly run factory park just inside North Korea, ending the only significant daily interaction across the heavily fortified inter-Korean border.

In March, Seoul released a list of companies and individuals it said were connected to North Korea’s weapons trade and nuclear and missile programmes. —Reuters

Global New Light of Myanmar
China rescues Filipinos near disputed South China Sea shoal

MANILA — China’s coastguard rescued two Filipino fishermen from a capsized boat near a disputed South China Sea shoal on Friday, underlining the fast thawing of ties between two countries long at odds over sovereignty.

A Philippine coastguard vessel navigated choppy waters to collect the two fishermen from the Chinese ship, in what would be the first time in four years both countries’ coastguards were in close proximity in the Scarborough Shoal, a rocky outcrop at the heart of years of diplomatic tension.

“As we speak, the Chinese vessel is linking up with our own ship to turn over the two Filipino fishermen,” said Philippine coastguard spokesman Commander Armand Balilo. “It is taking some time because the waters in the area are very rough.”

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said the fishermen were in good health and that efforts were continuing to get them to the Philippine ship.

China “will continue to patrol and keep watch in waters around Huangyan Island and faithfully carry out its responsibilities and mission to safeguard the peace, tranquility and order in relevant waters,” he said, using the Chinese name for Scarborough Shoal.

The rescue illustrates the rapid changes in the relationship between the two countries under Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who in only a few months has sought to turn a historic foe into a friend. He visited Beijing in October and has met twice with Chinese leader Xi Jinping, to whom he has expressed admiration.— Reuters

South Korea’s scandal-tainted Park to face impeachment vote next week

SEOUL — South Korean opposition parties said on Friday they will hold a parliamentary impeachment vote on scandal-tainted President Park Geun-hye next week, while her own party remains undecided on whether to force her out of office.

Park has offered to resign and asked parliament on Tuesday to decide how and when she should step down over the influence peddling scandal but the opposition has rejected it as a delaying tactic to avoid impeachment.

If Park is forced out of office or resigns, she will be the first democratically elected South Korean president not to serve a full term. A large rally is expected on Saturday, the sixth weekend protest in succession, calling on her to resign immediately.

The three opposition parties, with a combined 165 seats in the 300-member parliament, can bring the impeachment but will need some members from Park’s Saenuri Party to bring the vote to the two-thirds majority required to pass the bill.

“The three opposition parties will pursue the impeachment through close cooperation and without wavering,” a spokesman for the main opposition Democratic Party, Ki Dong-min, said.

“The motion will be proposed today. It will be reported to the plenary session on 8 December and we will bring the impeachment motion to a vote on 9 December,” he said.

Park is accused of colluding with a friend, Choi Soon-sil, who has been accused of abuse of power, to put undue pressure on conglomerates to contribute money to foundations that were set up to promote her policy initiatives.

Park has denied wrongdoing but has apologized to the nation. Some Saenuri members had earlier said they would join the opposition parties to impeach Park but changed their position after Park offered to quit, saying she should be given the chance to step down of her own accord by April.

“The president has offered to step down, so I don’t get what the motive is for insisting on impeaching her when we know there’s going to be uncertainties and confusion and side-effects,” Saenuri leader Chung Jin-suk said at a meeting.

It was not clear whether there would be the needed 28 Saenuri members to support the motion. There are seven non-party affiliated members who are expected to give their backing.

Some opposition members have said a failed impeachment could vindicate Park’s claim to have done nothing to benefit personally and help her survive politically.

“If the motion is voted down, it is effectively a remission of her sins,” People’s Party chief Park Jie-won told a party meeting on Thursday.

If it passes, the Constitutional Court has 180 days to approve or reject it. If approved, a new election must be called in 60 days to elect a new leader for a full five-year term.

Park has come under intense pressure to step down, with hundreds of thousands of people streaming into the streets demanding her resignation at successive weekend rallies, which have remained peaceful.

Her approval rating remained at a record low of 4 per cent, according to a Gallup Korea opinion poll on Friday. Gallup Korea, based in Seoul, is not affiliated with US-based Gallup Inc.— Reuters

Tens of thousands protest in Jakarta amid fury over Christian governor

JAKARTA — Tens of thousands of Muslims poured into central Jakarta on Friday to protest against the city’s governor, a Christian accused of insulting the Koran, fueling tension that has alarmed Indonesian President Joko Widodo.

Widodo has blamed “political actors” for exploiting the popular fury over Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama to destabilize his government. Underlining those concerns, police announced on Friday that 10 people had been detained for suspected treason.

A sea of white-clad protesters built up around the National Monument and, with no more room there, the roads around filled up with protesters chanting, praying and carrying banners demanding that Purnama be jailed.

Police officials estimated the crowd at least 150,000, including many who traveled to Jakarta from towns and cities across the island of Java and beyond.

Widodo addressed the rally after Friday prayers and praised the peaceful protest, before urging the crowd to leave safely.

“You thank and safe travels on your return from where you came from. God bless you,” said Widodo, who was flanked by ministers and Islamic leaders.

As the president was helped down from the stage, some in the crowd joined the head of the hardline Islamic Defenders Front in chanting slogans calling for the crushing of Purnama.

“Under rainy skies, the crowd later started to disperse.”

National news agency Antara said 22,000 police personnel were deployed to avoid a repeat of high political tension for weeks, with rumors of plots to undermine Widodo and scupper his chances of winning a second term in 2019.

Police spokesman Rikowan told a news conference that 10 people he identified only by their initials had been detained before dawn, citing articles of the criminal code that cover conspiracy and acts of treason. Two of them were charged under the law of information technology for hate speech.— Reuters

Australia boosts spending to keep Great Barrier Reef off ‘in danger’ list

SYDNEY — Australia will spend A$1.3 billion ($965.3 million) in the next five years to improve the water quality and wellbeing of the Great Barrier Reef to prevent the World Heritage Site being placed on the United Nation’s “in danger” list.

But activists say the money — in addition to the A$1 billion forecast earlier — is insufficient and want the government to take more concrete action to protect the reef.

A negative rating for the Great Barrier Reef — locat ed off the country’s north east coast — would be embarrassing for the Australian government and damage its lucrative tourism industry.

In the first progress report to the UN’s scientific arm, UNESCO, after it stopped short earlier this year of listing the reef as “in danger”, Australia said it would spend A$1.3 billion improving the world’s largest living ecosystem.

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull pledged a A$1 billion fund for the Great Barrier Reef in June.

Much of the accelerated spending will address water quality and ecosystem health, Australia said in the UNESCO report, including programs to minimize spillage of chemicals from farming and tightening oversight of connected waterways.— Reuters
Learning from society

Myint Win Thein

At least in principle, telling a lie is not acceptable in the society and every religion teaches their followers not to tell a lie and to love the truth. Children are told by their parents to avoid telling lies and to love the truth even before they can read or write. The staff in Mandalay are taught not to tell lies at early stages of their schooling and made to love the truth.

No one is entitled to tell a lie in their entire lives and everyone is responsible to love the truth.

However, people encounter liars who do not love the truth at every corner of the society, in every field of human activities and in every social stratum. As a result, there are also their victims elsewhere although most of them are ashamed of themselves for being the victims. However, they try to avoid known liars all their lives.

It can be said that almost every victim of lies hates them. This is because the victims lose something, serious or trivial, due to a lie or at least feel sad or angry for some unmet expectations from someone. However, it is only one side of a coin.

In fact, not everything resulting from being a victim of lies is bad. They can give at least one benefit to their victims: hatred to lies and love for truth. Repeated victims may even rise against their liars and may demand that justice be done. A world full of lies is the breeding ground for the love for truth. From the society, people will be able to learn what they failed to do so at school.

Education: Academia’s Resurgence on the Horizon?

Phoehlaing

This is the report of a rare glimmer in Myanmar higher education

Myanmar higher education has been in bad shape for decades. It is well known that under a succession of conceived bigoted dictators, university academics have been humbled, down-trodden, and their knowledge made worthless. The sorry state hasn’t changed yet under the new democratically elected government. As a member of the former Hluttaw Committee for Upgrading Yangon University chaired by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the author can say that its efforts to boost the university’s stature has not been successful. But this failure, the author wishes to point out, is due to the refusal of previous President U Thein Sen’s government to co-operate with the committee. And generally the overall blueprint for the new education system is still in planning and legislation stage.

Few Stars in Moonless Sky

Despite the gloomy sky, an indicator of coming progress twinkles. It is seen as the arrival in Yangon today, November 28, of a high profile Myanmar physicist, Professor Khin Maung Maung, head of physics department, University of Southern Missouri, USA, comes as a Fullbright Fellow, to teach at Mandalay University. The fellowship is a highly awarded award for the recipient as well as for the host institution. Prof. KMM will also give part-time courses in Yangon University from where he got his first degree. Please note I delete the title Dr. from his name in preference to professor, as it is usual international practice.

If Myanmar education scenario is compared to a moonless night, then Prof Khin Maung Maung is the morning star of physics. He heralds daybreak for physics in Myanmar; but as he works in USA he is also the evening star, the familiar twinkle in western sky. Mind you, the morning star in the east and evening star in the west are one and the same.

Good old days for physics in Mandalay

A visiting professor from USA supported by Fulbright Foundation is not altogether new for MU. Flashback 50+ years ago, Professor Robert Crowzier William of Florida University had been given the same honor. He taught the first four batches of physics honors students in Mandalay from 1959 to 1962. I was one of his students, from the fourth batch. Student numbers were few in those days - only two in the first batches; also in my class only two students plus three instructors attending as M.Sc. qualifying candidates.

In Mandalay in my days was strong and highly qualified. Apart from Prof Williamson, who gave two lectures a day every day, we had Professor Ali Ahmad, an exemplary Myanmar-Bengali, who I admire as a superb specialist of classical physics. He used to join our class, sitting as a student, to attend Prof Williamson’s Quantum Mechanics course! (He sets the example that it’s never too late to learn.) In addition, there were three lecturers – U Kyaw Maung, U Tin Oo Hlaing and U Thar Hlaing, all of them great physics masters. U Kyaw Maung, London trained, was most enthusiastic in teaching, and attractive in style of lecturing. In spite of his handsome looks and also good salary, he remained a bachelor, strongly bonded with students. U Tin Oo Hlaing, a postgraduate of Michigan University, also a bachelor for life, doesn’t let us go easy either, despite his hearty personal nature. U Thar Hlaing, last of the trio, tends to be stiff, a little dictatorial, but with good intentions. He happens to be the best electronic experimentalist in Myanmar I have known! And all three guided us in laboratory work! Well, just imagine how close we were with teachers – two professors and three senior lecturers taking care of classes of only four or five students each. No wonder, they produced the best cadre of physics for the country. The number is not large, just fifteen B.Sc. (honours) plus M.Sc. (Q) graduates; but the quality was high, nay lofty indeed. Compare them to any graduate of any top university; they will not let MU down.

A country-run-away repays his country

Professor Khin Maung Maung had been a pyi-pyi (literally country run-away). After getting his first degree, and finished M.Sc., KMM couldn’t get a teaching job, nor could he go anywhere for further study which he seriously wished to pursue. The 1970’s were bad days. With the economy in shambles, the government of dictator U Ne Win didn’t allow citizens easily to leave the country. Unable to get an official passport, KMM just crossed the border to Thailand with a friend. He spent many days in the forest, the area of rebels. Luckily, he was helped by a French missionary worker. "The priest got me a Myanmar passport," KMM told me; “and the priest told me, ‘don’t ask how I got this passport for you’.” The priest took KMM inside Thai ambassador’s residence, to attend an official passport, KMM just crossed the border to Thailand with a friend. He spent many days in the forest, the area of rebels. Luckily, he was helped by a French missionary worker. "The priest got me a Myanmar passport," KMM told me; “and the priest told me, ‘don’t ask how I got this passport for you’.” The priest took KMM inside Thai ambassador’s residence, to attend an official passport, KMM just crossed the border to Thailand with a friend. He spent many days in the forest, the area of rebels. Luckily, he was helped by a French missionary worker. "The priest got me a Myanmar passport," KMM told me; “and the priest told me, ‘don’t ask how I got this passport for you’.”

The intellectual level of this kind of physics is so deep and demanding that the work has to be divided between two types of specialists – experimentalists who do practical work and obtain data, and theoreticians who do just thinking and calculating. To be continued. I have said this area is esoteric. Originally strangeness is a purely theoretical entity; but these days hypernuclei can be produced using big machines called high energy accelerators. There are only a few accelerators in Japan, Europe and USA capable of producing hypernuclei.

The intellectual level of this kind of physics is so deep and demanding that the work has to be divided between two types of specialists – experimentalists who do practical work and obtain data, and theoreticians who do just thinking and calculating. To be continued.

Phoehlaing and wife in research laboratory in KMM’s department (June 2010).
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the Parade held in Honour of the Graduation Ceremony of 58th intake of Defense Services Academy

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Services addressed the parade held in honor of the graduation ceremony of 58th Intake of Defense Service Academy held at the parade ground in Pyin Oo Lwin, on 7:30 am on December 2.

Present at the ceremony were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, Dr Zaw Myint Maung, Chief Minister of Mandalay Region, General Mya Tun Oo, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) and wife, Admiral Tin Aung San, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and wife, General Khin Aung Myint, Commander-in-Chief (Air) and wife, high ranking officials from Commander-in-Chief (Army) and their wives, Commanders of Commands, Principal of Defense Services Academy, foreign ambassadors, diplomats, invited guests and parents of the cadets.

Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Services took the salute, inspecting the cadets.

Afterward, C-in-C of Defense Service presented awards to outstanding cadets.

After presenting awards to the cadets, the senior general made a speech, saying that the Tatmadaw is standing firmly on its six-point policy on restoring genuine and sustainable peace and it is important for ethnic armed groups to abide by the provisions of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and to sign the truce. Myanmar is a country of various national races and any youth of the national race are entitled to perform duties of national defence in the Tatmadaw in accordance with the rules and regulations of the defence services. There is only one army in every country and the Tatmadaw is performing its duties of protecting the country. Then the senior general received the salute of the graduating cadet.

Later, the senior general met with outstanding cadets and their parents at the guest house of the defence services academy.—Myanmar News Agency

Avid Myanmar Travelers can now pay with Mastercard and CB Bank credit

As Myanmar continues to see positive economic growth projections, its people are increasingly seeking overseas destinations. The latest Mastercard research revealed that Myanmar is the fastest growing outbound travel market in Asia Pacific with a growth projection of 10.6 per cent for the next five years.

In light of this, Mastercard has once again partnered Co-operative Bank Ltd (CB Bank) to launch Classic, Gold and Platinum Mastercard, which will be made available to Myanmar residents and citizens when travelling abroad.

Mr. Kyaw Lynn, Executive Vice Chairman and CEO of CB Bank said: “A paperless and cashless society is an important goal for CB Bank. Although still a work in progress, we are working hard to achieve that goal through increased usage of ATMs, POS terminals and e-commerce capabilities. For starters, we are already seeing a great shift from over-the-counter withdrawals to ATM withdrawals. And on average, there are 50,000 transactions being made monthly via electronic payment at the point-of-sale.”

Mr. Antonio Corro, country manager, Thailand & Myanmar, Mastercard, said: “For a country that had only opened its doors not too long ago, Myanmar’s economic and outbound travel projections are very encouraging. To meet the increasing demands for travel, we have deepened our partnership with CB Bank to launch our first credit card in the country. This signifies a big step towards the greater development of the electronic payments infrastructure and its also means that consumers are able to make more secure and convenient payments for their purchases when travelling abroad.”—GNLM

International Law Experts meet Myanmar Police for border area management

INTERNATIONAL law experts from the United Nations met with Police Major-General Zaw Win in Nya Pyi Tawon Wednesday at Myanmar Police headquarters for a discussion about management of the affairs of the border area and international law.

The delegation from the United Nations Office of Drugs & Crime was led by Mr. Scott Bateley. In the meeting, they discussed matters concerning the Country Programme for Myanmar 2014-2017 and the mutual assistance in Criminal Matters Law.—Myanmar News Agency

Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues press release on State Counsellor’s Singapore visit

>From page 1

6. Afterwards, the State Counsellor attended the luncheon hosted in her honour by Deputy Prime Minister and Coordination Minister for National Security HE Mr. Thea Chee Hean at the Shangri-La Hotel and in the afternoon, the State Counsellor and the Delegation visited the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau and heard clarification on work and procedure of the bureau before raising questions on some areas she was interested in.

7. In the evening, the State Counsellor attended the opening ceremony of “Cities and Kings: Ancient Treasures from Myanmar” at the Asian Civilization Museum (ACM) and the State Counsellor was welcomed there by Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong and the minister for Culture, Community and Youth. The museum is displaying cultural artefacts from Pyu Era, Eras of Mon Kings in lower Myanmar, Bagan Era and the Mandalay Palace until March 2017 in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

8. In the evening, the State Counsellor visited the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore and met with staff and families of the embassy and the Office of the Military Attaché (Army, Navy, AirForce). She also attended the dinner hosted by the ambassador before delivering a speech to Myanmar community in Singapore and responding to their questions frankly at the Big Box Hall in Jurong East.

9. On 2-12-2016, the State Counsellor, together with Minister for Foreign Affairs HE Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, visited the Ghim Moh Hawker Centre and Wet Market and attended the breakfast. At 13:00, the State Counsellor and the delegation left Changi Airport for Yangon International Airport and arrived in Yangon at 15:30 in the evening.—Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Tatmadawmen fighting in the battle of Mongkoe with valour

COMBINED forces of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) started to attack camps of the government troops, Myanmar Police Force outposts, camps of people’s militias in Mongkoe-Phaukngai-Kyugok-Muse and Kutkai in northern Shan State starting from November 20, trying to occupy the Tatmadaw troop’s camps in Mongkoe, People’s Militia camp and southern Hemoelon with large numbers of troops attacking with prepared plans.

In spite of their fierce fighting, the government troops and militiamen fought against the enemies with valour, forcing the battle abate at about 4 pm without losing the camps.

In the course of the fighting on the ground, aerial bombing and artillery attacks helped the government troops and militiamen to not lose the land close to the camps with great courage.

Armed groups wearing mutty waging to occupy the camps attacked the troops under the cover of houses and buildings in Mongkoe. Tatmataw troops responded with bombings, unavoidably causing some houses of civilians to be destroyed, it is learnt.

After the 20 November attacks, people from Mongkoe fled to Manhni in the neighboring country of Bangladesh as displaced victims, so there were no casualties of civilians in this fighting. In time of peace and stability, rehabilitation will be made for the ruined buildings, it is learnt.

In today’s fighting, government troops have fought to not lose their camps and security area, responding with aerial attacks in accordance with army law. According to the basic law of the war, the hideouts of enemies, the target of the fighting, were attacked proportionally. Tatmataw troops made efforts to not destroy civilian buildings, and if necessary will be employed for the needs of the war in accord with the law of the war.

—Myanmar News Agency

KIA armed group attacks Tatmataw troops and 2 trucks with artillery and firearms

The Office of the Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Services released a news that Tatmataw troops serving the duty of road safety in the township of Kutkai in northern Shan State were attacked by KIA armed group by shooting with firearms and artilleries and two trucks as well.

KIA armed group shot at the Tatmataw troops taking responsibilities of road safety between the villages of Namphalun and Manlwe in Kutkai township with firearms and artilleries at 5:30 am or so yesterday, and the government troops’ cross-fire pushed them to retreat, it is learnt.

The attack of the KIA armed group hit two 12-wheeled trucks bound for Muse from Kutkai to destruction and the government troops were clearing the area with vehicles moving as normal without any blockage, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

Donations offered for police killed & injured

A CEREMONY for offering monetary assistance to policemen killed and injured in the fighting at the Namph bridge police outpost in Muse and in the 105 mile trade zone was held at the office of the Deputy Commander of the Shan State Police Force, Lashio on Wednesday.

The Myanmar-China friendship association, the Myanmar Yadatan Shwekhit Company, the Shinmakaung Construction Material Selling Company and the Lashio Gold Merchants Association donated Ks 14 lak and Royal Heart Purified Water Company offered 300 bottles of purified drinking water, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

5 suspects, 56 travellers detained

FIVE people suspected of involvement in violent attacks in Yangon and Maungtaw in Rakhine State and 56 people travelling illegally in two boats in the Naf River were detained, according to the Information Committee of the State Counselor’s Office.

Ten thousand tablets bearing WY letters were also found on the illegal travellers.

Security forces conducting area clearance operation in Yangon detained Adula at Kanseik Village, Zarpaw Rmauk and three others at Maungnhama (South) Village and Karma at Phawtawchung Village.

Action has been taken against them in accordance with the law.

Patrolling along the Naf River, security forces found two boats sailing in the river. The security forces fired warning shots before detaining them. They are being questioned.—Myanmar News Agency

Fierce fighting between the government troops and KIA, TNLA, MNDAA & AA armed groups in Mongkoe & Kyukok/ Pansang

According to the Office of Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Services, there took places fierce fighting between the government troops and KIA, TNLA, MNDAA and AA combined groups in Mongkoe and Kyukok/ Pansang, northern Shan State, taking seizure of weapons and amphetamine tablets and dead bodies from the combined groups.

In the news released yesterday, KIA, TNLA, MNDAA and AA armed groups made frequent attacks on the camp of the government troops in Mongkoe, people’s militia camp and southern part of Haymoelon starting from 9 am or so on December 1 with greater numbers of the troops, hence the need to get backup from aerial bombing and artillery attack on the Tatmataw troops. In the morning and afternoon on December 1, about 12 people from KIA, MNDAA armed group attacked in the town of Kyukok/ Pansang with 20 or so from MNDAA attacking from 1000 meters away from the village of Lwegein and into the village of Haymoelon from 1000 meters south west of the village attacked by 100 people of KIA, NDF, NDA, armed group with some of MNDAA armed groups attacking from 500 meters south west of Lwegein village by launching automatic and government troops made cross-fire responses.

In the fighting, Tatmataw troops captured 14 dead bodies, 4 firearms including RPG rocket launcher, 616 various kinds of bullets, 40 AKK bullets, 4 bombs, 3 magazines, 18 grenades, 1600 amphetamine tablets valued at K 26 lakhs in street value. There were some casualties from the government troops, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

Action taken against suspected violent attackers in accordance with law

A total of 528 people suspected of involvement in violent attacks that broke out in Maungtaw on 9 October and subsequent attacks were detained for questioning, according to the Information Committee of the State Counselor’s Office.

Violent attackers ambushed, planted mines and attacked government troops and the border guard police who we conducting area clearance operations for regional stability in Maungtaw.

Out of 528 suspects, 48 have been sentenced, 9 have been released, one has been released on bail and 466 are still under questioning.—Myanmar News Agency

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Vegetarian and vegan diets good for kids and adults, nutritionists say

WASHINGTON

Plant-based diets are tied to a lower risk of health problems like heart disease, diabetes, obesity and certain cancers — and pretty much anyone can eat this way, according to a leading group of nutritionists.

Vegetarian and vegan diets are appropriate for all stages of life, including during infancy, pregnancy, childhood, adolescence and old age, the authors write in a position statement from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

That’s because people who adopt a plant-based diet tend to consume more fruits and vegetables, fewer sweets and salty snacks, and smaller amounts of total and saturated fats, the statement, published in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, asserts.

The trick is to make sure these diets are well planned and balanced, said Vandana Loria, a registered dietitian nutritionist and spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

“Any diet that is well planned and balanced can have negative side effects,” Loria said by email.

“Just because foods are plant based doesn’t automatically make them healthy,” she added. “For instance, pastries, cookies, fried and salty foods may be vegan but don’t really provide much in terms of nutritional value.”

For younger vegetarians and vegans in particular, it’s important to plan meals that include enough iron, zinc, vitamin B-12, and for some, calcium and vitamin D, Sheth said.

“Well-planned vegetarian and vegan diets containing vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds can be nutritionally adequate and may provide health benefits for the prevention and treatment of some chronic diseases,” Sheth noted.

Approximately 3.3 percent of American adults are vegetarian or vegan, meaning they never eat meat, poultry or fish, according to the guidelines. This way of eating is much more common among younger adults than elderly people.

Among the health benefits noted in the guidelines, people who eat a plant-based diet are less likely to be overweight or obese than adults who consume meat.

“Vegetan diets in particular, which exclude meats as well as animal products like milk, eggs and honey, are associated with a lower risk of heart disease than other ways of eating, the statement also points out.

According to the authors, people who adopt a vegan diet reduce the risk of diabetes by 62 per cent, the risk of prostate cancer by 35 per cent, the chance of being hospitalized for a heart attack by 33 per cent, the risk of heart disease by 48 per cent.

People can have a vegetarian or vegan diet that is healthy or terible; and a non-vegetarian or non-vegan diet that is healthy or terrible.

“A healthy diet is rich in minimally processed foods, especially from plants, but also from animals, Mozaffarian said.

“I recommend a high-fat Mediterranean-style diet, rich in fruits, non-starchy vegetables, nuts, beans, fish, whole grains, and vegetable oils, and including yogurt, cheese, poultry, and occasional half serving a week of fresh, unprocessed red meat,” Mozaffarian said.

Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian, dean of the Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy in Boston.

“For instance, fries and a coke are vegan,” Mozaffarian, who wasn’t involved in the position statement, said by email.

“Indeed, much of the harmful stuff in the food supply is vegetarian or vegan: refined grains, starches, added sugars, sweets, trans fats, salt, etc.,” Mozaffarian added.

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—Reuters
A year after San Bernardino attack, investigators still seek answers

LOS ANGELES — One year after two Islamic militants shot dead 14 people in a massacre in Southern California, FBI investigators are still seeking to answer key questions such as the location of the married couple’s computer hard drive and whether anyone helped them.

Syed Rizwan Farook, 28, and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, 29, opened fire on 2 December during a party and training session for San Bernardino County employees, who were co-workers of Farook, injuring 22 people in addition to the 14 killed.

It was one of the deadliest attacks by militants in the United States since the 11 September, 2001, hijacked plane attacks.

Authorities have said that US-born Farook and Malik, a native of Pakistan who lived most of her life in Saudi Arabia, were inspired by Islamic extremism. The couple, who were parents of a 6-month-old daughter, both died in a shootout with police four hours after the massacre.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is still seeking to determine if anyone assisted the couple, such as in financing the attack or helping to plan for it, FBI spokeswoman Laura Eimiller said.

“We have not charged anyone with providing support to Farook and Malik, we certainly will continue to investigate to determine if they were supported in any way,” she said in a telephone interview. To that end, the FBI is still hoping to find the hard drive from the couple’s computer, Eimiller said.

A search by FBI divers in the weeks after the attack of a small lake at a park where Farook and Malik stopped in the hours after the shooting failed to turn up the hard drive. In addition, the FBI still has an 18-minute gap in accounting for the whereabouts of Farook and Malik in the hours they spent driving around San Bernardino in a sport utility vehicle after the attack at the city’s Island Regional Centre.

The attack killed 14 and injured 22. The New York real estate magnate also announced that he would nominate Marine General James Mattis — calling him “Mad Dog Mattis” — to be his secretary of defence.

Speaking in an arena that was about three-quarters full, Trump rallied the crowd by repeatedly attacking the “extremely dishonest” media and invoking the populist message that resonated with millions of voters.

“People are demanding their country back, not their democrats, not their politicians,” Trump said.

In the past, Trump also has said he would stop the entry of all Muslims into the United States.

“The New York real estate magnate also announced that he would nominate Marine General James Mattis — calling him “Mad Dog Mattis” — to be his secretary of defence.

Noting an attack on the Ohio State University campus in Columbus earlier this week by a Somali immigrant, Trump said such threats against Americans were “created by our very, very stupid politicians; refugee programmes.”

In order to keep the United States safe from further attacks, Trump said he will suspend immigration “from regions where it cannot be safely processed,” including some countries in the Middle East.

“People are pouring in from regions of the Middle East. We have no idea who they are, where they come from, what they’re thinking and we’re going to stop that dead in its tracks,” Trump said.

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UN chief sorry for UN role in deadly Haiti cholera outbreak

UNITED NATIONS — Outgoing United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon apologized to the people of Haiti on Thursday for the world body’s role in a deadly cholera outbreak that has killed more than 9,300 people and was blamed on Nepali U.N. peacekeepers.

Haiti was free of cholera until 2010, when the peacekeepers dumped infected sewage into a river. The United Nations does not accept legal responsibility for the outbreak of the disease that causes uncontrollable diarrhea and has sickened 800,000 people.

But for the first time, Ban said sorry.

“The United Nations deeply regrets the loss of life and suffering caused by the cholera outbreak,” Ban told the 193-member U.N. General Assembly in Creole, French and English. “We apologize to the Haitian people.”

“We simply did not do enough with regard to the cholera outbreak and its spread in Haiti. We are profoundly sorry for our role,” said Ban, who steps down at the end of 2016 after two five-year terms.

While Ban acknowledged that the outbreak was “a blemish on the reputation of U.N. peacekeeping,” he did not specifically say that U.N. troops were responsible for bringing the water-borne disease to Haiti.

An independent panel appointed by Ban issued a 2011 report that did not determine conclusively how cholera was introduced to Haiti.

However, in 2013 the panel members independently published an article that concluded personnel associated with the U.N. peacekeeping mission were “the most likely source.”

“As a father and grandfather, I feel tremendous heartache at the pain so many families have had to endure. I will never forget it,” Ban said on Thursday of a visit to Haiti.

A U.S. federal appeals court upheld the United Nations’ immunity in August after a lawsuit was filed in the United States on behalf of cholera victims. Deputy U.N. Secretary-General Jan Eliasson told reporters on Thursday that the court decision had allowed Ban to apologize before the end of his term.

On Thursday Ban also outlined a new approach to try and wipe out cholera in the Caribbean country. The United Nations hopes to raise $200 million for families and communities worst-affected by the disease outbreak.

Ban described it as “a concrete expression of the regret of our organisation for the suffering,” proposing that material assistance and support be based on priorities established in consultation with communities, victims and their families.

A U.N. special advisor David Nabarro said in October that raising those funds through contributions would be “highly unlikely.”

The General Assembly could instead be asked to add the cost to the U.N. budget, which is paid through assessed contributions.

“Without your political will and financial support, we have only good intentions and words,” Ban told the General Assembly. A further $200 million would be raised to fund rapid response teams and build water and sanitation systems in a country where only a quarter of Haitians have toilets and half have access to clean drinking water.

Nabarro noted on Thursday that the cholera in Haiti had spread to the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, but those countries had been able to wipe it out. — Reuters

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Sharks and jellyfish slow British man’s attempt to swim Atlantic

DAKAR — A British man aiming to be the first person to swim across the Atlantic said on Thursday he is grappling with sharks, jellyfish stings, choppy water — and a sea moth that tried to nest in his left ear.

Ex-police officer Ben Hooper, 38, says he embarked on the nearly 2,000 mile (3,200 km) crossing from Senegal to Brazil to prove that nothing is impossible, inspired by explorers like Randolph Fienes, who crossed the Antarctic on foot.

But since setting out on 13 November he has only swum 67 nautical miles, meaning that at the current rate he will not arrive until early 2018, many months behind schedule. A former crew member said a support vessel had only packed food for 140 days.

“Yes, this is far tougher than envisaged,” said Hooper in a Facebook post. “Jellyfish sting me repeatedly every day and we have now seen sharks on two confirmed occasions,” he said, adding that he remained committed to swimming every mile.

Hooper told Reuters in an interview shortly before his departure that he had repelled made from rotting shark cartilage which is supposed to keep them at bay. — Reuters

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV GOLDEN TRADER VOY. NO (481)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV GOLDEN TRADER VOY. NO (481) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-4 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: 2301928

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV NO INNWA STAR VOY. NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV NO INNWA STAR VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of OEA/MITT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: 2301185

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MCC HA LONG VOY. NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC HA LONG VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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Phone No: 2301185
**First Hollywood entertainment tech festival held in Los Angeles**

LOS ANGELES — The first Hollywood Entertainment Technology Festival was held Thursday, focusing on innovation.

The festival gathered over 30 entertainment and technology companies and venture funds representatives together with film and entertainment-related teachers and students.

The festival was jointly hosted by Hanhai Studio, a Burbank-based Chinese invested company, and the Los Angeles Film School. “Hollywood has many high-tech ways of story-telling, and I believe, to combine the good technologies with Chinese 5,000 years of culture and history, there will come out some good stories,” Wang Hanguang, CEO of Hanhai Studio, told Xinhua.

“It’s an exciting time in our industry,” said Diana Deryn, president and CEO of The Los Angeles Film School.

“The ties between Hollywood and China are expected to grow in the future, and the Los Angeles Film School is looking forward to future cross-cultural collaborations. Being a part of this international business movement will benefit our students both here and abroad,” she said.—Xinhua

**‘La La Land’ leads Critics Choice, wins over New York film critics**

LOS ANGELES — “La La Land,” a modern-day musical love story of two struggling artists in Los Angeles, cemented its Hollywood awards season front-runner status on Thursday by simultaneously leading the nominees for Critics’ Choice Awards and being named best picture by New York film critics.

“La La Land” scored 12 Critics Choice nominations, including best picture, best actress for Emma Stone, best actor for Ryan Gosling and best director and screenplay for Damien Chazelle.

Sci-fi drama “Arrival” and independent drama “Moonlight” both landed 10 nominations each, including in the best picture race, as well as best director for Denis Villeneuve and Barry Jenkins respectively.

The New York Film Critics Awards, a separate critics organisation, named its 2016 winners on Thursday, with “La La Land” taking best picture. Jenkins was named best director.

The Critics’ Choice Awards are chosen by the 300-plus members of the Broadcast Film Critics Association (BFCA). Winners will be announced at a televised ceremony held in the Los Angeles coastal town of Santa Monica on 11 December.

Both the New York Film Critics and BFCA members rarely cross over into the film Academy and industry guilds that picks nominees and winners for the majority of Hollywood’s awards shows, but the critics’ awards help to build buzz for potential Oscar front-runners.

Also in the Critics Choice best picture race is Denzel Washington’s “Fences,” Mel Gibson’s war drama “Hacksaw Ridge,” crime thriller “Hell or High Water,” adoption tale “Lion,” “Loving,” about an interracial married couple, family grief drama “Manchester by the Sea,” and Clint Eastwood’s “Sully.”


The Critics Choice Awards divides the movie categories across drama, comedy, action, animated and sci-fi/horror, to include the bigger budget studio films sometimes overlooked during awards season.

In the action movie categories, superhero films “Captain America: Civil War,” “Deadpool” and “Doctor Strange” will compete against “Jason Bourne” and “Hacksaw Ridge.”— Reuters

**Salman to appear on 100th episode of ‘Koffee With Karan’**

MUMBAI — Superstar Salman Khan will be the guest on the 100th episode of celebrity chat show “Koffee With Karan” along with his brothers Arbaaz and Sohail.

The 50-year-old actor took to Twitter to share a picture from the sets of the show hosted by filmmaker Karan Johar.

“At Koffee with Khan shoot #koffeecentury,” Salman captioned the photo which features him along with his brothers and Johar.

While Salman, Sohail and Johar were dressed in black, Arbaaz opted for blue blazer and teamed it up with denims.

This is the second time the “Sultan” star will appear on the show. Last season he was the guest at the first episode.— PTI

**‘Fast and Furious’ stars pay tribute to Paul Walker**

LONDON — Actor Paul Walker’s “Fast and Furious” co-stars, including Vin Diesel, Tyrese Gibson, Rapper Ludacris and Jordana Brewster have paid tribute to him on his death anniversary.

The late actor, who starred as Brian O’Conner in the action film franchise, tragically died at the age of 40 in 2013 after his car crashed into a lamp post and burst into flames.

Diesel paid his respects, opting to simply change his Facebook cover picture to an image of himself and Walker.

While, Gibson, who played Romance Pierce in “2 Fast 2 Furious”, hailed him the “nicest” person and asked people to pray for his family.

Alongside a montage of Walker’s photos posted on Instagram, he wrote, “This week is always rough for those of us who really knew him personally. ‘Nov 30th we lost an angel!’ Paul treated everyone with the utmost respect and went out of his way to make everyone feel like they mattered..... I love you and I miss you dearly.

We simply ask of you prayer warriors around the world pray for his daughter our niece Meadow Walker.”

Ludacris also shared a touching tribute to the late actor, sharing a photo of him, with the message “Always in our hearts.”

Brewster also wrote, “Love you forever, miss you forever (sic).”—PTI

**Selena Gomez becomes Instagram’s most-followed celebrity**

LOS ANGELES — Selena Gomez overtook Taylor Swift as the most-followed celebrity on Instagram, as two of pop’s leading women once again dominated the social networking site in 2016.

In Instagram’s annual rankings released Thursday, Gomez was the most-followed celebrity with 103 million followers, while Swift was second with 93.9 million.

Ariana Grande and Beyonce came in third and fourth with 89.6 million and 88.9 million followers respectively, while reality TV star Kim Kardashian took fifth place with 88.2 million followers.

All five women were the top-followed Instagram accounts last year as well, but the order shifted as Kardashian dropped from second to fifth.

“Same Old Love” singer Gomez, 24, also had the most-liked celebrity photo and video on Instagram, and was the most-mentioned artist on the social media network.

‘Hip hop’ was the most-buzzed about US music hashtag during the year on Instagram, and key top moments included tributes pouring in for David Bowie after he died in January, and fans mourning Prince after his sudden death in April.

Facebook Inc-owned Instagram, which is centered on users sharing photos and videos, has grown to more than 500 million global users this year.

Instagram’s year-end statistics spanned across a variety of categories, such as the ‘most-instagrammed’ day of 2016 — Halloween — and the most-used emoji in posts, which was the heart emoji.—Reuters

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Hiroshima Carp’s ‘kamitteru’ feat shines as Japan’s 2016 top buzzword

NEW YORK — Muhammad Ali’s fight gloves and a box of cigars autographed by the Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro are among some of the highlights in an auction of memorabilia steeped in sporting history.

Ali’s gloves from the 1970 match at Madison Square Gardens in which he defeated Oscar Bonavenia are expected to fetch upwards of $60,000, auctioneer Darren Julien of Julien’s Auctions in New York City said Wednesday.

The items are among the top draws at the “Icons and Idols: Sports 2016” auction that will be held in Los Angeles on Saturday and will feature more than 500 lots of sports memorabilia, from baseball to racing.

The Ali items come from photographer Bingham, and include both personal and professional items of the late boxing legend, who died in June at age 74, after a long battle with Parkinson’s syndrome.

TOKYO — The Hiroshima Carp hit yet another home run as “kamitteru,” a coined word that means being godlike or superhuman, which was used to describe the baseball team’s feat this season, was selected as Japan’s top buzzword in 2016, the award’s organiser said on Thursday.

The word highlights the Carp’s achievements, including winning their first Central League pennant in 25 years on 10 September and finishing the season with a 17.5-game lead over the runner-up Yomiuri Giants.

Hiroshima manager Koichi Ogata renewed the trend of using the term in June when he described Seiya Suzuki’s performance as “kamitteru” after the outfielder hit sayonara home runs, or walk-off home runs, in two consecutive games against the Orix Buffaloes.

The expression, which had already been used mainly among young people for years, became even more popular after Ogata used it and the second-year manager described the entire ballclub as “kamitteru” at the end of the season.

This is the second straight year in which a top buzzword in Japan was related to baseball, with last year’s co-winner being “triple three,” used to describe a player posting at least a 300 batting average with 30 steals and 30 homers in a season, after two players achieved the feat in 2015.

Among the top 10 this year was “Trump gensho” (Trump phenomenon), “PPAP,” and “Pokemon Go,” reflecting trending topics in Japan and worldwide.

The word refers to US President Donald Trump, known for his inflammatory remarks during his presidential campaign, and “PPAP,” pertaining to the addictive, viral hit “Pe-Pineapple-Apple-Pen,” written and performed by Japanese comedian Piko Taro.

—Kyodo News

Ali’s boxing gloves, Fidel Castro cigars highlight sports auction

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—Kyodo News

NEW YORK — Buzz Aldrin, the former US astronaut and the second person to walk on the moon, was in stable condition after being evacuated from the South Pole to a New Zealand hospital because of a medical problem, a US agency and his tour company said.

Aldrin, 86, arrived by cargo plane in Christchurch, New Zealand, early on Friday local time, according to the US National Science Foundation, which manages the US Antarctic Program.

He was visiting the South Pole as part of a tour group when his condition deteriorated, the tourism company White Desert said in a statement.

Aldrin had fluid in his lungs but was in good spirits and responding well to antibiotics, the company said. He would be kept in the hospital for observation. Aldrin was a fighter pilot during the Korean War before joining the US astronaut programme. On 20 July 1969, he stopped on the moon about 20 minutes after Neil Armstrong had taken the historic first step.

Their moonwalk was part of the Apollo 11 lunar landing watched by a then-record television audience of 600 million people. Aldrin last year helped to launch a research institute at the Florida Institute of Technology aimed at paving a path toward Mars exploration and settlement. On Tuesday, he wore a T-shirt saying “Destination: Mars” as he prepared for the trip to Antarctica, according to photographs on his Twitter account.

—Reuters
Emirati Abdurrahman named Asia Player of the Year

Abu Dhabi when he was won Asia’s Player of the Year award ahead of Japan and Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya striker Hammadi Ahmed and China and Shanghai SIPG forward Wu Lei.

“It is a great achievement to have been given this honour,” the UAE international told reporters.

“This is a big achievement for the UAE football team and I am proud to represent my country,” he added.

Senegal’s Pape Souare (R) fights for the ball with UAE’s Omar Abdurrahman during their Men’s first round Group A preliminary soccer match in the London 2012 Olympic Games at the City of Coventry stadium, on 1 August 2012. Photo: REUTERS

Zidane and Luis Enrique get little credit despite feats

BARCELONA — Despite being former fellow heroes for the clubs they now manage, Barcelona coach Luis Enrique and his Real Madrid counterpart Zinedine Zidane have been accused of failing to perform at their best this season.

The duo famously clashed on the pitch in a heated ‘Clasico’ in 2003 when Zidane grabbed Luis Enrique’s face following a tackle from Barca’s midfielder. Zidane went 39 games without defeat.

Zidane has also won more in his first 33 games than any other man in the history of La Liga, but doubts still hang over his true abilities as a coach.

Zidane came in for plenty of criticism after Real drew four games in a row earlier in the campaign, being accused of failing to get the better of opponents. Despite the criticism, Real maintain their lead at the top of La Liga come the weekend.

The Catalans have won nine out of 11 competitions entered under his guidance, the crowning jewel being the 2015 Champions League.

A lot of the credit for those triumphs has not gone to the coach, however, and Barca’s defender Mascherano said that he scored 131 goals last season and 122 in their first campaign altogether.

As the magic of the trio has faded, this season, with Barca registering their worst points total at the same stage of the season since 2004, there has been a clamour in the Catalan media for a change in the team’s style of play in order to exert greater control in midfield.

The threat of Real marching nine points clear at the top of La Liga come Saturday evening will certainly test the mettle of both coaches but whichever team wins the Clasico neither Luis Enrique nor Zidane will expect much adulation from the media the morning after. — Reuters

2024 bid cities upbeat on costs as Tokyo struggles

The logo of the Paris candidacy for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games is pictured in Paris, France, on 17 February 2016. Photo: REUTERS

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In less than 11 months since succeeding Rafael Benitez, Zidane has revitalised a side that had become stale. He won the Champions League last season and has taken Real six points clear at the top of the league in this campaign.

Under the Frenchman in September, Real equalled the Liga record of 16 consecutive wins set by Barcelona in 2011 and they are two games from equalling the club’s longest-ever unbeaten streak of 34 games, which dates back to 1988/90.

Luis Enrique’s side go into the Nou Camp clash on Saturday knowing that they need to avoid defeat to move further clear of second-placed Atletico Madrid’s nine out of 11 competitions entered under his guidance, the crowning jewel being the 2015 Champions League.

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