Daw Aung San Suu Kyi: rural citizens are country’s backbone

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi spoke to youths from rural areas of Myanmar yesterday, stressing their importance in the path toward peace and calling them the “backbone of the country”, noting that those in rural areas make up 70 per cent of the nation’s population.

The talk with the youths took place yesterday at Myanmar International Convention Centre 2 in Nay Pyi Taw, where the State Counsellor told the youths that the peace talks were always open to the groups that had not signed the peace agreement, but that it was not possible to wait for all to sign in order to hold the second Panglong peace conference.

“The groups who have already signed can be involved fully,” the State Counsellor said.

Gov’t confirms plans to enact commission recommendations

The recently appointed National Security Advisor U Thaung Tun yesterday reaffirmed the Union government’s commitment to implement the large majority of the recommendations promptly in northern Rakhine and reiterated that there was no ethnic cleansing against the Muslims community there.

At a briefing to representatives from the diplomatic corps and UN Specialized Agencies in Yangon yesterday, the National Security Advisor referred to the State Counsellor’s recent interview with the BBC and restated the government’s stand on and commitments to the peace and national reconciliation in Rakhine State. He also recalled progress made by the government during a year in office as well as the priorities and the future direction for the country.

He also stated that a few of the recommendations would be contingent upon the situation on the ground, but said there would be speedy progress.

Speaking to diplomats in Yangon yesterday, the National Security Adviser also highlighted a number of positive developments in the conflict areas in northern Rakhine, disclosing that the government is working to close down camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kyaukpyu, Sittwe and Ramree.

Responding to the allegations of human rights violations, he updated the efforts of the Investigation Commission. He mentioned the latest visits conducted by commission members to affected areas in Rakhine and Cox’s Bazaar in Bangladesh. He reiterated that the government would take firm action in accordance with the law if there is clear evidence of wrongdoing.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to youths from rural areas of Myanmar at MICC-2 in Nay Pyi Taw. Photo: MNA

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Daw Aung San Suu Kyi: rural citizens are country’s backbone

The most important thing is to exchange views and negotiate on different views. They have the right to see things differently, but have a responsibility to adjust. So that we can get peace based on different views and can make the same goals for peace.

The region we’re living in doesn’t have the smell of gunpowder or the sound of firearms but my heart aches for our brethren. Our heart aches when a Shan suffers. Our heart aches when a Kayin suffers. Our heart aches when our ethnic brethren all over Myanmar suffers. There are those who fled the region, both legally and illegally, due to war or failure in their agricultural work. Appointing graduated ethnic youths in government departments can influence other ethnic brethren to contribute to peace efforts too. I believe the union government will be able to fulfill this.

In concluding, the State Counsellor encouraged everyone to work toward peace without giving up by seeking solutions and by questioning and listening to each other until arriving upon a solution. “I trust in success because of the strength of the people”, she said.—Myanmar News Agency
President U Htin Kyaw arrives back from China

A Myanmar delegation led by President U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin left Beijing yesterday morning and arrived in Kunming, Yunnan Province at 12:30 pm local standard time, where Mr Chen Hao, Vice Governor of Yunnan Province and Kunming-based Myanmar Consul-General U Soe Paing welcomed them at the airport.

The president received Mr Chen Hao, Party Secretary of Yunnan Province at Haigeng Garden Hotel and attended a luncheon hosted by Mr Chen Hao. In the afternoon, the president and his team visited Stone Forest, a famous site in Yunnan Province.

The Stone Forest is a collection of naturally occurring limestone pillars that resemble a forest of trees 96,000 acres. The stones have lasted for millions of years and were once under water. The stones emerged as they are seen today when the sea levels went down.

The president and entourage were welcomed by Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, U Thant Sin Maung, Union Minister for Transport and Communications, Dr Myo Aung, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council and wife, the Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, Mr Chen Chen, charge d affaires of Chinese Embassy in Myanmar and responsible persons at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport.—Myanmar News Agency

Rakhine State Chief Minister meets Maungtaw residents, inspects land reclamation tasks

A meeting between the Rakhine State government and local people took place at Thiri Mingalar Hall in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State yesterday morning. Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu made an opening address and was briefed about the socioeconomic status of the region and was brought up to date on the economic, road transportation and regional development tasks by the local people. Rakhine State cabinet members and officials gave sector-wise clarifications regarding the necessities presented by the local people.

Then, the state chief minister and officials presented fiber boats, life jackets, relief items, bags of rice and Gazi-branded water tanks through Township Administrator U Myint Khaing, who expressed words of thanks. Afterward, the State chief minister and party inspected land reclamation tasks with the use of heavy machinery in Wabeik Village, Kyeekanpyin Village-tract and proceeded to Myinlut Town to examine construction of new buildings and arrangements made to establish a new village in Kyaukpan Village-tract.—Yamanya

Fifteen people detained for illegal entry into Myanmar

EARLIER this month, security forces patrolling along the sea coast apprehended a vessel carrying 15 people who the authorities say had illegally entered Myanmar’s territorial waters in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State and placed them under arrest.

The Stone Forest is a tourist destination and attracts foreigners for its mysterious natural beauty. There are also extraordinary rock caves and beautiful wide lakes in the Stone Forest.

In the evening, the president and party left Kunming International Airport for Nay Pyi Taw by special flight and arrived at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport at 6 pm.

The president and entourage were welcomed by Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, U Thant Sin Maung, Union Minister for Transport and Communications, Dr Myo Aung, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council and wife, the Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, Mr Chen Chen, charge d affaires of Chinese Embassy in Myanmar and responsible persons at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport.—Myanmar News Agency

Former ten-household head missing in Maungtaw Township

A FORMER ten-household head in Kunthibin Village, Maungtaw Township in Rakhine State has been missing since Monday.

Mawpee Amlaung, 40, a former ten-household head, departed his house at 3 pm on Monday to catch shrimp and did not return. His wife Sarika Bakon filed a case at the local police station and the investigation is ongoing.—Myanmar News Agency

Gov’t confirms plans to enact . . .

Lockdown procedures were extended for three more months on the YBS bus line, according to an official from Yangon Region Transport Authority.

Although authorities previously announced that buses made before 1995 would have to deregister no later than 16 April, the deregistration period has been extended for three months because of a shortage of new buses.

Under the latest announcement, buses made before 1995 will have to leave the YBS line starting on 15 July.

The 1995 model CNG passenger buses Dynas and BMs have been issued with car import slips since November, 2016. A total of over 1,000 vehicles have already been issued with the slips as of yesterday. —200

The National Security Advisor provided an update on the progress made in healthcare, education, infrastructure and electricity, and highlighted the measures taken by the government in response to recommendations in the interim report published by the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State.

He emphasised that criminal acts to instill terror in the population cannot be condoned under any circumstances and that any attempt to sow the seeds of terror in one country can affect the peace and stability of the region and beyond.

He expressed appreciation to the donor countries and international organisations for their assistance and expressed the hope that international community would continue to provide understanding and constructive support for the government’s endeavor to build peace, justice and development for all the people living in Rakhine.—Myanmar News Agency

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Under ‘95 model buses granted 3-month extension

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SHWEDAGON Pagoda, the most famous pilgrimage site in Myanmar, was visited by more than 64,000 foreign travellers last month, an increase of over 5,500 visitors when compared with the similar period of last year, according to the Pagoda Board of Trustees. In March 2016, the Pagoda handled over 58,000 foreigners.

Pagoda authorities collected more than Ks510 million plus US$360 entrance fees and Ks9,400 donated by international tourists, mostly from neighbouring Thailand.

According to statistics of the Pagoda authorities, about 15,000 Thais, 6,229 Chinese, about 4,500 Koreans, 3,293 Japanese and 3,153 French visitors, as well as a few Chilean, Serbsian, Pakistanis, Czechs and Israelis, visited Shwedagon Pagoda in March alone. A collective blood donation activity will take place at the Pagoda on the first day of the Myanmar New Year, which falls on 17 April, with the Pagoda authorities inviting people to participate in the blood contribution for people in need.

Yangon’s most famous landmark is crowded every day with a large number of devotees and merit makers who walk around the stupas and make offerings to the Buddha statues. For foreign visitors, it is a great place to enjoy observing Myanmar’s cultural standard through ancient architectures. The Shwedagon Pagoda is situated at Singuttara Hill, Shwedagon Pagoda Road, Dagon Township, downtown Yangon, just west of Kandawgyi Lake.

16-bed station hospital to be built in Dabayin township

The government will build a 16-bed station hospital at Songon village, Dabayin township, Sagaing region in the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

Sonong villager Daw Ma Ngo donated a five-acre plot of land while the U Myint Hsau and Daw Khin San Hlaing family donated Ks 3.5 million for the construction of the hospital. Over 16,000 family members from 2,600 households are living in 17 villages in Dabayin township. These villages are less developed villages. The villagers can receive health care provided by local health personnel only. Hlutaw representatives and public officials inspected these villages and confirmed the necessity for better health care. Hlutaw representatives then arranged to build the 16-bed station hospital at the centre of these 17 villages.

The 16-bed station hospital will be built with an aim to provide better health care to the villagers.

Over 64,000 tourists visited Shwedagon Pagoda last month

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Prize presentation for winners of painting contest

THE prize presentation ceremony for winners of a painting competition jointly organised by the Taunggo District Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) and the Township Artists and Sculptors’ Association was held at the district public library in Taunggo on Sunday.

The competition was held with a view to stimulating the imagination of the children and enriching their general knowledge.

At the ceremony, Daw Thandar Lin, the head of the township IPRD, explained the aim of the competition. Artist Ko Chan Aye from the Township Artists and Sculptors’ Association presented his assessments of the paintings. Then the prizes were presented to the winners. Well-wishers donated Ks50,000 for the development of the library.

The ceremony was attended by about 60 people from the township women affairs committee, township maternal and childcare association, Township Artists and Sculptors’ Association, students, parents and teachers. Books, journals and newspapers were exhibited by the district IPRD with the pamphlets distributed to the attendees.

New cyclone shelters in Kayin State

NEW cyclone shelters will be built in Hlaingbwe and Hpa-an townships in Kayin State, southern Myanmar, to provide protection to residents from natural disasters, according to Kayin State government.

People residing in Hlaingbwe Township and Hpa-an, the capital town of the state, are vulnerable to natural disasters, including cyclones.

The two towns yearly experience flooding in June, July and August due to heavy rain. The new 60x60x28-feet cyclone facility in Hlaingbwe Township is designed to accommodate more than 400 people, while another shelter in Hpa-an Township can house approximately 400 people.

The National Natural Disaster Management Committee (NNDMC) allocated Ks118 million for the project to be implemented in Kamawkachu Village in Hlaingbwe Township and a further Ks116.8 million for another project on Kyain Ale Street in Ward-1 in Hpa-an Township.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the project in Hlaingbwe Township was recently held in the designated area. State authorities also inspected the project area in the town of Hpa-an to start construction.

Upon completion of the new schemes, emergency disaster management training and activities are planned for both cyclone facilities.

AUTHORITIES seized beer from China and other goods which were being sold without paying customs duties at Yangon checkpoint, Hseinwi township, Shan State (North) on 4 April.

The businessmen bought Chinese beer and other goods with custom duties unpaid to sell them during the Water Festival.

“We started checking at the checkpoint at 1 am. We seized the Chinese-made beers at 2am which had customs duties unpaid. They were covered with packages of instant noodles on which duty had been paid. We gave them back the instant noodles for which customs duties had been paid”, said U Tet Tun Aung, deputy director from the customs department.

Chinese-made beers sell well during the water festival as they are cheap. Also, they can be bought everywhere. So the beers are entering from China as well as drugs,” said U Myo Thant, a local resident from Lashio.

Moreover, motorbikes, bags and clothes were seized at Yangon checkpoint.

Beer and goods sold without paying customs duties seized

**Forty FDI proposals still to be verified according to old law**

FORTY proposals of foreign direct investment (FDI) submitted under the old foreign investment law amounting to over US$2 billion still need to be verified, said an official from the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The DICA will verify all current and future FDI proposals with the new foreign investment law that was enacted on 1 April, according to Myanmar Investment Commission media conference.

“We are trying to verify and approve the 40 proposals submitted according to the old foreign investment law. We will verify and approve these proposals as soon as possible. But we will apply the new policy from now on,” said U Aung Naing Oo, Director-General of DICA.

To encourage foreign direct investments in underdeveloped regions, DICA will grant tax holidays to FDIs in investment zones. Zone 1 will be granted a tax holiday of seven years, Zone 2 for five years and Zone 3 for three years.

The Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) has approved 1,135 foreign businesses that brought US$6.61 billion and 49 local companies which earned Ks13.8 trillion during this fiscal year.

**An official performing the groundbreaking ceremony for the project in Hlaingbwe Township. PHOTO: NAY MYO LIN (IPRD)**
MRTV announces content providers for Digital Free-to-Air of its Multi-Channel Playout System

List of Content Providers for Digital Free-to-Air channels in Multi-Channel Playout System of MRTV

1. Invitations were sent out to 42 companies/entities that passed the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage to submit a Request for Proposal (RFP) as Service Providers for 5 Free-to-Air Channels in Multi-Channel Playout System of MRTV.
2. Of the 42 companies/entities that passed the EOI stage, 29 submitted RPF. Consultant Tun Group Asia Limited conducted selection in stages and announced on 3 February 2017 on the selection of 10 companies/entities as preliminary Content Providers.
3. The 10 selected companies/entities were individually assessed for transparency, strong financial investment situation, legal background history and conformance to policy guide-

Commerce ministry continues efforts to enter foreign markets

THE Commerce Ministry exerted efforts for the country’s exports to attain more market shares in foreign countries, it is learnt. The delegation led by officials from the Commerce Ministry and entrepreneurs went to visit the U.S., Switzerland, South Korea, China, Thailand, Italy, Viet Nam, India and Japan in order to achieve more export markets and produce value-added agricultural products. The concerted efforts are being made with a view to tripling export volume. External trade with foreign partners in the incumbent government period has risen by over US$1 billion from fiscal year 2015-2016.

The Commerce Ministry hopes to increase the export earnings by laying down the six main objectives: trade promotion; trade facilitation; trade negotiation; trade liberalisation; trade education and consumer protection, according to its one-year performance. Myanmar is also making efforts to enhance re-export trade and grant permits for more items, negotiating with the departments concerned. Sugar, betel nut, fuel oil, clothes, garlic, sesame seeds, dried pepper, peanuts, cotton, electrical appliances, beverages, food, edible oil, and tyres are re-exported. The country earns more revenue from re-export trade with the increase in trade volume.

The Commerce Ministry will also verify and approve the proposals concerning the commodities which can be re-exported, it is learnt.—Ko Khant

Commercial tax on gold purchases to start this month

IN a bid to levy a commercial tax on gold purchases, a stamp duty will be issued at the end of April, said an official from the Internal Revenue Department.

Previously, a five per cent commercial tax was paid by the gold shops. Now, one per cent of the tax will be imposed on gold buyers. The gold and jewellery shops have not collected the tax yet, it is learnt. The aforementioned department is preparing for printing of stamp duty so as to ensure strict adherence to tax rules. The tax collected by the shops will be received by the government as revenue which will be applied to infrastructural improvements to benefit the public, he added.

If the taxation affixing a stamp on receipt comes into force, the sales tax can be levied on the actual total amount of sales.—Ko Khant

5,000 tonnes of grapes to be purchased for new winery

FIVE thousand tonnes of grapes will be bought at the end of April for a wine factory which will be opened in Nay Pyi Taw, said Ko Hlaing Hlaing Tun, the vineyard owner from Yamethin Township, Mandalay Region.

“This wine factory will be opened in Nay Pyi Taw at the end of April. An experimental production run resulted in a fruitful result, so we planned to purchase the grapes in order to come into operation”, Ko Hlaing Hlaing Tun said.

“We will buy the grapes from Alekon and Ywatan village tracts for the factory. The wine produced from this plan is target-
ed to place on foreign markets. The grape price is possibly to remain stable due to the demand from the wine market, unlike the declining market last year”, he continued.

The prevailing market price of grapes per viss is Ks2,000 for Bq variety and Ks3,000 for Bb variety. The price is likely to ascend. The yield this year declined against that of last year because of heavy precipitation before harvest time.

The price of grapes is usually on the decline in the rainy season. The price plunged down to below Ks1,500 to Ks2,000 per viss with the possibly stable market, it is learnt.—Ko Khant

External trade value up by over US$1 billion during last FY

EXTERNAL trade with foreign partners in the current fiscal year climbed up to US$28.80 billion, an increase of US$1.08 billion compared to that of the previous year, according to the official statistics provided by the Commerce Ministry.

The country is conducting foreign trade through border camps and normal trade. Normal trade performed better, with trade values of US$21.37 billion, than the trade values via border trade camps of US$7.43 billion.

Export value last year totalled US$11.62 billion, whereas import value amounted to US$17.18 billion. Imports surpassed exports last year, resulting in a trade deficit of US$5.56 billion.


The government is putting forth concerted efforts so as to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items, except for essentials, according to the second five-year National Development Plan. —Ko Khant
Political Scenario In One Year Together With The People

One year term from the inception of elected new government has ended leaving some voices of disapprovals on one side and satisfying remarks on other side among the people. The government understand those complaints against the incumbent government come from their dissatisfied feelings on the performance of the government as they still could not have seen their life better than before till the end of one year period under the new government.

Region and State governments are slammed by the people of their regions and states. Especially, Yangon Region government is the most stricken by the broadside of the people. However it is unfair to blame the incumbent government for the unsatisfactory result of their effort in sorting out the messy tangle that has amassed for many years by a series of social, economic and political blunders made by previous governments.

When the incumbent government tried to change the system that people had abhorred for a long time it was found difficult to do successfully because they had to restrain their action on encountering the politically sensitive and touchy issues in the course of their endeavor. People were dissatisfied with the performances of the new government that they thought did not reach their expectation.

However, despite high criticism people made, they still harbored their trust and support for the government since they thought the incumbent government was fighting against systems that people had abhorred for a long time. It was found difficult to do successfully because they had to restrain their action on encountering the politically sensitive and touchy issues in the course of their endeavor. People were dissatisfied with the performances of the new government that they thought did not reach their expectation. However, despite high criticism people made, they still harbored their trust and support for the government since they thought the incumbent government was fighting against systems that people had abhorred for a long time.

Beginning from people uprising:

When we talk about the November 2015 general election, we need consider a great milestone of the history registering people uprising in 1988 calling for the emergence of a democratic nation. The people had suffered utter oppression under the dictatorial regime for many years and when it came to unbearable stage in all aspects, people from all walks of life, noble and common, took to the road to demonstrate their wish to force out the oppressive system and put democracy in place and for a democratic state to emerge. The 1988 political uprising had paved the way to the emergence of a democratic nation and generated a political party by the name of National League for Democracy (NLD).

The NLD party was born of the people, endured the hardship together with the people, grew and became invincible solidified party. Now, although NLD party can grasp the state power after landslide victory in 2015 general election, the party leaders never enjoy the special privilege apart from their official provisions and they are still struggling to get out of the difficulties and crises together with the people.

The incumbent governments, is now trying to solve the problems calmly step by step at their utmost capacity but within a prevailing parameter.

People’s government and the challenges

Landslide victory in 2015 general elections indicated the massive support of the people to NLD party. Despite winning the heart and soul of the people together with their support NLD government cannot undertake their tasks at full throttle on account of the lack of sincere political atmosphere where there are many political contradictions that hamper the system-changing process of NLD government during the first year of its tenure. However NLD party can resolve the major challenges to some extent in a calm and clever way. NLD proclaimed in election campaign to amend the Constitution, to cease the civil war, to secure the peace and stability, to boost the national economy to promote education and health care, to alleviate poverty and to create more job opportunities as primary and priority task. The new government will be realized by the incumbent government without failure as they are campaign promises of theory, though how much difficult they achieve them.

The chaos, a vicious legacies left by the previous government, are more deeply entangled than we thought. The mission to sort out this chaos in such a gloomy political atmosphere is a very delicate task. A false step can ignite a disastrous consequences. Most of the people, understanding the difficult position of NLD are cooperating and supporting the party though they are not happy with the performance of party and its government in some respects.

Strength born out of difficulties and crises

The incumbent governments, is now trying to solve the problems calmly step by step at their utmost capacity but within a prevailing parameter. It seems the government is now on the right track advancing steadily in tackling the chaotic problems. Furthermore, the continued encouraging support of the international government institutions and non-government organizations since the time of 1988 political uprising engender the resilient strength for the NLD government.

To take time to change

According to the words of Ambassador of Ireland to Myanmar spoken at the political dialogue program of Myanmar National TV held on 7 January 2017, Ireland attained independence in 1922 and soon after the independence civil war broke out in Ireland. After stamping out the civil war rehabilitation works were carried out. Ireland, then was the poorest country in Europe. Citizens of Ireland had to work hard in other countries like America, England and even to Asian countries.

In 1973 Ireland became an EU nation and saw many changes in economy and now Ireland can stand as a developed and prosperous country. He continued, “Last year, Myanmar held the election successfully and Ireland and EU countries welcome heartily the transforming process to democratic institution.

Naturally transformation from one system to another has to take time. We also took time to change. We also had difficulties and hardships in the course of transforming the nation.

We had civil war and we had to take time to over-come the difficult times. Endeavor for economic development also needs time.”

He then said, “Myanmar has, now, the Myanmar Investment Law that certainly can attract the foreign investors and more and more foreign tourists are also coming. It is a common experience to have obstacles doing something new. We are very enthusiastic to share our experience to Myanmar in building a new economic structure and prosperous nation.

We have to create the job opportunities and potential for socioeconomic development. We also like to share our experience on how to overcome the conflicts and how to build the peace and stability in the country.”

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Political Scenario In One Year Together With The People

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The advice and experience sharing of a career diplomat is of much value for the new government of Myanmar. The Tatmadaw; ethnic forces; the National League for Democracy; the mother-party; and international relations are directly related to the political landscape arranged by the incumbent government.

Tatmadaw and Myanmar Politics

Since independence struggle, Tatmadaw was involved in many political activities throughout the history of anti-colonialism, anti-fascist and independent movements, the role of the Tatmadaw was of vital importance. General Aung San, who was still respected as the founder of the Tatmadaw, himself was politician and leader of the Tatmadaw and thus the history of relations between the Tatmadaw and Myanmar politics cannot be erased or altered.

The important fact which should not be neglected is that General Aung San, the founder of the Tatmadaw, was a politician. This politician who chose the armed struggle line had to found the Tatmadaw. After independence, leaders of the Tatmadaw founded political parties with the concept that engaging in the politics is a must for them.

It can be found that there is a thin line between the Tatmadaw founded by politicians and political parties who founded the Tatmadaw.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of democracy, is a daughter of General Aung San and she is built on love and kindness. She holds a positive attitude towards the Tatmadaw. She puts the national reconciliation at the top of her political agenda. Therefore, Tatmadaw is one of the most important figures in national reconciliation process. But, due to the limitation of the Constitution, it is under scrutiny by society.

As showing support for the Tatmadaw, the military leaders have laid the foundation to democracy. However, there are some heavy burdens and burdensome issues involved in Myanmar politics.

Anyhow, people are trustfully following the leadership of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be always with the people sharing their weal and woe. It is sure to see prosperous Myanmar in the near future.

Although there are some heavy burdens as amending constitution and cease fire, democracy foundation has been laid.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to students in a round-table discussion on a visit to Roosevelt High School in Washington, US, on 19 September 2016. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint shakes hands with Vice Chairman of People’s Assembly of Indonesia. PHOTO: MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaiing Than posing for a photo with Cambodian Ambassador. PHOTO: MNA

Change and the role of the Tatmadaw

To make a real change in Myanmar, Tatmadaw plays a vital role in the current political landscape. Political outlook and attitude and goodwill towards the people of Myanmar top military leaders are of most importance for all the conditions.

Although there are different views on the military leaders among all individuals in Myanmar, most of them accept the concept of “Leadership of Defence Leader” and they hope to see emergence of military leaders endowed with bright outlook for democracy.

She puts the national reconciliation at the top of her political agenda. Therefore, Tatmadaw is one of the most important figures in national reconciliation process.

Union Spirit

It will take time to remove the misunderstanding among ethnic groups on Eramar which is the result of a long civil war and incitement to racial and religious hatred. Therefore, a meaningful Union Spirit among all the nationalities is urgently required for building internal peace.

Such institutions as National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, the Peace Commission, Joint Committee for Union Peace Dialogue were reformed, reorganized and peace talks have been held simultaneously.

At the same time, human rights values are respected and regarding human rights issues, confrontations are avoided but applying positive engagements and cooperation. It may take time but can see a bright future for internal peace.

To become strong and consolidated political party

At the time when democracy forces, with the support of the people, have a chance to grab some powers, there exists numerous forces at home and abroad to do nation-building tasks but on the other hand, there also exists loopholes because weakness of unity within the party and unsystematic measures.

It can be seen that the party needs many leaders with gentlemen type who have a broad political outlook and who can organize a strong political party of the people. The most skilled politicians who are very useful for the nation as well as for the party seemed gone astray in foreign countries. They are to be reorganized systematically by the party.

Government and international relations

In the international view, Myanmar’s affair is very complicated. But, with the unified efforts these problems can be solved and national development can be achieved. This is the positive view.

As mentioned above, the National League for Democracy and its leaders have always sided with the people they have been steadfastly striving for ensuring democracy and human rights their lives. As a result, they win strong political support from international community.

As showing support for Myanmar’s democracy reform and human rights campaigns, the United States of America terminated National Emergency with respect to Myanmar and removed the sanctions with four President’s orders in October 2016.

European countries also contributed to the funds of peace. They shared experiences on peace process and arranged study tours for persons engaged in peace process.

During the visit of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to Japan, the host pledged to provide Yen 40 billion in five years for national reconciliation process and building democracy.

These are some examples. International community is keen to support Myanmar with goodwill and they also want to participate in democracy and human rights.

Together we shall build country of democracy

According to the nature of Myanmar, it is needed to study her political, economic and social affairs.

In retrospect, Myanmar’s development depends much on politics and this situation have existed for more than half century. Political instability caused power abuse, bribery, and seeking self-interests. This is the history that these situations have spoiled all economies and social standards of Myanmar.

It is safe to say that Myanmar has achieved political stability to some extent. Although there are some heavy burdens as amending constitution and cease fire, democracy foundation has been laid.

As said Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, people do not hesitate to make comment on government or its leaders. They are daring to express their opinion. Media gains freedom and transparency for a certain degree.

With political stability and the country is led by corruption-free leaders it is good foundations for building the nation.

As mentioned above, experts and skilled persons at home and abroad are to be organized. The main task the government should carry out is to purge the remnant naive and dishonest persons from the bureaucratic mechanism and also from the government.

Parties have been steadfastly striving for ensuring democracy and human rights their lives. As a result, they win strong political support from international community.
Etiqette in Japan

The reason for this is that the Japanese have a strong sense of tradition and respect for the past. They believe that the past is a source of wisdom and guidance for the present. This is reflected in their daily lives, where they follow a set of rules and customs that have been handed down through generations.

In Japanese society, people are expected to behave in a certain way in order to maintain social harmony and respect for others. This is known as “etiquette.”

There are many different types of etiquette in Japan, ranging from formal occasions such as weddings and funerals to everyday situations like sitting and standing manners. The rules for each situation are specific and can be quite complex.

One of the most important rules of etiquette in Japan is to show respect for seniors and show gratitude to others. This is reflected in the way people greet each other and the way they offer and accept gifts.

In addition to these formal etiquette rules, there are also many informal customs that are observed in Japanese society. For example, it is customary to say “Arigato” (thank you) after eating a meal, and to bow when entering or leaving a room.

The Japanese also take great care to maintain cleanliness and orderliness. This is reflected in the way people keep their homes and workplaces tidy, and in the way they follow rules for public spaces such as buses and trains.

One of the most important aspects of Japanese etiquette is the concept of “matsuri.” Matsuri are festivals or celebrations that take place throughout Japan, and they are an important part of Japanese culture.

In conclusion, etiquette plays a crucial role in maintaining social harmony and respect in Japanese society. It is an important aspect of daily life and helps to create a sense of order and structure.

Write for us

We encourage you to contribute articles to our website. If you have any interesting insights or stories to share on any topic related to social issues, gender equality, or global citizenship, please email us at writeforus@globalcitizenship.org with your proposal.

No one is above the law

In the context of this article, the phrase “no one is above the law” is a statement that emphasizes the importance of the rule of law and the principle that everyone is subject to the same laws and regulations. This is a fundamental aspect of the legal system and is essential for the maintenance of justice and order in society.

The principle of equal treatment before the law is a cornerstone of modern legal systems. It is based on the idea that everyone should be treated equally under the law, regardless of their social status, wealth, or any other personal characteristic.

In the case of Myanmar’s legal system, the principle of equal treatment before the law is essential for the protection of human rights and the maintenance of social harmony.

The Yangon court’s recent decision to acquit the police officer of all charges is significant as it upholds the principle of equal treatment before the law. It is a reminder that everyone, regardless of their position in society, is subject to the same laws and regulations.

The Yangon court’s decision sends a clear message that no one is above the law and that the legal system is capable of holding anyone accountable for their actions.

The Yangon court’s decision is an important step towards the establishment of a fair and just legal system in Myanmar.

Quenching thirst, improving health in Bawsai

Drinking water is a basic human right, and access to clean water is essential for maintaining good health. In many parts of the world, people do not have access to clean water, and this leads to health problems such as waterborne diseases.

In Myanmar, lack of access to clean water is a serious problem. In some areas, people must walk for miles to find clean water, and this can be time-consuming and physically demanding.

The Organization for Water Supply and Sanitation (OWS) is working to address this issue by providing clean water to people in need.

In Bawsai, a town in Myanmar, OWS has installed a water supply system that is operated by the local community. The system is designed to provide clean water to residents, and it has been a huge success.

Before the new system was installed, people had to walk for hours to find clean water, and many had to rely on contaminated water sources.

Now, with the new system in place, people can access clean water easily, and this has had a positive impact on their health.

The OWS water supply system has improved the quality of life for people in Bawsai, and it is a model for other communities that are facing similar challenges.

The OWS water supply system is an example of how technology can be used to address social issues. It is a testament to the power of innovation and collaboration in creating positive social change.

In conclusion, access to clean water is essential for maintaining good health and is a basic human right. The OWS water supply system in Bawsai is an example of how technology can be used to address this issue and improve the lives of people in need.

The OWS water supply system is a model for other communities that are facing similar challenges, and it is an example of how technology can be used to create positive social change.
Putin says expects ‘fake’ gas attacks to discredit Syria’s Assad

MOSCOW — President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday that Russia had information that the United States was planning to launch new missile strikes on Syria, and that there were plans to fake chemicals weapons attacks there.

Putin was speaking hours before US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was due to arrive in Moscow for talks with Russia’s foreign minister and days after denouncing last week’s US missile strike on a Syrian air base as illegal.

Standing alongside Italian President Sergio Mattarella who was in Moscow for talks, Putin, when asked by a reporter if he expected more US missile strikes on Syria, said:

“We have information that a similar protest injection of nerves is being prepared — in other parts of Syria including in the southern Damascus suburbs where they are planning to again plant some substance and accuse the Syrian authorities of using (chemical weapons).”

He did not offer any proof for that assertion.

Russia has defended the Syrian government, a staunch ally, against US allegations it was behind the nerve gas attack in Syria’s Idlib province last week which killed scores, saying there is no evidence to underpin such an allegation.

Putin said on Tuesday Russia would be urgently asking the global chemical weapons watchdog — the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons — to investigate the incident.

Speaking after Tillerson said earlier on Tuesday he hoped Russia would conclude it was wrong to align itself with the Syrian government, Putin said Moscow would tolerate Western criticism of its role in Syria but hoped that attitudes would eventually soften.

Putin’s spokesman has said there are no scheduled plans for Putin to meet Tillerson on Wednesday, but Russian media have cited unnamed sources as saying that such a meeting will happen. —Reuters

Nearly half of young German voters back Merkel, poll shows

BERLIN — Almost half of Germany’s first-time voters back Chancellor Angela Merkel, a poll by the Forsa Institut showed on Tuesday, providing a strong backbone of support as she prepares to bid for a fourth term in September.

Among all potential voters, conservative Merkel had 43 per cent support, compared to 32 per cent for Martin Schulz, the chancellor candidate for the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD). But that lead extended to 47 per cent against 29 per cent among those aged 18 to 21, the poll showed.

“Young people know Chancellor Merkel, with whom they grew up,” said Manfred Guellner, who heads the Forsa institute. He said the poll showed that “especially young people are looking for stability and continuity in these uncertain times.”

The elder stateswoman of western European politics, Merkel has come under fire at home for initially opening Germany’s doors to more than one million refugees. Ahead of what is likely to be a close-fought ballot, she has toughened her stance on immigration in recent months.

She faced criticism on Tuesday from the SPD, the junior partner in her coalition government, after giving her chief of staff, Peter Altmaier, a leading role in drafting the election programme for her Christian Democrats (CDU).

German Chancellor Angela Merkel. PHOTO: REUTERS

The appointment of Altmaier, who coordinates policy on migrant issues within the coalition, “violates the established political rules,” SPD general secretary Katarina Barley told the RND newspaper chain.

Altmaier said on Twitter that, while he looked forward to helping shape the CDU’s programme, the party’s general secretary Peter Tauber would remain its election campaign manager, adding that the SPD had similar arrangements.

Measured by party, the Forsa poll — conducted for Stern magazine and broadcaster RTL — put Merkel’s CDU and their Bavarian sister party (CSU) at 36 per cent, 6 percentage points ahead of the SPD of former European Parliament president Schulz.

A second survey by INSA for the mass-circulation Bild newspaper ahead of the 24 September, national election gave the CDU/CSU a 1.5 point lead. In the Forsa poll, the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, which had seen its support weaken in recent months, was steady at 8 per cent.

The AfD added 1 point to 10 per cent in the INSA poll.

Both Merkel and Schulz are hoping to form new governments with smaller partners, but the two polls suggested another “grand coalition” of their parties is likely. —Reuters

China will get better US trade deal if it solves North Korea problem — Trump

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said in a note on Twitter on Tuesday that he told China’s President Xi Jinping that Beijing would get a better trade deal with Washington if it helped solve the US problem with North Korea.

“I explained to the president of China that a trade deal with the US will be far better for them if they solve the North Korean problem!” Trump, who held talks with Xi in Florida last week, wrote on Twitter.

“North Korea is looking for trouble. If China decides to help, that would be great. If not, we will solve the problem without them!” he added in a second note. —Reuters

Syrian foreign minister to visit Moscow soon for talks — RIA

MOSCOW — Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem will travel to Moscow soon on an official visit, the RIA news agency cited the Syrian ambassador to Moscow as saying on Tuesday.

Talks will focus on US allegations of a poison gas attack in Syria’s Idlib province and the subsequent US missile strike on a Syrian air base, the ambassador was cited as saying. —Reuters

Blast in southeast Turkey occurred during repair of vehicle, minister says

ISTANBUL — An explosion that rocked Turkey’s southeastern city of Diyarbakir and wounded several people on Tuesday occurred during the repair of a vehicle, Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu said.

Soylu’s comments were broadcast live by CNN Turk. A police source said the explosion appeared to have taken place in a vehicle repair section of a police compound, causing part of the roof to collapse and wounding at least four people. The Dogan news agency said one was in critical condition. The blast comes ahead of a hotly contested referendum on Sunday on broadening President Tayyip Erdogan’s powers, a constitutional change opposed by many in the country’s predominantly Kurdish southeast.

—Reuters
Islamic State has lost most territory it held in Iraq — Iraqi spokesman

BAGHDAD — Islamic State has lost most of the territory it has held in Iraq since 2014, an Iraqi military spokesman said on Tuesday.

At the height of its power, the militant group controlled about 40 per cent of Iraq, joint operations command spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Rasool told a news conference.

That area has been whittled down to about 6.8 per cent of Iraqi territory after extensive military operations, which are still going on in the city of Mosul, he said.

Islamic State militants still control the towns of Qaim, Tal Afar and Hawija in Iraq, as well as Raqiqa, their de-facto capital in Syria.

The coalition battling Islamic State is made up of tens of thousands of members of the Iraqi security forces, led by the army, and thousands of Shi’ite volunteers, many from militia groups, commonly referred to as the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU).

The United States and other Western countries have assisted with air support, intelligence and equipment, Rasool said.

The battle for Mosul, one of Iraq’s largest cities, began last October and the outcome will likely determine whether Iraq’s various sects can work together to keep the country from fracturing.

The eastern half of the city is now completely under the control of Iraqi security forces, Rasool said.

But the push against Islamic State in Western Mosul is bogged down with Iraqi security forces fighting in a warren of small streets in the old part of the city.

The federal police said in a statement on Tuesday they have been reinforcing their positions in Western Mosul in preparation for a push on the al-Nuri Mosque where Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared a caliphate in 2014.

Islamic State has used hundreds of car bombs along with drones rigged with explosives in Mosul.

Its fighters have pulled civilians into the conflict by placing snipers in residential areas, using civilians as human shields and executing those who try to escape, coalition spokesman Col John Dorrian said at the news conference.

Dorrian said the fight in Western Mosul had been tough but said Islamic State fighters had no escape.

“Do not lose sight of the fact that even though the fighting is going to be very hard, this enemy is completely surrounded.” Dorrian said. “They aren’t going anywhere.”— Reuters

South Africa’s top court to hear case for secret no-confidence ballot on Zuma

PIETERMARITZBURG, (South Africa) — South Africa’s top court said on Tuesday it will consider whether a motion of no confidence against President Jacob Zuma should be taken by secret ballot.

The rand extended its gains to 1 per cent against the dollar after the announcement, and opposition parties said there could be a better chance that the motion, when taken, would succeed, if it was held by secret ballot.

The ruling African National Congress party, which has a majority in parliament, has said it will vote against the motion, which is due on 18 April. A secret ballot, however, would allow for anonymous dissent.

Zuma, 74, has survived four previous no confidence votes. But opponents, led by the main opposition party Democratic Alliance, believe a recent cabinet reshuffle that led to the dismissal of respected finance minister Pravin Gordhan may have angered enough ANC members to desert Zuma.

“We only need 65 to 70 people from the ANC, and the secret ballot can deliver the votes to remove Zuma,” Bantu Holomisa, head of the smaller United Democratic Movement (UDM), which is also backing the no-confidence vote against Zuma, said.

He earlier posted a court document on his Twitter feed showing the chief justice of the Constitutional Court had given the go-ahead for the motion, which is due on 18 April. Zuma and the ANC members faced by the Speaker of parliament said it would face a court challenge.

He earlier posted a court document on his Twitter feed showing the chief justice of the Constitutional Court had given the go-ahead for the motion, which is due on 18 April. Zuma and the ANC members faced by the Speaker of parliament said it would face a court challenge.

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

PHONE No: 2301185

CELL No: 083 207 8171

EMAIL: isunltd@isasunltd.com

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12.4.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.L.T.A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and 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 and damaged cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.L.T.A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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Leftist Melenchon surges as French election candidates bicker

PARIS — A new poll on Thursday showed far-left wildcard Jean-Luc Melenchon nipping at the heels of Centre-Right candidate Francois Fillon stepping up his attacks on Emmanuel Macron, with whom he is in competition for centre-right voters, calling him a liar. Macron responded, on Sued Radio: “Mr Fillon is a man of little worth.” Meanwhile Melenchon’s support jumped seven percentage points to 19 per cent in a monthly Ifop-Fiducial poll for Paris March and Sud Radio, putting him in third place ahead of Fillon.

He is also targeting Macron’s voters — but this time those to the left of centre, notably left, Melenchon and Fillon, on 19 per cent and 18.5 per cent, respectively, still lag Le Pen on 24 per cent and Macron on 23 per cent. But the two front runners are losing steam.

Macron is widely expected to win against Le Pen if both progress to the second round. The poll also showed some 32 per cent of voters could abstain in the first round on 23 April.

Melenchon’s rise in polls, the latest episode in an election campaign full of surprises, has unnerved financial markets and prompted a warning on Tuesday by the head of business lobby group Medef Pierre Gattaz. Calling both Melenchon’s and Le Pen’s programmes “an absolute catastrophe” for France, Gattaz warned on Europe 1 radio against a possible Melenchon-Le Pen second round.

“Le Pen-Melenchon second round shouldn’t take place,” he said. Though Melenchon is on the polar opposite of the political spectrum from Le Pen, in particular on immigration, they both distrust the European Union, want to renegotiate France’s role in it and hold a referendum on EU membership.

The turbulent presidential campaign has become increasing bitter in recent weeks as candidates eye the finish line.

Fillon has been under fire since January over allegations his wife was paid hundreds of thousands of euros for minimal work as a parliamentary assistant for several years. The couple are formally being investigated by magistrates.

He again accused the Socialist led government of helping to spread the allegations on Tuesday. A daily Opinionnair poll showed Macron winning the second round against Le Pen, with Melenchon in fourth place right behind Fillon in the first round. 

Indian cargo ship released, 9 hostages missing

NAIROBI — Somalia security forces have rescued an Indian cargo ship which was hijacked by Somali pirates on April 11 but nine members of the 11-crew are missing, a regional maritime official said on Tuesday.

John Steed, the regional manager of not for profit group, Oceans Beyond Piracy said the hostages are believed to be held between the vicinity of Hobyo and Harardhere in central Somalia.

“The Indian ship was released by Somalia security forces on Monday night but nine of the 11 crew members are missing having been taken as ashore by the pirates. The vessel is sailing away.” Steed told Xinhua by telephone.

The pirating of the Indian dhow came after the fuel tanker, Aris 13, was held for four days by armed pirates. The Indian ship, Al Kausar was one of three foreign vessels to be hijacked in the Gulf of Aden since January.

“The pirates are holding 17 hostages from Iran and India. "The pirates are holding 17 hostages at the moment. Eight are Iranians while 9 are Indians,” Steed said, adding that efforts are underway to secure their release. Al Kausar was chartered by a Somali businessman and was carrying commercial goods.

The vessel which was en route from Dubai, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Bosasso in Somalia, was hijacked in the vicinity of Socotra Island.

The release of the Indian vessel comes after sailors from Indian and Chinese Navies on Sunday freed a Tuvalu-registered vessel which had been boarded by pirates. The vessel had 19 crew members — Xinhua

Russia to put upgraded Tu-160 strategic bombers on serial production

A source in the defense and industrial sector earlier told TASS that serial production of the modernized Tu-160M2 missile carrier would begin in 2020. PHOTO: TASS

MOSCOW — The serial production of upgraded Tu-160M2 (NATO reporting name: Blackjack) strategic missile carriers will begin from 2022 and a total of 30-50 such aircraft are planned to be produced. President of Russia’s Aircraft-Building Corporation Yuri Slyusar said on Tuesday.

“We are discussing the exact numbers of these machines. We are discussing the exact figures with the customer. I believe their number will range from 30 to 50 machines,” Slyusar said in an interview with Rossiya-24 TV Channel.

A source in the defense and industrial sector earlier told TASS that the serial production of the modernized Tu-160M2 missile carrier would begin in 2020 and two-three such aircraft were planned to be produced each year. Along with the production of Tu-160M2s, operational long-range combat aircraft, such as Tu-160 and Tu-95MS missile carriers and Tu-22M3 strategic bombers, will be modernized.

The idea to restart the production of Tu-160 planes in their upgraded version was put forward by Russian Defence Minister Army General Sergei Shoigu in April 2015 during his visit to the Kazan aircraft enterprise, part of the Tupolev aerospace company.

In May that year, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave instructions to resume the production of these aircraft. Deputy Defence Minister Yuri Borisov said in October 2016 that 50 such planes were planned to be produced. —TASS

The Daily News of New York and ProPublica, a web-based platform specializing in investigative journalism, won the prize for public service journalism for coverage of New York police abuses that forced mostly poor minorities from their homes.

Other winners included an international consortium of more than 300 reporters on six continents that exposed the so-called Panama Papers detailing the hidden infrastructure and global scale of offshore tax havens used by the rich and mighty.

The Pulitzers, the most prestigious honors in American journalism, have been awarded since 1917, often going to famed publications such as The New York Times, The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal.

But they are also given to smaller, lesser known publications across the country whose work does not always gain national attention when it is published. Reporter Eric Eyre of Charleston Gazette-Mail in West Virginia took the prize for investigative reporting for exposing opioids flooding into depressed West Virginia counties with the country’s highest overdose death rates.

The staff of the East Bay Times of Oakland, California, won the breaking news award for coverage of the “Ghost Ship” fire that killed 36 people at a warehouse party, exposing the city’s failure to take actions that might have prevented the disaster.

While the Pulitzer ceremony highlighted the news media’s importance to democracy, it has been challenged by so-called fake news, which once referred to fabricated stories meant to influence the US election but has become a term used by Trump to dismiss factual reporting that is critical. Trump has frequently excoriated the media and in February called it “the enemy of the American people.”

Operating in the glare of the presidential campaign, David Fahrenthold of The Washington Post took the national reporting award. The judges said he created a “model for transparent journalism in political campaign coverage while casting doubt on Donald Trump’s assertions of generosity toward charities.

Fahrenthold found that Trump’s charitable giving had not always matched his public statements. He also broke perhaps the biggest scoop of the campaign, revealing Trump had been captured on videotape making crude remarks about women and bragging about kissing them without their permission.

The Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan, a longtime Republican, took the commentary prize for a series of critical pieces about Trump during the real estate magnate’s successful 2016 run for the White House.

The New York Times staff won the international reporting prize for articles on Russian President Vladimir Putin’s efforts to project Russia’s power abroad, a particularly pertinent story given US intelligence conclusions this year that Putin’s government actively tried to influence the US election in Trump’s favor.

The Times revealed “techniques that included assassination, online harassment and the planting of incriminating evidence on opponents,” the judges said. The 19-member Pulitzer board is made up of past winners and other distinguished journalists and academics. It chose the winners with the help of 102 jurors.

More than 2,500 entries were submitted this year, competing for 21 prizes in categories.

Seven awards recognize fiction, drama, history, biographies, poetry, general nonfiction and music.

— Reuters
Janet Jackson splits with husband 3 months after birth of son-reports

NEW YORK — Pop star Janet Jackson has split up with her Qatar businessman husband just three months after giving birth to her first child, according to media reports.

People magazine, Us Weekly and Entertainment Tonight all said sources had confirmed that Jackson, 50, and Wissam Al Mana had broken up after five years of marriage.

Representatives for the singer declined to confirm the split, which follows the birth in January of Jackson’s first child, a boy the couple named Eissa.

Britain’s Mail on Sunday publication, which was among the first to report the separation, quoted a source close to the singer as saying it was amicable. It was not known when the couple separated.

“They’re both busy people but determined to be good parents, even if they’re apart. It’s amicable and Eissa will stay with his mother, who is basing herself in London,” the source told the Mail on Sunday.

Jackson and Al Mana, 43, married in 2012, and a year ago the singer posted a picture of the couple in a family portrait titled “Emperor of Sand” and Christian music group MercyMe at number 1 with his latest song “Humble” selling 111,000 copies.—Reuters

Streaming keeps Drake’s ‘More Life’ atop Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — Canadian R&B artist Drake kept his reign at the top of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, boosted by strong online streaming of his “More Life” record.

“More Life” sold 16,000 albums and 86,000 songs and was streamed 167 million times in its third week of release, totaling 136,000 album units sold, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The Billboard 200 album chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

This is not the first time Drake has dominated the charts on the strength of streaming.

Last year, his “Views” album spent 13 non-consecutive weeks atop the Billboard 200 chart, regularly clocking more than 100 million streams a week.

New entries in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart include rapper Kodak Black at No 3 with “Painting Pictures,” heavy metal band Mastodon at No 7 with “Emperor of Sand” and Christian music group MercyMe at No 10 with “Lifer.” On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, rapper Kendrick Lamar debuted at No 1 with his latest song “Humble” selling 111,000 copies.—Reuters

Ryan Phillippe rubbishes Katy Perry dating rumours

LOS ANGELES — Actor Ryan Phillippe has refuted reports of him romancing pop star Katy Perry by tweeting that he is “not dating” her.

His tweet came after a few tabloid reports claimed that the actor and pop star were spotted getting cozy at Elton John’s birthday bash.

This is not the first time Phillippe, 42, slammed the reports, saying that he “barely knows” the 32-year-old songstress. “I AM NOT DATING KATY PERRY. BARELY KNOW HER. PLEASE STOP FLYING HELICOPTERS OVER MY HOUSE. SHE IS NOT HERE,” he tweeted in all caps.—PTI

Bradley Cooper, Irina Shayk welcome their first child

LOS ANGELES — Actor Bradley Cooper and his girlfriend Irina Shayk have welcomed their first baby.

The 31-year-old Russian supermodel, who has been dating Cooper, 42, since spring 2015, gave birth two weeks ago, reported People magazine.

However, no other details were made available.

Shayk’s pregnancy news came out in November after she showcased a baby bump while walking the runway at the 2016 Victoria’s Secret Fashion Show.

The two were first romantically linked in May 2015 when they were spotted kissing in New York City.—PTI
UK coffee chains offer discount to drinkers with own cups to cut waste

LONDON — Two major cafe chains on Monday cut the price of a coffee for drinkers who bring their own cups in a bid to tackle the waste caused by disposable cardboard cups and help the environment.

To mark UK Coffee Week, sandwich chain Pret A Manger and the French bakery Paul both promised discounts to any customers who bring in their own reusable cup and order a hot drink.

Pret customers can get 25 pence ($0.30) off their drink at any Pret in the London area, while the new “Paul Cares policy” includes a 10 pence discount at its United Kingdom locations.

The move comes as environmental campaigners put pressure on coffee chains to prioritise recycling with research showing an estimated 2.5 billion paper coffee cups thrown away in Britain each year, most of which are not recycled.

“Paul Cares” is our way of demonstrating our commitment to a passion we share with our customers which goes beyond the cup — lightening the environmental footprint of all we welcome through our doors,” Paul’s UK CEO Jean-Michel Orioux said in a statement.

Orioux said the reusable cup discount will be a permanent fixture at Paul’s UK stores and the chain also relaunched reusable cups available for purchase.

Pret’s trial will run until the end of April and will then be reviewed, a spokesman said.

Orioux said Pret’s reusables already gives customers with personal cups a discount and met a target for five per cent of all drinks to be served in personal tumblers by 2005.

UK Coffee Week, which runs until Sunday, is a fundraising initiative in which participating stores raise money for Project Waterfall, which aims to bring clean water facilities to coffee-growing communities around the world.

— Reuters

Brits find UK Banksy works highlight of Los Angeles street art auction

LOS ANGELES — More than a dozen works by the elusive British graffiti artist Banksy are “by far the most important pair of earrings ever offered at auction”, they will be offered to buyers separately at the auction house’s 16 May Magnificent Jewels and Noble Jewels sale in Geneva.

The 14.54-carat Apollo Blue is an “Internally Flawless Fancy Vivid Blue” stone with an estimated price tag of $38 million-$50 million while the Artemis Pink, a 16-carat “Fancy Intense Pink” stone, is seen at around $12.5 million-$18 million.

“I am certain there hasn’t been another pair of coloured diamonds of this size and importance ever put into auction — certainly the highest estimated pair of earrings ever to appear at auction,” David Bennett, worldwide chairman of Sotheby’s International Jewellery Division, told Reuters.

“We are selling them separately because there may well be somebody who wants them as a pair but it’s also possible somebody might want just one or the other separately.”

Last week, a 59-carat diamond pink diamond sold for a record $71.2 million in Hong Kong.

— Reuters

Sparkling diamond earrings seen fetching up to $70 mln at auction

LONDON — Two dazzling pink and blue pear-shaped diamonds are together expected to fetch close to $70 million when they go under the hammer next month.

Sotheby’s said the Apollo and Artemis stones are “by far the most important pair of earrings ever offered at auction”. They will be offered to buyers separately at the auction house’s 16 May Magnificent Jewels and Noble Jewels sale in Geneva.

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— Reuters

Banksy works highlight of Los Angeles street art auction

LOS ANGELES — More than a dozen works by the elusive British graffiti artist Banksy are among a collection of street and contemporary art up for auction in Los Angeles next month.

Banksy’s “Umbrella Rat,” an original aerosol stencil of a rat holding an umbrella that was found on a metal door in Berlin, is one of the top items on offer by Julien’s Auctions, estimated between $30,000 to $50,000.

Michael Doyle, an auctioneer at Julien’s Auctions, said “Umbrella Rat” could fetch as much as $100,000.

“Most of the time these works get covered up by the city or different private building owners so it’s very rare to find an existing piece of street art that is actually from the streets,” said Julien’s auctioneer Michael Doyle.

Other Banksy works expected to go under the hammer at the 11 May auction include “Black Bobby,” a 2003 black aerosol stencil of a British policeman estimated to fetch between $20,000 and $40,000. A 2004 screenprint entitled “Bomb Love,” of a girl hugging a missile, is expected to fetch upward of $5,000.

British artist Banksy — who is presumed to be a man but has kept his identity secret — rose to prominence through the Bristol street art scene in the west of England.

He is known for creating works on buildings displaying ironic and provocative social commentary, and political stunts that have been the subject of numerous papers, books, and documentaries spanning the past few years.

The auction in Los Angeles will also feature a 2003 Andy Warhol screenprint of Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger, estimated between $30,000 and $40,000, and works by Shepard Fairey, best known for creating the “Hope” poster for Barack Obama’s 2008 US presidential campaign.

— Reuters

British fashion retailer Jaeger goes into administration

LONDON Fashion retailer Jaeger, known for its classic British clothing ranges, has gone into administration, the administrators said in a statement, putting nearly 700 jobs at risk.

Jaeger, founded in 1884, is famous for its woollen coats and suits, but the company has struggled in the past few years to stand out in a fiercely competitive fashion retailing market.

The appointment of the administrators, AlixPartners, was made at the request of Jaeger’s directors after attempts to sell the business were unsuccessful, the statement said.

“Regrettably despite an extensive sales process it has not been possible to identify a purchaser for the business,” joint administrator Peter Saville said in the statement.

Jaeger has approximately 680 staff in its 46 stores, 63 concessions and head office facilities in London and logistics centre in Kings Lynn in eastern England.

A person familiar with the matter told Reuters on Friday the company had filed a notice to enter a form of creditor protection to buy it some breathing space after investment group Better Capital sold the retailer’s debt to another company.

Jaeger provided clothing for Ernest Shackleton’s Antarctic expedition and was famous for dressing film stars such as Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe.

It went into administration in 2012 before being bought by Better Capital.

The administrators said the company would continue to trade while they worked with all stakeholders to find the most appropriate route forward.

— Reuters

Programme Schedule (12-4-2017, Wednesday)

06:00 AM Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
07:00 AM Breakfast News
07:35 AM NRC Thingyan Programme
07:50 AM Money Talk Myanmar
08:05 AM Documentary (Thingyan)
09:40 AM Pyi The Ni Ti
10:30 AM Documentary (Thingyan)
10:45 AM Documentary (Thingyan)
11:00 AM Monthly Wealthy Report
11:30 AM Public Debate
12:30 PM TV Drama Series
1:00 PM Myanmar Movies
2:30 PM Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competition
3:00 PM Kyaw Pint Myaw Ya Yin Kone Than
3:30 PM Sunday Talks
4:35 PM NRC Thingyan Programme
5:10 AM Documentary (Thingyan)
5:30 PM Documentary (Thingyan)
6:15 PM MRTV Travelogue
6:30 PM Documentary (Thingyan)
7:15 PM Real Story nReal Movies
8:00 PM Drama Series
8:35 PM Talk Show (Ms. Victoria Kyaw Wai)
9:15 PM Documentary
9:40 PM TV Drama Series
10:15 PM Fine Arts — Bosom of Dramatic Performance

(For Detailed Schedule — www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)
Hull’s Jakupovic demands improvement away from home

LONDON—Hull City cannot rely solely on their home form and must quickly start racking up points away from their KCOP Stadium to avoid relegation from the Premier League this season, goalkeeper Eldin Jakupovic has said.

Hull, who are 17th in the table, two points above the drop zone, have triumphed in four of their last five home games but have not won away since August.

“We have to just keep going and take points away from home,” Jakupovic told British media. “We have three more home games but the next match is important for us.”

Hull travel to Stoke City on Saturday and also play Southampton and relegation rivals Crystal Palace away from home.

“We could win all three home games and get to 39 points. Would that be enough? Maybe, but we need away points. Every point will be massive, not just for us but for Palace and Swansea, and everybody,” Jakupovic added.

“We have to just keep going, try not to think about the table too much. We have to be cool and play our game.” —Reuters

Viet Nam beat Myanmar to seal AFC Women’s Asian Cup in Jordan

HOST Viet Nam defeated Myanmar 2-0 and secured a ticket to next year’s AFC Women’s Asian Cup yesterday.

Both teams used the key players during the match and bucked that trend early on; cancelling each other out in a tense opening period, before Myanmar veteran Naw Az Lo Wer Phaw brought the game to life in the 27th minute.

The two teams had no goal yet till the end of the first half. The game was alive and Viet Nam could give more pressure to Myanmar in the beginning of the second half.

Nguyan Thi Tuyet Dung and stroke the ball into an empty net at 55 min and their strategic play become more brilliant. Huyng Nhu also kicked straight to the goal net 82 min and Vietnam and the goal means sure win for Viet Nam.

After the final day match, Vietnam got 12 marks and had a chance to participate in AFC Women’s ASIAN Cup in Jordan but Myanmar pleased with 9 marks and lose the chances of AFC dream. —Kyaw Zin Lin

Arsenal’s top-four hopes suffer major blow with 3-0 Palace loss

LONDON — Arsenal’s hopes of finishing in the Premier League top four suffered a huge blow as they suffered a humiliating 3-0 defeat at relegation-threatened Crystal Palace on Monday.

 Palace, winners of four of their previous five league games, started in confident fashion and opened the scoring when former Tottenham Hotspur winger Andros Townsend swept the ball home at the end of a smart passing move after 17 minutes.

 Palace striker Christian Benteke then had a goal ruled out for offside before Yohan Cabaye’s superb curled effort and Luka Milivojevic’s penalty in five second-half minutes completed a miserable night for Arsene Wenger’s struggling side.

Arsenal, who have finished in the top four in 20 consecutive seasons, have 54 points from 30 games — seven points and two positions behind fourth-placed Manchester City, who have played a game more.

Crystal Palace stay 16th but now have 34 points from 31 matches, six more than Swansea City, who occupy the final relegation place in 18th and have played a game more. —Reuters