State Counsellor attends dinner hosted by Boris Johnson, visits St. Mary’s Hospital

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is currently in London, UK on an official visit, attended a dinner hosted by British Foreign Secretary Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson at Carlton Gardens, London Friday evening.

At the dinner, views were exchanged and discussions held on promotion of Myanmar-Britain bilateral relations and cooperation, improving the professional qualifications of the Myanmar Police force, cementing cooperation in education and health sectors, development and continued help by Britain in the Myanmar Peace and national unity process.

At 3 p.m local time, the State Counsellor and party visited St. Mary’s Hospital in London and viewed the medical treatment demonstration using modern education support equipment.

Serving as an academic health science centre, St. Mary’s Hospital is cooperating with and assisting the Myanmar Ministry of Health and Sports in teaching medical subjects.—Myanmar News Agency

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Peace Commission
Press Release
11th Waxing of Kason 1379 ME
6 May 2017

1. The Peace Commission has been negotiating with the national ethnic armed groups to be able to successfully hold the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong.

2. The delegation led by the Chairman of the Peace Commission met with DPN (Delegation for Political Negotiation) consisting of (KIO, SSPP, KNPP, NMSF, ANC, LDU, WNO) at Chiang Mai, in Thailand on 28th April 2017, to negotiate for the signing of the NCA (National Ceasefire Agreement), and to attend the Second meeting of the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong to be held on May 24, 2017.

3. During the period of negotiating the 9 facts proposed by DPN (Delegation for Political Negotiation) in order to sign the NCA, matters on signing DoC—Deed of Commitment was negotiated as well.

4. In addition, the Peace Commission will make efforts to negotiate with all national ethnic armed groups which have not yet signed the NCA, for all national ethnic armed groups to take part in the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong for seeking a solution by means of political negotiations without trying to solve political problems through fighting and it will continue to negotiate by following the NCA Path.

(Unofficial Translation)
1998 cultural heritage law to be amended before Bagan added to World Heritage list

THE government has a plan to amend the 1998 Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage Regions Law as it no longer suited current situations, said Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko.

The remark came at the press conference on preservation of Bagan Cultural Heritage in Bagan yesterday.

He also disclosed that as regards submission to have Bagan Cultural Heritage designated in the list of global heritage, Nomination Dossier will have to be tendered at the end of September, 2017, with Nomination Dossier and Management Plan to be submitted in January 2018.

Following this, International Council on Monuments & Sites (ICOMOS) will come to Bagan Cultural Zone, for inspection and it will enquire attitudes of the locals, according to Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko.

“If we cannot carry out the task of renewing Bagan region, it cannot be carried out to do remaining works of writing nomination dossiers which are being done to have the region enlisted,” he said.

The plan to have Bagan Cultural Zone designated in the list of world heritage was launched since 1996.

“It had been resumed to have Bagan Region enlisted in the list of global heritage in 2017-2018. If and when Bagan Region has been enlisted in the global heritage, the invisible benefit we will gain is none other than “National Dignity,” said the Union Minister.

“In case, the plan to submission of having Bagan region designated in the list of global heritage had been delayed due to various reasons, it must be assumed that we will lose a chance on national dignity,” he said.

Having Bagan cultural heritage enlisted in the global heritage, we will get cutting-edge technique and monetary subsidy to be provided by advanced UNESCO member countries.”

The local ancestors maintained the cultural heritages their forefathers established and cultivated, for thousands of years.

Like Myanmar, countries across the world have been facing natural disasters.

The Union Minister added, “It had been planned to submit to have Mrauk U region designated in the list of global heritage and to have Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon enlisted in UNESCO, temporarily.

Following that, Union Minister and responsible officials replied to the questions raised by media men, as to the plan of having Bagan Cultural Heritage Zone designated in the global heritage list, conservation of quake-hit pagodas in Bagan Region.

Present at the press release ceremony on designation of the area to have Bagan cultural heritage zone designated in the list of global heritage, were responsible officials, departmental officials and media men.

—Myanmar News Agency

Scholarship offered for under graduates and post graduates

AS a part of contribution to the human resource development in Myanmar, STI Myanmar University offers scholarship to the outstanding students in Myanmar under its special program.

The scholarship will be offered for the undergraduate courses of business management, accounting and post graduate course of business management opened by department of economics, undergraduate course of architecture, civil engineering, electronic, and architecture and civil engineering opened by the department of engineer, post graduates course for food and nutrition, hospital and health service management opened by the department of medicine.

The selection process takes into account the community services and activities of the candidates in addition to their academic qualifications. The full scholarship for the undergraduate and 50 per cent scholarship for post graduate were offered. Apart from the students, employed persons are also entitled for the scholarship program.

The post graduate student can apply for the scholarship until May 20 and undergraduate till May 25, addressing to No 10, MICT Park, Hlaing Campus, Yangon. The contact phones were 01-507151, 09-250064451 and to B 15, 16, corner of 66th and Thazin street, Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay. Phone contacts were 09-783800062-63-64.—Ko Nyi

Heavy rain makes Kawthoung flooded

Due to the heavy rain on May 5, streets in downtown area in Kawthoung township in Taninthayi Region were flooded. Heavy rain came amidst the continuous flush of lightnings and thunders and caused floods in the town as the time coincided with the rising tides. The rising floods stopped all movement of cars and other vehicles on the town roads for an hour. Lower areas were worst hit as flood waters flowed into the ground floor of some homes. Fortunately, the rain stopped in an hour and no major damage caused.

The townsfolk are worried about the current drainage system that needs repair before the coming rainy season.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

Two thieves arrested in Yangon

WHILE working on patrol on 2 May police found a safe including 62 lakhs, 2 visiting cards, a photo, 1 purse and a note book close to the bridge over the railroad near Thamada Cinema and investigated for owner and thieves in railway quarters, Mingalar Taung Nyunt Township.

Police discovered that the safe was stolen from a teashop on Bogyoke Aung San Street by two jobless men Pho Khat and Kyaw Soe Lin from Mingalar Taung Nyunt Township and arrested the two men on 3 May. On questioning, it was confirmed that the two suspects stole the safe and an axe from the teashop and were trying to break it open near the bridge. When people passing by noticed the two actions, the two fled leaving the safe behind.

The Pabedan police station is continuing the investigation of the two suspects if they had committed any other crimes.—Myanmar Police Force

Raw Opium seized in Phakant

An anti-drug squad in Mohnyin searched a motorbike driven by Khaung Lwan near Mu Tower Post on Waikher- Hsaitaung road in Phakant Township on 5 May and seized 1.2 kilo weight of raw opium.

Similarly on the same day, a local anti-drug squad from Lashio seized 2090 stimulant pills in a search of a motorbike driven by Kyaw Zeya Myo at mile post (80/4) Muse- Mandalay Pyidaungsu highway.

Police have filed charges against the suspects under the Anti-Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Myanmar Police Force
Kayah State Chief Minister assists in repairing gale-hit houses

KAYAH State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho assisted yesterday in repairing houses which were destroyed by a gale in Loikaw Township on Thursday.

The strong wind blew roofs of three houses at Mike-kan Village in Lawpita Village-tract in Loikaw Township.

The chief minister encouraged the owners of the houses and delivered cash assistance to them.—Kayah State IPRD

Meeting on socio-economic development and resettlement in Rakhine State

A MEETING led by Dr. Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to extend the works of the Coordinating Committee for United Nations, international and non-government organizations in Rakhine State was held in Rakhine State government meeting hall in Sittway yesterday afternoon.

Rakhine State government members, United Nations, international and non-government organizations conducting humanitarian and development work in Rakhine State, officials and town elders who are member of the coordinating committee attended the meeting.

The Union Minister said the incumbent government was handling the Rakhine State developmental and resettlement matters consistently since April 2016. Socio-economic development works together with humanitarian assistance was being conducted. While living in camps, work trainings were provided for development of women to provide job opportunities. Of the recommendations made by the Rakhine State Advisory Commission, the government was implementing the quickest achievable one while resettlements are being made according to the wishes of the people in the camps. Friendship markets were established for friendly trade, buying and selling activities. Rakhine State government’s 5-year plan for socio-economic development will soon be implemented. Arrangements are made to start birth certification processes in Rakhine State and Taninthayi Region but birth certification is not related to citizenship and citizenship naturalization. The ministry aim to be prepared in protecting social life, preventing and mitigating natural disaster together with civil society organizations. Of the 8 social life protection works, supporting expectant mothers and their newly born babies up to the age of two years with Ks 15,000 per month will be from LIFT Fund in least developed Chin State and from national reserve fund in Rakhine State and Naga region. Together with this cash support education work on personal hygiene and family planning is also provided. This support and education work will be continued to cover the whole country. The Rakhine State government wanted to reach the stage where the true situation of the societies can be obtained through discussion and is prioritizing the developmental matters of the Rakhine State.

Next, meeting attendees discussed about Rakhine State socio-economic development and resettlement matters.

Afterward, the Union Minister met with Rakhine civil societies and town elders in Sittway hotel and discussed about Rakhine State socio-economic development and resettlement matters.—Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar exports to France and French tech cooperation and investment agreed

AN agreement on Myanmar exports to France together with the French. The agreement between Myanmar and French technology aid and investment to Myanmar has reached, according to Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce (UMFCCI).

The agreement was reached after Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce signed the Memorandum of Understanding with French Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI French Myanmar) on 5 May.

According to the MoU, Myanmar exports will find a better way to reach France and the country will get access to French technological aid and investment. “The bilateral cooperation is aimed at assisting Myanmar,” said Mr. Julien Esch, Chairman of CCI French Myanmar.

French technology would enable help Myanmar produce value-added goods. “France can be the base for extending our trade with the whole EU, “ said U Zaw Min Win, Chairman of UMFCCI.

Dr Mg Mg Lay, vice chairman of UMFCCI said he preferred inviting long term investment that can support Myanmar development rather than short term investment.

In enhancing cooperation in trade and investment, the two federations will cooperate in trade fairs, business matching meetings, business tours, according to the agreement. French investment in Myanmar has reached USD 540 million in 2015-2016 and the trade volume has just reached USD 110 million.—Su Hnin Le
40,000 tourists visit Shwedagon Pagoda in April

A tour guide explains the detailed history of well-known Shwedagon Pagoda to tourists in Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR

Mixed chilli and corn cultivation increase profits

FARMERS gained more profits from chilli-corn mixed farming in summer at Salin creek field near Ngevetaman village, Salin Township, Minbu District, Magway Region.

One acre of corn farm can have a good yield, said a grower from corn plantation of Ngevetaman village. Shwe Ta Soke and Kyauksein chilli can be grown altogether with the corns in corn plantations.

After harvesting the corns, the chilli will be watered and fertilized.

One item of corn can be sold at 90 to 100 kyats. One plant of shwe ta soke chilli can yield 30 to 40 handful amounts and one handful of chilli obtained nearly K 15.

The price of the shwe ta soke chilli is nearly 350 kyats and Kyauksein chilli can get up to 500 kyats.

They were distributed to the markets of Kyaukpaduang, Minbu and Chauk.— Phoe Pyae

Exhibition for mangos and tea leaves to be held

MANDALAY will host an exhibition in which mangos, tea leaves, fruits, flowers and vegetables will be displayed at the National Institute of Building Science from 20 May to 22 May, according to Flowers and Vegetables Association.

The exhibition includes the 4th mango show where different species of different regions of Myanmar will be displayed in combination with mango competition.

Visitors to the exhibition will be treated with various sorts of tea leaves foods. Not only fruits, flowers and vegetables but also fertilizers, pesticides and various kinds of agriculture products will be displayed. The mangos for competition must have four inches length petiole and must be sent at least five samples to the venue between 9am and 3pm on 19 May.

The winners in this competition will be awarded Ks 3,000,000 for first prize, Ks 2,000,000 for second prizes, Ks 1,500,000 for third prize.—200

Over 1500 children with cleft lips, palates received free surgeries

HOSPITALS in Yangon were providing free surgeries for the children with cleft lips, palates and over 1500 surgeries have been conducted till now.

Under the aid of New Look New Life organization Pinlon Hospital and Shwe Baho Hospital in Yangon were conducting surgeries on children with cleft lips, palates free of charge.

The free-service programme aimed at enabling the children with cleft lips, palates to overcome their difficulties in dealing with social environment. Every year nearly 6000 children were born with cleft lips and palates in Myanmar according to estimated figures.—200
Border trade with ITCs reaches Ks1.7 billion in current FY

BORDER trade value using the Individual Trading Card (ITC) amounted to more than Ks1.7 billion in the current fiscal year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The Myawady border trade camp is reported to have the largest volume of trade with a value of more than Ks1.250 billion. According to the ministry’s statistics, the export value with ITCs was Ks1.694 billion on the first 21 days of this FY, while the import value with ITCs was Ks86 million.

The trade value through ITCs at borders were Ks83m at Tamu trade camp; Ks4m at Muse border gate; Ks79m at Tachileik trade camp; over Ks241 million at Kanpiketee border gate; over Ks28m at Kawthaung border town; over Ks19m at Reed border trade camp and over Ks72m at Mawtaung gate.

The total trade value with ITCs was Ks18.972 billion in FY2016-2017. From FY2012-2013 to date, the ministry issued a total of 1,273 ITCs to individual traders at borders. The commerce ministry permitted 292 ITCs in FY2012-13; 261 cards in FY2013-14; 317 cards in FY2014-15; 146 cards in FY2015-16 and 248 cards in FY2016-17 and 9 cards in FY2017. According to the ministry, an ITC holder may trade up to Ks15m in five days at border trade camps and import and export offices, with a trade value of Ks3m a day on average.

—Swe Nyein

Trade deficit reaches over $300 million in current FY

MYANMAR’s external trade value for the current fiscal year reached over US$1.8 billion, with the trade deficit of more than $300 million, according to the official figures released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Over the past 28 days of this FY, the foreign trade value amounted to $1.867 billion, exceeding $989 million than that of the same period of last year. Of the total value, export value hit $776.469 million and import value totalled $1.090 billion while the country has racked up a trade deficit of $314.247 million.

The total trade value of this FY included $353.608 million from normal trade and $240.801 million from the border trade. Efforts have been made by trade authorities to decrease trade deficit by promoting the country’s export sector. The country suffered a trade deficit of over $91 million in FY2012-2013. The trade deficit rose to $2.555 billion in FY2013-2014. It continues to increase to $4.109 billion in FY2014-2015 and $5.441 billion in FY2015-2016. Myanmar registered trade deficits of $5.5 billion in FY2016-2017.

—Lynn Lynn

Computers and accessories market cool down

COMPUTERS and their accessories market started to cool in Myanmar starting from March and remains cool till May because of appreciation of the US dollar. The price of the computers and its accessories are always changing depending on the rate of US dollar exchange rate.

“Computers are selling well mostly from January to April. Desktop and Laptop computers are also very popular in the market. But this month, our computer market is cooling when compared to the last month,” said a computer shop owner.

Moreover, the used computers which are sold by the training centers and imported from Japan are selling well. The used computers imported from Japan have the strong market because of the competitive price and high quality. The used desktop computers sold from the training centers are not selling at the shop but they are bought and sold direct between the buyers and sellers.

The price of the computers is changing depending on the US dollar exchange rate. The US dollar exchange rate was Ks 1,352 on 3 April, Ks 1,353 on 25 April and Ks 1,350 on 3 May.

The US dollar exchange rate is stable between Ks 1,350 and Ks 1,360 from the 1 to 6 May. So, the stable US dollar exchange affects the computer market.

—MMAL

Export value up by over US$460 million as of 21st April this FY

EXPORTS from 1st to 21st April fetched US$681.764 million, up from US$219.509 million in the same period last year, according to statistics from the Commerce Ministry.

In the similar period, the import value was US$699.058 million which is up by over US$94 million compared to that of last year.

External trade with foreign trade partners as of 21st April amounted to over US$1.3 billion, which is an increase of over US$550 million from last year. Normal trade hit over US$1 billion, whereas border trade fetched over US$280 million.

The country exports agricultural products, fishery products, minerals, animal products, forest products, finished industrial goods and other products while capital goods, personal goods and raw industrial materials are imported into Myanmar.

Myanmar is conducting border trade with China through Muse, Lweje, Kanpiketee, Chinswehaw and Kengtung while the country is trading with Thailand through the Tachileik, Myawady, Kawthaung, Myeik, Hteeheke, Mawtaung and Maese border gates.

The cross-border trade camps between Myanmar and Bangladesh are Sittway and Maungtaw, while the country trades directly with India via the Tamu and Reed border gates.—Mon Mon

—Nyein Lynn

File photo shows trucks near 105-mile Muse Trade Zone, Shan State. PHOTO: PHOE KHAR

Computers are displayed for sale. Computers are selling well mostly from January to April. PHOTO: MYANNA ALINN
Japan pledges $40 million to ADB fund for infrastructure development

YOKOHAMA — Japan pledged Saturday to provide $40 million to help developing countries introduce advanced technology via the Asian Development Bank in response to increasing infrastructure needs in the Asia-Pacific region.

In a speech delivered at an annual gathering of the ADB in Yokohama near Tokyo, Finance Minister Taro Aso also said infrastructure should increase connectivity in an “open, transparent and nonexclusive” manner.

The ADB expects large infrastructure-building needs totaling $26 trillion by 2030 as economic expansion continues in the fast-growing region.

The $40 million promised by Japan over the next two years will go to the ADB’s newly created trust fund designed to give assistance to clean energy and transportation projects, according to Japanese officials.

The Manila-based lender has a long history of helping build infrastructure in developing countries but its role and relevance are increasingly being tested by the launch of a China-led infrastructure investment bank.

Japan, one of the leading financial contributors to the ADB, has been promoting “quality” infrastructure, while calling for more action to address health risks and promote disaster prevention.

“I encourage the bank to focus more on knowledge-sharing and reform supporting loans in areas such as health, while continuing to promote infrastructure projects as a central pillar of its operations,” Aso said.

Aso, chairing this year’s annual event, said economic growth has contributed to alleviating poverty in Asia, with the ADB serving as the region’s “family doctor.”

“We cannot be complacent,” Aso told the gathering as natural disasters and pandemics pose risks and the region needs to address income inequality, aging and volatility in capital flows.

Crown Prince Naruhito attended the opening session of the ADB’s board of governors and expressed hope for the bank’s increased role in the region.

Finance ministers, central bankers and other delegates from the ADB’s 67 member states and regions are in the Japanese port city for a host of meetings through Sunday.

On the sidelines of the events, Japan proposed Friday to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to create a new currency swap scheme worth $40 billion to address short-term liquidity problems.

—Kyodo News

India successfully launches South Asia satellite

NEW DELHI — In its biggest space diplomacy push, India launched a South Asia communication satellite on Friday from the spaceport of Sriharikota in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh.

The State-owned Indian Space Research Organisation’s (ISRO) rocket, Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), carrying the 2,230 kg satellite GSAT-9, lifted off from the launch pad at Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota at 4:57 p.m. local time (1127 GMT).

ISRO, which has built the satellite for use by countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region, said GSAT-9 has been launched with an objective to provide different communication applications in Ku-band with coverage over South Asia.

The satellite was originally named SAARC satellite, but was later changed to South Asia satellite after Pakistan opted out of the project, stating “it has its own space programme.”

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the country’s scientists for the successful launch. “We are a united family of South Asian countries, united in our pursuit of peace, progress & prosperity of our region & the entire humankind,” he tweeted soon after the launch.

Later joining the five heads of state of SAARC nations — Afghanistan’s President Ashraf Ghani, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Maldives President Abdulla Yameen, Nepal’s Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena — Modi hailed the launch.

“Today is a historic day, one without precedent. We extend our close links into Outer Space. Space technology will touch the lives of our people in the region. Convinced when we join hands and mutually share fruits of knowledge, technology and growth, we can speed up development,” he said.

On his part, Afghanistan’s President Ashraf Ghani said: “This is an extremely important step to know nature and nature’s patterns. Development must be citizen centric. Today’s development is child centred and women centred, it makes governance accessible.”

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took the opportunity to thank India. “On today’s auspicious occasion, I congratulate the Government of India for the successful launch. Betterment of our people can happen through fruitful engagement,” she said.

—Xinhua

Nepali attempting to beat oldest Mt. Everest climber record dies

KATHMANDU — Nepali climber Min Bahadur Sherchan, who was hoping to surpass Japanese climber Yuichiro Miura as the oldest person to climb Mt. Everest, died Saturday at a mountain base camp, the Tourism Ministry confirmed.

“Sherchan passed away at 5:14 pm today at the base camp. Doctors here suspect he suffered a heart attack,” ministry official Gyanendra Shrestha told Kyodo News by phone from the base camp. Sherestha was 85 years old.

In 2008, Sherchan became the oldest man to summit the 8,848-meter peak — the world’s tallest — when he climbed Mt. Everest at the age of 76.

But in 2013, that feat was surpassed by Japan’s Yuichiro Miura who climbed the mountain at the age of 80. Sherchan, a former British Gurkha born in Myagdi district in western Nepal in June 1931, afterward repeatedly attempted to regain the record.

In 2008 when Miura achieved the stunning feat, Sherchan had to abandon his own attempt to defend his record because of delay in the issuance of a government climbing permit. And in 2013, he had to abort an attempt because of a quake-triggered avalanche on the mountain that killed 18 people.

Before Sherchan, the record for the oldest man to climb the mountain was set by Japanese climber Katsunori Yanagisawa, who did so at age 71 in 2007. Miura previously had held the record by climbing the mountain in 2003 at the age of 70.

Sherchan is the second climber to have perished on Mt. Everest this season. On Sunday, famed Swiss alpinist Ueli Steck, 40, died after slipping and falling 1,000 meters between Camp I and Camp II of the mountain.

The government has issued 371 climbing permits, an all-time record, for the mountain this climbing season.

Climbers who are acclimatizing at lower slopes of the mountain are expected to make their final push later this month, taking advantage of favorable weather periods. Including Sherpa guides, around 800 people are expected to attempt the mountain this month.—Kyodo News
Japan, China to hold finance talks amid concerns on protectionism, North Korea

YOKOHAMA, Japan (AP) — Japan and China will hold their first bilateral financial dialogue in two years on Saturday to discuss risks to Asia’s economic outlook, such as the protectionist policies advocated by US President Donald Trump and tension over North Korea, officials said.

Chinese Finance Minister Xiao Jie, who missed a trilateral meeting with his Japanese and South Korean counterparts on Friday for an emergency domestic meeting, has flown in for the bilateral dialogue, seeking to dispel speculation his absence had diplomatic implications.

Xiao and Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso will discuss issues ranging from North Korea’s nuclear and missile programme to the two countries’ economic outlook and financial cooperation during the dialogue, to be held on the sidelines of the Asian Development Bank’s annual meeting in Yokohama, eastern Japan.

Senior finance officials from both countries will also hold a separate round of talks, Japanese Finance Ministry officials say.

Relations between Japan and China have been strained over territorial rows and Japan’s occupation of parts of China in World War II, though leaders have recently sought to mend ties through dialogue.

Still, China’s increasing presence in infrastructure finance has alarmed some Japanese policymakers, who worry that Beijing’s new development bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), may overshadow the Japan-backed ADB.

Japan and China do agree on the need to resist protectionism, which is crucial to Asia’s trade-dependent economies.

Finance officials from Japan, China and South Korea agreed to resist all forms of protectionism in Friday’s trilateral meeting, taking a stronger stand than G20 major economies against the protectionist policies advocated by Trump.

China has positioned itself as a supporter of free trade in the wake of Trump’s calls to put America’s interests first and pull out of multilateral trade agreements. Japan has taken a more accommodative stance toward Washington’s argument that trade must not just be free but fair.

According to Bounoum, the Lao government has put forward a number of policies that promote clean energy and cross-border electrical grid interconnection in order to facilitate sustainable energy development.

“At present, Laos has connected with regional countries in terms of energy, but the competitiveness of our system is not strong enough and needs to be improved to ensure quality and reliability of connection,” Bounoum said.

Laos expects China’s promotion of power grid interconnection and interworking with neighbouring countries to “contribute to realizing our common goal,” noting that the EDL-Gen will continue to support the exchanges of electrical energy among regional countries to ensure regional energy stability.

With the rapid development of ASEAN countries, electricity demand of the bloc’s member states has also surged. Electricity exports have become one of the main sources for foreign trade and foreign exchange reserves of Laos.—Xinhua

Over 200 students hospitalized after gas leak near school in Delhi

NEW DELHI — Nearly 200 students of a state-run school were hospitalized after they fell ill following a gas leak from a nearby container depot in the Indian capital Saturday, a senior police official said.

The gas leak took place in Tughlakabad container depot near Rani Jhansi Sarvodaya Kan-ya VeDalya school in southeast Delhi in the morning, when classes were underway.

“Around 200 children have been admitted to four different hospitals for treatment after they complained of irritation in eye and throat. However, no one is serious. All students and teachers of the school have been evacuated,” Deputy Commissioner of Delhi Police, Ramlal Baniya, told the media.

“Fortunately, there have been no reports of any death in the incident. Some of the students who were hospitalized have been discharged after administration of first aid, while the remaining others are undergoing treatment,” the official said.

Fire tenders and the National Disaster Response Force have rushed to the spot and are trying to contain the leakage.

“The gas that leaked is actually Chloromethyl Pyridine, a chemical which is used in manufacturing insecticides and pesticides. We are trying to ascertain the exact cause of the leak,” said a senior official of the Delhi Fire Services.

One of the school teachers said, on condition of anonymity, that the school was open Saturday because of a scheduled examination. “The examination has now been postponed and the school shut temporarily,” she said.

Rahul Singh, a parent, said she got a call from one of the school teachers that her daughter has been admitted to a hospital after she complained of breathlessness, following the gas leak. “I was so worried. I immediately rushed to the hospital, now my daughter is out of danger,” she said.

Delhi’s Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Man-ish Sisodia said he will visit the children in the hospitals and that he has spoken to a few children on phone. “I have asked district magistrate to investigate the leak. Doctors have also said there is no problem,” he said.

A probe has been ordered into the incident and strict action will be taken against anyone found guilty, said another police official.

Gas leak is not uncommon in India, the most infamous being the tragedy in the central Indian city of Bhopal in 1984 when a poisonous gas leak from the Union Carbide Corporation plant killed several thousand people and injured more than half a million.—Xinhua

Lao power company lauds China’s efforts to push for integrated regional energy system

VIENTIANE — The Lao state-run energy giant EDL-Gen spoke highly of the efforts made by the State Grid Corporation of China to promote power grid interconnection and interworking with neighbouring countries under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Proposed by China in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, aiming at building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes of Silk Road.

EDL-Gen (Electricite du Laos Generation Public Company) is willing to join hands with regional countries to build an integrated energy system and exchange of electrical energy, EDL-Gen director Boungoum Syvampeng has said.

Hydropower plants built by Chinese companies have helped provide residents in remote areas in Laos with access to electricity, contributing to the accomplishment of the country’s socio-economic development targets, according to Lao officials.

The Global Light of Myanmar
Launching an Initiative for Building a Platform for New Writers

Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja, Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

MANY a time had the writer, before he reached the retired age of 60 years, visited this historic site in the outskirts of Yangon, either alone or in company with his family or students. But never bothered to learn about it and look seriously at sacred edifices and all their associated accessories.

Only when, as a late octogenarian, one day he and his wife, on one Buddhist Sabbath day, visited it for religious merit making, he discovered, much to his excitement, untapped historical sources. It was Moe Kaung Su Taung-Pyi Zedi, in Yankin township of Yangon reachable via Thitsa Road leading to it, or via Moa Kaung Paya Road leading to the western entrance or main road of Moe Kaung straight to the eastern entrance.

The Pagoda festival is annually held on the waxing moon days of Nat-taw month (December). The festival assumes a dual feature of rural and urban. Many bazaars from neighboring villages and markets and sores from nearly towns mushroom around the Pagoda precincts and performances of puppets, Ayeint dances, drama zatpwe, circus, stage show, for public entertainment gratis, feasts of Myanmar snacks, and soft drink for lay people and swarm food for monks donated by well-wishers and merit makers. Every time the written and the family visited it at the festival time they enjoyed entertainments, relished food and returned home with many souvenirs or rural products.

It was only on the occasion of the 102nd anniversary of the Festival, the author’s attention was caught by a folding pamphlet handed him by the Pagoda Trustee (Gwypaka) of Yankin Township.

Background history given in the pamphlet claims that Moe KaungZedi was built by Emperor Asoka who after becoming a Buddhist convert in the SassaSankrit 200 promoted Buddhism by building 84000 water reservoirs, wells sacred stupas and edifices at home and abroad and sending out missionaries including his own son and daughter to nine places and nine countries. Asoka named Moe Kaung-Zedi “Sri MangalaZadi”. In the reign of King Min Khaung 1 of Inwa Period of Myanmar history, the Sawbwa of Moe Meik Sao Khun renovated the Zedi raising its height as it stands today. Thenceforth the Zedi came to be known as Moe KaungZedi. The inner precinct of the Zedi measures 160 feet in circumference. The Zedi is 99 feet high. Next sacred edifice on the precinct, are briefly described as follows.

Thiri Nanda bhijayaSima (Ordi-
nation Hall stone Inscription). At the south east corner of the precinct is a brick building in which is set up a stone pillar on which are Thiri Nanda bhijayaSima Inscriptions the stone pillar measures 3 feet in length 2 feet in breadth and 6 inches in thickness. It dates kawzaSakarit year 1227. The inscriptions need deciphering of learned experienced epigraphists.
Marine conservation must consider human rights

OCEAN conservation is essential for protecting the marine environment and safeguarding the resources that people rely on for livelihoods and food security. But there are many documented cases where conservation has bumped up against the people who share the same places and resources, even leading to human rights abuses.

“Often the impacts of marine protected areas can undermine people’s rights or stop them from doing their livelihoods,” said Bennett, lead author of a new study published today in Marine Policy and a postdoctoral fellow at the University of British Columbia and the University of Washington. “There is a real danger that in pushing for marine conservation, socially unjust or inappropriate actions could be promoted, including those leading to displacement, violence, marginalization and poverty.”

Both the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Aichi Targets have set goals to have 10% of the ocean be designated as marine protected areas by 2020. But currently there are no standards for how conservation is done. Doctors, lawyers, engineers and many other professions have codes of conduct, should one exist for conservation?

A global group of oceans science practitioners and scientists argue yes - it is “warranted, urgent and past due”, in their new paper “An appeal for a code of conduct for marine conservation”. In it, they outline what that code could look like, with considerations for fair governance, social justice and accountability practices. This code could be widely used by governments, researchers, NGOs, private sector and local organizations to review such issues around human rights, indigenous rights, food and livelihood security, benefit sharing, conflict resolution, and more.

“This is urgent, we need thoughtful actions to conserve the marine environment, but we need to do it in an equitable way, with respect for fishers’ livelihoods, food sovereignty and dignity,” said Yoshitaka Ota, co-author and Nippon Foundation-UBC Nereus Program Director of Policy. “Most importantly, conservation is the art of finding a better way to live with the environment because we will always be a part of it.”

The authors recognize that accountability is a challenge - whether such a code of conduct would be voluntary or whether conservation needs an independent auditing system. Creating a code of conduct would allow for a more coordinated effort to happen internationally to merge the human dimension into the mainstream of conservation. “This is an important investment that the conservation community needs to prioritize,” said Bennett. “Investing in a code of conduct will pay dividends by increasing the acceptance and effectiveness of conservation.”

“The key is ‘being there’ to understand people, their rights and their needs” said Lydia Teh, co-author and Nippon Foundation-UBC Nereus Program Research Associate.

“Successful approach for marine conservation is through bottom-up processes which work with local people and develop their capacity to manage the resources and decide on areas for protection.” — Phys. org

Discovery of a historical site by a late Octogenarian

FROM PAGE 8
Moe Kaung Bo Bo Gyi Statues located near the Western Entrance Tazaung [Covered Corridor]. Believers pay homage to this statue with offertories. One was a smooth round wishing stone in front is used by believers in wishing and praying to the idol. Next idol is that of kabar Bo daw. He only preaches the precepts of the Buddha so his believers the observances of Five, Eight and Ten moral precepts of the Buddha [giving] donat-ed this bell which weighs 319 Viss. The two stone slabs with inscriptions were set up by U Nu later Prime Minister and wife Daw Mya Yee in ME 1309 [1941].

To the right side of the Western entrance are bells with inscriptions. The first bell tells us “Nay La Kaba Aha Aung, Moe Kaung Zedi U Tin Aung and family 1371, warring moon of Thadingyut [October] 3-10-2009, Saturday.

Next is a small bell in memory of a young man named Aung Ye Htet Kyu Lay who passed away at the age of 26 on 26 March 2012. His educational qualifications are B.A [Myanmar], Diploma [English], Diploma in Computer Science.

Under the warm gold light everything looks so bright and so peaceful. Many stalls lined up on both sides of the Tazaung selling both utility and vanity goods, and religious souvenirs. Fortunetellers palmists astrologers, and astronomers await consultants. Holiday makers or Sabbath keepers rest under green foliage alive with all kinds of local birds, cuckoos, doves, crows, minas and fowls. Squirrels loudly demand food from the visitors while hand some dogs and cats being overfed about howling and mewing. Two twin roosters indolently cockatooing their time reminding of these animals never fight. They co-exist peacefully.

The entire place is a sacred Abaya Hitana. [No. Danger Zone] Sanctuary. Day and nights voluntary Pagoda Patrols make round by turn every hour. All night sentries keep their watch every nook and corner for security a safety. Moe Kaung Zedi is under the administration of Auvadasariya Sayadaw [Advisory Body of Monks], Gawpak Apwe [Pagoda Trustees] and voluntary organizations. The writer and his wife returned home happy and peaceful, wishing to visit Moe Kaung Zedi again and again.

- Moe Kaung Bo Bo Gyi
French candidate Macron claims massive hack as emails leaked

FRANKFURT/PARIS — Leading French presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron’s campaign said on Friday it had been the target of a “massive” computer hack that dumped its campaign emails online 1-1/2 days before voters choose between the centrist and his far-right rival, Marine Le Pen.

Macron, who is seen as the frontrunner in an election billed as the most important in France in decades, extended his lead over Le Pen in polls Friday.

As much as 9 gigabytes of data were posted on a profile called EMELEAKS to Pastebin, a site that allows anonymous document sharing. It was not immediately clear who was responsible for posting the data or if any of it was genuine.

In a statement, Macron’s political movement En Marche! (Onwards!) confirmed that it had been hacked.

“The En Marche! Movement has been the victim of a massive and co-ordinated hack today which has given rise to the diffusion on social media of various internal information,” the statement said.

An interior ministry official declined to comment, citing French rules that forbid any commentary liable to influence an election, which took effect on Friday (2200 GMT).

The presidential election commission said in statement that it would hold a meeting later on Saturday after Macron’s campaign informed it about the hack and publishing of the data.

It urged the media to be cautious about publishing details of the emails given that campaigning had ended, and publication could lead to criminal charges.

Comments about the email dump began to appear on Friday evening just hours before the official ban on campaigning began. The ban is due to stay in place until the last polling stations close Sunday at 8 pm (1800 GMT).

Opinion polls show independent centrist Macron is set to beat National Front candidate Le Pen in Sunday’s second round of voting, in what is seen to be France’s most important election in decades. The latest surveys show him winning with about 62 percent of the vote.

Former economy minister Macron’s campaign has previously complained about attempts to hack its emails, blaming Russian interests in part for the cyber attacks.

On 26 April, the team said it had been the target of a attempt to steal email credentials dating back to January, but that the perpetrators had failed to compromise any campaign data.

The Kremlin has denied it was behind any such attacks, even though Macron’s camp renewed complaints against Russian media and a hackers’ group operating in Ukraine.

Vitali Kremez, director of research with New York-based cybersecurity firm Flashpoint, told Reuters his reviews indicate that APT28, a group tied to the GRU, the Russian military intelligence directorate, was behind the leak. He cited similarities with US election hacks that have been previously attributed to that group. APT28 last month registered decoy internet addresses to mimic the name of En Marche, which it likely used to send tainted emails to hack into the campaign’s computers, Kremez said. Those domains included onedrive-en-marche.fr and mail-en-marche.fr.

“Indeed drived by Moscow, this leak appears to be a significant escalation over the previous Russian operations aimed at the US presidential election, expanding the approach and scope of effort from simple espionage efforts towards more direct attempts to sway the outcome,” Kremez said. France is the latest nation to see a major election overshadowed by accusations of manipulation through cyber hacking.

US intelligence agencies said in January that Russian President Vladimir Putin had ordered hacking of parties tied to Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton to influence the election on behalf of Republican rival Donald Trump.

On Friday night as the #Macronleaks hashtag buzzed around social media, Florian Philippot, deputy leader of the National Front, tweeted “Will Macronleaks teach us something that investigative journalism has deliberately killed?”

Macron spokesman Sylvain Fort, in a response on Twitter, called Philippot’s tweet “vilé”.

En Marche! said the documents only showed the normal functioning of a presidential campaign, but that authentic documents had been mixed on social media with fake ones to sow “doubt and misinformation”.

Ben Nimmo, a UK-based security researcher with the Digital Forensic Research Lab of the Atlantic Council think tank, said initial analysis indicated that a group of US far-right online activists were behind early efforts to spread the data via social media. They were later picked up and promoted by core social media supporters of Le Pen in France, Nimmo said.

The hashtag #MacronLeaks was first spread by Jack Posobiec, a pro-Trump activist whose Twitter profile identifies him as Washington D.C. bureau chief of the far-right activist site Rebel TV, according to Nimmo and other analysts tracking the election.

Posobiec could not immediately be reached to comment by Reuters. “You have a hashtag drive that started with the alt-right in the United States that has been picked up by some of Le Pen’s most dedicated and aggressive followers online,” Nimmo told Reuters. All-right refers to a loose-knit group of far-right activists known for their advocacy of extremist ideas, rejection of mainstream conservatism and disruptive social media tactics.

Thousands of inmates escape Indonesia’s prison after riot

JAKARTA — Hundreds of inmates escaped an Indonesian prison on Sunday night following a riot caused by the bad condition of the prison.

WayanDusuki, the country’s director general of prisons, told a press conference late evening that the exact number of escaping inmates was still unclear although officials and police gave figures ranging from 100 to 300. “We, however, arrested 49 of them,“ he said.

Dusuki confirmed that it had been the target of a at- macks on the prison. The Indonesian government announced on Saturday that the prisoners to be freed for parole at the end of this month.

Hundreds of inmates escape Indonesia’s prison after riot

Kazakhstan offers to sell Brazil uranium

BRASILIA — Kazakhstan is offering to sell uranium to Brazil to cover the shortage of fuel for its atomic energy programme and help the South American nation explore its large reserves of uranium ore, a senior Kazakh official said on Friday.

“We proposed the participation of Kazakhstan in tenders for the purchase of uranium ore, a senior Kazakh official said on Friday.

“Kazakhstan is the world’s largest producer of uranium and its national operator Kazatomprom accounts for one-third of global output of the mineral needed to generate reactive nuclear power. It also makes weapons.”

Contaminated meat products recalled in several US states

CHICAGO — The state of Illinois among several other US states are recalling meat products distributed by a Pennsylvania-based company for E. coli contamination.

About 5,620 pounds of boneless veal, ground veal, beef and pork products produced by a farm could have been contaminated with E. coli, and the Pennsylvania-based Soudertonrade recalled these products distributed in several other US states.

“We will seek to avoid costly, large-scale US military interventions to achieve counterterrorism objectives and will increasingly look to partners to share the responsibility for countering terrorist groups,” it says.

However, it acknowledges that terrorism “cannot be defeated with any sort of finality.”

Michael Anton, spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said, “As part of its overall approach, the administration is taking a fresh look at the entire US national security strategy, to include the counterterrorism mission — which is especially important since no such strategy has been produced publicly since 2011.”

WASHINGTON — A draft of President Donald Trump’s new counterterrorism strategy demands that US allies shoulder more of the burden in combatting Islamist militants, while acknowledging that the threat of terrorism will never be totally eliminated.

The 11-page draft, seen on Friday by Reuters, said the United States should avoid costly, “open-ended” military commitments.

“We need to intensify operations against global jihadist groups while also reducing the costs of American ‘blood and treasure’ in pursuit of our counterterrorism goals,” the document, which is expected to be released in coming months.
Russia says Syria de-escalation deal takes effect at midnight

MOSCOW/BEIRUT — A de-escalation agreement in Syria takes effect at midnight but Russia’s air force will continue strikes against Islamic State elsewhere in the country, Russian news agencies cited the Defence Ministry as saying on Friday.

The largest of the four de-escalation zones is in northern Syria and includes Idlib province and adjoining districts of Latakia, Aleppo and Hama with a total population of over 1 million, the ministry said.

Iran and Turkey agreed on Thursday to Russia’s proposal to establish the de-escalation zones.

But details of the memorandum the three guarantors signed were sketchy, while the main Syrian opposition group said it lacked all legitimacy.

The zones appear intended to halt conflict in specific areas between government forces and rebels, and would potentially be policed by foreign troops.

The fact that the de-escalation agreement was supported by the United Nations, the United States and Saudi Arabia guaranteed its implementation, the Russian government has gained the military upper hand against rebel groups, including some supported by Turkey, the US and Gulf monarchies.

The government supported the de-escalation plan, but said it would continue to fight what it termed terrorist groups.

Rebels have rejected the deal and said they would not recognise Iran as a guarantor of any ceasefire plan.

The main Syrian opposition umbrella group, the High Negotiations Committee, cautioned against attempts to “partition the country through vague meanings of what have been called ... ‘de-escalation’ zones”.

The Russian-led deal “was concluded without the Syrian people” and “lacks the minimum basics of legitimacy”, it said in a statement.

The Riyadh-based HNC, which includes political and armed groups, said it remained committed to the UN-led peace process in Geneva and called for its revival.

Mohammed Rasheed, a spokesman for the Jaish al-Nasr group, said rebels doubted Russian or Syrian government warplanes would stop striking opposition areas after the deal takes effect.

“This is not the first time,” he added, referring to several mediated ceasefires that have unravelled in Syria’s multi-sided conflict.

“As long as the jets are bombing civilians, there are no signs of any ceasefire,” Rasheed said. “When they stop, then we can work on political solutions.” — Reuters

Afghan Taliban take district near northern Kunduz in spring offensive

KUNDUZ, (Afghanistan) — Taliban militants captured a district just outside the northern Afghan city of Kunduz on Saturday, officials said, pointing to renewed pickup in fighting after the insurgents announced their annual spring offensive last week.

Mahfouz Akbari, a police spokesman for eastern Afghanistan, said security forces had pulled out of Qala-i-Zal district, west of Kunduz city, on Saturday to avoid further civilian and military casualties after more than 24 hours of heavy fighting.

In a statement, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the insurgents had taken police headquarters, the governor’s compound and all security checkpoints. He said several police and soldiers had been killed and wounded.

Over the past 18 months, Taliban insurgents have twice succeeded in seizing the town centre of Kunduz for brief periods and the latest fighting underscores warnings that Afghan forces face another gruelling year of fighting.

A shopkeeper, whose name is also Zabihullah, said the situation was now reminiscent of the position in October last year when Taliban forces entered the city before being driven back after days of fighting and air strikes.

“I am extremely worried. There are security forces everywhere,” he said. “Everyone in my family is worried and if the situation gets worse, we’ll have to leave.” — Reuters

Iraqi forces gain foothold in northwest Mosul after surprise new push

HULAYLA, (Iraq) — Iraqi forces pushed further into Mosul from the north on the second day of a new push to speed up the nearly seven-month attempt to dislodge Islamic State, commanders said on Friday.

Islamic State tried to block the troops’ northerly advance into their de facto Iraqi capital with suicide car bombs and sniper fire, Brigadier General Walid Khalifa, deputy commander of the 9th brigade, told Reuters in Hulalya, west of Musheirfa.

His troops had killed about 30 militants, destroyed five car bombs before they could be used against them, he said.

US air support has proved vital for spotting suicide car bombs and for avoiding targets where civilians are trapped.

Brigadier General Yahya Rasool, a spokesman for the joint operations command, told Reuters the militants “didn’t have time to make barriers, the advance since yesterday has been good”.

An army statement said the Second Musheirfa district as well as the Church and Mikhail’s Monastery area had been retaken.

The US-backed Iraqi forces’ new foothold aims to open escape routes for the hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped behind Islamic State lines and, in turn, help troops’ progress.

Rasool said Iraqi forces rescued 1,000 families on Thursday.

Footage taken by a drone operated by the Iraqi 9th Armoured Division over the northwestern suburb of Musheirfa and seen by Reuters, showed the militants had scant defenses there, unlike in other parts of Mosul where streets are blocked by anti-tank barriers and vehicles.

US Army Lieutenant Colonel James Browning, the part- nered adviser to the 9th, said the militants had tried to keep some streets open in order to use suicide car bombs.

Islamic State was probably expecting the attack, he said, “but they can’t defend everywhere”.

Only two months ago, the militants would be firing 200 rockets or mortars at Iraqi forces in Mosul on any given day, Browning said, but in the past two days it dropped to about 30.

“When you open up more fronts it becomes harder for (Islamic State) to be able to defend. There are certainly some challenges. There are defenses in place,” he told Reuters.

— Reuters
Venezuela unrest death toll rises, Chavez statue destroyed

CARACAS — A 20-year-old Venezuelan protester died on Friday after being shot in the head, authorities said, taking fatalities from a month of anti-government unrest to at least 37 as the opposition geared up for more demonstrations.

Heceder Lugo was hurt during fighting between demonstrators and security forces in Valencia on Thursday that also injured four others, the local opposition Mayor Enzo Scarano said in a series of tweets.

The state prosecutor’s office, which keeps an official count of deaths since protests began against socialist President Nicolas Maduro in early April, confirmed he died after being shot in a protest.

Another 217 people have been injured and 152 are still in jail from the hundreds rounded up in widespread unrest around the volatile South American OPEC nation of 30 million people, according to the office’s latest tally. There has been violence and widespread looting this week in Valencia, a once-bustling industrial hub two hours from the capital by road.

And in an incident loaded with symbolism, a handful of young men destroyed a statue of late leader Hugo Chavez in the oil-producing Zulia state, according to videos circulating on social media Friday evening.

Footage shows the statue, which depicts Chavez saluting and wearing a sash, being yanked down to cheers in a public plaza before it is hauled into a sidewalk and then the road as onlookers swear at the leftist, who died in 2013 from cancer.

“Students destroyed this statue of Chavez. They accuse him, correctly, of destroying their future,” opposition lawmaker Carlos Valero said about the incident, which was also reported in local media. Reuters was unable to independently confirm it.

Venezuela’s opposition, which now enjoys majority support after being in the shadow of the ruling Socialist party since Chavez’s 1998 election win, says his successor Maduro has become a dictator and wrecked the economy.—Reuters

IATA says Mideast traffic growth slows in March

DUBAI — The International Air Transport Association (IATA) said on Saturday that Middle East carriers’ traffic growth slowed to 4.9 per cent in March compared to a year ago, “a considerable slowing” from its performance in January and February.

In an e-mailed statement, IATA said the global demand for flights in March, measured in revenue passenger kilometers (RPKs), rose 6.8 per cent year-on-year.

About the reasons why the Middle East, usually an outperforming region, underperformed in March, IATA said it is related more to “developments seen last year,” without giving details.

Last month, IATA said the potential implications of the Brexit talks on the air transport are “significant,” as Britain is one of the most important destinations for Arab carriers in Europe.

Nevertheless, the trade association hailed the overall traffic growth for Middle East airlines since the beginning of 2017.

“The Middle East has seen the fastest year-on-year growth in international RPKs so far this year, with robust growth on routes to and from Asia and Europe,” IATA said in the statement.—Xinhua

Heavy rain, wind disrupts travel for New Yorkers

NEW YORK — Heavy wind-driven rain soaked the New York City area on Friday afternoon, causing local flooding and an array of transportation delays across the heavily populated region.

The National Weather Service issued flash flood warnings for much of New York City and several suburban counties as a weather system that stretched across much of the Eastern Seaboard dumped three inches of rain on the metropolitan region in three hours.

The rain forced the closure of Manhattan’s West Side Highway, a major thoroughfare along the Hudson River, for at least 10 blocks, and caused extensive traffic delays citywide, New York City’s Office of Emergency Management said.

While the intensity of rainfall had diminished shortly before the evening rush hour, water in flood-affected areas was expected to take several hours to recede.

The weather service received reports of flooding across all five boroughs of New York City, prompting some vehicle rescues, spokesman Tim Morrin said.

“The problem was the rain came down so heavy and so fast that the drainage couldn’t keep up,” Morrin said. “Roads became quickly impassible.”

Many flights in and out of New York airports experienced long delays and there were many cancellations. Hardest hit was LaGuardia Airport, where more than 34 per cent of departing flights were delayed and 14 per cent canceled, according to FlightAware, a website that tracks air travel.

The PATH rail service that connects New Jersey to Manhattan suspended service on two lines on Friday, citing a power problem.

Flooding forced the temporary closure of the main entrance to Manhattan’s Pennsylvania Station, according to local media. The reports could not be immediately confirmed by Reuters.

The weather-related disruption was especially aggravating for commuters from New Jersey and Long Island suburbs who have endured hours-long delays in recent weeks after derailments and other incidents at Penn Station. Claire Jones, 19, who commutes from her home in New Jersey to New York, said her New Jersey Transit line running in and out of Penn Station was delayed at least six times this month.

“It’s difficult,” Jones said. “The main thing about time transit is that it’s convenient so you know you get on this train at this time, you’ll get where you need to go, and when that doesn’t happen, it’s extremely inconvenient.”

Amtrak, which owns and operates New York’s Penn Station and leases tracks and space to NJ Transit and the Long Island Railroad, is planning to close some tracks for weeks and months at a time as it undertakes repairs.

The station, with its decaying, century-old rail tunnels extending underneath the Hudson River, is a chokepoint on Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor, which runs from Washington to Boston. —Reuters

A motorcycle is seen in water on the West Side Highway after heavy rain in the Manhattan borough of New York, US, on 5 May 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Musicians from the Jose Francisco del Castillo Youth Symphony play the national anthem as a tribute during the funeral of Armando Canizales, a violinist who died during a protest, at his wake in Caracas, Venezuela on 5 May 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS
Japan researchers seek to have Chiba stratum represent geologic age

TOKYO — Japanese researchers will file an application this month with an international geological organization to have the name “Chibanian” represent the middle Pleistocene stage, based on a stratum discovered in Chiba Prefecture, east of Tokyo, according to researchers.

If granted, Chibanian meaning “Chiba age” will be the first time the name of a Japanese place has been adopted to represent a geologic time period. The Chiba section, where evidence of the last geomagnetic reversal occurring 770,000 years ago was found preserved in good condition, is competing with two other candidate sections in Italy — Montalbano Jorica and Valле di Manche.

The three candidates are competing for the naming right to represent the period from 770,000 to 126,000 years ago during which Earth’s most recent switching of north and south magnetic poles took place.

The organization, the International Union of Geological Sciences, is expected to select the name early next year after a thorough review.

Boundaries in geochronology are established by composite sections with episodic depositions evidencing the planet’s 4.6 billion years of history, such as drastic environmental changes. For example, the Jurassic period encompassing numerous stages was named on the basis of rock strata discovered in the Jurassic Mountains straddling the border between France and Switzerland.

The Japanese researchers including those at Ibaraki University and the National Institute of Polar Research will file the application for the Chiba section, exposed along the Yoro River on the Boso Peninsula.

In addition to grains with a magnetic trace taken from layers in the section, quality data of fossils of oceanic microorganisms and pollen will be crucial for the organization’s review in designating a section as a Global Boundary Stratotype Section and Point or GSSP, according to the researchers.

— Kyodo News

Indonesia sues Thailand’s PTT, PTTEP for $2 billion over oil spill

JAKARTA — The Indonesian government is suing Thailand’s state-owned PTT (PTT.BK) and PTT Exploration and Production (PTTEP Bk) for around $2 billion for alleged damage to the environment from an oil spill in the Timor Sea eight years ago.

The Montara well head operated by subsidiary PTTEP Australasia caught fire in 2009, leaking hundreds of thousands of litres of oil off the northern coast of Western Australia, according to media reports at the time.

The incident was considered one of Australia’s worst oil disasters, and PTTEP was fined A$510,000 ($394,000, £303,474) by a Darwin court after pleading guilty in 2011 to charges related to workplace health and safety failure to maintain good oilfield practice. Indonesia alleged, however, that the oil spill also fouled seawater and coastal areas in the nation’s East Nusa Tenggara province, and filed a lawsuit on Wednesday in a Jakarta court against PTT, PTTEP and PTTEP Australasia, seeking 27.5 trillion rupiah ($2.1 billion) for damages and restoration costs.

PTTEP Australasia “has not shown good intention in resolving the pollution problem of the Montara oil spill,” Indonesia’s maritime coordinating ministry said in a statement on Friday.

Besides polluting seawater, the incident also damaged mangrove forests, coral reefs and seagrass fields in East Nusa Tenggara province, the ministry said.

PTTEP said in an emailed statement that it was aware of reports about Indonesia’s lawsuit, but that it “has not been served with proceedings and has not received any notification of the substance or extent of the claim.”

Photo taken April 25, 2017, shows a stratum in Ichihara, Chiba Prefecture, where evidence of the last geomagnetic reversal occurring 770,000 years ago was found preserved in good condition. Based on this stratum, Japanese researchers will file an application in May 2017 with an international geological organization to have the name “Chibanian” represent the middle Pleistocene stage.

Photo: KYODO NEWS

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV ANDAMAN STAR VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANDAMAN STAR VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.5.2017 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.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV RATANA THIDA VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV RATANA THIDA VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.5.2017 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.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV XETHA BHUM VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV XETHA BHUM VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.5.2017 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.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV EVER ABLE VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ABLE VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T 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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185
Kanye West deletes social media accounts

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Kanye West has deleted his Twitter and Instagram accounts.

The 39-year-old music star mysteriously deactivated both his verified accounts, giving no reason for his actions, reported Ace Showbiz.

West, who is married to Kim Kardashian, has been struggling with his health following his breakdown and hospitalization in November last year.

His condition forced him to be absent from big events like the Met Gala. It was reported that he “was still very much enjoying his time off from public events.”

Although he hasn’t personally talked about his condition, Kim recently revealed on “Keeping Up with the Kardashians” how his breakdown affected their marriage.

—PTI

Country singer Loretta Lynn hospitalized after suffering stroke

LOS ANGELES — Country music singer Loretta Lynn was hospitalized after a suffering a stroke at her home in Hurricane Mills, Tennessee, her official website said Friday.

Lynn, 85, was admitted to a Nashville hospital on Thursday where she is “under medical care and is responsive and expected to make a full recovery,” a statement on LorettaLynn.com said.

The singer’s upcoming shows have been postponed on advice of her doctors while she recovers, the statement added.

Lynn was scheduled to perform at the Carolina Theatre in Durham, North Carolina on Friday, and had performances lined up across the United States through November.

Born in Kentucky, Lynn carved a career in the country music scene with her downtown twangy voice, singing hits such as 1960’s “I’m a Honky Tonk Girl” and “Coal Miner’s Daughter,” released in 1970.—Reuters

Deepika peeved over being mistaken for Priyanka in the West

MUMBAI — Actress Deepika Padukone says it is not only ignorance but racist when the foreign media mistakes her for Priyanka Chopra.

International mediapersons often confuse Deepika for the “Quantico” star and have even addressed her as Priyanka.

“It’s not just about me being offended. It’s you all in this room who should be offended. It’s not just ignorance, it’s also racist.

“Two people of similar colour are not the same people.

So, you as fellow Indians should actually be calling them out and educating them instead of encouraging it,” Deepika told reporters at the 12real event today.

When asked what could be the reason behind this confusion, she says, “Ignorance is ignorance. I feel bad for them.”

Recently Priyanka had said that it was not fair to mistake Deepika for her. “I guess I’m the most popular brown face that everyone has known. Every brown girl does not look the same. Don’t mistake it. Let’s try and tell us apart. That was not right and it’s not fair. She’s a massive star from India,” she had said.—PTI

Demi Moore sued over pool death

LOS ANGELES — Actress Demi Moore is being sued by the family of a man, who drowned in her pool two years ago.

The body of 21-year-old Ednilson Steven Valle was discovered at the bottom of the pool at Demi’s Los Angeles home following a small party thrown by her caretaker and the actress has now been named as a defendant in the lawsuit filed by Valle’s parents, reported TMZ.

In their lawsuit, Valle’s parents claim that “there were no depth markers or any safety signage in the 10-foot-deep pool, there were rocks around the pool which created a trip hazard.”

They also allege that the temperature in the pool was 101 degrees, which “compromises brain function.” Demi, 54, wasn’t at home when the death occurred but revealed she had been left devastated by the tragedy.

“I am in absolute shock. I was out of the country traveling to meet my daughters for a birthday celebration when I got the devastating news.

“The loss of a child is an unthinkable tragedy and my heart goes out to this young man’s family and friends. I ask that you please respect the privacy of all concerned during this sensitive time,” she had said.

It was previously reported that Valle didn’t know how to swim, and his body was discovered after the caretaker and some friends returned to the property after going out briefly.—PTI

New Brussels museum tells history from European perspective

BRUSSELS — An interactive museum exploring Europe’s diverse history of wars, the EU and even Brexit opens to the public in Brussels on Saturday, trying to tell the story of the continent from a non-national perspective.

Visitors to the modern six-storey House of European History, funded by the European Parliament, can take an interactive tour in 24 languages, starting in antiquity and leading past the two great wars of the 20th century and the reconstruction process towards a united continent that followed.

The museum will continue to evolve with future events such as Brexit, the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the museum’s content coordinator Andrea Mork explained.

“Depending on tomorrow’s events, we are trying to update as much as possible. But as a museum we need a certain distance to evaluate what is important,” she said.

The museum, which cost 55.4 million euros ($60.8 million) plus 7 million euros in annual expenses, was criticized as “a wildly extravagant vanity project” by Jonathan Arnott, a member of the European Parliament for British eurosceptic party UKIP.

The parliament’s president Antonio Tajani dismissed the criticism, saying the museum was an investment in culture as well as the education of future generations.

—Reuters

A visitor looks at items on display at the inauguration of the House of European History in Brussels, Belgium, on 4 May 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS
Eerie model of Picasso’s corpse lies in Spanish birthplace

MALAGA (Spain) — A life-size model of the corpse of Pablo Picasso lies on a plinth in his home city of Malaga, eyes closed, hands folded.

On the surface, it looks like another scheme to draw tourists. But, say the organizers, the tour and sculpture are actually a critique of the way the city has used Picasso for commercial ends. “The project is meant to criticize mass tourism and the culture industry of the city as a brand, in which tourism goes against the needs of the residents and where reality is replaced by settings created for the visitors,” said Los Interventores, a group of artists who commissioned the exhibit. Their Picasso tour passes by the church where he was baptized, his school and the bullring, before ending abruptly with his body, laid out near a marble gravestone that reads in gold lettering: ‘Here lies our good friend Pablo Picasso (1881-1973).’ — Reuters

A sign is pictured outside Christie’s auction house in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Auction houses see signs of art market uptick ahead of New York sales

NEW YORK — As auction powerhouse Christie’s and Sotheby’s gear up for their New York spring sales, hopes are high that a host of major works the likes of which have not hit the block for several seasons will reap strong, even record, prices.

After years of gangbuster results marked by soaring prices, both auction houses staged relatively modest sales last year, owing largely to hesitancy on the part of consignors in an unsettled global market.

No works carried estimates much beyond $40 million, in contrast to recent seasons when many pieces broke the $100 million barrier. Executives resorted to employing such terms as discriminator, measured and selective to characterize both the market, and some flabby results.

But collectors’ hunger for top-tier works also drove heavy spending in the fall, said Brook Hazelton, president of Christie’s Americas, citing its Claude Monet record in November. “Those successes gave a tremendous boost to seller confidence, and since that time we have seen a meaningful increase in supply,” Hazelton told Reuters. “We have witnessed strong demand for breakthrough masterpieces,” said Simon Shaw, co-head of Impressionist and modern art at rival Sotheby’s, citing one of its star offerings, Egon Schiele’s, “Danae,” as just one example. Painted when the artist was just 19, the work which Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale head Jeremiah Evarts called “without doubt the most important early work that’s ever come to auction” is expected to fetch as much as $40 million, not including commission, which would set a new Schiele record.

Traditionally the auction houses’ largest, the spring sales in New York kick off on May 15 as Christie’s features Pablo Picasso’s 1939 portrait of muse Dora Maar, “Femme assise, robe bleue,” estimated between $35 million and $50 million, at its Impressionist and Modern Art sale. — Reuters

A sign is pictured outside Christie’s auction house in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

People take pictures next to an artwork entitled “Picasso died here” by Spanish artist Eugenio Merino, featuring a hyperrealistic figure of the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso’s corpse, displayed at the Alliance Francaise (French Alliance) in Malaga, southern Spain, on 5 May 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS
Kipchoge runs quickest marathon in just over two hours

MONZA, (Italy) — Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge ran the quickest recorded marathon time at the Monza circuit in Italy on Saturday, crossing the line in two hours and 24 seconds but missing out on an attempt to break the two-hour barrier. The 32-year-old Kipchoge’s time, set on a Formula 1 track, smashed the official mark of 2:02.57 set by Kenyan Dennis Kimetto in Berlin in 2014, but will not enter the record books largely due to a non-compliant system of pacemaking.

The race involved just three competitors and was sponsored by sportswear group Nike in an athletics cum marketing project, Breaking2, which caught the imagination of sports fans and runners worldwide. Nike had pitched it as sport’s ‘moon shot’.

Eritrean Zersenay Tadese and Ethiopian Lelisa Desisa, the other two main runners, both dropped off the pace and were out of the running by the halfway mark.—Reuters

Fallen Djokovic should ask Becker to return, says Armenulic

BELGRADE — A struggling Novak Djokovic should bring past mentor Boris Becker back into the fold in order to rediscover his vintage form after dismissing his entire coaching staff on Friday, a former Yugoslavia Davis Cup team captain said.

“I expected this move because Djokovic’s results in the past few months have been well below par for the world’s former number one,” Radmilo Armenulic told Belgrade’s B92 website (www.b92.net).

“Something had to change because this team had become his family of sorts and I think Djokovic has made the right decision.

“He will now have to put together a heavyweight coaching staff headed by the likes of Boris Becker, Pete Sampras or some other former top player.

‘In my opinion, bringing Becker back would be the best course of action as he played the best tennis of his life after the German had joined his team,’ added the 76-year old, who steered Yugoslavia to Davis Cup semi-finals in 1988, 1989 and 1991.

Djokovic said he had decided to part company with long-time head coach Marijan Vajda, fitness coach Gebhard Phil Grisch, and physio Miljan Gritsch, and Ethiopian Lelisa Desisa, the other two main runners, both dropped off the pace and were out of the running by the halfway mark.—Reuters

Tottenham suffer crushing title blow with defeat at West Ham

LONDON — Tottenham Hotspur’s Premier League title hopes suffered a crushing blow as their nine-match winning run ended in a 1-0 defeat at West Ham United on Friday.

Manuel Lanzini’s scrappy 65th-minute effort decided a derby that Tottenham had largely dominated without ever reaching the levels that had raised hopes of a first title since 1961.

Tottenham could have cut leaders’ Chelsea’s advantage to one point with a victory but instead the gap will stretch to a seemingly unbridgeable seven with three games left if Chelsea beat struggling Middlesbrough at home on Monday.

West Ham, the first team to stop Tottenham scoring since Liverpool in early February, moved up to ninth with 42 points and are now mathematically safe. Home keeper Adrian frustrated Tottenham with first-half saves in quick succession from Dele Alli and Harry Kane and he also did well to keep out Son Heung-Min after the break as the visitors probed for an opener.—Reuters

Having won six of his 12 grand slam titles after the German had become part of his team, including his maiden French Open title in June, the 29-year old Serb failed to spark and were out of the running by the halfway mark.—Reuters

He is not getting any quicker and therefore needs to switch from long rallies to shorter points.—Reuters

Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge (L) runs behind pace-makers during an attempt to break the two-hour marathon barrier at the Monza circuit in Italy, on 6 May 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Serbia’s Novak Djokovic listens to his coach Boris Becker during a practice session at Melbourne Park, Australia, on 16 January 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS
Are modern inventions, ruining our future?

Are modern inventions ruining our future? Frankly, some people will say ‘no’ and some ‘yes’. In every way, all of them are not wrong. There is no definite answer to the above question because if the modern inventions are used in a right way they can help us to improve ourselves and have a more successful future. But if we use them in a wrong way, our future will surely be ruined.

For instance, let us take a look at the past. Before ‘cars’ were invented, people had to walk to everywhere they wanted to go such as their school, offices so on and so forth. But after ‘cars’ have been invented, we have been enjoying this ease of transportation since then. In others, we have become ‘lazy’. We use our cars to go to everywhere, to work, to school, to go on a trip or journey and so on. Some even use their cars to go to a convenience store which is just on the back street. Frankly, using our cars to go to somewhere far from our homes is right but we shouldn’t use cars to go to somewhere which is near us. As our great Lord Buddha preached, ‘Everything should be balanced.’ But as some people, including some of my family members, use cars all the time, it proves that we, people, have become lazy.

Thus, we are getting fatter and fatter. Suppose that you are an owner of a company. A fat guy and a thin one take the interview to become an employee of your company. In a common sense, neglecting their experiences, would you choose the fat one or the slim one? Well, I’m sure that 90 percent out of 100 will choose the thin one. Being so, modern inventions may ruin our futures if they are not used correctly.

Nowadays, every family in our country, Myanmar, has a TV; the one-eyed-monster; and people spend hours by watching TV. Watching TV is good but we should not watch it all the time and waste our precious time. As my favorite writer, William Shakespeare said, the time we have used cannot be replaced by the waves of time we have yet to use.

So we should watch TV for a while and spend the rest of the time usefully, especially the children around my age who are the future leaders of our country. The difference between the people who become successful in the future and who don’t, is the way they use their time. Thus if we watch TV all the time, our futures will be ruined for sure.

Mobile phones are also one of the serious dangers for us. Honestly, some people spend hours using mobile phones, playing online games like COC, COK, using Face book, Messenger, Viber, Wokie and so on.

We should not let mobile phones take complete control over us like that! Whether using phones is good or not simply depends on the way we use them. Most of the students use mobile phones to dial their girlfriends and crushes or to chat with them on messenger which, in fact, will result in their lives being ruined. As a fellow student, I would like to say that we should not chat with them all the time especially when we are in the class as our results of the Matriculation exams will make a permanent decision for us whether we will become mental or physical workers in the future. Even in the foreign countries, it is natural for us, teenagers, to have girlfriends and crushes when we are over 12 as to the information from the internet. But it is of great importance that we have to remain interested in our education more than relationship. Otherwise, it will ruin our future. The more the future of the students are ruined, the more ruined will be the future of our precious and lovely country, Myanmar.

To put it in a nutshell, other modern inventions can also ruin or improve our futures depending on how we use them. Use them in moderation and we will get fruitful results such as fame, success, etc. Use them excessively and we will have to face the bad consequences of our actions.

Every face is lovable in my eyes

My name is Nyein Chan, which was named by my Reverend Sayadaw U Sobita of the monastery situated near the only cemetery of our small town. As it is located nearby the graveyard, the monastery is called Sossankyaung. People apart from those residing nearby the monastery never call me my real names, addressing me as Kauk Ya, instead. Some 15 years ago, a townfolk met a new-born baby wrapped with a piece of cloth in a basket near the cemetery, knowing that someone abandoning the baby. He himself and his neighbors were too poor for a baby to be adopted. In this way, the orphan whose parents were unknown finally came to the monk. The then poor boy was none other than I was.

Though no one knew who were my parents and on which day I was born, Sayadaw named me after the day when I was picked up “Monday” as Nyein Chan meant for Peace in English, according to Myanmar traditional naming system. Out of pity for my present life of being left in a desperate condition, Sayadaw could choose other names but he had chosen this name on purpose with a view to driving sufferings and difficulties away from me in the years to follow. Sayadaw made me brought up under the care of his valet, Kappiya U Phyu Thee. The valet aged nearly 60, spent his life serving the monk since the age of 30 after the death of his wife leaving no children. At 5, I was sent to school to learn primary education. In my life, there were unforgettable days when Sayadaw made me mentored to become an educated one. Just because I was allowed to study at school, I came to know that I was adopted by the monk as they nicked me Kauk Ya at school. Failing that, I would have acknowledged that U Phyu Thee was my father because the latter was always very kind to me like a father without showing any signs of disappointment. He always calls me “My son.” Since after I ascertained that I was an adopted son, some people called me Kauk Ya without the knowledge of the monk though they called me Nyein Chan in front of the Sayadaw.

In spite of being nicknamed, I was never annoyed or disappointed with anyone. Somehow, I had a great desire to know who my parents were. Some people thought I would feel hatred toward my parents, especially my mother as they gave me away on a road. Perhaps they would have a reason or something to do so. So, U Phyu Thee called me Phoe Phyne Cho for my ever-smiling face and endurance. Since then, a childish idea occurred to my mind that there may be my parents among the guests to the monastery, people met on streets, those seen in TVs, videos and cinemas, if they will be alive. With that idea, I felt love towards everyone. Whenever they responded to my smile, I felt that I received smiles from my parents. I thought that my parents would have recognized me who has been their son surely whereas I have no reason to recognize them completely. Later, I came to realize that all the people regardless of religions or races in this world have been my relatives.

Visitors who pay a visit to the monastery, especially on Sabbath Days talk of one thing and another. The topics in their conversation include political affairs. I am not interested in politics and I do not know what the politics is. Nothing is known apart from the knowledge that we all included displacing people in many parts of our country, all those working in air-conditioned rooms, teachers producing leaders-to-be for the future, medical doctors and staff trying to save our people’s lives and generals from both sides giving commands to their forces to fight against each other are relatives. I am only an ordinary lad living on a diet provided by my Sayadaw. I am less educated compared to others. But I dare say my mind is free from greed, anger and ignorance. Therefore, every face surrounding me is lovable in my eyes. Let us uncover our masks of veiling with hatred, misunderstanding and revenges so that our future can be brighter.
Basic English Grammar for Basic Students

From today onwards, we are going to introduce “Basic English Grammar” for “Basic Students” of any age and any entry level here in this Grammar Lessons section which will come up every Sunday on this page. Here, “Basic English Grammar” means “the very Basic Level of English Grammar which is essential for you to read, to speak and to write your Correct English”. By the words “Basic Students”, we mean any student from any class and any school or institution, who wants to study English Grammar.

Let’s start with Lesson 1 today.

Lesson 1 : The Eight Parts of Speech

If you categorize or classify all English words, you can put all these into eight and only eight different boxes.

Let’s see what they are.

These eight different boxes are called: ..
(1) Nouns
(2) Pronouns
(3) Adjectives
(4) Verbs
(5) Adverbs
(6) Prepositions
(7) Conjunctions and
(8) Interjections

All these eight boxes will be opened one after another and we will study all in detail in the coming lessons.

But, for the time being, what you should bear in mind is these eight different classes of English words are called “the Eight Parts of Speech”, because by using these parts or words in their proper places, we can speak or write correct English.

Let’s see some example sentences below.

e.g.
(1) Girls like their dolls.
(Girls=Noun, like=Verb, their=Adjective, dolls=Noun)

(2) We love our parents.
(We=Pronoun, love=Verb, our=Adjective, parents=Noun)

(3) Boys run quickly.
(Boys=Noun, run=Verb, quickly=Adverb)

(4) Children are eating sweet ice creams.
(Children=Noun, are eating=Verb, sweet=Adjective, ice creams=Noun)

(5) I put the book on the table.
(I=Pronoun, put=Verb, the book=Noun, on=Preposition, the table=Noun)

(6) Mi Mi and Mu Mu are playing together.
(Mi Mi=Noun, Mu Mu=Noun, and=Conjunction, are playing=Verb, together=Adverb)

(7) Wow! You are pretty!
(Wow=Interjection, You=Pronoun, are=Verb, pretty=Adjective)

(8) Alas! We win.
(Alas=Interjection, we=Pronoun, win=Verb)

(9) We are happy in our English class.
(We=Pronoun, are=Verb, happy=Adjective, in=Preposition, English=Adjective, class=Noun)

(10) The sun shines brightly.
(The sun=Noun, shines=Verb, brightly=Adverb)

Please answer the following questions. Please don’t worry if you make mistakes. You can answer whatever you think what you understand. Feel free to make mistakes. (I’ll correct later.)

Exercise 1

(1) Into how many different boxes you can put all the English words?
(2) Can you put these into more than eight boxes?
(3) Can you put these into less than eight boxes?
(4) What are these eight boxes?
(5) Write down 5 words you know. Can you mention what parts of speech are these? Try to do so.

The correct answers for this Exercise 1, will be in this newspaper next Sunday.
Bye for now!
Please do not forget that we are going to open the first box named “Nouns” next Sunday.

Bye Bye!
Your English Teacher (GNLM)
Email: dr.nunuwintin.rose.dawn@gmail.com
The Most Important Stakeholders in Education

Dr. Nu Nu Win
Mingalar Learning Centre

We have so many stakeholders in the field of Education, such as, students, teachers, parents, donors, headmistresses and headmasters, Administrators from the Department of Education, both Basic and Higher; tutors, assistant lecturers, lecturers up to professors and rectors, the Minister of Education and so also persons from the other fields as school medical officers and school nurses, red cross associations and so on.

Among them, students, parents and teachers are the most important stakeholders.

We use to say that Students, Parents and Teachers are the three sides of the Education Triangle. If all these three sides or we can say three stakeholders of Education go together in a harmonious way, the condition or status of Education will be high. But if all three are not in harmony, the standard of Education will decline.

That means if students will do what students should do, teachers will do what teachers should do and parents will do what parents should do, then all these three sides will be in harmony and then we can get a beautiful Education triangle.

So let’s see how the three most important stakeholders should behave.

In our Myanmar society, it is not difficult to see what each side should do. We have our own customs and traditions in Myanmar such as Duties of Pupils, Duties of Teachers, and Duties of Parents. If we all fulfill our duties, the Education sector will become perfect.

It is not difficult to do so when we were young and even up till the time when we became young teachers (i.e. in the days of 1970s and 1980s). We could teach our students as much as we could and we could take care of them not only for their Education, but also their all-round development, i.e. their physical development, mental development, emotional development, social development and their moral and ethical development.

During these days, when parents came to school to see the teachers, they used to say, “Teacher, you can teach them in every way you need to do so, if only they will not become blind or lamed (broken)”. That is how parents relied fully on teachers for the all-round development of their children. But nowadays, the condition is upside down from heaven to hell. All teachers have to take care not to beat or punish a child no matter how much they break the classroom discipline. Or else, they will be reported to the higher authority and it is so sure they will be punished in one way or the other.

Because the one side (the parents side) is broken, the other side (the teacher side) becomes broken too. They have to take care of themselves so as not to lose the present job as a teacher; they have to relax some of their rules. They just ignore it when the children break school discipline if it is not so serious. Thus the children become spoiled.

They may think “I can do whatever I like in school, no need to care about the teachers and the classroom disciplines. If something happens, I have my parents who will take care of me and these problems.”

How can a child with such kind of attitude learn the lessons well?

Then another side of the Education triangle is broken again.

Let’s see why all these happen during nowadays.

Nowadays, the gap between the rich and the poor has become greater. Those who have become so rich, want to fulfill all the needs of their children as they love them so much. They use to be always on their children’s side whether these are right or wrong. They never take care of the disciplines their kids should follow.

They think they can solve all these problems through their richness. That is one kind of parents.

Another kind is those who are so absorbed in their own business matters, they think if they can give enough money for their children, they are dutiful indeed. They never take care of what their children are doing or how they feel.

The other kind of parents, are those who have to struggle for their living to make ends meet. This is the other extreme. They have no time to take care of their children whether they go to school regularly or not. So, their children have the chance to do whatever they like.

To take care of all these different kinds of children of all these different parents, the role of the teachers is not easy.

When we were young SATs, we got only 200 Kyats as our salary, but at that time, the price of gold was also 200 Kyats. So, we teachers had enough money to take care of our families and also we could also take care of our pupils whenever they were in need. We could pay their school fees (i.e. what we call tuition fees at that time) whatever they need. But, for the next term we could buy them compass boxes if their own parents could not afford to do so, we could buy and treat them lunch when they were in need and so on. So, during that time teachers were like parents to their pupils.

But, now a days, teachers’ salaries are so low to meet the needs of their own families, so they have to find outside money by giving special tuitions, so that they could fulfill whatever they need for their own families’ health, education and so on.

Because of this difference, sometimes the side of teachers is broken too.

In this way the three sides of the Education Triangle can be broken and so there is no more in harmony. Thus, sometimes corruption can be seen from these sides. Then how can we develop our Education sector to its highest level.

That’s why we all need to keep our all three sides of the Education Triangle well and harmonious so that we can develop our children’s all-round development to the full.

Therefore, we need to make sure that the three most important stakeholders of Education are in harmony so that we can have a higher and well-developed Education System.

Read the passage and answer the questions.

Mr. Jones’ shop sold food. Mr. Jones and a young man worked there. The young man’s name was George.

A man came into the shop on Monday. He was a funny man. Mr. Jones was in the office. It was behind the shop. The funny man looked at George and said, “I want a small table, please.”

Mr. Jones said, “Yes, he did.”

(a) No, he didn’t.
(b) Yes, he did.

Look at these questions. Find the right answers.

Then write the questions and the answers:

1. Did Mr. Jones work in George’s shop?
   (a) No, he didn’t.
   (b) Yes, he did.

2. Who worked in Mr. Jone’s shop?
   (a) A funny man did.
   (b) George did.

3. Did the shop sell tables, or food?
   (a) It sold food.
   (b) It sold tables.

4. Did the funny man ask George for some food?
   (a) No, he didn’t.
   (b) Yes, he did.

5. Did the funny man ask George for a table?
   (a) No, he didn’t.
   (b) Yes, he did.

6. Did George show him a table?
   (a) No, he didn’t.
   (b) Yes he did.

7. Whose office did George go into then?
   (a) Mr. Jones’s.
   (b) The funny man’s.

8. Did Mr Jones speak to the funny man?
   (a) No, he didn’t.
   (b) Yes, he did.

9. Was Mr Jones happy, or angry?
   (a) He was angry.
   (b) He was happy.

10. Did the funny man ask Mr. Jones for a table, or some food?
    (a) A table.
    (b) Some food.

(Answers will be covered next Sunday.)

L A HILL
Kayah State where one can find exquisitely woven and finely embroidered attire, intriguing traditional culture and quaint social habits. Kayah is a mountainous region located in the northeast part of Myanmar. Kayah State has the border with Shan State, Kayin State of Myanmar and also with Thailand. The main power plant of Myanmar, namely Lashio Hydropower Station is located in Kayah State. Kayah State is divided into 2 districts, Loikaw District and Baukdrai District. Loikaw District includes four townships, Loikaw, Dimowrong, Pitarbo and Shave Township. Baukdrai District consists of Baukdrai, Phawnguang and Mon Township.

Kayah State is easily accessible by air from Yangon and Mandalay and the flight time is about one hour. The journey can be completed by taking a taxi from Loikaw airport and takes about 3 hours while the journey with the same mode of transport from Yangon-Mandalay to Kayah takes about 12 hours.

Shall we visit legendary Ngwe Taung Pyi?

Ngwe Taung (Thanlwin) River is in its having always been a boundary of neighboring states since before the colonial era and running through traditional culture and quintessential social habits. Kayah is a mountainous region located in the northeast part of Myanmar. Kayah State has the border with Shan State, Kayin State of Myanmar and also with Thailand. The main power plant of Myanmar, namely Lashio Hydropower Station is located in Kayah State. Kayah State is divided into 2 districts, Loikaw District and Baukdrai District. Loikaw District includes four townships, Loikaw, Dimowrong, Pitarbo and Shave Township. Baukdrai District consists of Baukdrai, Phawnguang and Mon Township.

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Ngwe Taung (Thanlwin) River is in its having always been a boundary of neighboring states since before the colonial era and running through traditional culture and quintessential social habits. Kayah is a mountainous region located in the northeast part of Myanmar. Kayah State has the border with Shan State, Kayin State of Myanmar and also with Thailand. The main power plant of Myanmar, namely Lashio Hydropower Station is located in Kayah State. Kayah State is divided into 2 districts, Loikaw District and Baukdrai District. Loikaw District includes four townships, Loikaw, Dimowrong, Pitarbo and Shave Township. Baukdrai District consists of Baukdrai, Phawnguang and Mon Township.

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SUNDAY COMICS

HELLO! I CAN’T HEAR
I CAN’T HEAR.
HELLO! HELLO!

AH! I CAN HEAR.
NOW YOU CAN NOT ONLY HEAR ME
BUT ALSO SEE ME! HA...HA.

IS SHE YOUR AUNT?
YES.

COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE MY LETTER TO YOUR AUNT?
YES.

PLEASE! I WILL GIVE YOU POCKET MONEY.
OHH!

IT’S UP TO YOU! BUT,
PREVIOUS MEN PAID ME ONE
1,000 KYATS.

YES. OF COURSE
OK

HOW MUCH?

HM!

HOLE-IN-ONE
Cartoon
Maung Shwe Win

YOU MADE A HOLE-IN-ONE, SIR.
REALLY?

OH! WHAT’S THAT SOUND?

AH! RUN-RUN!
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Invitation to young writers for new Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is now accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its new weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform starting in May.

Interested candidates can send their works to the Global New Light of Myanmar at No. 150 NgarHtatGyiPayar Street, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to dee@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information:

(1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.),
(2) Real name and (if different) your penname,
(3) Your level of education,
(4) Name of your School/College/University,
(5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses,
(6) A color photo of the submitter,
(7) Copy of your NRC card,
(8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).
A family is a kind of community in which father, mother and their children live together sharing love and caring to one another. Although family members love each other a lot, there may usually have problems in families. Different families can have different problems. Mostly, those kinds of problems occur when children are starting to turn into teenagers. Every teenager has to pass the period of time before they become adults. That period is called ‘Adolescence’. Adolescence is a time when boys and girls begin to establish greater independence from their parents. It is not easy for both parents and teenagers to smoothly navigate this transition of stage. So, while parents and teenagers are trying to overcome this transitional stage, they may face some problems in their relationship. Among the problems, these ones are common; modern technology, alcoholism, mentally disabled parents, divorce and remarriage of parents, and others.

Firstly, I want to mention how media and technology effect on the relationship between parents and adolescents. In my view, continuous development of modern media and technology holds many problems between parents and teenagers to some extent. Nowadays most of the teenagers have own social accounts on the line and many social networks. In there, teens can make their secret life and own world each without letting their parents know about what they did, what they are doing and what they will do. For example, nowadays most of the teenagers are using Facebook, twitter, etc. where they can reveal and share their feelings they dare not or cannot tell their parents. And they can post photos and activities and chat with their friends. Otherwise, teens can play free online games, read free books and novels if interested in reading or can download music, videos and applications they like. There seem to be available most of the things that today’s youth want—such as books, chatting, music, TV general knowledge, school lessons, information and even shopping on the website. So, social networks and gadgets are gradually becoming better than real companions, like siblings and parents. Most of the teenagers shut their parents out when they get home from schools and use the Internet for their study or relaxation. That is the reason why many teenagers are not close to their family and the worst is that they remember their parents only in need of money. Hence there is no doubt that teens and parents are gradually more and more apart from each other although they live together under the same roof. If there are no frequent and warm conversations between parents and children, it will be difficult for both to closely associate in the future.

When we present about the family problems, one common problem is alcoholism and drug addiction. This affects the whole family – young, teenage, or grown-up children, wives or husbands, or even other relatives and friends. Every one out of four in this world has a problem with alcohol, and they are affected differently. In some family, they might have parents who are addicted to alcohol or drugs or maybe both, but in others, this addiction happens to children; teenagers are most possible ones to become alcohol or drug addicts. Alcohol abuse is a major problem for teenagers and their parents because it can damage the health of teenagers as well as the bonds between teenagers and parents. Many teenagers experiment with alcohol and other drugs. Adolescent problems with alcohol and other drugs are occurring at an earlier age than ever before. Children today commonly have their first alcohol-drinking experience at 12 years of age. Adolescents amounting to 4.6 million have alcohol-related problems such as poor school performance, trouble with parents, or criminal behavior and arrests. The main reason of this problem is that some parents keep in mind about the business and cannot pay attention to their teenage children’s affairs and desires. That thing can partly exert the teens to the wrong way and lead them to an unsuccessful life. In the same way, parental alcoholism and drug abuse effect on their children’s mental and physical problems. These children have difficulties not only with their parents but also with their school and studying when they come of age. Often the stressful environment at home makes them incapable of establishing relationship with teachers, classmates, boyfriend or girlfriend. The reason is that they were not used to be in normal relationship apart from violent and fierce ones and, they do not trust others.

Plus, parents’ divorcing also is a cause to make problems for both parents and adolescents. Parents divorce for many reasons. Usually divorce happens when couples feel that they can no longer live together due to fighting and anger or when the love they had to each other when they married, has completely changed. Divorce can also happen because one parent falls in love with someone else and sometimes it is due to a serious problem like drinking, drug-abuse, or gambling such as playing cards or betting in football matches. Sometimes nothing bad happens, but parents just decide to live apart.

A majority of children who have a parent with a mental illness find it difficult to cope because they do not have the maturity and coping tools to deal with certain complex situations. Often children are faced with feelings of insecurity and anxiety due to the unstable relationship with their parents. Sometimes they had to take their parents’ responsibilities and take care of the younger siblings and a sick parent. These kinds of children always feel worry, fear or shame because of their parent’s illness and behavior. Because of having a family member with a mental illness, they can usually get teased or bullied by other children and sometimes can hear unkind and upset things about ailing parents. By looking at the miserable lives of these children, we can partly reduce their mental feelings by offering our sympathetic and helpful manners, sweet words and showing how we also feel the same like them.

Despite many difficult problems that most of the families are facing and struggling in these days, I think the problems mentioned above are the most common ones for parents and children. If you realize those problems are happening in your family or around you, I want to advise you to keep calm and find out the best solutions together with your parents or children rather than making decisions with your one sided opinion without knowing or letting say other’s ideas and assumptions. I believe that we may take some lesson from these events which have appeared in my writing and can also prevent disadvantages from coming to us.