Better agricultural methods for floating farms of Inle Lake

The project has the support of the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and the Government of Japan, who are all working with the Department of Agriculture of Myanmar’s Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI).

At a one-day workshop on Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) organised by IFC and MoALI in Nyuang Shwe, 300 participants — including 200 tomato farmers — discussed how to improve and reduce the use of chemicals on their floating farms on Inle Lake. The event, a consequence of IFC’s efforts to support GAP and protect Inle Lake, was aimed at seeking solutions for improved sustainable agricultural practices and ensuring the lake continues to be a leading source of income for local residents.

See page-6
Human rights report submitted to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Myo Myint, Aye Aye Thant
(Myanmar News Agency)

The 2016 annual report by the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission was submitted to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw yesterday.

U Win Mya, the chairman of the MNHRC, said special attention had been paid of the rights of children.

“Supplementary agreements on rights of children or children’s involvement in armed conflicts had been initially signed, but arrangements will be made for further signing for approval. Suggestions will be made to ensure safety on the job and not to lose the rights of labourers, including children in human-resource-oriented productions. If the international agreement on economic, social and cultural rights can be approved and signed successfully, the international community can assume that Myanmar’s stance on the protection and up-grading of human rights is of great strength.”

U Win Mya spoke afterwards about arrangements to hold discussions and talks on human rights, human rights in combination with media and social websites, the situation on surveys over complaints, receipts of complaints about the Ministries and Region and State Cabinets, arrangements for inmates from penitentiaries to further their learning, separate interviews and interrogations with inmates from custody and prisons, acquisition of advice for Myanmar from the UNHCR, holding workshops aimed at reducing forced slavery and situations included in the special report of the Commission, submitted to the CEDAW Committee.

The report was put on record by the Hluttaw.

At the meeting, U Soe Min, U Soe Thein and U Bo Bo Nge took an oath as deputy governors of the Central Bank of Myanmar, in the presence of the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, followed by the announcement that Hluttaw put the appointment of U Set Aung, as Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance, sent by the President.

Approvals were made on a bill on petroleum and petroleum products that had been sent back from the President with his conclusions attached, and also on a bill on embarkment, which was a disagreement between Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw.

Hluttaw representatives discussed at length the exemption of commercial tax and special commercial tax for some commodities included in the 2017 Union Tax and Revenue Law.

“It has been found that budget estimates of the Union for tax and revenue of FY 2017-2018 exceeded Ks260,000 million more than that of FY 2016-2017. Budget estimate of the Union for special commercial tax outnumbered Ks87299,941 million more than that of FY 2016-2017. Provided that diamonds and emeralds are to be exempted from the levying of a special commercial tax in the current financial year, it needs to comply with national tax policies and budget estimate of tax and revenue of the Union. National budget deficit for the FY 2017-2018 will be 4.37% of GDP with the ratio of tax and GDP to be 7.10%. In doing so, it is necessary to consider potential effects over national deficit and ratio of tax and GDP in advance. We must take notice of potential emergence of bribery and corruption by exempting things of great value from being levied. Diamonds and emeralds are items of value which are out of reach for most people”, said Major Htin Lin Oo, Hluttaw representative from the Tatmadaw.

“The State is collecting taxes over commodities commonly used by the populace, through promulgated laws and rules. Exemption of valuable things from being levied is a question on transparency and justice. A democratic country is spending tax and revenue for expenditure and governmental machinery operation. An internationally standardised tax system must be created for the acquisition of more tax amongst the voluminous unemployment, income inequality and capability of business’s survival.” Following that, U Tun Tun Hein read out the report of the findings and conclusions of the combined drafting committee regarding the State Lottery Bill sent by the Government, and Hluttaw decided to send it back to the Government as sent the committee.

Buthidaung monitors H1N1

The H1N1 virus is being closely watched in Buthidaung, Rakhine State, with educational efforts and ongoing testing being performed, according to a medical doctor of the township hospital.

“As a close-watch measure, severe cases of illness, sneezing, coughing and pneumonia are being treated and tested to be able to keep them under control. Until now, no cases were found concerning outbreaks that affect the respiratory system. But educative measures are being made including having posters erected to reduce people’s worries”, said Dr. Than Tun Kyaw, of Buthidaung Township General Hospital.

“H1N1 is a curable disease, not needing to have any worries. Suspected patients will be given medical treatment and watched closely.”

Buthidaung Township hospital is a 50-bed facility where its 157 staff members have been providing medical care. Vaccinations against curable diseases have been administered, and polio patients are being given oral polio vaccines. Though the designated date for oral polio vaccines was originally 21 to 25 July, the programme was started 16 July due to over-population in the region. Medical officials said the effort was met with “100-per cent success”. Also, as a measure against malaria, medicated mosquito nets were provided to local people. —Aone Soe

More wreckage from Y-8 military transport plane crash discovered

Wreckages from Y-8 military transport plane. PHOTO: MNA

Fishing boats discovered a tire and wreckage near where a Y-8 military transport plane crashed into the Andaman Sea on 7 June.

Myanmar’s navy and local fishing boat continue to search for wreckage and remains from the Y-8 plane crash. —Myanmar News Agency

2 August 2017
Central Committee holds second meeting for successful convening of 13th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting and related meetings

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, attended the Central Committee meeting for successful convening of the 13th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting and its related meetings held at 2 pm yesterday at the Ayeyawady Hall of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, State Counsellor said in her address, “The present meeting is held subsequently after the 1st central committee meeting held in May. Sub-committees as well are performing their responsibilities respectively. For the successful convening of the meeting, it is of great importance to be smooth and convenient in subject matters as well as in management. As regards subject matters, effective negotiation is greatly needed among ASEM partner countries, so that there will emerge effective and good results which can be accepted by ASEM partner countries and all organisations. For all works to be successfully implemented, detailed negotiations are required to be performed among the committees.”

After this, the following sub-committees presented arrangements already made and work to be implemented further in their respective sectors: sub-committee for convening the meeting, secretariat and supervision sub-committee, sub-committee for events and ceremonies, sub-committee for finance and correctness of financial procedures, decoration sub-committee, entertainment sub-committee, security sub-committee, catering and excursion trip sub-committee, transport and communication sub-committee, sub-committee for convening 8th Model ASEM, sub-committee for convening 11th ASEF Joint Journalists’ Seminar, and health sub-committee.

Myanmar signs agreement on establishment of Asian Forest Cooperation Organisation

AGREEMENT on the establishment of Asian Forest Cooperation Organisation (AfCo) was signed by Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win at a ceremony held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Seoul, the Republic of Korea on 31 July.

Indonesia, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Bhutan, Brunei and the Republic of Korea have signed the agreement. Signing of the agreement reduces the effect of climate change through firm processes converted from implementing good technologies and policies of sustainable forest management framework and increases cooperation in regional forestry works resulting in closer cooperation between the government and organizations. Through cooperation and sharing of technologies between member countries in research and development work, modern techniques, policies and experiences are gained for progress and development of Myanmar forestry works.

Construction of ASEAN-Korea Forest Cooperation Regional Education and Training Centre (AfCo RETC) was started in Hmawbi, Yangon Region on 1 November 2015 and will be completed on 23 December 2017. The project period of the center is 10 years from 2014 to 2023 and support fund is US$ 6.6 million. Short term one week courses and long-term 2 weeks to 6 months courses will be provided to invited trainees from countries of the Asia region.

During his trip to South Korea, the Union Minister visited the Korean National Arboretum and Forest Museum and viewed the maintaining of biodiversity, research and development processes, and preservation technology on species and tree resources. Forest Department is collecting and recording species, resources lists, flower samples in Myanmar forests together with Korean National Arboretum it is learnt.—MNA
No more deaths from H1N1, but infects dozens

A nationwide outbreak of seasonal influenza A (H1N1) has killed 12 people out of total of 76 confirmed cases since 21 July, according to a report yesterday from the Ministry of Health and Sports.

The ministry announced there were 14 new cases since Monday and said 245 people received treatment in hospitals, nationwide, for respiratory diseases since 21 July.

The ministry noted that there have been no reported deaths due to the virus since Monday. And the ministry said no medical staff have contracted the virus from direct contact with patients.

Patients diagnosed with respiratory disease in Yangon are being treated at Wai Bargi Specialist Hospital in North Okkalapa.

The ministry issued the report following an emergency meeting on Monday in Nay Pyi Taw led by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Health and Sports. Health officials discussed forming a rapid relief team, distributing medical supplies and potential quarantine procedures.

The government is also assisting regions and state agencies with their relief efforts including dissemination of public health pamphlets. The most recent updates on the virus’ spread and prevention information is available at the Ministry of Health and Sports’ website: www.moh.gov.mm and the Myanmar Centres for Disease Control’s Facebook page.

— Myanmar News Agency

16,000 tons of illegal timber confiscated across the nation

Seized illegally cut timbers are loaded the vehicle in Mabein, Shan State in March 2017. PHOTO: MNA

16,000 tons of illegal timber confiscated across the nation

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation’s Forestry Department confiscated over 16,000 tons of illegal timber across the nation in the first three months of this financial year.

This seasons illegal confiscations are the third largest haul in the past 10 years.

The Forestry Department also confiscated 1,352 tons of charcoal, 659 backhoes, cranes, trailers, tractors, motorbikes, three-wheel motorbikes, motorboats and motor vessels and 1,800 sawmills.

Forty-four per cent of Myanmar’s forests are threatened by illegal timber extraction, according to Forestry Department statistics.

Myanmar ranks third in the world in deforestation.

— Min Thu

JICA to triple loans to SMEs next fiscal year

THE Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is planning to triple the amount of loan disbursements to small and medium enterprises in next financial year, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

JICA has disbursed Ks50 billion in SME loans this financial year and intends to provide Ks150 billion next year. “There is a high demand for JICA loans,” said Daw Aye Aye Win, the director-general of SME Development Department.

“JICA will provide SME loans to reduce import and promote exports. JICA has granted a total of Ks5 billion in loans to 11 SME businesses for the first time, and a total of Ks30 billion loans to 179 SME businessmen for the second time in this financial year: JICA provided the loans through six local banks.”

Myanmar’s traditional puppets decorate Bagan trees

BAGAN’S cultural zone is festooned with handmade traditional puppets hanging from trees, providing tourists with a colour spectacle, according to a report of yesterday’s edition of City News.

Myanmar’s traditional puppets — including depictions of alchemists, actors, elephants, horses and other figures are being sold at about 30 Bagan shops now. The puppets have been displayed in the trees and sold in this manner since 2016.

— GNLM

Government plans review of number of Yangon taxis

YANGON Region government is conducting a review of the number of taxis on the streets, prompting taxi licenses to increase to about Ks2 to Ks4 million each compared to other towns where they cost between Ks1.5 and Ks2.5 million, according to a report of yesterday’s edition of Myawady Daily newspaper.

There are more than 70,000 Yangon licensed taxis in Yangon, along with an unknown number of unlicensed taxis.

— GNLM

Nga Moe Yeik Bridge scheduled for completion in September

A new bridge over Nga Moe Yeik creek is expected to reduce traffic congestion in that area of Yangon by 75 per cent. The bridge will connect South Oakkapa and North Dagon townships in Yangon Region, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Construction on the Ks5.2 billion bridge began in April. Myat Noe Thu Company plans to complete construction of the two-lane 175-foot-long motor road bridge within six months.

— GNLM

Write for us

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— GNLM
Chevrolet introduces all-new Malibu

Chevrolet on Friday introduced the all-new 2017 Malibu – a completely restyled midsize sedan that is larger yet lighter than its predecessor, with greater efficiency and more advanced safety features than ever.

Built on an entirely new architecture, the all-new Malibu is 60 mm longer and has a wheelbase that is 93 mm longer than the previous model. That makes it the most spacious and longest sedan in its segment.

Through the extensive application of high-strength steel and advanced weight reduction technologies, the all-new Malibu shed 130 kg of mass. This supports its best-in-segment fuel economy and exhilarating ride performance.

“The Malibu is all new from the ground up – including its architecture, design, powertrains, chassis and safety systems – to far exceed the expectations of midsize sedan buyers,” said U Zaw Moe Khine, CEO of Pacific Alpine Myanmar Ltd. “It will change the market trend with its incomparable value and aggressive pricing.”—GNLM

Chevrolet introduces all-new Malibu

Myanmar’s rice producers suggest metric system adoption

MYANMAR plans to abolish its traditional measurement system in favour of the metric system, the most broadly used international standard, according to a report of yesterday’s edition of Myanmar Alin newspaper.

The plan, presented as a way to boost Myanmar exports, was included in a report submitted to the government by the Myanmar Rice Federation.

Currently, Myanmar’s official measurement system is on the English system, despite the use of the metric system by most of Myanmar’s trading partners, with the notable exception of the United States. Even the United Kingdom has, since the 1970s, converted to the metric system.

The rice federation paper argued that the metric system will create greater trade efficiencies and empower contract farmers to better comprehend pricing structures with international buyers without the intervention of middlemen.

In addition to the English system, Burmese and Indian units of measurement such as “basket” and “viss” are commonly used in Myanmar markets.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA)

Myanmar’s pulses exports face more competition in India

MYANMAR’s pulses industry is reliant on India’s massive export market, but is facing increasing competition from domestic pulses farmers following an Indian self-sufficiency policy for peas and edible oils.

Approximately 70 per cent of Myanmar’s pulses exports go to India, but increased local production has driven prices lower. For example, prices of mung beans and pigeon peas have declined by Ks100,000 per ton at the end of July.

India yearly imports more than 500,000 tons of pulses and 14.5 million tons of vegetable oil to satisfy its domestic demand, according to the Commerce Ministry. Recently, India’s pea production has been increasing significantly. In FY2016-2017 India produced 22.4 million tons of pulses compared to 16.35 million tons in FY2015-2016.

Similarly, edible oil crop production increased by 29 per cent this financial year.

Myanmar’s green grams are also exported to China, Viet Nam and European Union countries. Myanmar pulses are mostly cultivated in Sagaing and Magway regions. A total of 1.43 million tons of pulses were exported in FY2016-2017, according to the Commerce Ministry.—Mon Mon

MFF calls for crackdown on Tilapia inflow

Tilapia farms in Thailand are reportedly plagued by unhygienic and disease, prompting the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) to suspend tilapia imports, according to a report of Myawady Daily newspaper, yesterday.

As tilapia farming in Myanmar remains minimal, the nation has relied upon Thai imports. However, MFF general secretary U Win Kyaing said that sanitary conditions are so bad at Thai tilapia farms that 30 per cent of their fish die – often from viruses.

Farmed fish and prawns are subjected to pre-sale quality inspections and are required to have an import certificate ensuring that they are not diseased.—200

Myanmar’s rice producers suggest metric system adoption

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Workers dry rice on a field in Kangyidauk, Ayeyawady.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

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PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR
Rakhine State Government meets with media

Rakhine State matter is no longer a matter of a single state but is becoming a national matter linked to international situations and had to be handled while facing numbers of difficulties and challenges said Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu during a meeting with the media on 31 July explaining about the one year work of the state government. The meeting was held in Rakhine State government office meeting room 1.

The Chief Minister added that the media and the state level departments who are in attendance will already know about the events in the state and media personnel are expected to raise questions and comments with good intention toward the development of the state.

Before this meeting, the Chief Minister met with people in various townships of the state to explain and held discussion and learnt that people were satisfied with our work. But we were unable to fully accomplish yet said the Chief Minister. However, the state government had conducted its work in accord with the country’s government policies and guidelines without corruption and favoritism. The Chief Minister said we are mainly emphasizing on peace and development of the state and the State Counsellor herself is leading a Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace and Development in Rakhine State that includes all union ministers as members of the committee and had successfully fulfilled the people’s requirement and conducted developmental works.

The Chief Minister also said the people’s requirements were also being met additionally with President’s special fund of Ks1.65 billion while Tatmadaw, Myanmar police force, departments and people are working together for peace and stability in the state.

Afterward the media raised questions on stability in Rakhine State, development, education, health, transport, media freedom in acquiring news and state government issuing timely news and the Chief Minister, state ministers and officials answered the questions.

The media meeting was attended by media personnel from Rakhine State based Radio Free Asia (RFA), Eleven Media, DMG, EPA, Roma Time Media, Narinjara News, Rakhine Gazette, MRTV/NRC, and Sky Net. — Tin Tun (IPRD)

Better agricultural methods...

“Most farmers have poor knowledge about using pesticides in a safe and sustainable manner. They are known to mix chemicals with their bare hands. This not only triggers potential health risks, but also pollutes the water and soil, which in turn can contaminate the plants and fish,” said Dr. Ye Tint Tun, Director General of Department of Agriculture.

“Hence, it is imperative for farmers to learn how to use chemicals sustainably. MoAALI is supporting the implementation of GAP for tomato farmers on Inle Lake so that farming, fishing and tourism continue to sustain the livelihoods of local residents. Protecting the lake, therefore, is important for a sustainable growth in tourist arrivals.”

The workshop shared experiences of farmers participating in the GAP program to reduce use of chemicals and improve production efficiency through preventive bio products. Tomato buyers highlighted a growing demand for high-quality products among consumers, especially in major supermarkets, where they were ready to pay more for GAP quality produce.

At the event, farmers were also introduced to applications that could help them improve financial and inputs management, as well as to financial products available to support agriculture production in the Nyaung Shwe area.

“Economic is an area where Myanmar has a significant comparative advantage with abundant land and water resources. It is vital for these resources to be well-managed to ensure long-term sustainability of this sector as well as to ensure the health and safety of the population,” said Vikram Kumar, IFC Country Manager for Myanmar. “We are pleased to support MoAALI’s efforts to institute GAP in the Inle Lake area and to support the Ministry at the national level to improve the regulatory environment, standards and use of agricultural inputs for other crops, such as rice and sesame seeds.” The IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. —GNLM

Swiss National Day was held in Yangon

UNION MINISTER for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe is welcomed by Swiss Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Paul Rene’ Seger at a ceremony to mark the Swiss National Day which was held in Melia Yangon Hotel in Yangon at 6:30 pm on 1 August.—Myanmar News Agency

Authorities, volunteers team up to prevent H1N1

Lewe Township authorities held a coordination meeting with health officials and civil societies yesterday at the 100-bed hospital in Lewe.

At the meeting, they discussed preventive measures to be taken against H1N1 among the people. Representatives from the civil societies said they would raise awareness against H1N1 flu joining hands with the health officials and staff, giving priorities to expectant mothers, schools and aged people. The meeting was participated by two representatives of Lewe,14 departmental officials and doctors and representatives of the CSOs.—Myanmar News Agency
Abe to reshuffle Cabinet Thursday, top envoy Kishida likely to survive

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he will reshuffle his Cabinet and ruling party executives on Thursday, with sources saying Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida is expected to remain in his current post.

The Cabinet and Liberal Democratic Party leadership overhaul, the first in a year, is aimed at regaining public support following a recent plunge in Abe’s Cabinet approval ratings due to a series of scandals.

Abe himself became ensnared by allegations he gave favorable treatment to a friend seeking approval for the construction of a new veterinary school in his region. According to government sources, Abe is working on a special economic zone.

Abe has decided to keep key members, including Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Taro Aso, at the helm. He is pressing ahead with plans to build a new veterinary school in the central Hubei province.

Abe is considering bringing back someone who formerly served as defense minister, and Onodera is among the candidates, the sources added. The prime minister has accepted a request from the LDP’s junior coalition partner the Komeito Party to retain Keiichi Ishii, the only Cabinet member from the party, as transport minister, Komeito leader Natsuo Yamaguchi said on Monday.

Education minister Hirokazu Matsuno and regional revitalization minister Kozo Yamamoto, who have been under fire due to their jurisdiction over the vet school project, as well as Justice Minister Katsutoshi Kaneda are likely to be replaced, the sources said.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe heads to a meeting of his Liberal Democratic Party at the party’s headquarters in Tokyo on 1 August, 2017. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

China’s Inner Mongolia region culls 66,500 chickens after bird flu outbreak

BELING — China’s Inner Mongolia region has culled 66,500 chickens following an outbreak of bird flu that has affected 35,000 birds, the Ministry of Agriculture said on Tuesday.

The H5N1 strain of the virus was confirmed at a hen farm in Tongliao county, which has 3 million people, and has killed 15,000 birds, the ministry said in a statement on its website.

The outbreak is now under control, the ministry said.

The last bird flu outbreak in March killed 134 birds at a duck farm in central Hubei province.

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The outbreak is now under control, the ministry said.

The last bird flu outbreak in March killed 134 birds at a duck farm in central Hubei province.

Additionally, the H7N9 strain of the virus has caused at least 281 deaths since October in China. Live poultry markets were shut down in many provinces following human infections, forcing egg producers to keep their hens beyond their prime time, as demand also plunged amid public fears over bird flu.

Flocks are particularly vulnerable to avian flu during the winter months.

The five-day “international” political and cultural events in Pyongyang and Mt Paektu will begin on 13 August, according to the Korean Central News Agency.

The celebrations will also be attended by foreign guests, including those belonging to political parties and organizations having friendly ties with North Korea, it said.

The gatherings will take place as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has made significant progress in consolidating his power and developing weapons technology.

North Korea unveiled last October its plans to hold a series of events in 2017 as this year coincides with the fifth anniversary of Kim becoming its top leader, the 105th birth anniversary of its late founder, Kim II Sung, and the 75th birth anniversary of Kim Jong II, the previous leader who died of heart failure in late 2011. —Kyodo News

BELING — North Korea will hold a set of events aimed at eulogizing three generations of the ruling Kim family in mid-August, its official media said on Tuesday.

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North Korea to hold special events in mid-August in honor of Kim’s family

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Prevention Can Get Rid of Worries!

Khin Maung Oo

NATURALLY, humans easily tend to get worried whenever a serious public concern occurs. But, only if careful study of its cause and depth of people's worries is done will it be reasonable so that they will be well convinced as to what should be done and what should not be done.

These days, an increasing great concern among the people is the H1N1 flu case. With an outbreak of the disease, exaggerated and fabricated stories were added to the news of several fatalities officially released by health authorities concerned, igniting and increasing people's fear. Generally, people are infected with seasonal flu. Meanwhile, to their great fear, they heard the news of H1N1 flu. A rumor of H1N1 appeared during the night of 23rd July. On 24th July the health department officially informed the news. As regards the seasonal flu which break out in Myanmar, they can be categorized into three—Type A (H1N2) flu, A (H1N1)flu and A (H1N1) Pdm-2009. It has been learnt that the present flu belongs to A (H1N1) Pdm-2009. It broke out in Myanmar in 2001, claiming 9 lives out of 176 patients.

The disease also known as swine flu is the one we in Myanmar can be infected in the rainy season and in the period of early winter just after the monsoon season. Due to the information on indoor-patients and fatalities which appeared on social websites pages, there occurred an increasing concern among the people. But, we should not be excessively worried thanks to the transparent and timely news releases.

Now, check and examination health teams are carefully watching people coming in at ports, airports and border gates not only for the present disease but also for other infectious ones. As soon as a person knows that he has the flu, he needs to be tested to find out whether it is normal flu or swine flu. If he has swine flu, then he should get medical treatment under strict medical supervision. In fact, it can be protected and preventive measures should be done beforehand, by following the procedures described below:

Using a mask, covering our mouths and noses with a mask or tissue when we cough, washing our hands with soap or alcohol-based hand sanitizer thoroughly and frequently, avoiding touching our eyes, mouths and noses, staying at home if we are sick, avoiding going to crowded places and rushing to a clinic or medical health center if we are infected with the disease. Accordingly, every individual should take preventive measures in advance so as not to be infected with the disease as well as unnecessary ones. Prevention is better than cure and simultaneously prevention can get rid of worries.

The future of Asia’s farms

To produce enough food to meet burgeoning demand, Asia’s farms will need to undergo a twenty-first-century transformation. Asian Development Bank food and agriculture expert Mahfuz Ahmed explains how.

Food shortages are a distant memory for many people in Asia. But as the region struggles to feed and nourish a booming population, they could become a painful fact of life again.

Asia is already the world’s largest food market, and by 2050 its population is expected to grow to five billion—an increase of 900 million people. Owing to its expanding middle class, the region will likely account for half of the global increase in annual beef and poultry consumption and over three quarters of the rise in fish consumption between now and 2030.

And by then, more than 60 per cent of total cereal demand in the developing world will come from South and East Asia. To keep up with this growing demand, food production will have to increase by 60-70 per cent compared to a decade ago.

Ideally, Asia’s farms could simply expand their production. But they are woefully ill-equipped to do so. To produce a sufficient amount of food, Asia’s farms will need to undergo a twenty-first-century transformation.

Helping Asia’s farmers cope with climate change should be a central part of this effort. Although a warming planet could boost agricultural output in a few areas, it will severely limit production, and possibly trigger prolonged food crises, throughout the rest of the region.

As water becomes increasingly scarce in traditionally fertile zones such as the Indo-Gangetic Plain, rising seas will ruin vast swathes of farmland. If sea levels were to rise by one meter, the resulting saltwater intrusion would threaten 70 per cent of Vietnam’s coastal farmlands.

And as waters warm and tidal flows change, yields from the Mekong Delta’s vast fishing grounds could plummet.

According to Asian Development Bank research, by 2055, irrigated rice and wheat yields could fall by as much as 20 per cent and 44 per cent, respectively. This would drive up the price for cereals, soybeans, and wheat by 70 per cent, causing the number of malnourished children in the region to rise by 11 million.

But this doesn’t have to be Asia’s future, if its farmers can adapt. Most farmers today oversee family-run subsistence plots, and lack the money and know-how to improve productivity and crop quality. In Myanmar, for example, only 16 per cent of farm households even use tillers or tractors to prepare the land for planting.

Moreover, environmental degradation has left huge swaths of land barren. According to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, various forms of desertification affect nearly 40 per cent of Asia’s total land area. While governments cannot create new arable land, they can—and must—pursue policies to support, consolidate, and intensify farming operations on the land that is still available.

By using less labor, and more capital and technology, Asia’s future farms can grow enough food to feed everyone in the region.

For starters, the region’s governments can promote farm cooperatives. Not to be confused with old-style collectivized farming, today’s cooperatives are thoroughly commercial, prioritizing efficiency and profits. They comprise agricultural enterprises as well as farmers, all of whom pool their resources to create economies of scale, reduce costs, and lift incomes.
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party leave for Japan

A Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing left for a working visit to Japan yesterday morning at the invitation of Nippon Foundation Chairman Mr. Yohei Sasakawa.

The Senior General and party were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Tin Aung San, Lt-Gen Myo Zaw Thein of Commander-in-Chief (Army) office, Yangon Region Commander Brig-Gen Thet Pone, senior Tatmadaw officers, Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar Mr. Tateshi Higuchi, Military Attaché Col. Kei Tajika and officials.

The Senior General was accompanied by his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Lt-Gen San Oo, Lt-Gen Nyo Saw of Commander-in-Chief Army office and Tatmadaw officers.

During the visit, Myanmar’s the Senior General will meet with Japanese government, including Japan’s Self Defence Forces Chief of Joint Staff and Chiefs of Staff. Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services previously visited Japan at the invitation of JSDF Chief of Staff General Shigeru Iwasaki in 2014 and this is the second visit. — Myanmar News Agency

The future of Asia’s farms

FROM PAGE 8

When bought in bulk by a cooperative, inputs such as fertilizer and equipment are less expensive, as is the harvesting process. By coming together to coordinate planting, cooperatives in India and Nepal have made it possible for every member’s crop to be sown and harvested together by a machine, rather than individually by hand. Cooperatives can also add value after the harvest, by streamlining crop cleaning, grading, packaging, storage, and transportation. This increases the supply of food and boosts farmers’ incomes, especially in places such as Bangladesh, where more than one-third of perishables spoil before ever reaching the consumer.

China is already modernizing farms through cooperatives, and by using digital e-commerce platforms to tap into high-value markets. In Vietnam, a cooperative program has improved the quality of produce for urban consumers, and boosted tea, fruit, and vegetable revenues by nearly one third.

Although cooperatives are gradually catching on in Asia, they will need more support. Most of the region’s cooperatives are fragile, informal arrangements. But with the right legal framework in place, they could become far more efficient and durable.

China’s 2007 Farmers’ Cooperative Law serves as a good model. By offering incentives such as value-added tax exemptions, the law has encouraged cooperatives and other agricultural organizations to collaborate and create economies of scale. Within three years of the law’s enactment, the number of cooperatives in China had increased ninefold, to nearly 400,000.

Cooperatives also help farmers manage the effects of climate change, by creating networks through which members can share knowledge about tricky adaptive strategies like switching from crops to fish or shrimp in saline-affected areas. And with the extra income that cooperatives provide, farmers can buy greenhouses to prolong their production season, and shield against erratic weather. Cooperatives also allow farmers to benefit from previously unavailable techniques such as fertilization – using irrigation to deliver liquid fertilizers.

Finally, cooperatives make climate-smart technologies more affordable. With new digital technologies, farmers can better manage their land, water, and energy use, and prepare for bad weather. For example, the Philippines has experimented with apps that give farmers news about plant and animal diseases, the best places to buy and sell farm supplies, and upcoming weather events.

By using less labor, and more capital and technology, Asia’s future farms can grow enough food to feed everyone in the region. Cooperatives are one way to make this vision a reality. Only then will food shortages truly be a thing of the past.

Muhlyaz Ahmed is an adviser at the Asian Development Bank on agriculture, rural development, and food security.

A color photo of the submitter, STTHIN KINN

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles and essays from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their works to the Global New Light of Myanmar at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to de@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.). — Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar news office

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 21/2017
1379 ME, 9th Waxing of Wagaung
(1st August 2017)
Union Minister permitted to resign

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 235 (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 68 (a) of Union Government Law, U Fyo Zin Tun, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy has been permitted to resign of his own volition.

Sdi: Htin Kyaw
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 22/2017
1379 ME, 9th Waxing of Wagaung
(1st August 2017)
Union Minister appointed to second post

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 232 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 12 of Union Government Law, U Win Khaing, Union Minister for Construction, has been appointed concurrently as Union Minister for Electricity and Energy.

Sdi: Htin Kyaw
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

PRESS RELEASE

Appointment of ambassador agreed

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of H.E. Archbishop Paul Tschang In-Nam as Apostolic Nuncio of the Holy See to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Bangkok.

H.E. Archbishop Paul Tschang In-Nam was born on 30th October 1949 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. He was ordained to the priesthood on 17th December 1979 in Cheongiu, Republic of Korea and consecrated as a Bishop on 6th January 2003 in Rome. He graduated from Catholic University of Kwang-Ju and obtained a Doctorate in Theology at Pontifical Lateran University in 1985. He earned a licentiate in Canon Law at Pontifical University of St. Thomas, Rome in 1984. He also graduated from the Diplomatic Institute of the Holy See, Rome in 1983. He joined the Diplomatic Service of the Holy See on 1st May 1985. He has served at the Apostolic Nunciatures in El Salvador, Ethiopia, Syria, France, Greece and Belgium in various capacities till 2002. He also served as the Apostolic Nuncio to Bangladesh from 2003-2007 and Uganda from 2007 to 2012. Since 2012, he has been serving as Apostolic Nuncio to Thailand and Cambodia and Apostolic Delegate to Myanmar and Lao PDR.

H.E. Archbishop Paul Tschang In-Nam as Apostolic Nuncio of the Holy See to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
US begins Russia drawdown after Kremlin retaliates for sanctions

MOSCOW — The United States began removing furniture and equipment from a diplomatic property in Moscow on Tuesday in the first sign of compliance with a Kremlin order to slash its presence in Russia as retaliation for new US sanctions.

President Vladimir Putin has ordered the United States to cut around 60 per cent of its diplomatic staff in Russia by 1 September, and said Moscow will seize two US diplomatic properties in response to sanctions approved by Congress last week.

The White House has said US President Donald Trump will sign the sanctions bill, meant as a response to alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 US presidential election and to further punish Moscow for the 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

On Tuesday, removal men began dismantling play equipment and barbecues at a US-owned dacha (country villa) on the outskirts of Moscow, after being refused access the day before, according to a Reuters journalist at the scene.

The dacha, which is being confiscated along with a US warehouse in the south of the Russian capital, was used by US diplomatic staff at the weekends and to host parties for students, journalists and other diplomats.

The removal men said they arrived at around 7 am (0400 GMT) and were seen packing furniture, including beds and lamps, into three white removal vans before leaving the property three hours later. Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said US staff had to leave the dacha and warehouse by midday on Tuesday, TASS news agency reported. Ryabkov and the Kremlin said no one had obstructed US employees trying to access the property.

Putin said on Sunday Russia had ordered the United States to cut 75% of its 1,200 diplomatic staff in its embassy and consular operations, though many of those let go will be Russian citizens, with the United States allowed to choose who leaves.

The ultimatum issued by the Russian leader is a display of new US restrictions could prevent investment there, and business leaders say the US investment he needs, or burning his bridges with Trump.

One person at the embassy, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorised to talk to the media, said staff there were feeling depressed and despondent as they came to terms with the Kremlin’s order.

“The mood in the office is very pessimistic,” the person said. “Everyone is just loitering, or sitting on job websites looking for a new job.” —Reuters

Germany urges United States to talk to EU about Russia sanctions

BERLIN — Germany’s economy minister appealed to the United States on Tuesday to talk to Europeans about the effects of tougher sanctions they plan to introduce against Russia, saying European companies must not be punished.

The White House has said US President Donald Trump will sign the sanctions bill, a response to Russian meddling in the 2016 US presidential election and a further punishment for Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

The European Union fears new US restrictions could hurt some of its companies, especially those involved in the energy sector.

“The threat from the United States to also punish European companies by so-called extra-territorial sanctions is not acceptable,” said Economy Minister Brigitte Zypries.

“It would be very desirable for the US government to sit down with us at the negotiating table and to work through an acceptable solution for all parties,” she said.

She also said the unilateral move had set off an escalation in a diplomatic tit-for-tat, after Moscow ordered the United States to cut some 60 per cent of its diplomatic staff in Russia.

Germany’s government and business leaders say the new sanctions could prevent German companies from working on pipeline projects they say are essential to the country’s energy security. —Reuters

Venezuela opposition leaders Lopez, Ledezma taken from homes: family

CARACAS — Venezuela opposition leaders Leopoldo Lopez and Antonio Ledezma have been taken from their homes, where they were serving house arrest, family members of the two said via Twitter on Tuesday.

The wife of Lopez and the daughter of Ledezma said they were holding President Nicolas Maduro responsible for the fate of the two men. —Reuters

Etihad Airways says assisting Australian police with plane attack probe

SYDNEY — Abu Dhabi’s Etihad Airways said on Tuesday it was helping Australian Federal Police with an investigation into an alleged plot to bring down a plane.

The disclosure comes after four men were arrested at the weekend in raids conducted across several Sydney suburbs.

“The Etihad Airways aviation security team is assisting the Australian Federal Police with its investigation and the matter is ongoing,” the Etihad statement said. —Reuters

Pakistani lawmakers elect Abbasi as PM to replace ousted Nawaz Sharif

ISLAMABAD — Pakistani lawmakers on Tuesday elected former petroleum minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi as the country’s new prime minister, replacing ousted veteran leader Nawaz Sharif.

Sharif’s ruling PML-N party used its majority in the National Assembly to install Abbasi, after the Supreme Court last week ordered Nawaz Sharif disqualified from office over failure to disclose a source of income.

Abassi’s tenure is expected to be short, as Sharif has earmarked his brother Shabbarz as the successor once he becomes eligible. —Reuters

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Iran says new US sanctions breach nuclear deal — Tasnim news agency

LONDON — Iran has complained to the UN Security Council about sanctions the United States imposed on Iran in July, saying they breached Tehran’s nuclear deal with major powers, the speaker of parliament was quoted on Tuesday as saying.

The nuclear deal (also referred to as JCPOA), signed in 2015 by Iran and the six powers including the United States, led to the lifting of most sanctions against Tehran in return for curbs on its nuclear programme.

However, the US Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control imposed sanctions on six Iranian firms in late July for their role in development of ballistic missile program after Tehran’s launch of a rocket capable of putting a satellite into orbit.

The US Senate also voted on the same day almost unanimously to impose new sanctions on Iran, Russia and North Korea. The sanctions in that bill also target Iran’s missile programs as well as human rights abuses.

“The US nuclear deal remains in place and Iran is complying with its obligations under the agreement,” the official added.

“The official pointed to the JCPOA’s supervisory body, which is assessing the new sanctions and decided that they contradict parts of the nuclear deal,” the minister said.

Iran was also世俗 in its criticism of a statement by the US Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control that accused Tehran of violating the JCPOA.

Protesters demand rapid inquiry into murder of Kenya vote official

NAIROBI — Protesters marched on the offices of Kenya’s election commission on Tuesday as angry Kenya protest groups called for a speedy inquiry into the murder of a senior official that has raised fears over the legitimacy of next week’s national vote.

“Because of his bravery and the services he provided to the nation, he was killed in such a violent and senseless way,” Musalia Mudavadi, a key ally of opposition leader Raila Odinga, said in a statement.

Mudavadi said the official’s death was a “massive blow” to the country’s credibility and that the electoral body should be forced to resign.

“Those who are responsible forthis murder will be held accountable,” Odinga said.

Kenyan police chief general said that they were investigating the case and that they would do everything possible to bring the killer to justice.

“Police are working on this case and we will do everything possible to solve it, but we cannot give a timeframe,” said General.

A US military demining vehicle leads a convoy on the main road in Raqqa, Syria on 31 July, 2017. PHOTO: Reuters

SDF advances against Islamic State in southern Raqqa

BEIRUT — The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) are on the verge of seizing full control of the southern neighbourhoods of Islamic State-held Raqqa, a Kurdish official said on Tuesday.

The US-led coalition said SDF fighters advancing from the east were within 300 metres (330 yards) of meeting up with those advancing from the west. The SDF was making “consistent gains” every day, the coalition spokesman said.

The SDF launched its US-backed campaign to seize Raqqa in early June. The assault on Islamic State’s de facto capital in Syria overlapped with the campaign to drive IS from the Iraqi city of Mosul, where IS was defeated last month.

The Kurdish official told Reuters SDF fighters advancing from the east and the west remain separated by a few streets where fighting continued.

Full control of the southern districts would sever Islamic State’s last remaining path to the Euphrates River which is to the south of the city.

“There is a fierce resistance from Daesh, so we can’t determine when exactly we’ll take full control,” said the official, referring to Islamic State. “Around 90 per cent of the southern neighbourhoods are liberated,” the official added.

The spokesman for the US-led coalition said SDF fighters had also captured around 10 square km (4 sq miles) of territory from Islamic State north of Raqqa in the last two days.

“We’ve seen a less coherent ISIS defense in Raqqa compared to Mosul. ISIS is still using car bombs, booby traps, and civilians to hide behind, but their inability to address the multiple advances from the SDF is apparent,” coalition spokesman Col Ryan Dillon said in response to emailed questions from Reuters.

The SDF is dominated by the Kurdish YPG militia, and is the main partner for the US-led coalition against Islamic State in Syria.

Last week, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that the SDF has captured half of Raqqa. Islamic State has lost large expanses of territory in Syria over the last year to separate campaigns waged by the SDF, the Russian-backed Syrian military, and Turkey-backed Syrian rebels. — Reuters

Afghan politicians demand return of Vice President Dostum

KABUL — Two influential Afghan politicians urged President Ashraf Ghani on Tuesday to allow embattled Vice President Rashid Dostum to return home from Turkey, in comments that underlined the tensions threatening the Kabul government.

“We ask for the unconditional return of the first Vice President to Afghanistan and for him to resume his office,” Atta Mohammad Noor, the powerful governor of Balkh province, on the border with Uzbekistan, told a demonstration in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

Dostum has been in Turkey since May when he left for medical treatment amid accusations that he ordered a political rival to be tortured and sexually abused in a case that drew widespread condemnation from allies including the United States. No comment was immediately available from Ghani’s office. A powerful ethnic Uzbek leader with decades of experience in Afghanism, the Dostum leader with decades of experience in Afghan politics, Dostum has denied the accusations but has so far been unable to return home. — Reuters

Afghanistan

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
WORLD 11
Russia leads in tank biathlon at 2017 International Army Games after half of races

ALABINO RANGE — Russia is still leading in the tank biathlon at the 2017 International Army Games after half of the races, the competition's chief judge Colonel Roman Binyukov told reporters.

"We had seven races yesterday, and the leaders have been determined. These are the crew of the Russian Federation (the first place), the People’s Republic of China (second), and then the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Kazakhstan," Binyukov said.

On Tuesday, the second crews from Belarus, Zimbabwe, Kazakhstan and Iran are taking part in Race 8. Crews from Russia, Serbia and Kyrgyzstan will also take part in Race 9. Binyukov noted that all the teams had almost tripled their hit percentage. "This is a real result, when, at the 100 hit percentage, many teams fight in the correct obstacle crossing," he said. The Games' chief judge Major General Dmitry Gorbatenko also pointed to the grown mastery of the tank biathlon participants. "We all note the growing level of the teams that come to us for the competitions," he said, noting that the mastery was improving and the crews had reached a high level at which they fought with just seconds separating them.

The Tank Biathlon international completion started at the Alabino Range on 29 July as part of the 2017 International Army Games. The semifinal races will be held on 8-10 August. After the semifinal results, the best four teams will enter the final that will be held on 12 August, on the Games’ closing day.

This year’s Army Games are being held at 22 ranges in Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and China from 29 July to 12 August, with 28 countries participating.—Tass

North Korea can hit most of United States — US officials

WASHINGTON — North Korea’s latest test of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) has shown that Pyongyang now may be able to reach most of the continental United States, two US officials told Reuters on Monday.

The assessment, which the officials discussed on condition of anonymity, underscored the growing threat posed by Pyongyang’s nuclear and missile programmes, and could add pressure on President Donald Trump’s administration to respond.

North Korea said on Saturday it had conducted another successful test of an ICBM that proved its ability to strike America’s mainland.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised the midnight launch of the missile on Friday night and called it a “stern warning” to the United States that it would not be safe from destruction if it tried to attack, the North’s official KCNA news agency said.

However, two US intelligence officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said on Monday Kim wants to develop a nuclear-capable ICBM to deter any attack on his country and gain international legitimacy, not to launch an attack on the United States or its allies that he knows would be suicidal. The Pentagon declined to comment on the US assessment of the missile launch, even as it acknowledged that the latest test represented the longest test flight of any North Korean missile.

“The specifics of our assessment are classified for reasons I hope you understand,” Pentagon spokesman Navy Captain Jeff Davis told a news briefing, acknowledging only that the missile could fly at least 5,500 km (3,420 miles), the minimum range for what the Pentagon classifies as an ICBM.

Two separate US officials who discussed the latest test, which lasted about 45 minutes, said it showed greater range than the 4 July ICBM launch, which North Korea said lasted 39 minutes. One of the officials said it had greater height, range and power than the previous test because it used force stabilizing engines, which counter the effects of winds and other forces that can knock an ascending rocket off course. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe spoke with Trump on Monday and agreed on the need for more action on North Korea hours after the US Ambassador to the United Nations said Washington is “done talking about North Korea”.—Reuters

UK must rescue itself from abrupt Brexit ‘disaster’, Hague says

LONDON — Britain is heading towards a Brexit disaster that could amount to the biggest muddle in its history unless finance minister Philip Hammond succeeds in achieving a less abrupt exit from the EU, former Conservative Party leader William Hague said.

Since May’s failed gamble on a snap election last month, the future of Brexit has been thrown into question with squabbling between her ministers over the pace, tone and terms of Britain’s departure from the club it joined in 1973.

May has faced public pressure to temper her plans for a clean break from the EU.

Hague, also a former foreign minister, said that there was a danger that some Brexit supporters were underestimating the risks of a sharp economic slowdown or even the possible stalling of Brexit talks with the EU.—Reuters

(TOP) Invitation to tender (1/2017)

Tenders for the supply of KONECRANES Empty Container Handler with 9 ton lifting and 7 High stacking capacity, in local kyat are invited by MPA-Allied Yangon Inland Container Depot Ltd. (ICD - 1). Tender documents shall be available during office hours from 8:00AM to 5:00PM commencing from 1st August to 10th August 2017, at MPA-Allied Office, Botataung Zay Street, Seikkan Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Detailed information’s are available contacting with MPA-Allied office.

MPA-Allied Yangon Inland Container Depot Ltd.

ICD - 1

Tel: 01291939, 290204, 290178.

PHOTO: TASS
BANGKOK — Former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra declared her innocence on Tuesday at the Supreme Court over allegations of mishandling a multibillion dollar rice subsidy scheme, saying she is a “victim” of political persecution.

Yingluck insisted in her closing statement at the courtroom that she did nothing wrong and was being treated unfairly over the case, in which she could face up to 10 years in jail if found guilty. The court’s Criminal Division for Holders of Political Positions is set to hand down a verdict on 25 August.

“I am the victim of a deep political game,” she said, and argued the scheme was designed to help farmers with debt problems and that the country’s economy benefited from it.

Yingluck was charged with negligence of duty for failing to prevent corruption in the rice-purchasing scheme, her government’s flagship policy.

The former premier dismissed allegations that she was negligent in her duties and said she had instructed relevant officials to oversee the scheme to prevent corruption.

Yingluck accused the National Anti-Corruption Commission — which conducted the probe and indicted her over the scheme — of having erred in its decision not to launch an investigation.

Critics say farmers were paid an inflated price for their rice under the scheme, which is estimated to have resulted in losses of some $500 million (฿15 billion) for the country.

She also faced the seizure of assets worth 35 billion baht over the scheme’s losses.

Yingluck, who reportedly cried during her statement, urged the court for “mercy” and to make a ruling on her case based on the facts and evidence.

More than 1,000 of her supporters gathered at the court on Tuesday morning, prompting tight security in the area. Nearly 400 police personnel were deployed.

On the same day of Yingluck’s ruling, the court will also rule on fake rice deals involving former ministers and government officials in her administration. Yingluck was ousted from office by the Constitutional Court over the scheme, ahead of a military coup led by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, then head of the army, in May 2014 that overthrew the Pheu Thai Party government.

—Kyodo News

Former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra receives red roses from her supporters as she arrives at the Supreme Court in Bangkok on 1 August, 2017 to deliver her closing statement in her trial over alleged mishandling of a multibillion dollar rice subsidy scheme. The court is set to hand down a verdict on 25 August. Yingluck faces up to 10 years in jail if found guilty.

Former Thai PM
Yingluck pleads innocent in rice-pledging scheme

Nearly 70 people hurt trying to cross border into Spanish enclave

MADRID — Around 70 sub-Saharan African migrants were injured when they tried to cross through the razor-wire-topped fence separating northern Morocco from the Spanish enclave of Ceuta on Tuesday, the Red Cross said.

Local police said 200 people rushed the border in a bid to reach Europe. Around 60 managed to enter the territory.

Migrants frequently jump or cut through the fences of Spain’s two enclaves in northern Africa, Ceuta and Melilla, or attempt to reach them by swimming along the Moroccan coastlines.

The number of migrants entering Spain via Ceuta and Melilla more than doubled in the first six months of the year from the same period last year to 3,200 people, according to Spain’s Interior Ministry.

Once within the enclaves, migrants are either returned to their country of origin or moved to the Spanish mainland, which many use as a jumping-off point for the rest of Europe.

The migrants used wire cutters to breach a gate, according to a spokesman from the Ceuta government. Between 1,000 and 1,500 people are camping out in the scrub and woods around the enclave waiting for the opportunity to rush the border, he said.

The Red Cross said 14 people had to be hospitalized.

The last major push in to one of the enclaves was in May when some 300 migrants attempted to jump the fence in Melilla. Around 100 successfully crossed the border.

—Reuters

Nearly 70 people hurt trying to cross border into Spanish enclave

Former Thai PM
Yingluck pleads innocent in rice-pledging scheme

WORLD 13

“Invitation for Bid”

Date: 2nd August, 2017

1. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) towards the cost of the Yangon Circular Railway Line Upgrading Project. The Bids are invited by Myanma Railways as follows:

2. Bidding will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable Guidelines for Procurement under Japanese ODA Loans, and is open to all Bidders from eligible source of countries, as defined in the Loan Agreement. The Eligible Nationality of the Bidders shall be Japan in the case of the prime contractor. In case where the prime contractor is a joint venture, such joint venture will be eligible provided that the nationality of the lead partner is Japan, that the nationality of the other partner is Japan and/or the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and that the total share of work of Japanese partners in the Joint venture is more than fifty percent (50%) of the contract amount.

3. The Myanma Railways now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the design, execution and completion of the Rolling Stock Procurement Works as described below (“the Works”). International Competitive Bidding will be conducted in accordance with JICA’s Single-Stage Bidding Procedure.

Contract No. | Closing Date/Time for Submission of Bid | Non-refundable Document Fee
---|---|---
MR/YCR/UCP/201 (Rolling Procurement Works) | 31st October, 2017/2:00 p.m. | MMK 1,350,000 or USD 1,000
MR/YCR/UCP/202 (Rolling Procurement Works) | 31st October, 2017/2:00 p.m. | MMK 1,350,000 or USD 1,000
MR/YCR/UG/CP201 (Rolling Procurement Works) | 31st October, 2017/2:00 p.m. | MMK 1,350,000 or USD 1,000
MR/YCR/UG/CP202 (Rolling Procurement Works) | 31st October, 2017/2:00 p.m. | MMK 1,350,000 or USD 1,000

4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain documents on the submission of a written application to the Tender Office in the Head office of Myanma Railways at Nay Pyi Taw Railway Station Compound, Pobba Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar during the office hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on business days.

5. Bids must be delivered to the address above mentioned on or before the closing date and time.

6. Technical Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders’ representatives who choose to attend at 10:10 a.m. and 2:10 p.m. respectively on 31st October 2017 at the Tender Office as stated above.

Email address: dgmplan.rail@mrt.gov.mm/ dgm.planning.mr@gmail.com (not for submission but for clarification)
Angelina Jolie ‘upset’ over backlash to Cambodia film casting process

LOS ANGELES — Angelina Jolie responded to growing backlash over the casting process for her latest film, saying she was “upset” that an improvised scene during auditions had been misconstrued as taking real money away from impoverished children.

In a Vanity Fair interview published last week about her film “First They Killed My Father,” Jolie described a game played by the casting directors with the young Cambodian children auditioning for the lead role of Loung Ung.

Jolie, a special envoy for the United Nations refugee agency, told Vanity Fair she looked for her lead star in orphanages, circuses and slum schools.

In the casting, a child was placed in front of money on a table, asked to think of what they needed the money for and to snatch it away. Jolie would then pretend to catch them, and the child would have to lie about why they stole the money.

“I am upset that a pretend exercise in an improvisation, from an actual scene in the film, has been written about as if it was a real scenario,” Jolie, who directed the film, said in a statement on Sunday.

“The suggestion that real money was taken from a child during an audition is false and upsetting. I would be outraged myself if this had happened.”

Users on social media slammed Jolie’s casting game as cruel and exploiting impoverished children. Vanity Fair reporter Evgenia Peretz called the casting game “disturbing in its realism” in the profile, while Kayla Cobb at pop culture website Decider.com compared the game to a psychological thriller.

“Everyone should know better than to literally dangle money in front of impoverished children ... no movie is worth psychologically traumatizing multiple children,” Cobb wrote.

“First They Killed My Father” is about the 1970s Khmer Rouge regime under which more than 1 million people died. It is due to be released globally and on Netflix in September.

Jolie said the young girl who won the part, Srey Moch, was chosen after “she became overwhelmed with emotion” when forced to give the money back, saying she needed the money to pay for her grandfather’s funeral.

“The children were not tricked or entrapped, as some have suggested,” Rithy Panh, a Cambodian producer on the film, said in a statement. They understood very well that this was acting, and make believe.”

—Reuters

HBO urges critics of slavery drama to hold fire after Twitter outcry

LOS ANGELES — Cable channel HBO urged critics of its planned slavery-themed drama “Confederate” to reserve judgment until the show develops further, in response to an intense social media campaign demanding that the project be axed.

The hashtag #NoConfederate was a top-trending Twitter topic worldwide on Sunday after April Reign, the woman behind the #OscarsSoWhite campaign two years ago, urged people to send a message to HBO objecting to the show.

Critics of the concept have deemed it both offensive and inappropriate, especially coming from two white male creators, David Benioff and DB Weiss, the creators of HBO’s medieval fantasy series “Game of Thrones.”

“We believe the time to speak up is now, before the show has been written or cast. Before @hbo invests too much money into #Confederate,” Reign tweeted, as #NoConfederate became a trending topic during Sunday night’s episode of “Game of Thrones.”

HBO announced last week that “Confederate,” in the early stages of development, would be set in an imaginary world where slavery still exists in the United States and the nation is on the brink of a third civil war.

HBO said on Sunday that while it had “great respect for the dialogue and concern being expressed around ‘Confederate,’” it had faith in creators Benioff, Weiss and their black writing partners, Nichelle and Malcolm Spellman.

“The project is currently in its infancy so we hope that people will reserve judgment until there is something to see,” HBO said in a statement.

Responding to the backlash, the “Confederate” creators said last week that neither they nor the show endorse slavery. Malcolm Spellman acknowledged that the premise was “weapons-grade material,” but said the series would provide an opportunity to examine how racism and white supremacy are “alive and real” in the United States, more than 150 years after slavery was abolished.

Reign’s Twitter campaign, however, suggested the controversy is unlikely to go away any time soon.

—Reuters

ASEAN music festival to open in Viet Nam

HANOI — ASEAN Music Festival will take place in Viet Nam’s northern Vinh Phuc province on 29-24 August with participation of seven Southeast Asian nations.

Art troupes from Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam will stage music and dance performances at the five-day event, the provincial authorities said on Tuesday. During the festival, one of the events designated to celebrate the 50th founding anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), art troupes will also attend relevant seminars and tour Vinh Phuc.—Xinhua

‘Quantico’ star Priyanka welcomes Marlee Matlin on board

LOS ANGELES — Priyanka Chopra is excited as her Hollywood show “Quantico” has tapped Academy Award-winning actress Marlee Matlin for its new season.

Priyanka, 35, shared the news with fans on Twitter and welcomed Matlin on board.

“Welcome to Quantico @MarleeMatlin we can’t wait to have u on board,” Priyanka wrote.

Matlin, who is best known for her performance of a young deaf woman, Sarah Norman, in “Children of a Lesser God,” also expressed her excitement by tweeting. “Can’t wait to work with Priyanka Chopra, Johanna Braddy, Jake Mclaughlin, my old friend Blair Underwood and of course Michael Seitzman.”

Matlin, 51, has joined “Quantico” as a series regular for the upcoming third season. She will play Jocelyn Turner, an ex-FBI agent who was known at one time as the best undercover agent in the field until a bomb blew up near her and rendered her deaf, reported Variety.—PTI

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Royals and relatives mark centennial of WWI battle of Passchendaele

PASSCHENDAELE, (Belgium) — Relatives read letters and diary excerpts from soldiers who died in the World War One battle of Passchendaele when they gathered on Monday for a ceremony to mark 100 years since the start of one of the war's bloodiest offensives. Politicians and royalty joined relatives of the dead for the centenary of the 103-day battle in western Belgium in which more than half a million Allied and German troops were killed or wounded.

The brutal clash, which became a symbol of the horrors of the war, began on 31 July, 1917 when British launched an assault against German forces who were holding the plateau overlooking the Belgium city of Ypres.

Hit by heavy rain, the campaign transformed the Flanders lowlands into a mud-churned swamp rendering tanks immobile and virtually paralysing the infantry.

Some 4,000 relatives of the soldiers who fought there gathered at the Tyne Cot Cemetery near Ypres, where nearly 12,000 Commonwealth dead are buried. They were joined by Britain's Prince Charles, Prince William, his wife Kate, Prime Minister Theresa May, and Belgian King and Queen Philippe and Mathilde.

At the service, Prince Charles honoured the "courage and bravery" of those killed and said the gathering was "to promise we will never forget."

Military personnel and descendants read out letters and diary excerpts penned by many of those who died. The ceremony concluded with a fly-past by the Belgian airforce in a 'missing man' formation.

Prince William paid tribute on Sunday at the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres to those "who sacrificed everything for the lives we live today."

As he spoke, thousands of paper poppies were dropped from the roof of the gate, which is engraved with the names of 54,391 British soldiers who have no known grave.

—Reuters

Malta restores forgotten war rooms, hewn into the rocks in WWII

VALLETTA (Malta) — In a vast network of tunnels carved into the rocks under the Maltese capital Valletta, faded maps of the Mediterranean hint at the place's role in directing key battles in World War Two.

Malta is now restoring the 28,000 square meters (300,000 square feet) of tunnels, planning to open a huge section to the public.

The compound, hidden under the picturesque port city perched on cliffs above the sea, was built by the British and served as the staging ground for major naval operations. The British military withdrew in 1979 and the compound was abandoned for almost 40 years. German and Italian forces bombarded Malta intensively between 1940 and 1942 to try gain control of the Mediterranean, but did not manage to force the British out. During the Cold War, the tunnels were used to track Soviet submarines.

Over the years, water and humidity have let rust and mould spread. Some rooms have been vandalized, but traces of the military apparatus that once occupied the complex still remain. Military cot beds, tangled cables and dust-covered rotary phones litter the rooms.

The Malta Heritage Trust, a non-governmental preservation group, began the multi-million dollar restoration of the site in 2009. —Reuters

Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(2-8-2017 07:00am - 3-8-2017 07:00am) MST

<table>
<thead>
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Prime Time

(11:00 Am — 01:00 Pm) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am — 11:00 Am)
(02:00 Pm — 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am — 11:00 Am)

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<td>Chimlone and the dreams of the player</td>
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A rotary dial telephone set and clock are seen in the NATO tunnels dating back to the Cold War in the War Headquarters tunnels beneath Valletta, Malta, on 28 March, 2017. —Photo: Reuters
Myanmar U-22 national football team and Japan Ryutsu Keizai University FC to play another friendly match

Shine Htet Zaw

As a friendly match, Myanmar U-22 national football team will play against Japan Ryutsu Keizai University FC today, 2 August. It is the 10th and last friendly match of Myanmar U-22 national football team before 2017 South east Asia, SEA Game. It is also the second friendly match against Japan Ryutsu Keizai University FC.

In the first friendly match with Japan Ryutsu Keizai University FC on 30 July, Myanmar U-22 national football team was defeated 1-4.

As 2017 SEA Game to open on 19 August, the preparation times for Myanmar U-22 national football team is very limited. Of the 10 friendly matches of Myanmar U-22 national football team, Myanmar team won five matches and was defeated in four matches.

As a preparation for 2017 SEA Game before 2017 SEA Game, Myanmar U-22 national football team participated in KBZ Bank Cup 2017 and 2018 AFC Champion Qualification and also played against Myanmar National League, MNL All Star team, Malaysia U-22 national team and Japan Ryutsu Keizai University FC.

After today match, Myanmar U-22 national football team will make its final players selection for the SEA Game.

Man United sign midfielder Matic from Chelsea

Kyaw Zin Tun

LONDON — Manchester United have signed Serbia midfielder Nemanja Matic from Premier League champions Chelsea on a three-year contract with an option to extend for a further year, both clubs said on Monday.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed, but British media reported that United paid between 40 million and 50 million pounds to reunite the 28-year-old with Matic’s arrival followed the transfer window was an indication that Matic could have struggled for game time next season. United have also signed defender Victor Lindelof from Benfica and striker Romelu Lukaku from Everton. —Reuters

Klopp confident Liverpool can target title campaign

LONDON — Liverpool are working hard towards their aim of winning the Premier League title, manager Juergen Klopp said ahead of the side’s pre-season friendly against German champions Bayern Munich at the Allianz Arena on Tuesday. The Merseyside club were in early title contention last season, just six points behind leaders Chelsea at the halfway stage, but faded in January to finish 17 points behind the champions in fourth place.

“Yes, we will be playing for the championship,” Klopp told reporters. “We don’t start a season by not having any ambitions. We have to have our goals and I think we have a very good team now. We did have a bit of bad luck last season. I think we can play a little bit better. Let’s hope everything will work very well and that there isn’t much more to improve. We have to work very hard on it and we’re doing that.” —Reuters

Myanmar to host the 2017 AFF Youth Championship

Kyaw Zin Tun

Myanmar will host the ASEAN Football Federation U-18 Youth Championship. The tournament, which will feature 11 of 12 AFF teams, will be hosted by Myanmar. The championship will feature two competition groups: Group A will include Thailand, Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Laos, Cambodia and Singapore; Group B will include Myanmar, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Philippines and Brunei.

Aung San Stadium in Yangon, with a capacity of 40,000, will host matches between 4 to 13 September.

Winners and runners-up of both groups will advance to semi-finals that will take place at 6pm on 11 and 13 August at the Thuwanna Stadium, Yangon. The Thailand match is planned for 27 August in Bangkok, Thailand.

U-18 Myanmar national football team to play the friendly matches against U-18 Inter Milan and U-19 Thailand

Kyaw Zin Tun

Myanmar’s U-18 national football team will play a series of friendly matches in preparation for this year’s Asian Football Federation (AFF) Youth Championship. The Inter Milan match will take place at 6pm on 11 and 13 August at the Thuwanna Stadium, Yangon. The Thailand match is planned for 27 August in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Myanmar footballers are seen during the training session. PHOTO: MFF

Photo: MFF

Chelsea’s Nemanja Matic in action with West Bromwich Albion’s Craig Dawson during the match of Premier League at The Hawthorns on 12 May 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS