Kofi Annan arrives to issue final report on Rakhine

Mr. Kofi Annan, the chair of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State and the former UN Secretary General, arrived in Yangon yesterday in advance of the release of the commission’s final report.

Mr. Annan is scheduled to hold talks with members of the Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development in Rakhine State chaired by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi today in Nay Pyi Taw, according to the Ministry of Information.

The central committee includes 20 cabinet ministers.

According to the website of the advisory commission, Mr. Annan will answer questions from the media in the Sule Shangri-La hotel on Thursday morning. The commission’s final report will be published on the same day.

The report will include recommendations for the government on conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance, reconciliation between the region’s Buddhist and Muslim communities, institution building, and development in conflict-torn Rakhine State.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi hails Myanmar’s SEA Games athletes

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday expressed her support to Myanmar athletes competing in the 2017 SEA Games currently being held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, despite some inconveniences during the competition of South-East Asian nations.

In a message released yesterday, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said she congratulated the Myanmar men’s football team, which was able to advance to the semi-finals despite a loss against Malaysia.

“The Myanmar U-22 men’s soccer team was defeated by the host team at the group’s last match on 21st August, but it was a great honour for us as Myanmar would progress to the semi-final. The whole nation is encouraging you with great expectations”, the statement read.

“It is natural that sometimes we win and sometimes we get a learning experience. The greatest reward is to be able to apply physical strength, wisdom and bravery after accumulating new strength and renewed spirits, in the coming matches by reviewing these lessons. I would like you all to lay stress on making efforts to show your best calibre in the midst of the audience with light spirits and well-rested bodies. Our people will also continue to encourage your best efforts”.

See page-3
Government urged to conserve water sources

An amendment to an agreement on narcotics control

Air traffic management meeting held

MYN-US sign change on narcotics control
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Counsellor Office

Message of Congratulations sent by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to the 29th SEA Games Athletes

(22nd August 2017)

I would like to say “Mingalarpar,” to all of you men and women athletes bringing honor to the country by representing Myanmar and competing in various sports in the 29th SEA Games being held in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia from August 19, 2017 to August 30.

To our great delight and honour, news and information are coming in continually that our sportsmen are participating in the Games, by representing the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and our people with pure sporting spirit, indomitable zeal and the ASEAN Spirit of Friendship.

On 21st August, at 7:45 am a car accident occurred to the vehicle with the Myanmar Squash Sports team onboard, in which one sportsman and two sportswomen were injured. Fortunately enough, the sportsman was slightly wounded, managing to contest in the game, whereas it has been learnt that the two sportswomen would be able to participate in the games after a few days of rest. This was a great relief for us.

Myanmar U-22 men’s soccer team was defeated by the host team at the group’s last match on 21st August, but it was a good honour for us as Myanmar would progress to the semi-final. The whole nation is encouraging you with great expectations. It is natural that sometimes we win and sometimes we get a learning experience. The greatest reward is to be able to apply physical strength, wisdom and bravery after accumulating new strength and renewed spirits, in the coming matches by reviewing these lessons. I would like you all to lay stress on making efforts to show your best calibre in the midst of the audience with light spirits and well-rested bodies. Our people will also continue to encourage your best efforts.

Broadcast of Chinese TV series commemorated

A ceremony was held yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw at Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV) to commemorate the joint broadcasting of a Chinese TV series by MRTV and a Chinese broadcaster.

Today, the Chinese TV series “Mingalaba Chang” is being broadcast with Myanmar voice dubbing. The series, popular in China, depicts the overcoming of life’s difficulties with strength and determination that is expected to be equally popular with Myanmar audiences, said Dr. Pe Myint, the Union Minister for Information.

As part of the agreement, a recording studio signboard was also set up and commemorated yesterday.

At the ceremony, Dr. Pe Myint delivered a welcoming speech, noting that Myanmar and China have a long history of cooperation in the information sector and other sectors in Myanmar.

In keeping with an agreement between Guangxi TV (GXBS) and MRTV, the two stations sent representatives on study tours between 2013 and 2015 and, based on discussions held during these visits, additional agreements were signed, including an agreement on jointly broadcasting a Chinese TV programme. Through such joint broadcasting, MRTV programmes will become more complete and support the transition to Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) while increasing relations between the two organisations.

As part of yesterday’s commemoration, Ms. Fan Xiaoai, the Guangxi Autonomous Region party permanent committee member, gave words of thanks.

A trailer of “Mingalaba Chang” was then shown, after which officials cut a ceremonial ribbon.

Afterward, Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint, Guangxi Autonomous Region party permanent committee member; minister of information Ms. Fan Xiaoai toured the recording studio.—MNA

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi hails Myanmar’s SEA Games athletes

FROM PAGE 1

The 2017 SEA Games, however, have not been without incidents that have sidetracked the efforts of the athletes. On Monday, the vehicle transporting the Myanmar squash team was involved in an accident in which one male player and two female players were injured. The male athlete was only slightly injured and was able to compete. The two female players had to concede their next match, but will be able to participate in later matches, the statement said.

It has been learnt that the two sportswomen will be able to participate in the games after a few days of rest. This was a great relief for us,” the State Counsellor said in her statement.

In another incident, the Myanmar women’s football team had to wait several hours after their win over Malaysia on 17 August after it was learnt that the bus driver did not have a valid license. “Taking part in the games while representing the motherland, individual skills, good training, good spirit, and team unity are needed. At the same time, it gives us the opportunity to show the civility and dignity of the athletes of the participating country”, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said in her statement. “The State and its people are hoping that all of you will be able to uplift our national dignity by exerting your utmost efforts with sporting spirit and ethical sporting behavior, spirit of justice, fairness, purity and noble spirit”—GNLM

Kofi Annan arrives to issue final report on Rakhine

FROM PAGE 1

The advisory commission has already submitted a 15-page interim report to the government with 39 recommendations that the Burmese government could undertake immediately including points relating to citizenship, humanitarian aid, border issues, and bilateral relationships with Bangladesh.

The nine-member Advisory Commission is chaired by Mr Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, the chairman and founder of the Kofi Annan Foundation and a Nobel laureate. In addition to Mr Annan, the commission comprises three international and six national persons of eminence who are highly experienced, respected and neutral individuals, added the statement.—GNLM
Poultry industry suffers losses due to virus outbreak

THE H1N1 virus has resulted in poultry industry losses of about Ks165 million in the last three months, according to the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Infected chickens were discovered at three breeding farms—one in Yangon Region including Dawei Township and two in Taninthayi Region.

Myanmar is planning to offer agricultural and livestock insurance to cover such losses in the future.

Therefore, officials from the government side and the people from the private sector had meetings for the insurance system to be introduced not only in the agricultural sector but also in the livestock breeding sector.

H5N1 disease was found to have infected the chicken in three breeding farms: one in Hlinethaya Township in Yangon Region, another one in Wae Kyun Htein Thit ward in Dawei Township and the third one in Taninthayi Region.

Therefore, consumption of chicken and eggs has declined after chicken were killed by H5N1.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Foreign direct investment goals revised higher

May Thet Hnin

A 2012 foreign direct investment promotion plan will be revised with higher targets to account for faster than expected growth, said U Aung Naing Oo, the Director-General of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

“Before there was no Myanmar Investment Law, the situation of the country is not as good as these days,” he said. “Therefore, we set very low targets for foreign direct investment as we thought it would be difficult to achieve a target of US$6 billion. But, now the situation has changed, leading us to set higher targets.”

DICA will revise the foreign direct investment plan with assistance from the Japanese government.

“The new plan will be based on the new Myanmar Investment Law,” said U Thant Sin Lwin, the deputy director-general of DICA.

DICA set a target of $6 billion in FDI in FY2017-2018. Currently, foreign direct investment is estimated at $3.6 billion in the first four months of FY2017-2018, with investment likely to exceed the government’s initial goal.

The manufacturing sector was ranked first garnering 35 per cent of all foreign investment this fiscal year. Transportation and communication sectors accounted for 30 per cent.

Services sector investments were the third largest investment sector with 25 per cent. Real estate was fourth with six per cent.

According to MIC, 112 foreign enterprises invested a total of $3.7 billion and 40 domestic companies invested Ks 1.2 trillion between April and August.

Heroin seized in Kachin State

POLICE seized heroin worth Ks42 million from a motorcyclist driving on Pyidaungzgu Road between Hopin and Kyargyi Gwin village near Hopin Township in Kachin State yesterday.

Acting on a tip, police officers stopped a motorcycle driven by Ma Khin Cho, 35, from Lwe Mon village, Indawgyi area in Mohinyin Township and found 55 soap boxes of heroin powder weighing a total of 650 grams.

Police said Ma Khin Cho admitted she had bought the heroin for Ks19 million from a supplier in Nan Mee Laung village.

Police charged Ma Khin Cho on suspicion of breaking Myanmar’s drug laws.—Min Min Oo

PHOTO: MIN MIN OO

Write for us

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.
US food executives seek Myanmar Tilapia deal

Ko Moe

AMERICAN food industry executives have made an offer to buy Myanmar tilapia exports, said U Tun Win Myint, head of Yangon Region Fisheries Department. “America has made an offer to buy 20 or 30 containers of tilapia from Myanmar per month. One container can carry 40 or 50 tons. They want the tilapia containers monthly. But, we cannot fulfill their demand. Even we tried to breed the tilapia, we can supply only two or three containers the most per month,” U Tun Win Myint said. “Our local farmers are still breeding the fish with the traditional methods. They need to do more research to keep up with international markets and to know what kinds of fish are in highest demand.”

Tilapia is being bred mostly in Twantay, Khayang-thongwga townships in Yangon. Yangon breeders are also farming catfish, striped snakehead and small fresh-water catfish. Fisheries products earned around US$600 million in FY2016-2017.

Myanmar’s coffee launched in Switzerland

NAT Coffee, a premium Arabica grower in Shan and Chin states and Mandalay Region, is processing its beans with a Swiss roaster and taking on the Switzerland premium coffee market. Nat Coffee’s Geneva kick-off event was held on 6 July.

Myanmar’s Arabica beans are selling in Thailand, Malaysia, China, the United States and Taiwan. Myanmar beans have been certified by the Specialty Coffee Association of America. Specialty coffee sells for about US$7,000 per tonne in the United States and $3,800 in Taiwan. About 7,000 tonnes of coffee are produced in Myanmar per year, but only about 50 per cent of coffee production goes to foreign countries, according to the Myanmar Coffee Association. About 8,000 acres are devoted to coffee cultivation in Myanmar this fiscal year, which is double the amount last year, according to the Ywangan Coffee Association. —Ko Htet

Edible oil imports increase by 10% every year

DESPITE Myanmar’s domestic production of edible oils, edible oil imports increased about 10 per cent this year, according to yesterday’s edition of the Myawady Daily. More than 600,000 metric tons of edible oil were imported through Yangon ports last fiscal year, according to a report in yesterday’s edition of Myawady Daily.

Currently, much of Myanmar’s gasoline comes from Singapore, China, India and other regional suppliers rather than producers in the Middle East. Myanmar energy officials think they can save money by buying more gas from Middle Eastern suppliers and ship those supplies directly to Myanmar without using Singapore. —GNLM

Energy officials to explore direct gas shipments from the Middle East

MYANMAR energy officials are contemplating changing the way the country imports gasoline, according to a report in yesterday’s edition of Myawady Daily. Myanmar energy officials think they can save money by buying more gas from Middle Eastern suppliers and ship those supplies directly to Myanmar without using Singapore. —GNLM
Japan investments expected to rise

HSu Hnin Le

JAPAN is one of the biggest contributors to Myanmar and provides humanitarian support, loans at low interest rates, technological support and investments in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Investment from Japanese companies went up after 2011 and has increased further since the democratic government took administration. The following is an interview with Mr. Hiro Yamaoka, the Managing Director of Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) in Yangon. JETRO provides information to Japanese companies interested in doing business in Myanmar and assists Japanese companies coming to invest here as well.

“Foreign investment and technology can boost the export sector in Myanmar but the Myanmar government needs to promote it more,” Mr. Hiro Yamaoka.

Q: There are 84 companies working in Thilawa SEZ’s Zone A and Zone B. How many of them are Japanese companies?
A: The most recent statistics show that 42 of them are Japanese companies so half of the companies there are Japanese.

Q: Zone B is being expanded and they say basic infrastructure will be completed within a year. What role will Japanese investment play in this?
A: Zone B is being expanded by 100 hectares which is one third of Zone A. We hope to between 10 and 15 companies come invest in this.

Q: Investment hasn’t been flowing as much as it was expected. Is it because of the investment law and what other obstacles are there when investing in Myanmar?
A: Japanese investors have to consider two options when investing in Myanmar. For example, investing in Thilawa SEZ and investing in other industrial/economic zones.

Thilawa SEZ operates in accord with the Myanmar Special Economic Zone Law so it’s a good law for investing in ASEAN. Japanese companies are not hesitant with working in Thilawa SEZ. However, the laws for the other industrial zones are still being reviewed in the Hluttaw for amendments so Japanese companies are still surveying the situation. Freedom is important for foreign companies investing here as there are more restrictions for foreign companies compared to local companies.

Q: Japanese investment in Myanmar is low compared to investors in Viet Nam. When Viet Nam opened the doors for businesses, Japanese investment increased. How are prospects in Myanmar?
A: I believe Myanmar’s government needs to first enact policies and laws that help investors do well here. Foreign companies have to think about the risks when they come to do business in a country. They have to consider the political situation of the country and the stability of its government is very important. I think Myanmar’s main interest for investment from Japan is in the export sector. Japanese investment would primarily go to building factories for manufacturing but for that to happen we also need adequate electric supply. If Myanmar is able to develop their electric power supply like Viet Nam it will probably attract more Japanese investors.

Q: What sectors are Japanese companies mainly interested in Myanmar?
A: Companies mainly look at expenses when doing business. Viet Nam is able to produce Japanese industrial products because of the low costs and they have stable electric power. Myanmar could probably provide its own generators and call in skilled workers from overseas. So without stable electricity and skilled workers, Myanmar needs a bit more development to reach this level. Myanmar should start with small industrial products that require low production costs and then eventually work its way towards high-value products.

Q: Is there any interest in investing in other economic zones like Kyaukpyu and Dawei?
A: In the long-term, I think Kyaukpyu and Dawei have potential for development in maybe 30 or 50 years’ time but currently Thilawa SEZ has a lot of momentum. It really depends on the government as to how much they will open up the other economic zones and how much they are willing to develop them. Myanmar has about one fifteenth the amount of economic zones as Viet Nam so there is room for development. But in Yangon the situation looks like you may have to rent the land from their current owners and set up your own electricity, water and transformers so Japanese companies are more attracted to investing in Thilawa SEZ right now.

Q: Do you have any other comments?
A: About 300 representatives from Japan attend the monthly meeting at our JETRO office in Yangon. We discuss with these Japanese companies about investing in Myanmar and they talk about economic development and improving the livelihood of the Myanmar people.

I want to talk about 4 characteristics of Japan. Japanese companies are said to be slow in coming to invest but that is because we think for the long term. We also provide proper training and education to our workers so that they become professional and skilled employees.

Third is that Japanese companies are very strict so they avoid anything that goes against the law. They always operate within the law.

Finally, Japanese companies always work hard for profit and pay the proper taxes. That is all I want to say.
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IN promoting exports, we need to increase the amount of exports as well as to acquire a larger market. Only if we could acquire a larger market would we be able to strengthen the foundation and create more and more progress. For any export product if the market is not large enough and if we have to depend wholly on one market, an unexpected change in that the market could have a very harmful effect on the national economy.

It has been learnt that export earnings from various Myanmar beans amounted to 18% of total export earnings. Compared to income from other exports, exports of various kinds of beans outnumbered that of rice. As for growing acreage as well, there was a slight difference between rice and peas—18 million acreage:11 million acreage. Just by seeing it, it can be easily seen that export of various beans plays an important role in Myanmar’s economy. Yet, there has been a disadvantage in exporting beans. It is none other than its absolute dependency on the Indian market.

Very recently, the Indian government decided to import 2 lakh tons only per year by designating Toor Whole (Pesingone) as restricted goods. Out of various kinds of beans exported, toor whole is the one which fetched the third highest income. Moreover, the toor whole is the one which is grown just for exporting it to India. From this, we can see that a policy change in India can easily harm Myanmar’s toor whole production. We feel that making any policy change depending upon India’s internal demand is not the correct way. Based on friendly bilateral relations, practical ways and means to solve this problem should be made. It has been learnt that discussions on this matter are being made between responsible officials and the Indian Ambassador. If ways and means of solving this problem could be found during the official visit of Narendra Modi, the Indian Prime Minister that had been arranged in the first week of September, friendly relations between the two countries would be further promoted and strengthened.

The current case of toor whole exports highlights the importance of creation of high-priced agricultural produce. Had pea-based high-priced produce been exported, Myanmar bean growers would have a larger market. India, the country in which peas are mostly consumed could very well become the potential country which can cooperate with Myanmar. Last but not least, we deeply urge to make efforts to turn the current crisis of toor whole—into an opportunity for Myanmar.

(Translated by Khin Maung Oo)

AGRICULTURE and food production seem to be under constant threat from climate change, policy failure and new diseases in meeting the demand of an ever-increasing world population. Yet, innovative endeavours and technological advancements have given hope that adaptation, invention and international cooperation can overcome the looming challenges, with positive implications for ASEAN’s approach to food security.

The World Agricultural Forum (WAF) 2017, held in Singapore in July 2017, provided useful insights on the key issues faced globally in food and agriculture. There has been growing uncertainty on whether global efforts will succeed in slowing climate change.

Agricultural production may aggravate the situation, with deforestation and agricultural emissions from livestock, soil and nutrient management contributing as much as 24% of global greenhouse gas emissions in 2010, according to the latest comprehensive report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2014.

With the largest population among world continents, Asia’s farming practices will play a major role in shaping future climate.

Integrated Solutions

There is also a rising tide of protectionist measures, in the form of tariff and non-tariff barriers, as well as the threat of export restrictions on the part of major producers. India banned export of non-Basmati rice in April 2008 triggering the food price crisis of 2007-08. These imperil food importing countries, and may pave the way to another crisis, especially when compounded with natural disasters such as droughts or floods.

In addition, food-borne diseases are fast evolving, and developing resistance to the very treatments intended to address them, a phenomenon known as anti-microbial resistance. ASEAN is all but immune to these developments.

Rather than feeling overwhelmed, WAF 2017 left participants inspired, as it offered a number of interesting integrated solutions that can allow ASEAN to adapt to the increasingly complex and inter-connected challenges.

Innovation and Technology

The first insight is in innovative inventions that can make agriculture more sustainable and climate smart. This is relevant given that the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) Work Plan towards the ASEAN Economic Community 2025 includes objectives like increasing crop, livestock and fishery/aquaculture production (2016-19) and improving productivity, technology and product quality to support small producers (2017-19).

Digital agriculture offers a myriad of opportunities in realising the AMAF Work Plan. These include drones that spray fertilisers and pesticides over large areas of plants, as well as robotics and automation in the supply chain to spare individuals from more “dirty, dangerous and difficult” manual tasks. Further technologies, such as data sensors, can give farmers information on the optimal quantity of production inputs (e.g. seeds, nutrients) and the environment (e.g. temperature, humidity) to boost yields.

The next insight is in investments, which enable key technologies. The understanding is that investment promotion for the food sector can be improved by making it more technology-focused. Global venture capital investments in agricultural technologies (Agtech) grew from just US$ 500 million in 2012 to approximately $3 billion in 2015, according to a report by the Boston Consulting Group and AgFunder, an online Agtech investment platform. While many countries in Southeast Asia were already destinations for these investments, there seems to be a divide as Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar have not yet availed themselves of these kinds of opportunity.

Integration As Way Forward

However, WAF 2017 has shown that ASEAN is not immune to food security threats faced globally, but neither is ASEAN alone in addressing them. Moving forward, there is need for better integration so that these developments reach smallholder farmers, to meet growing consumer demand. Supportive infrastructure will be needed, such as allowing for more mobile telecommunications operators and expanding the wireless technology coverage. Telecommunications services will enable farmers to track yields, and will also allow for the entry of digital technologies.
More parts of crashed Y-8 aircraft found

DURING the search for remaining parts of crashed Y-8 aircraft in combination with Tatmadaw (Navy) ships and local fishing boats, nearby the location where parts of its tail depending upon images received through sonar system, 3 fishing boats found one engine and 3 propeller blades of the aircraft in the search by dragging fishing nets, it was learnt. —Myanmar News Agency

Twelve suspected violent attackers arrested in Maungtaw

SECURITY forces arrested 12 persons in Norual Village and Myo Oo village tract on Sunday in Maungtaw suspected of being associated with violent attackers.

Six men, including Shaung Ru Arr Laung, were arrested in Norual Village by patrolling security forces on Sunday.

Similarly, a combined force of police personnel conducting a patrol in villages of Myo Oo village tract also arrested six men suspected of associating with violent attackers. —Myanmar News Agency

Villager with weapons arrested in Maungtaw

HAMID Tu Saung from East Village of Ywa Thit Kay ward was arrested for possession of knives, pointed iron bars and military uniforms on Monday, according to Myanmar News Agency.

Based on information received, security forces searched and found four knives, a wooden stick, two pointed iron bars, one black jersey, two pairs of trousers, a pair of stockings and a water bottle in Hamid Tu Saung’s home. A case was opened against him in accordance with the law at Maungtaw Myoma police station. —Myanmar News Agency

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Ambassadors of PRC and Netherlands

Thura U Shwe Mann, Chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission, held separate meetings yesterday with H.E Mr Hong Liang, Ambassador of People’s Republic of China to Myanmar at the Hluttaw Affairs House and H.E. Mr Wouter Jurgens, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Myanmar.

In both meetings, Thura U Shwe Mann and the ambassadors discussed bilateral co-operations – especially in the agricultural sector. —Myanmar News Agency

Future Of Agriculture And Implications For ASEAN – Analysis

FROM PAGE 8

A further step is for farmers to share data with one another, to spread best practices that optimise the use of inputs. The private sector can also provide farmers with insurance mechanisms to shield them from financial shocks caused by bad harvests.

Information dissemination campaigns will be required so that farmers will learn about funding opportunities as well as the benefits of insurance.

As regards anti-microbial resistance, Singapore is currently coordinating ASEAN’s efforts in reducing use of anti-microbials in agricultural production, developing regional laboratory testing capabilities, and promoting exchange of information among member states. Linkages with countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands, through NTU’s Food Science and Technology Programme and Food Technology Centre, allow for more information on better management systems which can supplant over-use of anti-biotics for boosting yields.

Lastly, job creation is a key policy imperative for developing countries, as well as the developed economies. An effective policy in bringing agriculture to the 21st century actually yields more employment, and not just in doing the manual jobs on the farms. There are innovative enterprises and emerging technologies to support food production and to package food exports.

It will be important to engage and encourage the youth to enter into agri-entrepreneurship, and to venture into jobs related to agriculture. Similar initiatives such as the Youth Engagement Event, which took place alongside WAF 2017 and engaged over a hundred Singaporean youth and students in Singapore, will be needed to secure the food production base for generations to come. This initiative is worth emulating in other ASEAN countries as well.

Beyond ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework

ASEAN created the AIFS framework in 2009, with primary objectives of ensuring long-term food security, and improving the livelihood of farmers, in the region. This is translated into a Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security (SPA-FS) in the ASEAN Region for 2015-2020, which is reviewed periodically to ensure objectives are achieved.

WAF 2017 provided comprehensive and objective developments in the field of food and agriculture that can aid in SPA-FS reviews, with the next one scheduled for 2018. Beyond this, WAF 2017 also showed that the food and agriculture sector alone is not sufficient to address emerging threats to food security.

In a similar vein, the AIFS framework in its current form is not enough. Strategies in other sectors such as information technology, telecommunication, finance, insurance and education, will need to be calibrated accordingly to enable solutions that help secure the region’s future food security and agriculture. —Ong Keng Yong is Executive Deputy Chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore and Jose Montesclaros is an Associate Research Fellow at the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, RSIS. This is the final essay in the series on the World Agricultural Forum 2017 held on 6-7 July 2017 in Singapore, co-organised by the WAF and RSIS.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, essays and short stories 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 dce@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
WASHINGTON/KABUL — President Donald Trump committed US troops to an open-ended war in Afghanistan, a decision the Afghan government welcomed on Tuesday but which Taliban insurgents warned would make the country a “graveyard for the American empire”.

Trump offered few specifics in a speech on Monday but promised a stepped-up military campaign against the Taliban who have gained ground against US-backed Afghan government forces. He also singled out Pakistan for harboring militants in safe havens on its soil.

Trump, who had in the past advocated a US withdrawal, acknowledged he was going against his instincts in approving the new campaign plan sought by his military advisers but said he was convinced that leaving posed more risk.

“The consequences of a rapid exit are both predictable and unacceptable,” he said. “A hasty withdrawal would create a vacuum that terrorists, including ISIS and al Qaeda, would instantly fill.”

Still, he promised an end to “nation-building” by US forces in what has become America’s longest war and stressed that ultimately Afghanistan’s struggling police and army must defeat the Taliban.

“The stronger the Afghan security forces become, the less we will have to do. Afghans will secure and build their own nation and define their own future. We want them to succeed.”

Most of the approximately 8,400 US troops in Afghanistan work with a NATO-led training and advising mission, with the rest part of a counter-terrorism force that mostly targets pockets of al Qaeda and Islamic State fighters.

While Trump said he would not discuss troop levels or details of the new strategy, US officials said on Monday he had signed off on Defense Secretary James Mattis’ plans to send about 4,000 more troops to Afghanistan.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, in welcoming the strategy, said it would increase the capacity of the training mission for Afghan forces, including enhancing its fledgling air force and doubling the size of the Afghan special forces.

“I am grateful to President Trump and the American people for this affirmation of support … for our joint struggle to rid the region from the threat of terrorism,” Ghani said in a statement.

The Taliban swiftly condemned Trump’s decision to keep American troops in Afghanistan without a withdrawal timetable, vowing to continue “jihad” until all US soldiers were gone.

“If the US does not pull all its forces out of Afghanistan, we will make this country the 21st century graveyard for the American empire,” Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement.

Republican Trump, who had criticized his predecessors for setting deadlines for drawing down troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, declined to put a timeline on expanded US operations in Afghanistan.

Trump now inherits the same challenges as George W Bush and Barack Obama, including a stubborn Taliban insurgency and a weak, divided Kabul government. He is laying the groundwork for greater US involvement without a clear end in sight or providing specific benchmarks for success.

Trump warned that US support “is not a blank check,” and insisted he would not engage in “nation-building,” a practice he has accused his predecessors of doing at huge cost.

Trump insisted through his speech that the Afghan government, Pakistan, India, and NATO allies step up their own commitment to resolving the 16-year conflict.

“We can no longer be silent about Pakistan’s safe havens,” he said.

Senior US officials warned he could reduce security assistance for nuclear-armed Pakistan unless it cooperated more.

A Pakistani army spokesman said on Monday that Pakistan had taken action against all Islamist militants.

“There are no terrorist hideouts in Pakistan,” spokesman Major General Asif Ghafoor said.

Pakistan sees Afghanistan as a vital strategic interest. Obama sent Navy SEALs into Pakistan to kill al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden, the architect of the 11 September, 2001, attacks that triggered the war in Afghanistan.

The Taliban government was overthrown by US-backed Afghan forces in late 2001 but US forces have been bogged down there ever since. About 2,400 US troops have died in Afghanistan.

Trump expanded the US military’s authority for American forces to target militant safe havens on its soil.

South African unions to sign wage agreement in the engineering sector

JOHANNESBURG — Two major unions said on Tuesday they will sign a new wage agreement in the engineering sector, quelling fears of an industry strike.

Trade union Solidarity and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) said they will sign a three-year wage agreement with the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (SEFSA) on Wednesday.

“Counts towards a atmosphere of calm and normalcy in the engineering sector,” said NUMSA general secretary Zizamele Cosa.

Sees serious constitutional challenge to Trump’s travel ban

WASHINGTON — The US Supreme Court is set to take up a case that could determine whether President Donald Trump’s travel ban is constitutional.

The justices will hear arguments on October 10 in case that involves a lawsuit filed by a group of countries who say the ban violates their rights under the international law.

The ban, signed by Trump in January, bars travelers from six Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States.

A federal judge in Hawaii blocked the ban, but a higher court in San Francisco upheld it. Now the case will go before the Supreme Court.

US President Donald Trump announces his strategy for the war in Afghanistan during an address to the nation from Fort Myer, Virginia, US on 21 August, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

US, Pakistan to strengthen military ties

WASHINGTON — The US and Pakistan agreed on Monday to hold regular military talks and increase security cooperation.

The announcement came after US President Donald Trump said he would send troops to America’s “graveyard” in Afghanistan.

The talks will focus on counterterrorism, maritime security and trade.

A US military official said the talks were a “positive step” in improving relations between the two countries.

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Quake kills two on Italian holiday island, young brothers trapped

ROME — An earthquake hit the tourist-packed Italian holiday island of Ischia on Monday night, killing at least two people, injuring dozens of others and leaving two young brothers trapped in the rubble.

Emergency crews found a baby boy called Pasquale alive in the wreckage of a collapsed building hours after the quake, and said they had located his seven and 11-year-old brothers stuck under a bed nearby.

They pulled out the seven-month-old infant early on Tuesday and pushed a tube through to get water to the older boys, said the fire service. The parents were both safe, said officials.

Residents and tourists on the island off the coast of Naples ran out onto the narrow streets from homes and hotels. Fearing aftershocks, many decided to leave the island early.

Television images showed about six buildings in the town of Casamicciola including a church had collapsed in the quake, which hit at 8:57 pm (1857 GMT).

The earthquake hit three days before the first anniversary of a major quake that killed nearly 300 people in central Italy, most of them in the town of Amatrice.

Italy’s National Institute of Geophysics and Vulcanology put the magnitude of Monday’s quake at 4.0, revising it up from an initial 3.6, but both the US Geological Survey and the European quake agency estimated the magnitude at 4.3.

The director of the island’s hospital said two women were killed and about 40 injured. One of victims was killed when she was hit by falling masonry from the church of Santa Maria del Suffragio, the Civil Protection Department in Rome said.

The church was rebuilt after it, like most of Casamicciola was destroyed by an earthquake that killed some 2,000 people in 1883.

Most of the damage was in the high part of the volcanic island. Hotels and residences on the coast did not appear to suffer serious damage but fire brigades were checking to see if they could still be used.

The island has a year-round population of about 63,000, which swells to more than 200,000 in summer, with many people from the mainland owning holiday homes.

Civil Protection Department head Angelo Borrelli said about 2,600 people could not re-enter their homes, pending checks.

Helicopters and a ferry boat brought in more rescue workers from the mainland.

Many who were due to take ferries from Naples on the mainland to start their vacations cancelled their plans, local officials said.

Some civil protection squads were already on the island because of brushfires.

Ischia, a volcanic island about a one-hour ferry ride from Naples, is popular with German tourists. German chancellor Angela Merkel has stayed there often.—Reuters

Iraqi forces breach Islamic State stronghold Tal Afar — statement

BAGHDAD — Iraqi forces breached on Tuesday the city limits of Tal Afar, an Islamic State stronghold west of Mosul, military authorities said.

Army and counter terrorism units broke into the city from the eastern and southern sides, according to statements from the Iraqi joint operations command. Security forces launched an offensive to take back the city on Sunday, their latest objective in a US-backed campaign to defeat the Sunni Muslim jihadists, who remain in control of territory in western Iraq and eastern Syria.—Reuters

US Navy says divers searching warship’s flooded compartments for missing sailors

SINGAPORE — The US Navy said on Tuesday divers have begun searching flooded compartments of a US warship for 10 US sailors missing since the guided-missile destroyer collided with a merchant vessel in waters near Singapore and Malaysia. US Navy and Marine Corps divers will access sealed compartments located in damaged parts of the ship, the US Seventh Fleet said in a statement posted on its website. “Additionally, they will conduct damage assessments of the hull and flooded areas,” it said.

The USS John S McCain and the tanker Alnic MC collided early on Monday while the US vessel was nearing Singapore for a routine port call. The collision tore a hole in the warship’s port side at the waterline, flooding compartments that included a crew sleeping area.—Reuters

Iran says can produce highly enriched uranium in days if US quits deal

LONDON — Iran can resume production of highly enriched uranium within five days if the nuclear deal it struck with world powers in 2015 is revoked, Iran’s atomic chief was quoted by state media as saying on Tuesday.

The deal that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani championed with the United States, Russia, China and three European powers led to the lifting of most sanctions against Tehran in return for curbs on its nuclear programme.

Rouhani has intensified efforts to protect the deal, also known by its acronym JCPOA, against Washington’s return to an aggressive Iran policy, after US President Donald Trump approved new sanctions on Tehran.

Rouhani warned last week that Iran could abandon the nuclear agreement “within hours” if the United States imposes any more new sanctions. “The president’s warning was not baseless,” Head of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Ali Akbar Salehi said on Tuesday. “If we decide, we can reach 20 per cent (uranium) enrichment within five days in Fordow (underground nuclear plant),” he added.

However, Salehi who was reappointed this month as vice president and the head of the Atomic Energy Organization, said his main priority would be to protect the JCPOA. Following the nuclear deal, Iran drastically reduced the number of centrifuges — machines that enrich uranium — installed at Fordow, and kept just over 1,000 there for research purposes.

The JCPOA states that no enrichment is permitted at Fordow for 15 years.

Uranium enriched to a high level can be used to make an atomic bomb. Iran says its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes.

The US Treasury imposed sanctions on six Iranian firms in late July for their role in the development of a ballistic missile programme after Tehran launched a rocket capable of putting a satellite into orbit.

Trump also signed in August a US Senate bill that imposed sanctions on Iran, Russia, and North Korea.

Iran says new US sanctions breach the JCPOA but the United States says they were unrelated to the deal.

During his election campaign Trump called the deal a “disaster” and “the worst deal ever negotiated.”

This month he said he did not believe Iran was living up to the deal’s spirit.—Reuters
Ka-52 helicopter to be armed with new defence system

KUBINKA /Moscow Region — The reconnaissance and attack helicopter Ka-52 Alligator is to undergo upgrade to be equipped with a new defence system and, possibly, new armaments, the press-service of the holding company Helicopters of Russia (an affiliate of Rostec) said on Tuesday.

"The Alligator will be equipped with a new onboard defence complex, which will enhance protection from guided surface-to-air and air-to-air missiles. In cooperation with the Defence Ministry and a number of other manufacturers the possibility is being considered of arming Ka-52 with new weapon systems," the company said.

The auxiliary power plant will be equipped with an extra generator, which will increase its reliability, the press-service said.

"The helicopter’s payload will be increased and tactical capabilities expanded. Corresponding amendments are being made to the designer documentation," the Helicopters of Russia said.

Earlier the company told TASS that the upgraded Ka-52 will have foldable airscrews. It will be possible to keep helicopters of that type in hangars.

'REALLY COMMITTED' NATO BACKS NEW US APPROACH ON AFGHANISTAN

BRUSSELS — NATO allies on Tuesday welcomed President Donald Trump’s decision to commit more forces to Afghanistan, as part of a new US strategy he said would require more troops and funding increases.

Having run for the White House last year on a pledge to withdraw swiftly from Afghanistan, Trump reversed course on Monday and promised a stepped-up military campaign against Taliban insurgents, saying: "Our troops will fight to win'.

US officials said he had signed off on plans to send about 4,000 more US troops to add to the roughly 8,000 now deployed in Afghanistan. But his speech did not define benchmarks for successfully ending the war that began with the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, and which he acknowledged had required an "extraordinary sacrifice of blood and treasure". "We will ask our NATO allies and global partners to support our new strategy, with additional troops and funding increases in line with our own. We are confident they will," Trump said. That comment signalled he would further increase pressure on US partners who have already been jolted by his repeated demands to step up their contributions to NATO and his description of the alliance as ‘obsolete’—even though, since taking office, he has said this is no longer the case. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement: "NATO remains fully committed to Afghanistan and I am looking forward to discussing the way ahead with (Defence) Secretary (James) Mattis and our Allies and international partners." NATO has 12,000 troops in Afghanistan, and 15 countries have pledged more, Stoltenberg said. Britain, a leading NATO member, called the US commitment "very welcome".

"In my call with Secretary Mattis yesterday we agreed that despite the challenges, we have to stay the course in Afghanistan to help build up its fragile democracy and reduce the terrorist threat to the West," Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said.—Reuters

UK OUTLINES APPROACH TO CROSS-BORDER LEGAL DISPUTES POST-BREXIT

LONDON — Britain will outline ways on Tuesday to resolve cross-border civil disputes with the European Union after Brexit, adding to a list of proposals for future ties to try to nudge talks forward with the bloc.

In the third of five such papers to be published this week, the government will look at civil judicial cooperation, suggesting ways of tackling disputes ranging from marital cases to challenges brought by small businesses against EU suppliers.

The papers are part of efforts to move talks with the EU beyond simply settling the divorce between the two, to address their future relationship once Britain leaves the bloc in March 2019.

"Close cooperation in this area isn’t just in the interest of the UK citizens living in the EU, it’s in the interest of the 3.2 million EU citizens living here in Britain," a government source said.

"For example, with more and more families living across borders, we need to make absolutely sure that if and when problems arise, they can be reassured that cross-border laws will apply to them in a fair and sensible way."

The source offered no concrete measures beyond three points that the government’s proposals would be based on — a commitment to build on the existing foundation of cooperation, continued collaboration at all levels and the development of judicial ties "as our societies and laws develop".

Justice minister David Lidington said Britain and the EU needed "an even closer set of cooperative arrangements amongst the countries that are near neighbours to protect citizens in cross-border disputes".— Reuters

Britain welcomes Trump’s renewed commitment to Afghanistan

LONDON — Britain on Tuesday welcomed a commitment by US President Donald Trump to step up the military campaign against Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan.

President Trump committed the United States to an open-ended conflict in Afghanistan on Monday night, reversing course from his campaign pledges.

Britain along with other European allies pledged more troops to support Afghanistan’s military in June, with US Secretary of Defense James Mattis saying at the time that troop numbers in the country had been reduced too rapidly. "The US commitment is very welcome," British Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said in a statement.—Reuters
China, Indonesia to further comprehensive strategic partnership

BEIJING — China and Indonesia held the sixth meeting of vice-premier-level dialogue on Monday, vowing to improve the two countries’ comprehensive strategic partnership.

Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi and visiting Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Wiranto co-chaired the meeting in Beijing.

Yang called on both sides to implement the consensus reached by their leaders.

China-Indonesia ties have seen rapid development and the two countries have maintained frequent high-level visits, while expanding cooperation in various fields, Yang said.

As major developing countries, both China and Indonesia shoulder the responsibility of safeguarding national security and boosting economic development, Yang said, noting that China is willing to work with Indonesia to integrate development strategies and enhance pragmatic cooperation.

Wiranto said Indonesia regards China as a strategic partner in the Asia-Pacific region and is ready to cooperate more with China and boost bilateral ties.

The two sides agreed to maintain high-level visits and close communication on key issues, integrate development strategies and promote cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative.

Both sides agreed to deepen cooperation in defense, law enforcement, anti-terrorism, drug control, cyberspace, aerospace, and maritime affairs.

They agreed to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea, push forward East Asia cooperation and promote the continued and stable development of China-ASEAN ties.

In addition, the two sides agreed to coordinate and cooperate more in multilateral mechanisms. —Xinhua

Record 5.2 trillion yen defence budget sought amid N Korea concerns

TOKYO — The Japanese Defence Ministry plans to seek a record-high budget of 5.26 trillion yen ($48.1 billion) for fiscal 2018 as the country seeks to beef up its missile defense capabilities in the face of growing missile threats by North Korea, a government source said on Tuesday.

The ministry plans to set aside 47.2 billion yen to acquire a new type of interceptor missile to be loaded on Japanese destroyers equipped with the Aegis missile defence system, while also asking for funding to introduce a land-based Aegis system known as Aegis Ashore.

The fiscal 2018 budget request would mark a 2.5 per cent rise from the initial budget for the current year through March. Japan’s defence budget has been on the rise from fiscal 2013 under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s government and topped 5 trillion yen in the fiscal 2017 budget for a second-straight year.

The Defence Ministry will leave open the actual sum it is expecting for designing the Aegis Ashore programme because of the need for consultations with the United States that owns the technology. But it plans to finalize the costs by the end of the year when the government will draw up the fiscal 2018 budget plan.

Under Japan’s current multi-tier ballistic missile defence system, the Maritime Self-Defence Force’s Aegis destroyers equipped with Standard Missile-3 interceptors are tasked with stopping missiles in the outer atmosphere.

If they fail, the Air Self-Defence Force’s Patriot Advanced Capability-3 surface-to-air guided interceptors are the next line of defence against missile attack.

In the budgetary request, the ministry plans to spend 28.5 billion yen to purchase an improved version of PAC-3 missiles known as PAC-3 MSE. It also wants to set aside 10.7 billion yen to upgrade its air defence radar network as part of efforts to prepare for missiles launched on a highly “lofted” trajectory that are more difficult to intercept than those fired on a normal trajectory. —Kyodo News

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV MCC HA LONG VOY. No ()
Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC HA LONG VOY. No () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.8.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.i.t.t-3 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm on 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 MCC TRANSPORT (S’PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV BBC ROSARIO VOY. NO (+)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV BBC ROSARIO VOY. NO (+) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.8.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-3 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm on 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES (S’PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV GSS YANGON VOY. NO (+)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV GSS YANGON VOY. NO (+) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.8.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-3 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm on 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA

Phone No: 2301185

 CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV SINAR BANDA VOY. NO ()
Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BANDA VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.8.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of Hpt-3 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm on 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 SAMUDEERA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

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SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA

Phone No: 2301185
‘Logan Lucky’ writer mystery: Is she real? Yes, says Adam Driver

LONDON — The mystery over the identity of the screenwriter of “Logan Lucky” deepened on Monday when actor Adam Driver said the woman had been on the set of the heist caper movie.

“Logan Lucky,” directed by Steven Soderbergh and set in the world of NASCAR racing, has made headlines because of speculation over whether its first-time screenwriter, Rebecca Blunt, really exists or is a pseudonym.

Driver’s remarks appear to be the first reported sighting of Blunt.

Asked at the film’s London premiere on Monday whether he had met Rebecca Blunt, Driver told Reuters Television: “Yeah.”

“So she is real?,” Driver was asked.

“Yes, she’s been on set,” Driver added.

The Hollywood Reporter, citing multiple unnamed sources, said in July that no writer named Rebecca Blunt existed and that the name was a ruse that deceived Driver and his co-stars Daniel Craig and Channing Tatum while the film was being shot.

The Hollywood Reporter in July noted that Blunt has no other mentions in movie and film union databases and has never been interviewed or photographed during promotions for the film.

The trade publication also recalled that Soderbergh invented names for what was in fact his work as a film editor and cinematographer on his 2015 film “Magic Mike XXL.”

Soderbergh responded in July to the speculation about Blunt’s existence by telling Entertainment Weekly, “When people make a statement like that, they should be very careful, especially when it’s a woman screenwriter who is having her first screenplay produced.”

“Logan Lucky” opened in US movie theaters last week and starts its European rollout this week. —Reuters

Kesha thanks fans as ‘Rainbow’ comeback debuts at top of Billboard

LOS ANGELES — Kesha scored top billing on the Billboard 200 chart with her comeback album “Rainbow,” her first studio album in five years amid a bitter legal battle over her record contract.

The 30-year-old singer sold some 116,000 units of “Rainbow,” according to data on Monday from Nielsen SoundScan, to give her the second-largest US sales from Nielsen SoundScan, to give her the second-largest US sales week of 2017 by a female singer after Katy Perry’s “Witness.”

“Rainbow,” her first studio album chart with her comeback album top billing on the Billboard 200, with another 43,000 units sold for the week.—Reuters

Cosby back in court with new legal team for sex assault trial

Bill Cosby was due back in court on Tuesday to seek a judge’s approval to have a lawyer who successfully defended the late singer Michael Jackson against child molestation charges represent the comedian at his sex assault retrial. Cosby’s first Pennsylvania trial on charges that he sexually assaulted a former administrator at his alma mater ended in May with a hung jury, and the 80-year-old entertainer wants a new legal team to represent him when he faces the charges again in November.

It was unclear if Cosby would attend the session Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas in Norristown, Pennsylvania, just outside Philadelphia.

The three-person defence team includes Tom Mesereau, who is best known for helping to secure an acquittal for Jackson in the pop star’s 2005 child molestation trial in California. Cosby built a long career on a family-friendly style of comedy before several dozen women publicly accused him of sexual assault in a series of attacks dating back to the 1960s.

All but one of those allegations was too old to be the subject of criminal prosecution. Andrea Constand, formerly of Temple University, accused Cosby of sexually assaulting her in his Philadelphia-area home in 2004, and he was charged in December 2015, shortly before the statute of limitations on the alleged crime was to expire.

Cosby has denied all wrongdoing and said that any sexual contact with any of his accusers was consensual.—Reuters

HARRY STYLES set for own BBC special

LONDON—Singer Harry Styles will have his own hour-long special at BBC after Michael Buble and Adele.

The special will feature the former One Direction stars singing tracks from his debut album, reported Digital Spy.

It will be presented by his friend and TV personality Nick Grimshaw.

“Harry is a great performer and full of so many wonderful stories about his extraordinary career, which he’ll be sharing with us. I cant wait for this show,” Grimshaw said.

Styles recently made his feature film debut with Christopher Nolans “Dunkirk” and was praised for his role in the World War II movie. —PTI
Britain's Big Ben falls silent for four years of renovation work

LONDON — The 'Big Ben' bell in the British parliament's famous clock tower tolled for the last time on Monday before it ceased its regular bongs for four years while renovation work is carried out.

The bongs will sound for events such as New Year's Eve celebrations but the four-year length of the outage has caused consternation among British politicians. Prime Minister Theresa May has said the length of the absence can't be right.

The hammers which have struck the 13.7 tonne bell every hour for most of the last 157 years will be locked and disconnected from the clock to ensure the safety of those working on the restoration in the tower, with the bell ringing not returning to normal until 2021.

Hundreds of people stood in silence along Westminster Bridge and Parliament Square to observe the final bongs, breaking into applause once the bells had ceased to ring. Officially called the Elizabeth Tower, the 96-metre-tall clock tower that houses Big Ben is believed to be the most photographed building in the United Kingdom. Its lower sections are already covered in scaffolding.

The panel of lawmakers responsible for the maintenance of parliament's buildings has said it will review the arrangements following the backlash, but will still ensure worker safety is prioritised.

— Reuters

A statue of Boudica is seen near to the Queen Elizabeth Tower, which houses the Great Clock and the 'Big Ben' bell, at the Houses of Parliament in London, Britain on 20 August, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Soviet-era ground effect vehicles

MOSCOW — A ground effect vehicle, also known as “ekranopl,” is a vehicle capable of rising above ground or water due to the effect created by the aerodynamic interaction of the wings and the surface.

Although they may look like seaplanes, ground effect vehicles are not aircraft, as they are unable to fly freely in the air. According to Russian manufacturers, sea-based multirole ground effect vehicles may be created in Russia in 2020-2022.

TASS recalls these futuristic machines which were popular during Soviet times. — Tass

Lun-class ground effect vehicle (GEV) was designed by Rostislav Alexeyev and used by the Soviet and Russian navies until late 1990s. It carried the P-270 Mosquito guided missile. The only model of this class ever built, the MD-Lun-class ground effect vehicle (GEV) was designed by Rostislav Alexeyev and used by the Soviet and Russian navies until late 1990s. It carried the P-270 Mosquito guided missile. The only model of this class ever built, the MD-Lun-class ground effect vehicle (GEV) was designed by Rostislav Alexeyev and used by the Soviet and Russian navies until late 1990s. It carried the P-270 Mosquito guided missile. The only model of this class ever built, the MD-

The Global Light of Myanmar

23 August 2017

MRTV Programme Schedule

(23-8-2017 07:00am ~ 24-8-2017 07:00am) MST

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Programme</th>
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<td>07:03</td>
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For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule
**Myanmar women’s football team blanks Philippines in SEA Games**

Sandar Soe

The Myanmar national women’s football team soundly defeated the team from the Philippines yesterday at the SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, by a lopsided score of 6-0.

The Myanmar women were relentless in scoring against the Philippines. Within four minutes of the start of play, Khin Moe Wai, a key player from Myanmar team, scored the first goal for Myanmar.

Two minutes later, the second goal was scored by Myanmar midfielder Win Theingi Tun.

Twelve minutes later, the third goal was sent into the net by Myanmar forward Ye Ye Oo.

One minute later, Naw Ar Lo Wer Phaw added the fourth goal of the match.

At the 80-minute mark, Khin Moe Wai scored her second goal and the fifth for Myanmar. Four minutes into the additional time period, Khin Moe Wai scored her third goal of the match. At the 2017 SEA Games, Myanmar has played 4 games, winning two. Myanmar now stands in third place with six points. Myanmar has scored 14 goals and has had 6 goals scored against the team.

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**Myanmar futsal teams faring poorly at SEA Games**

Kyaw Zin Tun

Myanmar women’s futsal team lost 1-3 against Indonesia and its men’s futsal team lost 1-6 against Viet Nam yesterday at the Southeast Asia Games at Panasonic Stadium, Shah Alam, Malaysia.

Yesterday’s match was the Myanmar women’s team third straight loss, having been previously defeated by Malaysia, 1-2, and Thailand, 2-10.

It was the second loss of men’s team having been defeat ed by Malaysia 4-5.

So far, neither team has won a futsal match at this year’s SEA Games.

Five nations, Myanmar, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam, are competing in the SEA Games futsal competition.

The Myanmar women’s futsal team will play Viet Nam and the men’s team will play Thailand on 23 August and against Indonesia on 27 August.

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**Myanmar billiards players advance to finals**

Myanmar billiards players Aung Htet and Minn Sithu Tun advanced to the finals of the nine-ball doubles competition at the 29th SEA Games, beating the team from Viet Nam by a score of 3-1 in the semifinals yesterday.

In the other semi final match, Thailand defeated Singapore and also advanced to the final.

Myanmar will compete against Thailand tonight for the gold medal. Billiards and snooker at the 2017 Southeast Asian Games featured competitions in five events (all for men) — English billiards singles, nine-ball singles, nine-ball doubles, snookers singles and snooker doubles. —Ye Yint Shine

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**Myanmar team takes six medals in wushu competition**

Wushu competition at the Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia concluded yesterday after three days with Myanmar taking two medals each for gold, silver and bronze.

Wushu is a martial art with full contact and form category competitions.

Wushu form competitions include open-hand, staff and sword categories.

Myat Thet Hsu Wai Phyo won a women’s gold medal and Thein Than Oo won a men’s gold medal for Myanmar’s wushu team. Sandy Oo and Aye Thitsar Myint won women’s and men’s medals, respectively.

Sandy Oo and Khant Min Htet won women’s and men’s medals, respectively.

Fifty-one wushu medals were granted this year. Malaysia took 14 medals, Viet Nam took 10, Indonesia took nine, Singapore took eight medals and the Philippines and Brunei took two medals each.

The SEA Games feature 17 sports, including 13 team sports and four individual events. A total of 28 nations from Asia and Oceania are competing in the games. Malaysia hosted the event this year.

Myanmar’s female wushu team took two medals each. Thitsar Myint won a women’s gold medal and Kyaw Zin Tun won a men’s silver medal. Sandy Oo and Aye Khant Min Htet won a gold and bronze?

Myanmar and Philippines women players vie for the ball. **PHOTO: MFF**

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**Myanmar takes silver medal in Sepak Takraw men’s doubles**

Myanmar yesterday won the silver medal in the Sepak Takraw men’s team doubles against host country Malaysia by a score of 2-1 at the SEA Games being held in Malaysia.

Myanmar’s first doubles team of Aung Myo Swe and Thant Zin Oo won 22-24, 16-21 to Malaysia’s Amirul Zazwan Amir and Muhammad Afifuddin Mohd Razali, in Titwangsa Indoor Stadium.

The second doubles team of Myanmar Wai Lin Aung and Htet Myat Thu lost 21-14, 21-18 to Malaysia’s Muhammad Kamal Ishak and Muhammad Suhairel Sulaiman.

In the third doubles, Myanmar beat their opponent 21-23 and 8-21 and advanced to the final.

The Myanmar doubles team play against Thailand in the final event last night lost by a score of 0-2 and had to settle for the silver medal.

In past SEA Games, the Myanmar Sepak Takraw men’s doubles team won the gold medal in 2015 and 2013 and the silver medal in 2011. —Kyaw Zin Tun

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Myanmar billiards players advance to finals. **PHOTO: PUBLIC SPORTS AND EDUCATIVE DEPARTMENT**

Myanmar’s striker in action during their Sepak Takraw match against Malaysia’s player at the 29th SEA Games, Malaysia **PHOTO: MFF**