National verification process to be stepped up in N-Rakhine

IMMIGRATION and Population officials in Rakhine State have stepped up the national verification process, which is one of the recommendations of the advisory commission on Rakhine State, recently issuing verification cards to nearly 100 villagers from Shwezar Village-tract in Maungtaw Township. The work was suspended due to most recent terrorist attacks on 25th August, and resumed on 1 October in the areas which have returned to normalcy.

“We recorded the villagers with biometric methods for the National ID system, and so far; 70 men and 22 women from Shwezar Village-tract have been issued the National Verification card up to 25th October,” said an official who is a member of the mobile team of the immigration and population department.

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Reconstruction of homes in Maungtaw commences

VILLAGES destroyed in terrorist attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) are being rebuilt. A stake-driving ceremony was held yesterday to officially start construction of 86 houses in Thittonenargwa village tract.

Attending the ceremony were Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister Mahn Johnny, Region Hluttaw Speaker and Rakhine State governmental personnel.

The Region Chief Minister met with local Mro villagers and said that ethnic people should be united especially when the times are challenging and important. This trip to provide help and cooperation with works of the Government is also important, the region chief minister said.

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Local News

Three endangered baby dolphins spotted in Ayeyawady River

Photograph:  [Photo: MNA]
Aye Aye Thant (MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY)

THE 2nd Pyithu Hluttaw, 6th regular session’s 5th day meeting was held at 10 am yesterday in the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, U Min Thein of Taungdwingyi constituency asked if any high school students were serving prison sentences, and if so, could arrangements be made for them to continue their education and take examinations, including the matriculation examination. He added that some prisoners were sentenced while under-education were continuing their ninth standard education in Insein Prison and Mandalay Central Prison.

Teaching in prisons takes up 8 hours a day from Monday to Friday, and one session is 45 minutes.

In response to this question, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe said prisoners who were sentenced while undergoing education were permitted to continue with their education so that they did not miss out on their opportunity for education. They were informed at the start of the education year that they could continue their education, and there were prisoners who were continuing their ninth standard education in Insein Central Prison and Mandalay Central Prison.

Teaching in prisons takes up 8 hours a day from Monday to Friday, and one session is 45 minutes. With adequate breaks given in between. From Monday to Friday, prisoner teachers teach the students and on Saturdays state high school teachers and private teachers arranged by the prison come to teach. When a chapter is completed, a chapter-concluding examination is conducted, and as per the government high school, first-term and second-term examinations were also conducted with examination papers from the government high school.

Students attending the classes and prison teachers are dressed in the traditional school uniforms of a white shirt and a green longyi, while textbooks and exercise books are provided by the Prisons Department and occasional donors. Insein Central Prison and Mandalay Central Prison arranges for those who pass the matriculation examination to continue university education at Yangon Western University and Mandalay University, respectively, said the Deputy Minister. Responding to a question by U Lin Lin Oo of Tanai constituency on plans to start an international-level police academy, the Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe said under the Police Training Department of the Myanmar Police Force there are Police Officer Depot, Police Officer Training Depot, Police Sergeant Training Depot, No. 1, 2, 3 and 4 Police Training schools. While the Police Officer Training Depot provides training to police officers and staff officers, the Mandalay Police Officer Training Depot was established. Surveillance, investigation, narcotics, intelligence, and tourist security courses are provided in cooperation with the European Union. The Ministry of Home Affairs will follow the policy direction and procedures of the Union government to form an international-level police academy, replied the Deputy Minister.

Next, U Sai Tha Na Kyaw of Mairel constituency said migrant workers who were working overseas for various reasons were now facing difficulties from changes in migrant labour laws and policies and were returning. In tabling a motion urging the government to assist these returnees who were the country’s ethnic nationals displaced from their homes and left by various means for other countries due to the long-running political situation and conflict in the country, lack of job opportunities, and fear from instability in the region, avoiding wars, lacked opportunity for education and facing livelihood difficulties were expecting the government’s assistance in getting full salary, wages and safety in their overseas works. These migrant workers with a passport, work permits and stay permits face difficulties in extending their permits and passports and employers confiscating their passports. Migrant workers without legal papers were also facing difficulties from changing labour laws and policies resulting in being detained and employers driving them away without paying wages. Thus they are awaiting and yearning for the government’s assistance. Township, ward and village tract administrators, police, immigration, Tatmadaw and civil service society personnel are urged to assist them. The motion was supported by U Sai Oo Khin of Hsewinyi constituency and the Hluttaw Speaker announced that hlttaw representatives who want to debate the motion to register their names. Afterwards, the Hluttaw Speaker announced the receipt of a bill amending the narcotic drug and psychotropic substances law sent with amendment by Amyotha Hluttaw and bill committee member Dew Mar Mar Khang submitted and read a report about it. Next, the Hluttaw Speaker announced that hlttaw representatives who want to discuss the bill should register their names.

Aung Ye Thwin (MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY)

At the 5th day meeting of the 6th regular session of the 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw, held at 10 am yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw, Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, presented a motion to contribute the daily-alowances for one day of Amyotha Hluttaw parliamentarians to the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine (UERHD), and the Hluttaw announced its approval.

U Kyaw Lin, Deputy Minister for Construction, replied to the question raised by U Hwei Tin of constituency 11, Chin State, saying: “Construction of retaining walls and a concrete road on Strand Road, Paletwa town, in Chin State will be started under the FY 2017-2018 lump sum budget fund — 600 feet of port retaining walls with the budget allotment of Ks150 million and 140 feet of retaining walls on Strand Road with the budget allotment of Ks20 million as the first stage.

No budget allotments for construction of concrete road were yet allowed for the present financial year. Total measurements of port area retaining walls to be constructed will be 2,200 feet. The remaining part of the 1,600 feet-long retaining walls will be constructed in the coming financial year.”

Afterward, the Deputy Minister replied to questions raised by U Lin Tin Kyaw of constituency 4, Mon State and parliamentarians concerning the Bill on Myanmar Hluttaw. U Kyaw Kyaw of Rakhine State said: “Under section 74, 109, 141 and 161 of the Constitution, the 2008 Hluttaw is categorised as such Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw and Region or State Hluttaw. Pyithu Hluttaw has Hluttaw Rules and Regulations for compilation of legislation. Similarly, Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw and Region or State Hluttaw have their particular rules and regulations for legislation. And, we have Myanmar Inter-Parliamentary Union and Constitution. By linking Hluttaw, the tasks can be performed in accord with principles, rules and regulations. Under section 12/A of the Constitution, legislative power of the State is empowered to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Region or State Hluttaw. Under section 11/A of the Constitution, there are legislative power, executive power and judicial power. Executive and judicial powers are controlled by the Central Body whereas legislative power is free from the control of the Central Body. Constitution has the advantage. In other words, it can be said to be a typical federal type. Hence, the bill on Myanmar Parliament Union should not be promulgated beyond the constitutional section with great essence.”

Major Zaw Win Oo, Tatmadaw Hluttaw Representative, said, “Four objectives described on the promulgation of Myanmar Parliament Union are of excellence. But it is necessary to take notice of potential effects due to the Letter of Law, invisible consequences and objectives. In the tenure of 1st Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Myanmar Parliament Union was formed under the notification of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. In the second tenure, MPU consisting of 18 members was formed on 6th day meeting of 2nd Pyidaungsu Hluttaw 1st regular session, and its meeting 2/2017 was held on 5th May 2017. As its routines are smoothly operating, Myanmar Parliament Union need not promulgate the present law. Now is the time for building the mutual trusts with all the national brethren by holding Union Peace Conference (21st Century Panglong) for gaining nationwide peace.

In building a federal democratic union as demanded by the national organisations, the Bill on Myanmar Hluttaw Assembly should not be promulgated.” U Khin Maung Latt of constituency 3, Rakhine State, U Myint Naing of constituency 5 Rakhine State, U Soe Thein (a) U Maung Soe of constituency 1 Mo Nyunt Region, U Hla Oo of constituency 4 of Sagaing Region, U Soe Thein of constituency 9 Kayah State and Colonel Kyaw Kyaw, Tatmadaw Hluttaw representative took part in discussion. The 6th day meeting of 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw 6th regular session will be held on 27th October it was learnt.
President and First Lady attend Thai King’s royal cremation ceremony

U Htin Kyaw, the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and First Lady attended the cremation ceremony of Thailand’s former king Bhumibol Adulyadej at Sanam Luang public square in Bangkok yesterday evening.

Kings and queens, presidents and leaders of government and special representatives from ASEAN and world nations attended the ceremony.

A delegation led by the President was welcomed by Thailand’s government officials at the ceremony upon their arrival at Sanam Luang at 4:30 pm., shortly before the ceremony began at 5pm.

During the ceremony, the President and First Lady scattered sandalwood flowers at the royal cremation place of the former Thai King and visited the royal reception hall and greeted the new king of Thailand King Maha Vajiralongkorn and his family.

After the ceremony, the President and First Lady returned to the Okura Prestige Hotel, where they are staying during their official visit to Thailand.

Across Bangkok, thousands of Thais dressed in black prostrated themselves as the funeral urn for their revered former king who became the world’s longest-reigning monarch was carried by chariot to his cremation pyre.

Strict regulations handed out to reporters covering the event included a ban on long hair, earrings and moustaches for male journalists. “Unnatural hair colouring is not allowed,” they said.

The symbolic service ends the official mourning period, a year in which government officials and many Thais have only worn black.—Myanmar News Agency

State Counsellor receives Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes German Ambassador Mrs. Dorothee Janetzke-Wenzel. PHOTO: MNA

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs received H.E. Mrs. Dorothee Janetzke-Wenzel, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 26 October 2017 at 10:00 am at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on matters related to the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Germany. —Myanmar News Agency

Officials from World Bank, UNRC and EU Commission Meet with Dr Win Myat Aye to Cooperate in UEHRD’s Working Process

Ms. Ellen Goldstein, Director for Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao PDR, Ms. Renata Dessallien UN Residential Coordinator and H.E Mr Kristian Schmidt respectively called on Dr Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement at the May Kha Lar Hall of the Office of the Ministry yesterday morning.

In meeting with the director of WB, matters of WB’s recommendations and means of giving subsidies in providing humanitarian aids in northern Rakhine State which has been speeded up, the working process of UEHRD’s enterprises to be implemented with the supports of aligned countries and organizations, especially based on public strength, tasks of providing subsidies to the aged under the strategic project of subsidizing the aged, programmes for supporting monetary aids to expectant mothers and newborn babies and children under 2 year-age were discussed more broadly.

While meeting with outgoing UN Residential Coordinator Ms Renata Dessallien, matters concerning UEHRD’s enterprises which have been speeded up, were frankly discussed.

And, Union Minister met with H.E. Mr Kristian Schmidt, discussing programmes on provision of contributions and other subsidies for UEHRD, upgrade of providing humanitarian aids, help for education and health of conflict-affected locals, acceptance of victims and resettlement in systematic way and non-emergence of similar events in future.—Myanmar News Agency
Three endangered baby dolphins spotted in Ayeyawady River

By Aung Thant Khaing

Three baby Irrawaddy dolphins were discovered during a survey tour from 10th to 22nd October, according to the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). The team includes conservationists from the Department of Fisheries and WCS, who predict that more baby dolphins will be discovered, said U Han Win, Assistant Director of the Department of Fisheries.

They found the first baby dolphin on the first day of the survey trip and spotted the next two on 16th and 17th October.

“They are thought to be born three months ago. As there are no baby dolphins deaths in the tour, more baby dolphins are expected to be discovered”, U Han Win added. The first baby dolphin was swimming at the dolphin conservation area between Mandalay and Kyauk Myaung when the team spotted it and next two were discovered near lower Hteechaint and upper Katha.

Nearly 50 dolphins were found in this tour, and 69 dolphins were found in the survey trip in February. “January and February is the best time to survey the dolphins as the river recedes. Many creeks appear when the river levels increase, therefore, the next survey will be made in February, and then the survey about the population will be released soon after.” he added.

Battery shock fishing is considered the main threat to fish and endangered dolphins in the river. Illegal fishing is decreasing because of stepped-up enforcement. U Lay Maung, a local fisherman said who said he can communicate with the dolphins to help in his fishing with them, said, “The increase in the number of dolphins is very good. For their conservation, we should not just rely on the Department of Fisheries. Villagers and fishermen are also obliged to involve in conservation of dolphins.”

Two-storey buildings to be built at Shwepyitha Industrial Zone for industrial workers

By Ko Moe

To accommodate workers, two five-storey buildings will be built in the Shwepyitha Industrial Zone, said U Ko Ko Lwin, the secretary 1 of Shwepyitha Industrial Zone Management Committee.

“We are preparing to construct two buildings for workers. We expect this construction will finish in a short time despite some difficulties”, he continued.

There are a total of 120 rooms in the two buildings, with each room about 16 feet wide. Those buildings will be built on two acres, with the capital of businessmen at Shwepyitha Industrial Zone. The estimated cost of a building is around Ks700 to 800 million.

Workers can purchase a room with a guarantee from the employers, said U Ko Ko Lwin.

The factory owners are not allowed to resell the apartments except to other workers from the industrial zone.

Two buildings were constructed for the accommodation of industrial workers at Shwepyitha Industrial Zone two years ago. A room sold for Ks10 million then. Shwepyitha Industrial Zone has 300 acres of land and a labour force of nearly 13,000 workers. There are 173 factories engaged in food production, consumer product, construction, and other goods. Shwelinpan Industrial Zone also has several five-storey buildings to accommodate workers, said a local manager.

Agro-Industry Park planned for Myaungmya Township

AGRO-Industry Park, which will include agro-based food chain enterprises, is planned for Myaungmya Township, according to yesterday’s report in the Myawady Daily.

To implement this project, over 300 acres of vacant land will be leased. This project is slated to start within three years with investments of US$20 to 30 million.

Myaungmya was chosen, officials said, because it is a centrally located township with good infrastructure, good transportation including a port, a sufficient supply of electricity and is a strategic point for agriculture.

Feedstuff processing factories, food manufacturing factories, rice mills, a rice vermicelli factory, a noodles factory, a factory which produces glucose from broken rice, a rice-husk power plant spending about US$4 million and other factories and workshops will be set up in the park.—GNLM
Farmers receiving good price for rain paddy harvest due to foreign demand

By May Thet Hnin

WITH increasing demand from foreign trade partners, farmers are now getting a decent price for rice, according to the farmers.

During this time last year, 100 baskets of export quality rice fetched around Ks400,000, whereas this year’s price reached over Ks500,000.

“At the early harvest period, 100-basket rice was offered up to Ks550,000. The farmers are doing well with a good price,” said U Soe Tun, a farmer from Taikkyi Township.

“The rice is plentiful in the market and grain moisture content is pretty high, which led to a decrease to Ks500,000”, said U Than Nyunt, a farmer from Nyaungdon Township in Ayeyawady Region.

U Than Oo, secretary of the Bayinnaung commodity depot, said China is importing the rice in large quantities and offering a high price. Additionally, agreements have already been reached with Bangladesh and some African countries to purchase about 3 million rice bags from Myanmar. In addition, Chinese merchants come to Mandalay for direct purchase of paddy. “Total input from planting to harvesting including labour wages and fertilizer amounted to about Ks 200,000. So, the farmers will see a healthy profit if they got the above said price,” said farmers.

There was no significant damage and destruction due to flooding, unlike the previous years, resulting in average rice productivity. An acre yields 70 to 90 baskets depending on the variety of paddy. At present, the pulses market is in sharp decline. Mung bean growers switched to paddy for this winter’s crop season on account of the good price, said growers.

About 2 million metric tons of rice is expected to be shipped to foreign countries this financial year. More than 1.6 million tons were shipped as of 6 October, according to statistics of Myanmar Rice Federation.

Bilateral trade between Singapore and Myanmar valued at US$1.26 billion in five months

BILATERAL trade between Singapore and Myanmar has reached US$1.26 billion, with an estimated export value of $222 million and an import value of over $1 million.

Among regional countries, Singapore is in second place on the list of top bilateral traders after the neighbouring country of Thailand.

Fruits, vegetables, rice, green grams and other pulses, ginger, and flowers are exported to Singapore, while capital goods, raw industrial materials such as petroleum products, chemicals, and consumer products are imported into Myanmar.

Bilateral trade values were about $2.06 billion in FY 2016-2017, $3.69 billion in FY 2015-16, $4.89 billion in FY 2014-2015, $3.6 billion in FY 2013-2014, $2.82 billion in FY 2012-2013 and $3 billion in FY 2011-2012.

In addition, Singapore is the main investor with capital of US$1.7 billion brought into the country as of the end of September in the current fiscal year, according to Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) statistics.

Since FY 1988-89, 265 projects from Singapore were approved by MIC with investments of about $18.6 billion. –Mon Mon
Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker donates aid for Rakhine resettlement

A CEREMONY to donate money for resettlement in Rakhine was held yesterday afternoon at the Amyotha Hluttaw Hall, attended by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, who gave the donated cash.

The Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker handed over a total of Ks7.5 million, including Ks3.02 million under the title of “Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker’s donation” and Ks4.48 million, the collective donations of one day’s daily allowance of 224 Hluttaw representatives to Dr Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and vice chairman of the UEHRD committee for humanitarian aid, resettlement and development of Rakhine State.

The Union Minister gave back certificates of honour. Present at the ceremony were Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and officials from the Amyotha Hluttaw office.

—Myanmar News Agency

Pyithu Hluttaw deputy speaker receives Mr. Martyn Brown

U T KHUN MYAT, the Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and chairman of the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) received Mr. Martyn Brown, Senior Editorial of Foundation Hirondelle in Myanmar at the Pyithu Hluttaw deputy speaker’s office. Foundation Hirondelle is a Swiss non-profit organisation founded in 1995 whose aim is to provide impartial information to populations faced with crisis.

During the meeting, they discussed the matter of cooperation works between the Myanmar Hluttaw and Foundation Hirondelle such as Hluttaw’s technical sector development and Hluttaw supporting staff to cooperate with classes and workshops for the media sector.

—Myanmar news agency

National verification process to be…

FROM PAGE-1

The staff from the Rakhine State Immigration and Population Department issued National Verification cards to over 2,600 people from Shwe Zar (North) (West) and (Middle) villagers in mid-October.

The Union Government arranged a diplomatic trip to Rakhine during which Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and vice chairman of the UEHRD committee for humanitarian aid, resettlement and development of Rakhine State visited the area to live there”, U Kyaw Htet, the town ship administrator of Thabeikkyin Township, Mandalay Region.

Only if a foreigner holds a certificate of recommendation from the Government of the Region will they be allowed to enter Mogok and Thabeikkyin Townships, U Aung Moe Oo said.

“Some gold mining companies had employed foreign experts and technicians, but being a restricted area, foreigners cannot go in and out of Thabeikkyin Township without getting permission. A committee was formed to check for any foreigners not to trespass the area to live there”, U Aung Moe Oo added.

Under the instruction of the Government of the Region, township administrators are required to be appointed as the group leader with the township head of the police station, head of the township labour, immigration and population and Thabeikkyin Township No. 2 mining industry in-charge as members.

“As for foreigners, they are to get permits to enter the restricted area. If found guilty of violating rules and regulations, legal actions will be taken against them under immigration law”, said U Nyi Nyi Lwin, the deputy head of the township’s labour, immigration and population department.

There had been 15 companies which employed foreign experts and professionals in the area, it was learnt.

Checks to be made concerning foreigners trespassing on gold mining sites

By Kyaw Htet

MEASURES are being taken to in the northern Pyin Oo Lwin district to ensure that unauthorised foreigners do not trespass onto gold mining sites, officials said yesterday.

“On-the-ground checks will be made concerning foreigners settling down in gold mining plots of gold mining companies without official stay permits”, said U Aung Moe Oo, the township administrator of Thabeikkyin Township, Mandalay Region.

—Myanmar news agency

Speaker U Win Myint presents cash for UEHRD

AN EVENT during which money was provided for the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State (UEHRD) by Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint was held in the guest room of the Pyithu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Speaker U Win Myint presented Ks6.3 million to the UEHRD as the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker’s donation and Ks8.7 million which was the collective donations of the daily allowance of 435 Hluttaw representatives, a total of Ks15 million.

The cash assistance was accepted by Dr Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Vice Chairperson of UEHRD. Dr Win Myat Aye in turn presented certificates of honour.

Together with the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat and officials from the office of Pyithu Hluttaw attended the event.

—Myanmar News Agency

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint presents cash assistance for UEHRD to Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye in Nay Pyi Taw on 26 October 2017. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint presents cash for UEHRD to Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye in Nay Pyi Taw on 26 October 2017. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Khun Myat holds talks with Senior Editorial of Foundation Hirondelle in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than hands over donated cash assistance for Rakhine resettlement to Dr Win Myat Aye. PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, who gave the donated cash.
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets UN Resident Coordinator

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received United Nations Resident Coordinator Ms. Renata Nicola Lok Dessallien at Bayint Naung reception hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed the cooperative processes between Myanmar and the UN, the status of Myanmar’s transitional stages and the UN’s unbiased support for Myanmar.—Myanmar News Agency

U Lwin Oo appointed as Ambassador to Bangladesh

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Lwin Oo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Nepal, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.—MNA

Thiri Pyanchi U Tun Nay Linn appointed as Ambassador to Nepal

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed Thiri Pyanchi U Tun Nay Linn, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Federative Republic of Brazil, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Nepal.—Myanmar News Agency

Anti-human trafficking action taken in Maungtaw, Rakhine State

OFFICERS and members of an anti-human trafficking unit in Maungtaw Township are performing anti-human trafficking activities in cooperation with respective security forces at the towns’ entrances and express water vehicles ports in Maungtaw and Buthidaung townships.

The No.1 anti-human trafficking police are carrying out activities of pamphlet distribution and conducting educational talks at the junctions, schools, IDP camps and villages. The specialised police unit is also linking with anti-human trafficking police from neighboring countries, said Inspector San Min from the No.1 anti-human trafficking police.

“As an activity of anti-human trafficking, information is inquired from the work places to the villages where violence happened, as traffickers can take advantage of victims in conflict areas by offering incentive money. Therefore, the elders and leaders of villages are contacted and educated not to let such kind of human trafficking happen”, said inspector San Min. There was one human trafficking case recorded in 2011, 11 cases in 2015, three cases in 2016 and two cases in 2017. Most of the victims are men who are being smuggled into Myanmar, and sometimes to Bangladesh and China.—Thant Zin Win/Naing Lin Kyi

Consensus reached on half of 21 points proposed by signatories to NCA

By Ye Khaung Nyunt

WITH discussion over the 21 points proposed by the signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), the meeting on reviewing the NCA between the Union Government and ethnic armed groups ended yesterday in Yangon.

“We mainly discussed weaknesses in implementing the NCA. We exchanged views on moving forward for peace while working between the political dialogue and the ceasefire. Out of the 21 points we discussed, the majority are agreed upon by both sides,” said U Zaw Htay, a representative of the Peace Commission.

“To overcome the challenges we face depends on the farsightedness of the leaders of both sides,” said Yebaw Than Gae, a representative from the signatories to the NCA.

“The Union Government and ethnic armed groups review Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. PHOTO: YE KHAUNG NYUNT

“The Government and ethnic armed groups have reached consensus on over half of the 21 points proposed by the ethnic armed groups, and exchanged views on the remaining points,” U Htun Htun Oo, the Union Attorney-General.

The outcomes of the meeting will be put forward to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting-JICM.”

Reconstruction of homes . . .

The Thittonenargwa village tract is a resettlement area where organised Mro ethnic villages of Khayuchaung, Myautkhaungtaung, Panchaung, Inachau Village (low) villages and 86 homes from the village tract will be constructed. Each plot will measure 40x60 feet.

The Chief Minister and party then donated cash to the Sayadaw of Ywama monastery and the pastor from the Church of Jesus Christ in Kyeinchaung village.—Naing Lin Kyi, Thant Zin Win

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From page-1

The Rakhine State Minister for Electric Power, Industry and Transport U Aung Kyaw Zan said that the Government is undertaking resettlement, humanitarian assistance and regional development. Every state and region will provide help to show the meaning of Union and how it manifests national unity.

Afterwards, the Region Chief Minister and party drove a ceremonial stake into the ground where homes will be constructed.

The Thittonenargwa village tract is a resettlement area where organised Mro ethnic villages of Khayuchaung, Myautkhaungtaung, Panchaung, Inachau Village (low) villages and 86 homes from the village tract will be constructed. Each plot will measure 40x60 feet.

The Chief Minister and party then donated cash to the Sayadaw of Ywama monastery and the pastor from the Church of Jesus Christ in Kyeinchaung village.—Naing Lin Kyi, Thant Zin Win
No Alternative But to Negotiate

By Khin Maung Oo

The Ministerial Meeting on Border Security and Law Enforcement Cooperation between the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Ministry of Home Affairs of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh was held on October 24. The meeting resulted in agreements to make bilateral cooperation between both of the Ministries of Home Affairs.

The agreements include upgrading cooperation in bringing about rule of law and security in the border areas, cooperating in fighting terrorism and opening border liaison offices in border areas, fighting illegal migration through the border areas and drug trafficking, and accepting systematically after careful scrutiny of those who fled Myanmar into Bangladesh in accord with rules and regulation. Much as there are many things left to be practically performed, we must welcome with open arms the attitude of cooperating through negotiations, which is an essentiality between friendly nations.

Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, appointed a special envoy to Myanmar to negotiate for finding ways for helping needy people scoured by extremist terrorists’ attacks, contributing Can $ 25 million, it was learnt. Though Canada is very far away from Myanmar, its contributions bring about the meaning of creating positive developments in the nation with long-lasting friendship. We warmly welcome this.

Simultaneously, Tatmadaw True News Information Team released the news that it would help humanitarian aids to be rightfully provided to needy people. But, Tatmadaw firmly believe that there may be risks of national security and interest behind the situation of needing humanitarian aids. Global communities should, in fact, assess just by negotiation as to whether Tatmadaw’s conception was true and reasonable. Yet, it was found that US took actions against Tatmadaw, in regard to Rakhine State Affair. Such an action will never result in any helps in dealing with Rakhine State Affair. What is needed to resolve the problem is to be well-convinced of actual situations of the region as well as to provide supports in every way, together with inter-negotiation.
Development of Myanmar Films World discussed

A ‘Discussion on the current difficulties to develop Myanmar Films World’ by the Myanmar Motion Picture Association under the arrangement of Amyotha Hluttaw’s Pledges, Guarantees and Undertakings Vetting Committee was held at Hall J of the Amyotha Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the discussion, the Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung gave a welcoming speech. U Zin Wyne, Chairman of the Myanmar Motion Picture Association and responsible personnel presented matters on Myanmar Films World followed by the questions of Hluttaw representatives.

Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khang Than, Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and hluttaw representatives attended the event. — Myanmar News Agency

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, 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

How can digital finance better serve Asia’s poor?

FROM PAGE 8

Mobile money has the big potential to improve the daily lives of the poor, as proved by the most successful story of M-Pesa in Kenya. Mobile money allows the poor to make low-cost, fast, safe, and easy transactions without going to physical branches, and encourages a cashless society: To promote mobile money for the poor, service providers need to justify the benefits advertised.

A 2017 report by business intelligence firm GSMA indicated that mobile adoption has been rising in Asia-Pacific. Mobile subscribers numbered 2.7 billion in 2016 and estimated reaching 3.1 billion by 2020 in the region, which is three quarters of the population.

The trend is led by the People’s Republic of China and India, but Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and the Philippines have also shown high a smartphone adoption ratio, over 50 per cent. This is justified by looking at poor households in the Philippines.

ADB staff members recently visited poor communities living in Kasiglahan, on the outskirts of Metro Manila. We spoke to a family that earns about PhP500-600 ($10-12) per day, working 10 to 15 days per month, and supporting three children.

The parents lack a bank account and don’t borrow informally, but have small savings in a box. Their living condition is among daily survival but they have a smartphone and a tablet, which the children use to complete their school homework.

Since they can’t afford to buy books, the kids study online because the community has a basic internet connection. They pay PhP7 per week to a neighbor to use internet. This suggests the huge potential of delivering digital financial services to the poor.

Now I’m wondering if digital finance is a pipe dream for the extremely poor, since their primary concern is daily survival. Maybe it isn’t. Given the high mobile penetration rate in some developing Asian countries, data connectivity can unlock digital financial services for those who have almost nothing.
Union Minister receives Literature Conference committee members, UN coordinator

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint received U Aung Soe Oo, Chairman of the Literature Conference 2017 organising committee and party at the guest room of the ministry yesterday.

Committee members announced at the meeting that the 2017 literature conference will open on 12 December. A panel discussion will be held at the Myanmar Convention Center in Yangon on 13, 14 and 15 December from 9am to 5pm, and representatives from 11 literary organisations and writers and groups will participate in the discussion. Results of the discussion will be assessed from the decision of attendees after submitting votes at the literature conference of 16 December. A book fair, art shows, puzzle contests, and literary talks will be held in front of Yangon City Hall starting at 4pm from 8 to 12 December to promote the literature conference.

Those who would like to attend the literature conference can contact the Literature Conference organising committee’s office at Yangon Book Plaza or call 09-425029559 or email sar_papyrilarkhan2017@gmail.com.

The Union Minister for Information also separately received Ms Renata Dessallien, the UN Resident Coordinator in Myanmar at the ministry yesterday at 2pm. During the meeting, matters on works implemented for development in Rakhine State and news to explain fully to all people about the development works were discussed.

—Myanmar News Agency ■

Vaccination given to abandoned cattle in Maungtaw

PREVENTION of infectious diseases to cattle was carried out in the surrounding villages of Pantawpyin camp, Maungtaw Township yesterday, according to the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department in Rakhine State.

Township veterinary teams gave medical care to seven cattle and 11 goats from a nearby village of Pantawpyin animal camp, four cattle and five goats from villages near the Khone-tine camp, and nine cattle and 14 goats from surrounding villages in Ngakhura camp - a total of 20 cattle and 39 goats from nearby villages of the three animal camps.

A total of 172 cattle and 476 goats are receiving medical treatment at the animal camps. Educational brochures were also distributed to local villagers.

—Myanmar News Agency ■

20% tourist increase expected in Mandalay

TOURISTS visiting Mandalay are expected to increase to about 400,000, over 20 per cent more than the previously forecast rate, according to U San Yu, assistant head of the department of hotels and tourism.

“According to the lists of previous months, an increase in tourists is being seen more this year than last year. Therefore, the forecast rate, over a 20 per cent increase, is sure at the end of the year. Almost every foreign tourist visits Mandalay as it is a must-visit culture zone in Myanmar,” U San Yu added.

A total of 385,031 tourists visited Mandalay in 2016. During the months of January to August of this year, a total of 301,803 tourists already visited Mandalay. Therefore, the forecasted number of over 400,000 are sure to visit this year in the remaining four months of this year. September to December are the high tourist seasons.

“Visitors from China, France, America, China and Thailand also visited”, said an official from the department of immigration and national registration. In the Mandalay Region, there are 198 hotels with 8,111 rooms. Foreign tourists mostly visited downtown Mandalay, Amarapura, Inwa, Mingyin and Bagan, NyaungU.

According to the lists, a total 385,031 tourists visited Mandalay in 2016 with the following monthly rates -- 40,533 in January, 39,150 in February, 38,884 in March, 20,262 in April, 24,089 in May, 17,868 in June, 23,746 in July, 26,228 in August, 23,131 in September, 22,957 in October, 52,373 in November and 47,945 in December.

The number of tourists who visited in January was 53,051 – 55,482 in February, 45,592 in March, 27,496 in April, 27,076 in May, 27,365 in June, 32,432 in July and 33,309 in August are the monthly lists for this year, 2017.

—Aung Thant Khaing ■

Yangon-bound MNA flight makes emergency landing

FLIGHT MNA UB 206, bound for Yangon from Sittway at 7:15 pm yesterday, made an emergency landing at Sittway airport at 7:55 pm due to airflow into the pilot’s cabin. No one onboard was harmed, according to airport authorities.

After necessary repairs, the airplane left for Yangon at 9 pm, according to the authorities. Out of 97 local and outbound passengers including the pilot, 34 travelers declined to proceed to Yangon of their own accord, instead staying at the Sittway airport.

—Tin Tun (IPRD) ■

A veterinary gives medical care to a goat. PHOTO: MNA

Tourists visit Kuthodaw Pagoda in Mandalay. PHOTO: MNA

Tourists visiting Mandalay are expected to increase to about 400,000, over 20 per cent more than the previous forecast rate, according to U San Yu, assistant head of the department of hotels and tourism. According to the lists, a total 385,031 tourists visited Mandalay in 2016 with the following monthly rates -- 40,533 in January, 39,150 in February, 38,884 in March, 20,262 in April, 24,089 in May, 17,868 in June, 23,746 in July, 26,228 in August, 23,131 in September, 22,957 in October, 52,373 in November and 47,945 in December. The number of tourists who visited in January was 53,051 – 55,482 in February, 45,592 in March, 27,496 in April, 27,076 in May, 27,365 in June, 32,432 in July and 33,309 in August are the monthly lists for this year, 2017. —Aung Thant Khaing ■
Israel willing to resort to military action to stop Iran acquiring nuclear weapons: minister

TOKYO — Israel is willing to resort to military action to stop Iran acquiring nuclear weapons, Intelligence Minister Katz said on Thursday in Tokyo. "There are changes that can be made (to the agreement) to ensure that they will never have the ability to have a nuclear weapon."

Intelligence Minister Israel Katz said in an interview in Tokyo. "There are changes that can be made (to the agreement) to ensure that they will never have the ability to have a nuclear weapon."

Israel has taken unilateral action in the past without the consent of its major ally, the United States, including air strikes on a suspected nuclear reactor in Syria in 2007 and in Iraq in 1981. A strike against Iran, however, would be a risky venture with the potential to provoke a counter-strike and roil financial markets.

An Israeli threat of military strikes could, nonetheless, galvanize support in the United States for toughening up the nuclear agreement but it could also backfire by encouraging hardliners in Iran and widening a rift between Washington and European allies.

So far, none of the other signatories to the deal — Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China, Iran and the European Union — has cited serious concerns, leaving the United States isolated.

Japan relies on the US military to help defend it against threats from North Korea and elsewhere. Tokyo's diplomatic strategy in the Middle East, where it buys almost all its oil, is to maintain friendly relations with all countries, including Iran.

"I asked the Japanese government to support steps led by President Trump to change the nuclear agreement," said Katz, who is a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing Likud party. "The question of whether Japanese companies will begin to work in Iran or not is a very important question."

Katz's visit to Tokyo comes ahead of a planned trip by Trump from 5 November for a summit with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Officials at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs were not immediately available to comment.

Israel, Katz said, wants the nuclear agreement to be revised to remove an expiration date, and to impose tighter conditions to stop Tehran from developing new centrifuges used to make weapons-grade nuclear material.

He also urged sanctions to stop Iran from establishing Syria as a military base to launch attacks on Israel and action to put a halt to Tehran's development of ballistic missiles.

"We will not allow Iran to transform Syria into a forward base for sea harbours, air bases and Shia militias," he said. "We will act together with the United States and other countries in the world until they stop the ballistic missiles that threaten Israel."

The US House of Representatives on Wednesday backed new sanctions on Lebanon's Iranian-backed Hezbollah militia.—Reuters

Iraqi PM Abadi demands Kurds cancel secession bid as price for talks

BAGHDAD — Iraq's prime minister demanded on Thursday that Kurds declare their independence referendum void, rejecting the Kurdish autonomous region's offer to suspend its independence push to resolve a crisis through talks.

"We won't accept anything but its cancellation and the respect of the Constitution," Haider al-Abadi said in a statement during a visit to Tehran.

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) proposed on Wednesday an immediate ceasefire, a suspension of the referendum result and "starting an open dialogue with the federal government based on the Iraqi Constitution".

The Kurds have been swiftly making concessions to Baghdad since last week and in Iraq in 2007. Abadi has sent his forces to seize all Kurdish-held territory outside of three autonomous provinces.

A startlingly rapid advance by government troops transformed the balance of power in northern Iraq within a matter of days and has wrecked decades-old dreams of Kurdish independence that had come to a head last month with a referendum on secession.

Baghdad has always considered the Kurdish secession referendum illegal. Abadi's visit to Iran on Thursday follows a trip to Turkey on Wednesday, a diplomatic offensive that has shored up support from Iraq's neighbours for his hard line.

Turkey's foreign minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Thursday the Kurdish offer to suspend the push for independence was a step in the right direction but did not go far enough.

Abadi has ordered his army to recapture all disputed territory and has demanded central control of Iraq's border crossings with Turkey, including the oil export pipeline hub at Fish-Khabur, located just inside the Kurdish autonomous region.—Reuters

Engagement

We are pleased to announce the engagement of

Dr Yinn Mar Myo Aung
M.B.,B.S (Ygn),
DCH, Dip Derm, FRACGP (Australia),
daughter of U Myo Aung (Deputy Director; Advisor (Rtd),
Myanmar Textile Industry)
and Daw Betty Nyunt (General Manager (Rtd), MKM Co.,Ltd,
Myanmar Textile Industry)
of Thanlwin Road, Kamayut Township, Yangon

to

Dr Banyar Than Naing
M.B.,B.S (Ygn),
M.D, PhD (Nippon Medical School, Japan),
son of U Than Naing (Deputy Director General (Rtd), Dept. of
Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration ) and Daw Khin Mu Mu
(Chief Research Officer (Rtd), Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise)
of Sizone Street, Sanchaung Township, Yangon

in the presence of both parents and relatives on the 20th of October, 2017.

Parents from both sides and
Dr Banyar Than Naing, Dr Yinn Mar Myo Aung

The Global New Light of Myanmar
27 October 2017
11

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (R) listens to Transportation and Intelligence Minister Yisrael Katz during the weekly cabinet meeting at his Jerusalem office September 26, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS
International crews performing flights during Russian-Indian drills for first time

VLADIVOSTOK — For the first time in the history of Russia’s aerospace forces, Russian and Indian pilots perform flights in mixed international crews during the Indra-2017 military exercises in Russia’s Far Eastern Primorye Territory, spokesman for the Russian Pacific Navy Nikolai Vokresensky said on Thursday.

“For the first time in the history of the Russian aerospace forces, mixed international crews, with Indian second pilots, perform flights onboard Russian aircraft at the Central Ulgovaya airfield near Vladivostok as part of the Russian-Indian multi-service force drills Indra-2017. All foreign pilots have experience of piloting similar aircraft used by the Indian air force,” he said.

Mixed crew use Su-30M2 and An-26 planes, and Mi-8AMTSh helicopters. About ten joint crews have already performed reconnaissance flights, took part in the landing of tactical airborne force to Sergeyevsky range and hit targets simulating the maneuver enemy’s weapon emplacements.

“Today, international crew acted in the interest of the Russian Pacific Fleet’s and Indian Navy’s warships drilling their skills in the Peter the Great Bay,” Vokresensky said.

This year, the Russian-Indian maneuvers will for the first time be held in the multi-service force format. Instead of the drills Indra Navy-2016, Avis Indra-2016 and Indra-2016 held last year, maneuvers with the participation of three military branches will be held this year with the involvement of the Pacific Fleet and also aviation and land troops units of Russia’s Eastern Military District.—Tass

UK government faces legal challenge to its alliance with N Irish party

LONDON — A legal challenge began in a London court on Thursday against the deal between Britain’s ruling Conservatives and a Northern Ireland party that allowed the government to cobble together a parliamentary majority in June.

After losing their majority in a disastrous snap election on 8 June, Prime Minister Theresa May’s Conservatives secured support from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) in return for a pledge to spend an extra 1 billion pounds in Northern Ireland. The crowdfunding legal challenge, brought by a Northern Irish citizen, is based on the argument that the deal was corrupt because it amounted to using public money to buy votes.

“We say the Conservative Party purchased the political support of the DUP for the sum of 1 billion pounds,” Dominic Chambers, a lawyer representing the challenger, told the High Court.

The government rejects the argument and was due to present its side later in the hearing.

The challenge was launched by Ciaran McClean, a mental health worker and Green Party member, who raised 92,000 pounds ($121,600) on a crowdfunding website.

McClean wrote on his fundraising page that he was horrified by the Conservative-DUP deal.

“It’s straight bribery — money for votes,” he wrote. McClean wrote that the agreement violated Northern Ireland’s 1998 Good Friday peace agreement which requires the UK government to be impartial between unionists who want the province to remain part of the UK and republicans who aspire to become part of Ireland.

Northern Ireland’s semi-autonomous institutions have been paralyzed since January because of the collapse of a power-sharing agreement between the DUP and Sinn Fein, the largest republican party.

May, who replaced David Cameron as prime minister after the Brexit referendum in June 2016, inherited a narrow parliamentary majority from him. In April 2017, with opinion polls suggesting she had a double-digit lead over the opposition Labour Party, she called a snap election, hoping to increase her majority.

—Reuters

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—Ong Minn U -Advocate May Phyo Kin (H.G.P)

For, Integre Holdings Pte Ltd.

Myanmar Global Law Firm

Ph:09443220023

Dated: 27th October 2017

Mixed crew use Su-30M2 and An-26 planes, and Mi-8AMTSh helicopters. PHOTO: TASS
Thousands turn out to see lavish funeral of Thailand’s late king

BANGKOK — Thousands of people turned out in Bangkok to watch the funeral procession of Thailand’s late King Bhumibol Adulyadej on Thursday, with buildings draped in yellow marigolds and mourners lining the streets on the eve of his cremation.

Mourners dressed in black slept overnight on thin plastic mats on pavements near the Grand Palace in the Thai capital in order to secure a good view of the procession, which was expected to begin at 7 am (1200 GMT).

The king’s cremation will feature ancient rites and a series of processions winding from the Grand Palace in Bangkok’s historic quarter to the 50-metre (165-feet) high Royal Crematorium that has been erected in a square near the palace. His body will be pulled from the Grand Palace to the cremation site on a golden chariot. A sum of $80 million has been set aside for the funeral, the likes of which has never been seen in Thailand, officials in preparations have said.

King Bhumibol, also known as King Rama IX, died last October aged 88 after ruling for seven decades. He played a pivotal role in maintaining stability during years of political upheaval and rapid development.

Piyarat Potsopho, 38, said she had been waiting two days for the king’s funeral procession since Wednesday night. “I was very fortunate to have been born under the reign of King Rama IX,” she said.

Another Bangkok resident, Suchinda Samparp, 67, said: “It’s so hard to describe the dedication I’ve seen, how people have come out to help each other and how the late king has inspired this.”

Analysts say the king’s death has left a large vacuum in the Thai psyche. Thailand has observed a year of mourning for King Bhumibol and radio and television stations have played songs dedicated to the monarch almost non-stop since his death. The songs urge Thais to follow in “father’s footsteps”.

King Bhumibol is often referred to as “father” by Thais and is credited with reviving the popularity of the monarchy in Thailand.

Days of heavy rain failed to deter mourners, many of whom pitched tents in order to gain the best access to the funeral.

Many businesses around the Southeast Asian nation were shut, while Bangkok’s old quarters were draped in floral garlands made of marigolds. Government buildings placed potted yellow marigolds around portraits of the late king.

King Bhumibol was born on a Monday, a day which Thais associate with the colour yellow. Thai Buddhists traditionally keep the bodies of their dead for seven days before a cremation. Funerals of Thai royals, however, have historically taken place months after death.—Reuters

Indonesia fireworks factory explosions kill 47, injure dozens — police

KOSAMBI, Indonesia — Two explosions and a fire at a fireworks factory in the western outskirts of Indonesia’s capital killed 47 people and injured dozens on Thursday, police said, and the death toll was expected to rise.

Thick plumes of dark smoke billowed from a factory warehouse in the Tangerang district of Jakarta, an industrial and manufacturing hub on the island of Java, TV broadcasts showed.

Hours later the burn-out factory was still smouldering and there was a strong smell of burning plastic and chemicals.

Witnesses said there were two explosions, one at around 10 am (0300 GMT) and another last night. Both of which could be heard miles away, media reports said.

A grisly video of the scene inside the warehouse, which was widely shared on social media, showed onlookers counting badly charred bodies.

“From the manifest we obtained, there were 103 workers. Of those 103 workers ... there were 46 who were injured,” Jakarta police spokesman Argo Yuwono told Metro Television. “We also found some who had died. There are 47 bodies.”

An official had earlier put the death toll at 30. “We saw 10 people on the manifest who were not accounted for may have left with light injuries or not been working at the time of the blasts,” the officer said.

The online video and media images of the PT Panca Buana Cahaya Sukses warehouse showed smouldering ash and debris, with the roof missing in some parts.

A search and rescue official, Deden Nurjaman, said bodies were still inside and he expected the death toll to climb.”People were burned so badly you couldn’t see their faces... It was really bad,” said Nurjaman. “With rules poorly enforced. There have been a series of major fires this year, including one that engulfed one of Jakarta’s main markets.

At the scene of Thursday’s disaster, the grass was scorched in an area around 10 metres from the site.—Reuters

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Dated 27th October 2017
kmna@kcyangon.com
George Clooney rebukes racism in backdrop of thriller ‘Suburbicon’

LOS ANGELES — As one of Hollywood’s most famous celebrities, George Clooney is not afraid to use his platform to speak up on issues close to him, but do not expect the actor to enter the political arena anytime soon.

“I’ve always been around and involved in politics and believe that we all have to participate one way or another. But no, I’m not going to get into it,” Clooney told Reuters.

“I don’t have to answer to any one person. I don’t have to make compromises, I can point the finger at whomever I think needs to be pointed out,” he added.

In his latest film “Suburbicon,” Clooney directs a darkly humorous 1950s crime tale in which he points the finger squarely at the racial tensions in present-day America with a story about a black family moving into an affluent white suburban neighbourhood as the backdrop.

“I think we should constantly be talking about whether or not building walls and scapegoating of minorities is how we want to be represented,” Clooney said.

LOS ANGELES — The end of the world is nigh, and Marvel’s brawny superhero Thor finds himself hammerless and held hostage on a kitsch futuristic planet light years away from his home, in a sequel that revamps the slightly dim-witted Norse god with irreverent humour.

“Thor: Ragnarok,” the third installment of Marvel’s standalone “Thor” film franchise, sees Chris Hemsworth reprise his role as the superhero and places Thor well outside of his comfort zone, relying on others to help him save the world.

“I was a bit sick of the Thor I’d created,” Chris Hemsworth told Reuters.

“I think that I have an obligation to change it up, you know, and give people something different, something new,” he added.

“Ragnarok,” in international theatres this week and on Nov. 3 in North America, opens with Thor hanging from a dungeon ceiling in a cave talking to a skeleton, and as things only get more bizarre, Hemsworth showcases his comedic timing with off-the-cuffs jokes.

“He’s literally playing himself,” director Taika Waititi said. “You look at Chris, he looks like Thor weirdly, and he’s funny, charming, beautiful guy, lovely guy and loves hammers ... he is that character.”

After reuniting with his mischievous and devious brother Loki, Thor discovers they have a sister, the formidable Hela (Cate Blanchett), who has her eyes on destroying his celestial home of Asgard.

Thor loses his magic power-wielding hammer and is cast away by his sister to an unknown futuristic planet and held hostage by an eccentric Grandmaster (Jeff Goldblum), forced to fight his fellow Avenger, the Hulk. “Ragnarok,” part of Walt Disney Co’s Marvel film franchise, is by far the biggest production for New Zealand director Waititi, who previously wrote and directed small, independent fare such as 2010’s “Boy” and 2016’s “Hunt For the Wilderpeople.”

But the comedy in “Ragnarok” is very much a trademark of Waititi, who likes to find comedy often by placing unlikely characters in mundane settings, such as vampires sharing an apartment in 2014’s cult hit “What We Do in the Shadows.” Waititi said in fact that the vampire mockumentary may be remade into an American TV series.—Reuters

Thor finds his funny side as apocalypse nears in ‘Ragnarok’

US rapper Eminem wins copyright case against NZ political ads

SYDNEY — A New Zealand political party has been ordered to pay more than $400,000 to US rapper Eminem for using music similar to his 2002 hit “Lose Yourself” in a television commercial to help win a national election. The track, played during the National Party’s successful 2014 election campaign and titled “Eminem Esque,” was found by a New Zealand court to have “substantially copied” Lose Yourself.

The National Party used the song 186 times during the campaign before taking the ad off the air, the court said.

“This decision is a warning to sound-alike music producers and their clients everywhere,” Adam Simpson, director of Simpsons Solicitors, who acted for Eminem’s music company, Eight Mile Style, said in a statement. The National Party said the music was licensed with one of New Zealand’s main industry copyright bodies, the Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society (AMCOS).

“Being licensed and available for purchase, and having taken advice from our suppliers, the party believed the purchase was legal,” National Party President Peter Goodfellow said in a statement.

“The party is now considering the implications of the judgment and the next steps. We already have a claim against the suppliers and licensors of the track.”—Reuters

LOST ANGELES — The end of the world is nigh, and Marvel’s brawny superhero Thor finds himself hammerless and held hostage on a kitsch futuristic planet light years away from his home, in a sequel that revamps the slightly dim-witted Norse god with irreverent humour.

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“Thor: Ragnarok,” the third installment of Marvel’s standalone “Thor” film franchise, sees Chris Hemsworth reprise his role as the superhero and places Thor well outside of his comfort zone, relying on others to help him save the world.

“I was a bit sick of the Thor I’d created,” Chris Hemsworth told Reuters.

“I think that I have an obligation to change it up, you know, and give people something different, something new,” he added.

“Ragnarok,” in international theatres this week and on Nov. 3 in North America, opens with Thor hanging from a dungeon ceiling in a cave talking to a skeleton, and as things only get more bizarre, Hemsworth showcases his comedic timing with off-the-cuffs jokes.

“He’s literally playing himself,” director Taika Waititi said. “You look at Chris, he looks like Thor weirdly, and he’s funny, charming, beautiful guy, lovely guy and loves hammers ... he is that character.”

After reuniting with his mischievous and devious brother Loki, Thor discovers they have a sister, the formidable Hela (Cate Blanchett), who has her eyes on destroying his celestial home of Asgard.

Thor loses his magic power-wielding hammer and is cast away by his sister to an unknown futuristic planet and held hostage by an eccentric Grandmaster (Jeff Goldblum), forced to fight his fellow Avenger, the Hulk. “Ragnarok,” part of Walt Disney Co’s Marvel film franchise, is by far the biggest production for New Zealand director Waititi, who previously wrote and directed small, independent fare such as 2010’s “Boy” and 2016’s “Hunt For the Wilderpeople.”

But the comedy in “Ragnarok” is very much a trademark of Waititi, who likes to find comedy often by placing unlikely characters in mundane settings, such as vampires sharing an apartment in 2014’s cult hit “What We Do in the Shadows.” Waititi said in fact that the vampire mockumentary may be remade into an American TV series.—Reuters
Butter shortfall leaves French croissants half-baked

PARIS — France is running short of butter, with some supermarket shelves sitting empty and the price of croissants on the rise, creating a headache for the government just as it tries to make the food chain fairer for farmers.

The shortage is the result of falling milk production and rising butter demand globally, with some halting deliveries and considering passing higher costs onto retailers and shoppers. Makers of baked goods like croissants, in which butter makes up around a quarter of the content, have been grappling with a doubling of butter prices in the past year to record levels above 6 euros ($7.65) a kilo.

Speaking in his traditional bakery in Paris, Samir Kichou said he had not yet increased his prices because of extra butter costs but may have to soon.

"Because the year-end holidays are approaching, with Christmas preparations and particularly the 'Galette des Rois' cake which needs a lot of butter, if there is not a significant decline, we will be forced to pass on the price rise," he said.

A customer shops in front of empty shelves in the butter section, due to a drop in milk production, at a supermarket in Nice, France on 23 October, 2017. — Reuters

Note with Einstein's theory on life auctioned for $1.3 million

JERUSALEM — Strapped for cash in a Tokyo hotel, Albert Einstein wrote his take on life on a note and handed it to the bellboy instead of a tip. The physicist's formula for happy living fetched $1.3 million ($990,424) on Tuesday, a Jerusalem auction house said.

In 1922, Einstein was en route to Japan when the announcement came he would be awarded the 1921 Nobel prize in physics, Winner's Auctions and Exhibitions said.

Upon his arrival in Tokyo, he held up in his hotel room trying to put his thoughts to paper.

When an attendant came to his room to make a delivery, Einstein found himself without any money for a tip. Instead, he handed him a signed note with one sentence, written in German: "A calm and humble life will bring more happiness than the pursuit of success and the constant restlessness that comes with it." According to the auction house, Einstein advised the bellboy to keep the note, saying that some day its value will surpass the amount of a standard tip. Almost a 100 years later, Einstein was proven right after the bellboy’s nephew contacted the auction house to put the note up for sale. The identity of the online buyer has not been revealed.

— Reuters

US Halloween princesses make way for Wonder Woman, pink 'pussyhats'

NEW YORK — This Halloween, expect to open the door to more pink pussyhats and fewer princesses.

Months after the historic women’s march on Washington and in the midst of the “#MeToo” sexual harassment outcry, Halloween 2017 is becoming yet another platform in the United States for women and girls to show strength.

This year’s most-searched Halloween costume is Wonder Woman, according to Google’s Frightgeist search tool.

Star Wars heroine Rey, the self-reliant young woman who shines as a survivor against all odds, is among the film series’ characters who rank in the top 10 children’s costumes for 2017, according to the National Retail Federation.

And, makers of homemade costumes this year are getting online tips for re-purposing pink “pussyhats.” They were born by many of the hundreds of thousands of women who took part in marches in Washington and other US cities on 21 January, the day after Donald Trump’s inauguration as president, to denounce his years-ago boast about grabbing women’s genitals.

“The year or more of sexual harassment scandals has shifted people’s thinking about what they want to become on Halloween,” said Barnard College Psychology Professor Tovah Klein.

“Costumes empower children — as in ‘I can be strong, I can be invincible, I can fight for justice.’ And right now, with Wonder Woman and other characters, girls are embracing this strong side,” Klein said.

Raising her light saber, 9-year-old Abby of Maplewood, New Jersey, demonstrated her warrior stance dressed as Rey, a steel-colored cloth crossed over her chest, with pants to match her tunic.

“I feel more brave when I’m Rey,” said Abby, a fourth-grader who has celebrated Halloween past by dressing up as princesses.

“I like Rey more than princesses. She’s very tough. She’s fighting. She’s helping a lot of other people survive,” said Abby, whose parents asked that her last name be withheld for privacy.

More than 179 million people in the United States will celebrate Halloween 2017, spending a record high of $9.1 billion, with the largest outlay on costumes, the retail federation said.

To be sure, feminist-fueled Halloween costumes are nothing new. But this year, they carry a special resonance.

Trump’s brag about assaulting women, which he later called “locker room talk,” was made public when a 2005 video surfaced during his 2016 presidential campaign. A year later, sexual abuse allegations against movie mogul Harvey Weinstein sparked the “#MeToo” movement. Weinstein has denied having non-consensual sex with anyone.

“Strong feminist ideals, girls power, political movements” are pushing Wonder Woman to the top costume purchase for girls, said AnnaMarie McConnell, vice president of product and brand development at Ricky’s NYC, a beauty supply store that features Halloween costumes.

In Sheridan, Wyoming, Jennie Way said her daughter Marley, 4, chose to dress up as Wonder Woman and daughter Vivian, 8, as Robin, a sidekick to Bat Girl, portrayed by their grandmother Deb Johnson.

“It’s about how we picture ourselves and how we picture other women,” said Way, 41, a married nursing student.

“If we see ourselves as strong, and if we see our mothers and our friends as strong enough to help us and to help carry us, then that makes the conversation move forward,” she said. — Reuters
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Leipzig, who had Naby Keita sent off in the 54th minute for a second booking, should have scored during a strong first-half performance.

Emil Forsberg wove his way into the Bayern box but keeper Sven Ulreich did well to save in the 24th minute, and another similar run should have earned him a penalty when Arturo Vidal clipped the Swede’s legs. But they got their spot-kick in the 68th minute when Yussuf Poulsen was brought down by Jerome Boateng. — Reuters

In the opening match of the 2017 AFF Futsal Championship, Myanmar earned a big win over Brunei by a score of 13-0 in Group A competition yesterday, and showed the crowd at Phu Tho Stadium in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam that they came to play.

The win for Myanmar is crucial to their hopes of advancing to the semi-finals, and in the process qualifying for the Asian Futsal Championship.

Myanmar attacked relentlessly from the start, pressing their opponents at every opportunity. Even though Brunei defended to the best of their ability, they could not stop their opponents, allowing the first goal in the third minute of play with a solid strike from Pyae Phyo Maung.

Myanmar’s Sai Pyone Aung also created two quick strikes at the 7-minute mark. By the break, Brunei was trailing by eight goals. Myanmar’s other goals were netted by Naing Ye Kyaw at 27 and 29 minutes, Aung Aung at 16 and 38 minutes, Hlaing Min Tun at the 10-minute mark, Aung Zin Oo at 20 minutes and Kyaw Kyaw Tun at the 36-minute mark. After the opening goal, Phyo Maung added three more goals at the 14, 15 and 28 minutes.

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Late goals by Cambodia lead to Myanmar defeat

IN a qualifier of 2018 AFC U19 Championship, Myanmar lost to host Cambodia 2-3 due to last-minute goals from Cambodian strikers at the national Olympic Stadium in Cambodia yesterday.

Myanmar lined up with keeper Htet Wai Yan Moe, Than Htike Zin, Captain Soe Moe Kyaw, Si Thu Moe Khant, Lwin Moe Aung, Win Naing Tun, Myat Kaung Khant, Hein Htet Aung, Pyae Sone Naing, Naing Ko Ko and Aung Wunna Soe.

Myanmar dominated the first half and scored the opener in the 33rd minute when forward Hein Htet Aung scored off a goalmouth scramble.

Myanmar’s Lwin Moe Aung scored in the 35th minute to claim his second goal of the qualifiers.

The Cambodians were much better in the second half, reducing the deficit in the 59th minute courtesy of forward Sin Kakada, who floated in a free kick from just outside the box to leave keeper Htet Wai Yan Soe with no chance at making a save.

Cambodia star Kakada then repeated his feat in the 90th minute, scoring his second goal of the match.

With three minutes of time added, striker San Kimheng tapped in a close-range shot for the winning goal for Cambodia, with the match ending soon after the goal.

The loss caused much consternation for the Myanmar crowd, upset for their team to have lost after dominating the first half with solid ball possession.

Players from Cambodia and Myanmar vie for the ball in yesterday’s match at the national Olympic Stadium in Cambodia. PHOTO:AFC

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