State Counsellor receives BIMSTEC Secretary-General

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Mr. M. Shahidul Islam, the Secretary-General of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Permanent Secretariat based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, at 11:20 am yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. During the meeting, they discussed matters related to current and future cooperation between Myanmar and BIMSTEC. Also present on the occasion was Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin.—Myanmar News Agency

Mawlawi Federation urges people without ID to get NV card

THOSE who do not have any identification that shows proof of residence in Myanmar are being urged by the All Myanmar Mawlawi Federation (Central) in a notification dated 27 November 2017 to obtain a National Verification Card.

The notification states that all those who are living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar should be registered using a form (1) book according to the Registration Act of 1949 for all who reside in Union of Myanmar, and the Registration Act of 1951. Those who have registered in form (1) book, including their children and offspring, are being issued with either a form (2) identity card, a form (3) temporary identity card, a national registration card after 10 years, a national verification card after 18 years, guest national card and guest national verification card issued according to the rules and regulations regarding guest nationals, document for permission to become a citizen and verification document to become a citizen.
AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker receives IBAHRI’s director

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than received Director of International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) Mr. Phillip Tahmindjis and party yesterday afternoon at Amyotha Hluttaw Meeting Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they friendly and openly discussed matters relating Hluttaw legislation. Present at the meeting were Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and officials from Amyotha Hluttaw Office. —Myanmar News Agency

Data on trees and plants to be published

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Deputy Speaker receives Chargé d’Affaires of British Embassy in Myanmar

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung received Chargé d’Affaires of British Embassy, Deputy Head of Mission in Myanmar Mr. David Hall and party at Amyotha Hluttaw J Hall yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting matters relating to promotion of bilateral friendly relations in the interest of the two countries were discussed. —Myanmar News Agency

Campaign for malaria-free Myanmar in 2030 under way

OUTBREAKS of malaria in Myanmar have decreased, and the campaign for a malaria-free Myanmar in 2030 is under way, according to a meeting for the one-week-long malaria prevention campaign held under the sponsorship of Asia-Pacific Malaria Elimination Network.

“The campaign for a malaria-free Myanmar in 2030 is under implementation. Presently, rate of the outbreak of malaria cases in Myanmar was reduced by 85 per cent of that of 2012. In the past, there were nearly 600,000 patients suffering from malaria. According to the statistics of the previous year, the rate of outbreaks of malaria was found to have been reduced markedly. Only two out of every 1,000 people now suffer from the illness. According to the statistics of the National Malaria Elimination Project, the outbreak rate is one in one thousand and NMEP and its partner organisations, two in one thousand. The mortality rate is 0.04 per cent in 0.1 million people. In figures, there were 110,000 malaria patients in the whole country. Out of them, only 21 died. We will reduce the outbreak rate by 85 per cent and mortality rate by 95 per cent so that the country will be totally free from malaria cases in 2030”, said Dr. Aung Thi, the National Malaria Elimination Project manager. “For now, all the townships are designated as places likely to be affected by the malaria, so that malaria can be uprooted. But, Kachin and Rakhine states and Sagaing Region are the most-affected regions, whereas the remaining regions including Nay Pyi Taw can be designated as malaria-free zones in 2020. Later on, the places where malaria cases broke out will be designated as the focal zone and carried out to be totally free from the diseases in 2030”, he added.

The meeting for the one-week-long malaria prevention campaign will be held from 4 to 8 December. On 6 December there will be a senior-level officials’ meeting, and on 7 December there will be a meeting of Directors-General on Health, in preparation for the Greater Meikong Sub-regions Health Ministers’ Meeting. On 8 December there will be the GMS Health Ministers’ Meeting.

The meetings will be participated in discussions by Health Ministers and high-ranking officials from over 30 countries of the Asia-Pacific Region and partner countries. The results of the discussion will be released after the GMS Health Ministers’ Meeting, it was learnt.

“The meeting was arranged to be held in Myanmar to make people more convinced of malaria. The five-day-long meeting will be attended by 30 countries in Asia-Pacific Region in the World Health Assembly to be held in May 2018, where all the ministers will attend, it is designated for all Health Ministers of GMS countries to sign the Declaration,” Dr. Aung Thi explained. Dr Aye Yu Soe of the Three Millennium Development Goal Fund, who attended the meeting, said, “Malaria was a common illness in Myanmar, and now the rate of outbreaks of the disease has remarkably decreased. In 2016, there were only 0.1 million patients in the country left. It is designated as the malaria-free Myanmar in 2030, in all countries including Myanmar. Rural health volunteers have been trained to give treatment to patients in villages around the clock. They all had been given equipment for testing blood for malaria examination. If a patient suspected of malaria illness is found, the said volunteer health staff will make the blood test and will give treatment promptly right after the patient is found. The drugs will be given out free of charge. This is the successful result.” —Shin Min/My Phyo

Dr. Aung Thi delivers the speech at the meeting for the one-week-long malaria prevention campaign. —PHOTO: KYAW YE SWE
Vice President U Myint Swe receives Secretary-General of BIMSTEC

VICE President U Myint Swe received the delegation led by H.E Mr Shahidul Islam, Secretary-General of BIMSTEC, at 3 pm yesterday at the diplomatic lounge of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

In the meeting, views on situations of cooperation between Myanmar and BIMSTEC, prospects to be cooperated in future and situations of cooperation among 7 BIMSTEC countries in the sectors of power and agriculture with Myanmar participating as the leading country were exchanged. This is the first-ever friendship visit to Myanmar of H.E Mr Shahidul Islam, after taking the post of the Secretary-General of BIMSTEC in September 2017, it was learnt. Present at the meeting were U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation, Major-General Aung Soe, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs, Dr Tun Naing, Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy, Dr Tin Htut, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and responsible officials.—Myanmar News Agency

VP U Henry Van Thio attends Central Committee for Myanmar SEZ meeting

THE Central Committee for Myanmar Special Economic Zones (SEZs) coordination meeting 2/2017 was held yesterday morning at the President’s Office in Nay Pyi Taw, where Vice President U Henry Van Thio, the Chairman of the Myanmar SEZ Central Committee, attended and delivered a speech.

In the meeting, the Vice President said during the incumbent government period, the SEZ Central Committee was formed on 12 August 2016 and the first meeting of the central committee was held on 9 February 2017. The present meeting is called to study the work conducted, progress made after the first meeting and to discuss together on what needs to be done.

“It is now 1 year and 8 months since the new government took up responsibility. Everyone knew that the ministries are doing what they can in their respective sectors for the country’s economic development. But with the exception of the tourism sector, there is a need to show identifiable progress in the economic sector” the Vice President said.

“The SEZ management committee had been formed for more than a year by now and there had been sufficient time to study the works so all need to strive energetically towards development”.

The Vice President added of his trust that the country’s economic development will be obvious with the development of SEZs.

With regards to the SEZs, the State Counsellor had said that the SEZ works are important for the country and there is a need to discuss and coordinate to find the best solutions for the success of the SEZ works. The views and opinions of the local people need to be stressed and the State Counsellor had guided on prioritising job opportunities.

“SEZs are to be implemented according the 12 economic policies laid down by the country. Enacted SEZ Law and rules need to be followed. The Thilawa SEZ is picking up momentum and moving forward. Emphasis must now be placed on starting the Kyaukpyu and Dawei SEZs that haven’t started yet”, the State Counsellor said.

In making an effort to restart the initial projects of Dawei SEZ, once the upgrading of the two-way road is completed, it will be a significant development for not only the zone but also for travel business in Taninthayi Region as well. It will also support the remaining projects and would raise the interest of the investors.

Myanmar’s equity ratio in the Kyaukpyu zone deep sea port project and industrial park project are being discussed with the CITIC Group Corporation, the state-owned investment company of the People’s Republic of China. In conducting SEZ works, the short term aim is to provide job opportunities for local nationals and work must be conducted systematically. Time is to be valued and progress need to be achieved in the shortest possible time. SEZ works involves international dealing and must be managed smoothly and systematically, said the Vice President.

At the meeting, Myanmar SEZ Central Committee Vice Chairman Union Minister U Kyaw Tin Swe explained the importance of SEZs to Myanmar economic development.

“It is especially an important work for providing job opportunities for local people and to have economic and contact with other countries. As the work of SEZ is beneficial for the country and people, all are urged to actively participate in it”, said the Vice Chairman.

Afterwards, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein then explained the benefits of setting up a Yangon Special Economic Zone and work programmes.

Meeting attendees then provided their suggestions and discussions.

Myanmar SEZ Central Committee Chairman U Henry Van Thio remarked on obtaining benefits for the country and to work in a timely manner for the projects to progress. Trainings are to be provided so that local nationals can perform high-position jobs and, if required, to obtain the advice of international experts in signing work project agreements.

The meeting was attended by Union ministers, states and regions chief ministers, deputy ministers and officials.—Myanmar News Agency
Authority reinforcing safety precautions on Japanese Encephalitis vaccination programme

May Thet Hnin

THE Ministry of Health and Sports is reinforcing precautions for the Japanese Encephalitis (JE) vaccination, a public programme that will be conducted from 11 to 20 December across the country to protect against the sometimes fatal disease, said Dr. Than Tun Aung, the deputy director general of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

To ensure the safety of the second phase of the vaccination programme, health staff will check the children’s medical biography to determine whether the children should receive the vaccination against Japanese encephalitis. The health staff will also post informational posters depicting symptoms and conditions in which the vaccine is not to be administered for parents. Question and answer sessions will also be widely conducted. Children will be put under observation for an hour after being vaccinated and all will be reminded to inform the doctor if any symptoms appear.

“A vaccination team will not vaccinate more than 100 children. Then, we will keep a health staff at the vaccination programme health centre as a standby to ask for medical treatment if we find any vaccination problems,” said Dr. Than Tun Aung.

The campaign includes two phases, beginning in all schools from 15-23 November. Health teams in all states and regions reached every school as well as religious and private institutions across the country to immunize children aged 5 to 15. According to 24 November data, the team has given the vaccination against Japanese encephalitis to 6.3 million out of 8.6 million children.

During the second phase, from 11-20 December, immunisation posts will be set up at hospitals, health centres, ward and village administration offices, monasteries and other community locations to reach children aged 9 months to 5 years and those who have missed the first round. The health department targeted another five million children in a community-based vaccination programme.

81 per cent in Rakhine State, 90 per cent in Yangon Region, 91 per cent in Northern Shan State, 94 per cent in Southern Shan State and Kayah State and over 95 per cent in other states and regions were being vaccinated against Japanese encephalitis by the Ministry of Health and Sports. During the first vaccination campaign, five children died after receiving the JE vaccination, creating worry for parents whose children are being vaccinated for JE.

“I am really worried for my child to take JE vaccination when I heard of some children dying after being vaccinated. Now, I am considering to see a doctor before my child take JE vaccination,” said the mother of a 3-year-old child in North Okkalapa Township. An inquiry into the incident revealed that the vaccination was not the cause of the death.

“Our team from the central vaccination programme immediately went out to find out the cause of the death and to see whether there was any connection to the vaccination. We have conducted laboratory tests and autopsies on these five children. We have found that those five children died because of other diseases” said Dr. Htar Htar Lin.

Health officials said the vaccination being used is very safe and has been tested extensively.

“The Japanese encephalitis vaccine was manufactured in China. Currently, over 400 million children from 11 countries were vaccinated against JE with the recommendation of the World Health Organization. The JE vaccine is also recommended by Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety,” said Prof. Saw Win, child specialist and vice chairman of the National Committee for Immunization Practices.

Myanmar people have suffered from JE and a total of 315 JE cases were reported in 2017. The Ministry of Health and Sports has decided to add Japanese encephalitis (JE) vaccine to the National Immunisation Programme beginning in January 2018. Currently, they have provided the Japanese encephalitis vaccines to the children aged nine months to 15 years.

Japanese encephalitis is caused by a virus transmitted to humans by the Culex tritaeniorhynchus mosquito. The Culex mosquito breeds in water pools and flooded rice fields and picks up the virus from pigs and water birds. It does not spread from person to person.

Japanese Encephalitis is a serious infection that occurs mainly in rural parts of Asia. The symptoms of JE are initially mild fever, headache and vomiting. When it becomes serious it can cause seizures, brain swelling, loss of consciousness and death. There is no effective treatment for JE. Taking the vaccination is the best way to prevent JE.

If children receive the JE vaccination once, it prevent JE 90 per cent of the time if and the children take the JE vaccination twice, it can prevent JE 99 per cent of the time.

In Myanmar and 24 countries of the Asia Pacific region, there are an estimated 68,000 cases of JE disease infection per 100,000 per year and most of those infected are children under 15 years old. Of this, the fatalities are estimated to be from 13,600 to 20,400, according to the World Health Organization. (Translation: Haymar Tin Win)
TMH Telecom Public Co., Ltd soon to be listed on Yangon Stock Exchange

YANGON Stock Exchange (YSX) approved the TMH Telecom Public Co., Ltd to be listed on YSX on 1st December 2017 after scrutinizing submitted application documents and a deliberate listing examination in accordance with Section 41 (c) of the Securities Exchange Law and section 7 and 8 of the Securities Listing Business Regulations, a recent disclosure of YSX.

The listing date of TMH is soon to be announced to the investors. Only company’s profile has disclosed on YSX website, and prospectus and supplemental documents will be revealed upon listing date.

The TMH was primarily focused on manufacturing of quality automatic telephone exchanges and then, it expanded to telecommunication services and the construction and operation of communication and broadband service. Currently, shares of four companies — First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB) and First Private Bank (FPB) are currently being traded on YSX.

On 4th December, 14,774 shares worth over Ks77 million were traded by four listed companies. However, stock trading volume dropped down to 4,068 shares yesterday with estimated trading value of Ks56 million. The share prices were Ks12,000 for FMI, Ks3,100 for MTSH, Ks8,800 for MCB and Ks26,000 for FPB at the closing time. Last month, stock trading value on YSX was Ks11.14 billion which is up from all-time low of Ks1 billion in October since its establishment, according to monthly data released by YSX yesterday.

YSX failed to attract local stock traders even after publicity discussions, expo and educational talks of stock market as it is far removed from most of the local businesses. A year and half old YSX is trying to survive from strong criticism with cool market and dropping share prices of listed companies.—Mon Mon

More than 2.1 million tons of rice and broken rice exported to foreign countries

MYANMAR’S rice and broken rice export to foreign countries as of 24th November this FY reached over 2.1 million tons, with estimated value of US$643 million, according to recent news released by the Commerce Ministry.

The export volume this FY has increased about 1.4 million tons more than similar period of last FY. Export income from rice and broken rice export was up by $402 million.

Previously, 72 per cent of rice and broken rice export went to foreign trade partners via border checkpoints. Rice trade via sea route has now improved.

This fiscal year, sea route accounts for 60 per cent of rice export whereas 40 per cent went from border gate.

Last year, there were only 29 foreign rice buyer countries. Myanmar’s rice has now shipped to 48 countries through sea route.

Rice and broken rice are main export items in agriculture group which includes various pulses, rubber, sesame seeds, fruits, vegetables, corns, etc. — Htet Myat
The Rakhine State Government announced yesterday that paddies in more than 3,580 fields belonging to farmers who fled to Bangladesh have been harvested to prevent waste.

The authorities formed a committee to harvest the ownerless rice, beginning the harvest on 28 October. According to the committee, more than 168,350 baskets of paddy were collected from more than 3,580 fields in villages in Maungtaw Township. The paddy that has been harvested will be returned to the owners either in cash or in the form of paddy. The harvested rice has been systematically recorded with the following data: Owner’s name, plot number, quantity and moisture level (13 per cent). After recording thusly, the rice is bagged and stored in designated storage areas. The government personnel who are performing this task are from the AMD – Agriculture Mechanization Department. AMD personnel from Mandalay and Sagaing regions have been brought in to support the local AMD personnel.- UEHRD Information and Communications Office.— Myanmar News Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Village-tract</th>
<th>Harvested (acres)</th>
<th>Yield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Kyaung Taung</td>
<td>305.29</td>
<td>14060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Kan Poo</td>
<td>310.20</td>
<td>14320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Myo Thu Gyi</td>
<td>216.86</td>
<td>11525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Chain Khar Li</td>
<td>194.81</td>
<td>8833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Than Dar</td>
<td>122.74</td>
<td>6262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Aeldthankyaw</td>
<td>363.30</td>
<td>14842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Hmawyontaung</td>
<td>153.19</td>
<td>7608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Myin Hlut</td>
<td>513.75</td>
<td>23809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Kyikanpyin</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Thihokyun</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>1038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>U-daung</td>
<td>150.02</td>
<td>7377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Sanpalkon</td>
<td>183.11</td>
<td>9141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Laungdon</td>
<td>193.25</td>
<td>10751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Aungspitpyin</td>
<td>218.73</td>
<td>10756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Warcha</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Thayaytaw</td>
<td>280.29</td>
<td>12089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Doetan</td>
<td>12.60</td>
<td>657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Ywathitkay</td>
<td>62.10</td>
<td>2800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Maungtaw</td>
<td>Zawmatat</td>
<td>36.55</td>
<td>1440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3580.96</td>
<td>168351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rakhine State Government

Union Minister U Thaung Tun meets Indonesia Minister

H.E. U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government, received Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, H.E. Dr. H. Wiranto in Nay Pyi Taw at 10 am on 5 December 2017. During the meeting, they discussed security issues in Rakhine State and exchanged views on counter-terrorism measures. The meeting was attended by senior officials from the Ministry of the Office of the Union Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.— Myanmar News Agency

Over 2,000 land confiscation complaints resolved in one year

The Central Committee for scrutinising cases of disputed farmland and other land allegations dealt with more than 2,075 complaints against land confiscation nationwide lodged to the committee in a year.

In a statement released by the Central Committee headed by Vice President U Henry Van Thio yesterday, the committee returned more than 38,024 acres of farmland to original owners, kept more than 88,771 acres as state-owned land and transferred more than 13,493 acres to other ministries. Meanwhile, nearly 7,000 acres are under scrutinisation to possibly be returned to owners.

The incumbent government’s central committee for scrutinising grabbed farmland has returned more than 140,289 acres from May, 2016 to 30th November, 2017 so far and the Land Use Management Committee of the previous government returned more than 429,000 acres.

Meanwhile, there are 4,730 cases remaining to be settled that date back to the time of the previous government.— GNLM

Union Attorney-General separately receives IDLO Field Program Manager and IBA Director

UNION Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo separately received International Development Law Organization (IDLO) Field Program Manager Ms. Christina Beninger and party at 11:30 a.m. and International Bars Association (IBA) Director Dr. Phillip Tahminjids AM and party at 2 p.m. in Union Attorney-General office guest room, Nay Pyi Taw on 4 December.

During the meeting with IDLO delegation, findings and suggestions of IDLO training requirement survey report, future works to improve Union Attorney-General office trainings, expanding the cooperative works in accordance with the signed MoU between IDLO and Union Attorney-General office and publishing of Fair Trail Standard as soon as possible were discussed.

The meetings were attended by Permanent Secretary Daw Nu Nu Yin, directors general Daw Khin Cho Ohn, Dr. Thida Oo and U Min Swe. — Myanmar News Agency
MoU on media cooperation

A ceremony to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on media cooperation between Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Information and the State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China was held yesterday afternoon in the Zhubao government guest house in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. The MoU was signed by Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint and the State Council Information Office Minister Mr. Jiang Jianguo.

At the signing ceremony, matters relating to bilateral media cooperation, cultural and literature cooperation and exchange were discussed. The event was attended by State Council Information Office Vice Minister Mr. Guo Weimin, Director General Mr. Zhang Ye, Director General Mr. Zhang Xiong, Deputy Director General Mr. Zhang Hongbin, Ministry of Information Deputy Permanent Secretary U Myint Kyaw and Printing and Publishing Department Deputy Director General U Ko Ko Naing. —Myanmar News Agency

Internet contributes to abandoned babies?

By: Nandar Win, Myat Sandy

VERY recently, a news item was found on a social web page that a newborn baby with the umbilical cord still attached was found abandoned, waiting for someone desirous of adopting the poor victim. In a previous February, a similar abandoned baby was found in the midst of rubbish in the back alley between Zadila and Zawtika Streets of Mahlwagone Htay Kywe (Ka) Ward of Tamway Township in Yangon. The baby was sent to Yankin Children’s Hospital for treatment, but unfortunately the baby died.

Medical professionals said these types of occurrences happen regularly.

“Events of abandonment in back alleys after delivery at home and cases of abandonment at hospitals are commonly found. Child abandonment was mostly attributed to unwanted conceptions”, said Dr. Pyone Mo Ei, a member of the team for protection of child abandonment, Myanmar Women Affairs Committee said.

Last year as well, it was learnt from social media pages that a baby with some scratches on its head and with some rubbish in its mouth was abandoned, packed in a bag in the grove near the Yaytagu village, Thamote village-tract in Myeik Township.

“Being youths, they cannot defend themselves from dangers and stand on their own two feet. Becoming pregnant, they will give birth to babies in secret places and abandon them. These became habits among them”, Dr. Pyone Mo Ei also said.

In accord with the saying, “The world is becoming a village with the advancement of Information Technology”, these days we are frequently hearing about child abandonment.

A superintendent of Children’s Hospital concluded that such cases of abandonment of innocent children are due to social or economic problems. But such deeds should not be done by young parents or their relatives.

Child abandonment is a criminal offence. A person can be arrested under section 317 of the Penal Code, it was learnt. A senior official said that, provided the person in question cannot take responsibility for caring for a newborn infant due to social problems, they can apply for entrusting the child to the child care centre at Shwegondine under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and they can apply for the administration of the baby in the future when they find it easy for livelihood again.

The social welfare department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is giving care to socially disabled children and orphans from the age of infancy to 10 years in Mandalay, Kengtung, Pathein, Sittway, Magway, Mawlamyine and other cities, it was learnt. Even though they are being cared for, a mother’s lap is the safest place for them.

“Every child wants to be brought up in the lap of their mother. Today’s child, being future leaders-to-be, they would not like to start their life with bitter experiences. Had we managed to protect unwanted conception, child abandonment would never occur; we firmly believe this,” said Dr. Pyone Mo Ei.

It is definitely described in the pamphlet of the Child Care Centre, Shwegon dine that any child being despised and ridiculed becomes frightened and less confident of oneself; any child being blamed and denounced becomes accustomed to blaming others; likewise, any child being in touch with hatred tends to behave in an aggressive manner.

“We want people to know this. It is very important. However much the government gives care to children, they cannot be well qualified with good qualities like children in the laps of their own mothers. If we can give some help concerning unwanted conceptions, child abandonment will never occur”, a responsible official said.

It has been learnt that a philanthropic team led by movie star Khaing Hnin Wai took part in a campaign to eliminate child rape.

“We helped to eradicate child rape and reduce child abandonment. We arranged short plays and concert. We aimed at educating youths as to what causes child rapes”, Khaing Hnin Wai said.

“Every individual has his own personal value. They themselves value and they need to value others. Consideration is needed to stand tall among the people.

We can control our desires with our own conscience and we can avert them as desired by us.”

The booth of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. Ministry at the Youth All-Round Development Festival. PHOTO: MNA

School children visit the Youth All-Round Development Festival. PHOTO: MNA
Despite recent growth, tourism in Myanmar faces near-term challenges...
14 people rescued from capsized Myanmar fishing boat

A fishing boat named “Silver Sea” capsized in the Andaman Sea at about 12 nautical miles north of the drilling platform in Hainggyikyun Township, Pathein District in Ayeyawady Region early this morning, according to the initial news from the Department of Fisheries. A vessel from the Myanmar Navy rescued 14 people from the sunken boat and was carrying out rescue operations. The search and rescue operation for the remaining people is ongoing.—Myanmar Digital News ■

Anti-aircraft bullets seized in Myawady Township

LOCAL police officials seized 1020 of the 12.7 mm anti-aircraft bullets during a house search in Thingannaynaung Village, Myawady Township in Kayin State on 4 December. The house was hired by San Lin (alias) Ko John.

The police received a clue that the suspect fled to Myitkyina. A combined squad consisting of policemen and security personnel raided the house of the suspect where they arrested house owner San Lin (alias) Ko John.

The two suspects are being questioned at Myitkyina Police Department, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs.—MDN ■

Child development measurement project to be implemented in nine places

MINISTRY of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement will implement the child development measurement and rehabilitation projects in nine places, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday. The projects will be implemented in 2018. The ministry has chosen nine urban and rural areas in eight townships including Yangon, Ayeyawady and Sagaing regions and, Mon State.

The ministry will check the development of children under five years and people with disabilities in selected townships. The ministry will establish a basic foundation for those who are in need of services. Moreover, Myanmar passed the Right of People with Disabilities Law in accord with the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in 2015. The bylaw will be issued very soon.

As part of the work for the rehabilitation and development of the disabled, the ministry is conducting the opening of vocational courses, the establishment of income-generating business and the physical development in eight disabled training schools.—GNLM ■

Power and Might of Youths

“We do another project on Power Savings, and it can dramatically reduce the consumption of electricity to some extent”, said the students of Geography, Yangon University. “We are trying to save and reduce the energy consumption in order to maintain our ecosystem.”

This project is mainly based on natural air and water which can be utilized from all resources such as solar and wind power. All these projects are invented and led by many associations and organizations in Myanmar.

Students, of course, have a keen interest in new inventions and technologies, which can bring about the progress of mankind. They are driving forces to shape the country as well. Therefore we must strive to uplift the development of our country as much as we can.

Indonesia Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs leaves Nay Pyi Taw

AN Indonesian delegation led by Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Mr. Wiranto who were in Myanmar left Nay Pyi Taw by air yesterday evening.

The departing guests Indonesia Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Mr. Wiranto and party were seen off at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director General U Soe Han, Indonesia Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Dr. Ito Sumardi and officials.—Myanmar News Agency

Fire broke out in monastic school

A fire broke out in the monastic school where there are 262 students in Gyobingauk Township, Bago Region yesterday. The fire started from a solar battery charger; there was damage to the school building and 25 desks. No casualties were reported.

Mr. Wiranto who were in Myanmar left Nay Pyi Taw by air yesterday evening. The departing guests Indonesia Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs Mr. Wiranto and party were seen off at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director General U Soe Han, Indonesia Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Dr. Ito Sumardi and officials.—Myanmar News Agency

Nandar win, Win Win Maw
Photo: Zaw Min Latt

It was such an interesting news that people who are curious to know about the latest technological changes in Myanmar, can witness how to assemble the air-conditioners which is making the best use of natural air and water, especially in the rural areas of Upper Myanmar.

Following is the excerpts of the interviewees.

Maung Htet Naing Lin, a Fourth Year Student, from Mechanical Department told that I am very glad to take part in this is festival, which was held for three days at the Yangon University. As a part of our youths, we exhibit some inventions that we made together at the science lab. All the inventors are students who are from our own country as much as we can.

Air-conditioners which are making the best use of natural air and water assembled by the students from Hmawbi Technological University.

Hmawbi Technological University. I think that we can do it due to our efforts and commitment.

The students who are from the Technological University of Western Yangon, invented newly-launched -operated system which can also check the student attendance list, teaching respective subjects, and also can switch on/off the lights and fans automatically by using smart card.

The sensor can operate the monitor which can check the students’ attendance, roll call and classroom respectively. Besides the classrooms, meeting rooms, offices and schools are able to operate it without any difficulty.
A delegation comprised of ethnic people from border areas visited Nay Pyi Taw yesterday at the invitation of the Ministry of Border Affairs.

About 100 visitors representing different ethnic races visited the Uppatasanti Pagoda, the Yezin University of Agriculture and the Hliutta water. The delegation includes 25 people from Sagaing Region, 25 from the Naga Self-administered Zone, 25 from Taninthayi Region, and 25 from southern Shan State. At Yezin University, they observed crop cultivation and research on horticulture. Following the visit to Yezin, the excursion group went to Pyithu Hluttaw and the Amyotha Hluttaw, and the Nay Pyi Taw Water Fountain in the late afternoon.

The delegation members arrived in Nay Pyi Taw on 4 December, beginning their three-day visit the next day. They will also visit Yangon.

With the aim of enhancing friendship and understanding among ethnic people, the Ministry of Border Affairs arranged the excursion programme for the ethnic people from remote areas to visit Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw and other regions.

—Myanmar News Agency

Nearly 800 houses under construction for displaced villagers in Maungtaw

A total of 798 houses are being constructed for more than 3500 people from 798 households in 26 villages in Maungtaw, said according to local authorities in Rakhine State.

The project is a part of the resettlement program of the Rakhine State Government.

The followings are the names of the villages in which the houses are to be built.

Status of building houses in Maungtaw Township

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Village Tract</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Houses to be built</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Region / State / Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inndin (Hindu)</td>
<td>Inndin</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Inndin</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yebaw Kya (Hindu)</td>
<td>Yebaw Kya</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Yebaw Kya</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung (Hindu)</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Taungpyo (Hindu)</td>
<td>Taungpyo</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taungpyo</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Myoma east (Hindu)</td>
<td>Myoma east</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Myoma east</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oo Htane (Hindu)</td>
<td>Oo Htane</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Oo Htane</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ywathit (Bengali)</td>
<td>Ywathit</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ywathit</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Badaka Ywathit (Daingnet)</td>
<td>Badaka Ywathit</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Badaka Ywathit</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>12 12 23 23 50 12 20 20 51 58 109 42</td>
<td>Aungthapyay Ywa Tatmadaw</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Aungthapyay Ywa Tatmadaw</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Thetkinenya Thetkinenya (Thet)</td>
<td>Thetkinenya Thetkinenya</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Thetkinenya Thetkinenya</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>28 28 64 57 121 4</td>
<td>Aungsitpyin group</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>Aungsitpyin group</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>73 72 182 170 352 72</td>
<td>Aungpyo group</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Aungpyo group</td>
<td>Sagaing Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Myauk Gaung Htaung</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Myauk Gaung Htaung</td>
<td>Mandalay Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Mandalay Region</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Mandalay Region</td>
<td>Mandalay Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>11 27 45 45 120 123 243</td>
<td>Yenauk Nga Tha (Mro)</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>Yenauk Nga Tha</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>11 11 17 17 34</td>
<td>Thanpaya (Mro)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Thanpaya</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>47 112 113 225</td>
<td>La Baw (Mro)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>La Baw</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3 Mile (Mro)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>97 103 200</td>
<td>3 Mile</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>47 112 113 225</td>
<td>Padaka South (Mro)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Padaka South</td>
<td>Taninthayi Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung (mixed)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung</td>
<td>Rakhine State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung (mixed)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung</td>
<td>Rakhine State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung (mixed)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung</td>
<td>Rakhine State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung (mixed)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung</td>
<td>Rakhine State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rakhine State government

Status of caring for ownerless buffaloes, cows until 27-11-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. Date</th>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Cattle type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26-11-2017</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township</td>
<td>Taungpyo village-tract</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-11-2017</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung village-tract</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-11-2017</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township</td>
<td>Yebaw Kya village-tract</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-11-2017</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township</td>
<td>Taungpyo village-tract</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-11-2017</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung village-tract</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-11-2017</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township</td>
<td>Taungpyo village-tract</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-11-2017</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township</td>
<td>Kyeinchaung village-tract</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman receives NMC members

U Aung Kyi, Chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission, received Dr Myo Thant Tin, Vice-Chairman 2 of Myanmar Press Council and member Hanthawady U Ohn Kyaw at 10 am yesterday at the guest room of the Office of Anti-Corruption Commission in Nay Pyi Taw.

In the meeting, matters concerning the process to be done further and the prescriptions on the law of anti-corruption were discussed.

At the meeting U Han Nyunt, member of the Commission was also present. —MNA

Anti-corruption commission chairman U Aung Kyi welcomes NMC member Veteran journalist U Ohn Kyaw in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA
Russian strategic bombers pay visit to Indonesia

MOSCOW — Two Tupolev Tu-95MS strategic bombers and two Ilyushin Il-76MD aircraft of Russia’s Aerospace Forces have paid an international visit to Indonesia, the Russian Defence Ministry said.

“Two Tu-95MS strategic bombers and two Il-76MD aircraft of the Russian Aerospace Forces flew from an airfield in the Amur Region to the Biak airfield in the Republic of Indonesia as part of an international visit,” the ministry said. During the flight, the aerial refuelling of Tu-95MS aircraft was performed with the help of Il-78 air-to-air refuelling tanker aircraft over the waters of the Pacific Ocean. The flight was carried out in strict compliance with international rules of using the airspace, and no other states’ borders were violated, the ministry stressed.—Tass

Germany must stop relying on US for foreign policy — foreign minister

BERLIN — Germany should be more assertive in setting foreign policy according to its own interests rather than to those of the United States, the German foreign minister said on Tuesday. Traditionally close ties between Berlin and Washington have soured since US President Donald Trump took office in January.

Trump is at odds with Germany over Iran and North Korea, has denounced Germany’s trade surplus with the United States, accused Berlin and others of owing vast sums to NATO and worried partners by deciding to ditch the Paris climate accord.

The traditional view of the United States as having a protecting role was beginning to “crumble”, Sigmar Gabriel told an audience of politicians and government representatives at the Koerber Foundation.

“The US’s retreat (from its international role) is not due to the policies of only one president. It will not change fundamentally after the next elections,” he said.

Germany should continue to invest in its partnership with the United States as a trading partner but must be more assertive in representing its own interests when the two countries are at odds.

Gabriel gave the example of sanctions against Russia that the US Congress agreed on in the summer and which could ultimately affect Germany’s energy supply as they affect Russian pipelines.

Gabriel also warned against ending the nuclear deal with Iran, saying this would increase the risk of war and affect national security, and against any move by the United States to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. “Germany cannot afford to wait for decisions from Washington, or to merely react to them. We must lay out our own position and make clear to our allies where the limits of our solidarity are reached,” Gabriel said in the speech, excerpts of which had been published by Sueddeutsche Zeitung ahead of time.

Germany see US President Donald Trump as a bigger challenge for German foreign policy than authoritarian leaders in North Korea, Russia or Turkey, a survey published by the Koerber Foundation showed.

Post-war Germany has pursued a cautious foreign policy embedded in the principles and institutions of the European Union, due to the legacy of World War Two but has gradually taken on a more active global role in the last decade or so.

Gabriel’s Social Democratic Party’s (SPD) have said they will launch talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conservatives on forming a government next week if members of his centre-left party gave him the green light at a congress this weekend.—Reuters

EU court adviser says Britain was wrong to refuse transgender woman’s pension

LUXEMBOURG — Britain’s rejection of a transgender woman’s claim for a women’s state pension because she was still married to her spouse from before her transition is discriminatory, an EU court adviser said on Tuesday.

Advocate General Michal Bobek of the Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ) stated in a non-binding opinion that marriage status does not play a role in accessing state retirement pensions for people who are not transgender.

“This amounts to direct discrimination on the basis of sex, which is not open to objective justification,” a news release of the opinion stated.

The opinion was issued for a case where a transgender woman — who was registered as a boy at birth but has lived as a woman since 1991 and had gender reassignment surgery in 1995 — in the UK applied for a state retirement pension when she turned 60 in 2008.

According to UK law, a woman born before 6 April, 1950 must be 65 to access the state retirement pension, whereas for a man born before 6 December 1953 the age is 65.

Her application was denied because she didn’t apply for a full gender recognition certificate due to the fact that she remained married to a woman and her marriage would have been annulled at the time as same-sex marriage was not legal in Britain.

The UK Supreme Court asked the ECJ if the requirement to be unmarried to recognise a change in gender, and thus determine the qualifying age for a state pension, was allowed under EU law.—Reuters

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MY THANH BA VOY. NO (+)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THANH BA VOY. NO (+) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.12.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of BSW-2 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS BEN LINE AGENCIES
(S’PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928
Scientists watch and wait as Bali’s menacing volcano rumbles

KARANGASEM, Indonesia — The question Indonesian volcanologist Devy Kamil Syahbana gets most is the one he cannot answer — when, or if, rumbling Mount Agung on Bali island will blow up in a major eruption.

The 3,000 metre (9,800 ft) Agung — a so-called strato-volcano capable of very violent eruptions — has recorded a sharp rise in activity that has raised worries about a repeat of a 1963 eruption that killed more than 1,000 people.

“There’s no instrument in the world that can estimate precisely when there will be a major eruption,” said Syahbana, who runs an observatory monitoring the towering volcano, just outside a 10-km exclusion zone.

Sensors beeped and walkie-talkies crackled as he spoke to Reuters at the monitoring station.

“People expect certainty but volcanology is a science of probability,” he said pointing to charts showing dramatic fluctuations in the seismic activity deep under Agung.

Authorities raised the alert status to the maximum after the volcano started erupting last month, spewing out ash over the holiday island and causing travel chaos by closing its airport for three days last week.

While hot magma has produced an eerie orange glow just above the crater, and thousands of villagers have fled from their homes on the mountain’s slopes, Agung has, this time, yet to explode violently, Syahbana, who studied volcanology in Brussels and Paris, said his team’s main job was to “increase the preparedness of the communities here in the event of a major eruption”. He said safety was his priority, never mind that raising the alert level has spooked residents and tourists alike.

Syahbana said he had not come under any pressure to lower the alert, though his team was “aware of the costs” for Indonesia’s main tourist destination famous for its beaches and temples.

Indonesia has nearly 130 active volcanoes, more than any other country.

Syahbana has surveyed and installed instruments on many of the most active ones, including Mount Merapi on Java island, to the west of Bali, and on Mount Sinabung in the north of Sumatra island.

His team of 16 scientists takes six-hour shifts to monitor seismic stations on Agung that record tremors deep inside the mountain, GPS trackers that record changes in its land features and CCTV cameras that provide 24-hour surveillance.

“The difference between other volcanoes and Mount Agung is that there are no scientific records about previous eruptions here, only people’s experiences,” Syahbana said.

In 1963, pyroclastic flows of lava and rocks poured out of the volcano, killing more than 1,000 people and razing dozens of villages. According to survivors, that eruption was preceded by earthquakes, volcanic mudflows, and ashfall — all signs that Mount Agung is showing again now, said Syahbana.

This time, with the internet and live feeds on social media, experts around the world are watching the smouldering Agung.— Reuters

Arctic sea ice melt to exacerbate California droughts — study

WASHINGTON — Melting Arctic sea ice could render sun-soaked California vulnerable to a recurrence of the severe drought suffered in recent years as it is likely to cause high pressure systems that push away rain-bearing storms, a study released on Tuesday said.

As temperatures rise, the Arctic Ocean is expected to become ice-free within two or three decades, resulting in more of the sun’s heat being stored in the Arctic Ocean, leading to atmospheric circulation changes and cloud formations in the tropical Pacific that move north.

That will lead to the building of high pressure systems known as an atmospheric ridge in the northern Pacific off California’s coast, steering storms north into Alaska and Canada, the study said.

“This has the potential to make a drought very similar to the one we had in 2012 to 2016,” said Ivana Cvijanovic, an atmospheric scientist at the Department of Energy’s Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

Cvijanovic led the study with contributions from colleagues at the lab and at University of California, Berkeley.

The recent five-year drought cost California’s farmers billions of dollars in lost production, slashed seasonal agriculture jobs by the thousands, and spiked electricity bills for residents as hydroelectric systems failed.

US meetings on the Arctic warming are mostly attended by scientists and members of Alaskan communities, but Cvijanovic said residents of other regions should pay attention.

“Studies like this one imply that it’s not only a problem for communities in Alaska) and that Arctic Sea Ice loss that we expect in the next couple of decades could have massive effects” on Californians and other people around the world, she said.

Modeling by the scientists showed that the loss of sea ice could cause a 10 to 15 per cent decrease in California’s rainfall when considering a 20-year mean, with some years becoming much drier and others becoming wetter. The loss of Arctic sea ice is only one path that will contribute to a drier California that scientists have predicted.

A previous study on drought in the country’s most populous state blamed another aspect of global warming. California’s temperatures have risen about 2 degrees Fahrenheit over the last century and the warm air holds more water, sucking moisture out of soil, rivers and streams.

The study appeared in the journal Nature Communications and was funded by the Department of Energy’s science office.— Reuters
Taylor Swift spends third week atop Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — Taylor Swift held onto her throne atop the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart for a third-consecutive week on Monday. Swift’s “Reputation” record sold another 147,000 album units in the week ending 30 November, according to figures from Nielsen Music. At No 2 this week is acapella group Pentatonix’s festive album “A Pentatonix Christmas,” while British singer Sam Smith’s latest album “The Thrill of It All” held steady at No 3.

The only new entry in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week was a collaborative album by rappers Jadakiss and Fabolous, “Friday on Elm Street,” opening at No 10. The Billboard 200 chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, Ed Sheeran’s love song “Perfect” climbed to No 1 from No 3 with nearly 60,000 copies sold. The singer released a new version of “Perfect” on 1 December, in which he duets with Beyoncé. As of Monday, the song is at the top of the US iTunes chart and has been viewed nearly 22 million times on YouTube.

New York Met opera suspends conductor on sexual misconduct allegations

NEW YORK — New York’s Metropolitan Opera on Sunday suspended its relationship with former long-time music director, the acclaimed conductor James Levine, as it investigates several allegations of sexual misconduct.

The opera said in a statement that it decided to act following “multiple allegations of sexual misconduct by Mr. Levine that took place from the 1980’s to the 1990’s, including the earlier part of his conducting career at the Met.”

The organization said Levine, Met music director for 40 years until his retirement in 2016, would not be involved in any Met activities, including conducting scheduled performances this season.

“The Met adamantly condemns sexual harassment and assault,” the statement read. “The Met is one of the world’s most prestigious opera houses and we have a responsibility to make sure that all who work for us feel safe and respected.”

Levine of sexually abusing him following “multiple allegations of sexual misconduct by Mr. Levine that took place from the 1980’s to the 1990’s, including the earlier part of his conducting career at the Met.”

Attempts to reach Levine through his manager Sunday night were unsuccessful. Met officials could not be reached to request comment from Levine.

The allegations at one of the world’s most prestigious opera houses come amid widening sexual misconduct scandals in the fields of entertainment, politics and journalism.

The opera on Saturday said it was investigating Levine after news reports of charges of sexual misconduct in the 1980s. The Met told The New York Times it became aware in October 2016 of a police report in Illinois that month in which a man accused Levine of sexually abusing him three decades ago, beginning when the man was a teenager.

Gelb told the Times that Levine said the charges were false and the Met did not hear anything further from the police. The New York Times reported on Sunday that additional men had come forward with accusations against Levine.

Levine denies all allegations and is seeking a federal lawsuit against the Met and its Executive Committee.

“Levine has said repeatedly that he is not guilty of the sexual misconduct charges and looks forward to proving his innocence in court,” his attorney said in a statement.

Levine’s attorney, Robert Cooper, released a video statement on YouTube in October in which Levine called the allegations “false and the Met did not hear anything further from the police.”

Levine of sexually abusing him following “multiple allegations of sexual misconduct by Mr. Levine that took place from the 1980’s to the 1990’s, including the earlier part of his conducting career at the Met.”

While we await the results of the investigation, based on these new news reports, the Met has made the decision to act now,” General Manager Peter Gelb said in the statement, adding that the action was supported by the leadership of the Met Board and its Executive Committee. “This is a tragedy for anyone whose life has been affected.”

‘Coco’ Repeats as Box Office Winner With $26.1 Million

LOS ANGELES — Disney-Pixar’s animated comedy “Coco” easily repeated as the winner of the North American box office with a solid $26.1 million (19.4 million pounds) at 3,987 locations during a moderate weekend.

The third weekend of Warner Bros-DC Entertainment’s “Justice League” finished second with $16.7 million at 3,820 sites, with the superhero tentpole dropping 60%.

Lionsgate’s “Wonder Wheel” debuted with $12.5 million at 3,449 venues to come in third followed by Disney-Marvel’s fifth frame of “Thor: Ragnarok” with $9.7 million at 3,148 sites, the fourth weekend of Paramount’s “Dad dy’s Home 2” with $7 million at 3,403 venues and Fox’s fourth weekend of “Murder on the Orient Express” with $6.7 million at 3,201 screens.

Awards contenders “Lady Bird” and “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri” tied for seventh place with $4.5 million each. A24’s “Lady Bird” expanded by 403 sites to 1,194, and Fox Searchlight’s “Three Billboards” doubled its run to 1,430 screens.

The major studios opted to rely on holdovers during the weekend and held off any wide openings. A24 generated strong performance from its limited launch of James Franco’s “The Disaster Artist” with $1.2 million at 19 locations for a $64,254 per screen average. Fox Searchlight’s “The Shape of Water” saw an impressive $166,800 at two theatres and Woody Allen’s “Wonder Wheel” debuted with a solid $140,565 at five sites through Amazon.

Sony Classics’ second weekend of “Call Me By Your Name” posted a stellar $281,200 at four screens for a 10-day total of $908,175. It won best feature at the Gotham Independent Film Awards on 27 November.

“Coco” has now taken in $108.7 million in its first 12 days following a 47% decline from its opening. The film, based on the traditions surrounding the Day of the Dead holiday in Mexico, centres on a 12-year-old boy who dreams of becoming a musician. The film has been embraced by critics with a 97% score on Rotten Tomatoes. Disney’s “Moana” performed slightly better during the same period last year with $119.8 million after 12 days.

The studio has not released a price for “Coco.” Disney-Pixar titles are usually budgeted in the $175 million to $200 million range.

“Justice League” also grossed $33.7 million on approximately 20,375 screens in 66 international markets, bringing the overseas total to $370.1 million and the global total $567.4 million.

Overall domestic moviegoing totalled $104 million, up $8 million from the same frame in 2016 and the biggest post-Thanksgiving weekend in five years, according to comScore. —Reuters
First-ever gathering of Taungtha ethnic people held at Htilin Tsp, Magwe Region

TAUNGTHA ethnic people from Htilin, Saw, Gangaw, Sedoktara, Mindat townships assembled at Watthet village monastery in Htilin Township, Magwe Region from 9 am to 4 pm on 3rd December; and the gathering was alive with teeming crow crowd enjoying classical music and traditional dance.

Taungtha people live around Htilin, Saw and Yaw areas in Gangaw District.

The Taungtha people are the earliest inhabitants of Myanmar but are now on the verge of extinction.

This first-ever gathering aims to maintain the endangered Taungtha people and preserve Taungtha literature with the help of authorities concerned and the regional government, said local residents. Magwe Region Hluttaw Chairman U Tar and officials from respective regions and states and teeming crows of Taungtha people participated in the gathering.—Myanmar Digital News

Without Trump, Kennedy Centre celebrates Lionel Richie and Gloria Estefan

WASHINGTON — With the notable absence of President Donald Trump, the Kennedy Centre on Sunday celebrated singers Lionel Richie and Gloria Estefan, rapper LL Cool J, television producer Norman Lear and dancer Carmen de Lavallade with honours for the arts.

The Kennedy Centre Honours are considered the highest recognition in the country for artists across many fields, and the importance of the annual event is usually underscored by a White House reception with the president and the first lady.

Not this year.

The White House said in August that Trump and his wife, Melania, would not attend, so that those honoured could enjoy the event “without any political distraction.” The White House reception was also canceled after some honourees said they would boycott it. De Lavallade, 86, said she decided she could not attend such an event after Trump said both right- and left-wing extremists were at fault in a white supremacist rally in Virginia where one woman died.

“Something in my soul ... said no,” she told reporters.

The show at the Kennedy Centre itself went on with minimal politics and a lot of star power.

Musicians, including Stevie Wonder; Quincy Jones and Kenny Rogers, paid tribute to Richie, known for hits such as “Three Times a Lady” and “Say You, Say Me.” Singer Leona Lewis finished with a rocking rendition of Richie’s hit song, “All Night Long,” bringing the audience to its feet.

Singer and songwriter Estefan, 60, who was born in Havana, Cuba, was feted by her daughter, Emily, who delivered a moving rendition of her mother’s song “Reach.”

The elder Estefan said she was thankful Trump chose not to attend. “Whenever something becomes more about the controversy than the actual achievements of the people that are receiving the award, it kinda dampens it for everybody,” she told Reuters on Saturday. LL Cool J, 49, who stars in the television show “NCIS Los Angeles,” made history by becoming the first hip hop artist to join the club of honorees.

“I’ve never been more inspired,” he told Reuters. “It’s a reminder that art matters.” He said Trump’s presence would have been a distraction.

Oscar-winning actress Meryl Streep kicked off a tribute to her one-time teacher De Lavallade, an actress and a dancer, who wiped tears from her eyes at the conclusion of a gala dinner at the US State Department, in Washington, US on 2 December, 2017.

CBS will broadcast the 40th Kennedy Center Honors show on 26 December.—Reuters
Myanmar U-23 football team draws 1-1 with MNL All Stars

MYANMAR U-23 football team which will be taking part in the M-150 Cup 2017 drew 1-1 with Myanmar National League, M-150 Cup 2017 team. Maung Maung Lwin scored the leading goal at 24 minutes. Before the game finished, the two teams tried their best to get more goal, but, no team scored any goal and the game concluded drawing.

Myanmar U-23 football team will be taking part in M-150 Cup 2017 with five other U-23 teams, Thailand, Vietnam, DPR Korea, Uzbekistan and North Korea. The teams will be competing in a round robin format. The top two teams will advance to the final.

Women's matches will begin on Friday and the men will play on Saturday. The North Korean teams left Pyongyang last Saturday and stopped over in Beijing before flying onwards to Tokyo.

North Korea has banned North Korean nationals from entering the country as part of unilateral sanctions against Pyongyang over its continued development and tests of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, but the Japanese Embassy in Beijing on Monday granted visas to the teams as an exceptional case, Japanese government sources said.

N Korean soccer teams arrive in Japan on specially issued visas

TOKYO — North Korea's men's and women's national soccer teams arrived on Tuesday at Tokyo's Haneda airport, gaining entry with visas issued despite Japan's ongoing ban on citizens from the country.

The players are scheduled to take part in the East Asian Football Federation's upcoming E-1 Football Championship, in which Japan, China, South Korea and North Korea will compete.

Tokyo has banned North Korean nationals from entering the country for fear of unilateral sanctions against Pyongyang over its continued development and tests of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, but the Japanese Embassy in Beijing on Monday granted visas to the teams as an exceptional case, Japanese government sources said.

Brunt, Phillips close to West Brom return, says Pardew

LONDON — West Bromwich Albion coach Gerry Francis will leave the Premier League club after rejecting an offer to stay and work under new manager Alan Pardew due to “moral obligations”, the 65-year-old has said.

Francis joined former West Brom boss Tony Pulis' coaching team in 2008 and has worked with him also throughout his stints at Stoke City and Crystal Palace.

Pulis took charge at West Brom in January 2015 but was sacked last month after a poor run of results that has left them 17th in the standings, three points above the relegation zone, and winless in their last 13 league games.

Pardew was named the club's new manager last week.

"It is with regret that I feel I cannot accept Alan Pardew's and West Brom's offer to stay on at the club due to moral obligations on my part," Francis told Sky Sports.

"I am sure Alan along with the talented squad of players will very soon change the fortunes of the club in the right direction and climb up the table."

Fourth AirKBZ Aung Lan Golden Belt Championship on Sunday

THE fourth AirKBZ Aung Lan Golden Belt Championship event, Myanmar-French-Japanese Traditional Lethwei Fight will be held at 2pm on 10 December at Thiri Myitkyina Stadium, Yangon.

Under the supervision of Ministry of Health and Sports and Myanmar Traditional Boxing Federation, the event was sponsored by Air KBZ and organized by Myanmar Media Group.

The event will feature six men fights and a women fight. The six men fights are regions and states gold and the best fighter medalist Aung Paing (Myanmar) versus MLWC and ILFJ golden belts champion Yves (French), Air KBZ Aung Lan golden belt champion Lan Mayu (Yamanya Ahram) versus Kayin National Day Aung Lan champion Thar Athae Ta Pweint (Burma Thwe), regions and states gold medalist Htet Aung Oo (Myanmar) versus ILFJ gold medalist Dai Kei Khane Ko (Japan), Myanmar Pyi freelance lethwei champion and Air KBZ golden belt champion Saw Min Aung (Myanmar) versus World Kick Boxing Champion To Khae Shi (Japan), MLWC golden belt champion Daewa (Myanmar) versus MLWC golden belt champion Kow Tan Yan Lan (French) and Pyan Thwe (Shwe Moe Hti Nyein Chan) versus Saw Gaw Mu Do (Thet Ti).

One of the women fight is regions and states gold medalist Shwe Ko Lay (Bago) versus regions and states gold medalist Lin Yone May (Lin Yone Club).

Advanced tickets can be available at No.358, 4th floor, Industrial (1) Road, Bahan Township, Tel. 01-558387, 01-557787 and 01-860513. Ticket prices for the event are Ks 10,000, Ks 20,000 and Ks 30,000.

First AirKBZ Aung Lan Golden Belt Champions

THE first Aung Lan Belt Champions will very soon change the for-