Collective strength returns transportation to normal after Myaungmya bridge collapse

By Ye Khaung and Zaw Gyi
PHOTO: ZAW MIN LAT

THE Myaungmya suspension bridge collapsed early morning on 1 April 2018, when a 16-tonne six-wheel truck passed over the bridge. Therefore, efforts are being made to resume the normal flow of commodities with the cooperation of the Ayeyawady Region government, the local people, volunteers and donors. Following are excerpts from interviews conducted with authorities and the local people.

U Aung Kyaw Zeya, Township Administrator

The search-and-rescue work was conducted on the night of the accident. While carrying passengers and cars, we had to use the barge alternately and offer our services free of charge. Many people have come here to offer voluntary services, along with the staff from several departments, including transport, fire brigade, police forces and the traffic police force and inland water transport. Beside these departments, members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) have joined the search-and-rescue teams. A new bridge is being built following the collapse of the Myaungmya bridge. As a result, everyone has been affected, and efforts are being made to ensure the situation returns to normalcy.

U Tun Tun Oo, Chairman of Watercraft Committee

We have to raise awareness about the dangers of the bridge and issue some clarifications on the collapse of the bridge. Also, we sent some 6,000 passengers to the other side of the bridge during the first day of the accident. It was estimated that there were some 15,000 to 20,000 passengers in two days. Our committee, including the ministries concerned, the police force and NGOs, are trying their best to serve the local people.

SEE PAGE-2
Former drug addicts in northern Shan State rehabilitated effectively: Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye attended a meeting with departmental officials, civil society organisations, cultural groups and the public at the General Administration Department in Lashio District, northern Shan State, yesterday morning.

At the meeting, the Union Minister said the government was striving to ensure the rule of law in the entire country, the development of socio-economic conditions, national reconciliation, internal peace and the establishment of a federal democracy union. The ministry is attempting to achieve peace, basic socio-economic development and equality in Shan State and other states, where many ethnic nationals live together.

The ministry is cooperating and assessing the strengths of the departments, civil society organisations and the public. The ministry is in Lashio to assist and care for people displaced by armed conflicts, expectant mothers and children who need care, handicapped persons and women-led households. It is believed that such socio-economic assistance works will help socio-economic development, said the union minister. In this district, rehabilitation works, including the rehabilitation of former drug addicts, are being conducted by the ministry. Effective rehabilitation works will be conducted through livelihood courses, and the public is being urged to cooperate, said the Union Minister. At the meeting, donations worth Ks3 million for 10 ethnic national literature and culture groups, Ks3.3 million for people (from Lashio District, Kutkai, Namtu and Namhkam) displaced by armed conflicts, Ks2.2 million for expectant mothers, Ks15.4 million for children under five years, Ks5.4 million for the physically disabled, Ks6.25 million for women-led households and Ks300,000 for the Sinshweli home for the aged were accepted by the officials. Next, the Union Minister and his delegation inspected the rehabilitation camp of former drug addicts, where the camp manager explained the physical and moral rehabilitation work processes conducted for former drug addicts. The Union Minister mentioned the importance of ensuring that former drug addicts do not re-enter the vicious circle of drug addiction. He said volunteers were conducting community-based care programmes to engage with the relevant family members, and referred to the importance of the rule of law and security in resolving the difficulties faced by former drug addicts while re-entering the society, and especially the importance of providing assistance to the family.

Later, the Union Minister met with the staff of the ministry at the District Social Welfare Office and fulfilled their requirements.

To conduct systematically the rehabilitation of former drug addicts from northern Shan State and Lashio, Muse, Kyaukme and Laukkai districts, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is conducting village-based rehabilitation works in all the districts and camp-based rehabilitation works in Laukkai District in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.—MSWRR

PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye meets with the staff of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement at the Lashio District Office in northern Shan State.

Collective strength returns . . .

FROM PAGE-1
U Nyi Nyi San, Township WTD manager

As for our water transport department, we render transport services to the local people three times a day. All the barge, together with the SEA Emperor barge used for the transport, are providing services free from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Man Tun Kyaiang, a representative of Amyotha Hluttaw

We reached Myanmar on 2 April 2018. There are many organisations and NGOs assisting the needy. We are trying to ensure a speedy flow of commodities in this area. Being a member of the Hluttaw, efforts are being made to build a new bridge for the local people.

U Soe Soe, businessman

We are finding it difficult to get easy access to transport services since the collapse of the Myaungmya bridge. So, we organised a group, raised a Ks1.5million-fund and sent the passengers across the river free of charge. We want to ensure passengers reach their respective destinations easily. We heard the authority concerned will form several committees for the convenience of the residents. We are cooperating with the relevant ministries and the NGOs as well. Currently, we are offering food, water and the necessary aid to the local residents.

We have helped passengers carry their luggage on to the barge since the bridge collapsed. We are happy to help the people at a time when they are facing obstacles.

Corrigendum


NATIONAL 10 APRIL 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
Coordination meeting held to establish movie studio, skills training school in Nay Pyi Taw

A COORDINATION meeting to discuss plans and arrangements to establish movie studios and skills training school for the development of the Myanmar motion picture sector was held at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint spoke about establishing outdoor and indoor movie shooting locales in Nay Pyi Taw. The Union Minister spoke about the requirement of a movie studio and a training school to raise the image of Myanmar through the art of motion picture and for the development of Myanmar motion picture.

The Union Minister said the Ministry of Information would assist in establishing movie studios and skills training school and urged all attending the meeting to discuss the development of the Myanmar motion picture sector. He added that another coordination meeting would be held in Yangon.

Next, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung discussed short- and long-term works for the development of the Myanmar motion picture sector, matters to be coordinated and worked on to overcome the country’s lack of movie studios and discussed matters related to the sectorial requirements to construct a movie studio in Nay Pyi Taw.

Following this, Forever Group Co. Ltd. CEO U Win Maw and Shwe Than Lwin Media Company Limited Chairman Daw Myint Myint Win discussed establishing a movie training school and studios. The Union Minister coordinated on the matters that were discussed.

— Myanmar News Agency

Over 1,600 hotels, guesthouses get permits

Some 1,628 licensed hotels, motels, guesthouses and inns are operating in Myanmar, as of the end of March 2018, offering some 65,470 rooms, according to statistics provided by the Hotels and Tourism Ministry.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism issued some 4,503 tour guide licences, 3,449 regional tour guide licences and 2,564 transport licences by December 2017.

Further, some 2,676 travel agencies were issued permits by the ministry.

The famous tourism attractions in Myanmar are Mandalay, Yangon, Bagan, Inle, Kayin State and Mon State, Myeik archaeology, Chin Hills and beaches such as Chaungthaga, Ngwe Saung and Ngapali.

Additionally, tourists like to explore cultural zones, such as the Bagan-Nyaung U cultural zone, Ava cultural site, PyinUoLwin.

The Hotels and Tourism Ministry created eco-tourism sites and community-based tourism (CBT) spots, establishing Thandaunggyi in Kayin State, Pa-O community-involved tourism in Shan State, the Kayah Cultural Community Tour, CBT with dolphins along Ayeyawady River, the Phoe Kyar elephant camp, Poppa Mountain National Park, Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary and other wildlife sanctuaries.

Tourists visit Myanmar through the three international airports, as well as the border checkpoints on bikes or vehicles. Tourists are also flocking to Myanmar via luxury cruise liners. — Ko Htet

Anti-Narcotic Police statement on what to avoid during Thingyan

1. Vehicle drivers must avoid consuming alcohol or other intoxicating substances.
2. Everyone must avoid consuming all types of psychotropic drugs and sexually stimulating drugs and be on the lookout for potential tempters.
3. As responsible citizens, it is everyone’s duty to report to the nearest police officers if you stumble upon any drug dealing or consumption. Please help keep the traditional Thingyan festival clean and safe.
4. Young people should partake in the festivities in a fun and responsible manner and avoid intoxication which may lead to adverse effects.
5. We wish to urge community elders, leaders, parents, guardians, and pavilion officials to cooperate and keep vigilance so that the Thingyan Festival may commence peacefully.—Myanmar Police Force
Mandalay Regional gov’t will propose to Union Gov’t to allow foreigners to visit Mogok

THE Mandalay Regional government will put forward a proposal to the Union Government to allow foreigners to visit Mogok city, said Dr Zaw Myint Maung, Chief Minister of Mandalay Region.

“If foreigners can travel to the city, the region will develop,” the Chief Minister said in the opening ceremony of the 800th anniversary of establishing Mogok city, which is also known as Ruby Land.

Currently, the union government designated the city as a restricted area for foreigners.

If development of Mogok improves this will have a positive effect on the rest of Mandalay Region, he will call for the central government to allow foreigners to visit Ruby Land, the Chief Minister said.

“If foreigners can enter Mogok, the local gem stone markets will improve,” said U Tun Myat, a resident of Ruby Land.

Although foreigners are restricted to the city, more than 170 foreigners were allowed to visit under the approval of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism during the festival to mark the 800th anniversary of Mogok city.—Myanmar Digital News

Two die in vehicle collision on Yangon-Mandalay highway

An express named Aung Yadana hit a 12-wheel vehicle near Ottwin Township on Yangon-Mandalay highway at 1:30 a.m. on the morning of 9 April.

The express, driven by Wai Yan Htet, en route from Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon hit the 12-wheel vehicle, Fusso, between milepost 123/6 and 123/7 on the Yangon-Mandalay highway. The driver of the 12-wheel vehicle escaped without any injuries.

Of the 28 persons onboard the express, including the driver, a monk and a man were killed on the scene and 11 other people, including four women, were seriously injured in the accident. The injured were taken in a vehicle from the highway police station to Pyu Township Hospital to receive medical treatment.

The Dawbgonide Highway Police have filed charges of reckless driving against the driver.—Than Oo (Laymyethna)

Tourists continuously visit Myanmar through Tachilek border check point

In order to experience stunning scenery and the culture of local ethnic people, foreign tourists continuously enter Myanmar via the Tachilek/Mae Sai border checkpoint according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. The ministry reported that the total number of day trippers to the Tachilek border town between April 1 and 5 this year is 107.

A total of 140 tourists from Thailand and other foreign countries visited Maing Phat-Kengtung. In addition the number of tourists with visas on arrival was 121, it said.

Most day trippers visited well-known destinations in Tachilek such as the Tarlot Market, the Bayinnaung Statue, the Maha Myatmuni Pagoda, the Shwedagon Pagoda, the National Landmark Gardens, the Arkha Market, and the Chinese temple.—Myanmar Digital News
**Onion exports plunge 70% this year**

SOME 18,400 tonnes of onions worth US$7 million were exported to foreign trade partners in the 2017-2018 fiscal year (FY), down 70 per cent compared with the 2016-2017 FY.

The sharp drop in the export volume might be attributed to the temporary suspension on exports due to the soaring price in the local market last year. Onions are now back in the export market, said U Myat Soe, a member of the Mandalay onion merchant group.

Onions are primarily sent to the foreign market through the border gates, as they are perishable, and have a high domestic consumption rate, fetching a high price in the local market.

Myanmar’s onions have penetrated markets in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, China, Bulgaria, India, Bangladesh, Japan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Mexico, Viet Nam and Venezuela.

There are some 40,000 acres of onion plantations growing the winter and monsoon crops. Nearly one million tonnes of onions are produced every year. Some 900,000 tonnes are kept aside for domestic consumption, before they are exported after excluding the rotten onions. The onion supply chain is not stable, as extensive acres are available for cultivation when they fetch a good price at the end of the harvest season. Onion plantation acres decrease when onions prices are low at the end of the crop season.

The onion price is high when the supply is low. The price drops when there is a glut in the market. As a result, the onion market is unstable every year. Before 2010, onions were banned from export until the country had achieved self-sufficiency. Onion exports started during the previous government’s tenure. During the 2016-2017 FY, some 66,010 tonnes of onions were exported, with 13.17 per cent being excess supply. —Zar Lin Thu (AMIA)

**Tissue-culture banana exports likely to fetch $50m this FY**

The export of tissue-culture bananas through the border gates is expected to bring in some US$50 million in the coming 2018-2019 fiscal year (FY), according to a report in Myanmar Alinn.

The bananas are sent to neighbouring countries through the Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Kapkitee and Kengtung gates. Tissue-culture bananas are primarily grown in Myitkyina and Waingmaw areas of Kachin State.

Tissue-culture bananas are mainly shipped to China, while a small portion goes to Thailand. The land cost for the cultivation of tissue-culture bananas is exorbitant in Kachin State, said a banana grower.

The bananas have to be grown in organic farms. All the produce is sent to China, and therefore, to maintain their quality, growers do not use chemical fertilisers.

Tissue-culture bananas are grown on 25,000 acres in Waingmaw Township. The cultivation lands are extended every year. Chinese agriculturists visit the banana farms to provide information on growing methods. The growers depend on China’s demand. Some 150,000 tonnes of tissue-culture bananas are exported to China yearly. Also, it is a substitute crop for poppy. Advanced technology helps raise the yield, said U Yan Ja Seng, a grower from Myitkyina. According to the statistics of a grower from Waingmaw Township, there are 40,000 acres of tissue-culture banana plantations in the country. In the 2015-2016 FY, more than Ks700 million were earned through the tissue-culture sector and some Ks600 million was made in the 2016-2017 FY. —Myat Thu (AMIA)
Achievement of Ministry of Education in the past two years

BY Khin Yadana

MINISTRY of Education is the ministry that is primarily conducting human resource development works. During the second year period for the people, with an aim of having more education opportunities and for students to acquire better quality education, the Ministry of Education is implementing works outlined in the National Education Law, National Education Amendment Law and National Education Strategic Plan 2016-2021.

Ministry of Education identified and designated nine sectors to implement the National Education Strategic Plan aims and 12 priority works were set. Following is the interview with Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi on works conducted for the people by the ministry during the second year period.

Q. Please tell about the aim of the ministry and the policy matters.

A. Ministry of Education has formed a commission and committees for the national education sector development. According to National Education Law and with the consent of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw a 21-member National Education Policy Commission was formed in 28 September 2016, a National Curriculum Committee was formed in 9 November and a National Quality Assurance Assessment Committee was formed in January 2017. The Ministry of Education is training and producing good human resource who cooperates and work together, are dutiful and responsible, are capable of being inventive and entrepreneurial with a policies of no discrimination at all education level and at all school attending ages, no one is left out and no drop-out from schools.

Q. As part of educational transformation, what sort of changes is made at primary education? What was done at the basic education level?

A. Starting from the primary level, a KG + 12 System was implemented. From academic year 2016-2017, all five years old children are attending KG and all six years old children are attending Grade-1. The teachings were in a new curriculum, new text books and new teachers guide books.

At the basic education level, with an aim of providing education opportunities, schools were upgraded based not only on the number of students but also based on distance. As such 3,320 schools and 5,100 schools were upgraded during academic years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 respectively. A total of 8,420 schools were upgraded during the two-year period.

All students were provided with a set of text books, six exercise books and a school uniform for free and compulsory primary education. To continue with middle and high school level education after acquiring primary education Ministry of Education is striving toward providing a set of text books and school enrolment without any payments during the enrolment week.

Q. What has the Ministry of Education done toward education for all?

A. With the cooperation of UNICEF and Kubota Company, educational supports like exercise books and school bags were provided to students with hearing and sight impairments. In addition to scholarships provided to students facing financial difficulties in acquiring an education, during academic year 2017-18, more students from far-off and distant places, students with hearing and sight impairments were able to attend schools as supports were provided.

School development funds for basic education schools were provided, libraries established and repair, maintenance, extension and new construction were conducted for dangerous school building, school buildings damaged due to natural disasters and crowded school buildings.

Q. What has been done toward school curriculum?

A. Curriculum for primary level is being amended and raised with the cooperation of JICA. Training courses on new curriculum for KG in academic year 2016-2017 and for Grade-1 in academic year 2017-2018 were being conducted for teachers while textbooks and teachers’ guide book were being distributed free. Courses for teachers will be held in the 2018 summer school holidays to start a new curriculum for Grade-2 in academic year 2018-19. The Ministry is striving toward printing and free distribution of new curriculums to Grade-3 and Grade-6 during academic year 2019-2020.

SEE PAGE 7
Primary education is the corner stone of the entire education system

FROM PAGE-6

Q. Explain about the ministry’s work on testing and assessment sector.

A. Conferences on raising the basic education quality were held annually in Nay Pyi Taw. Much depends on the quality of the teacher in order to raise the education level. Due to the weakness in the promotion system for teachers, even though primary education is the corner stone of the entire education system, most primary teachers were being promoted to middle and high school teachers. In order to retain and prevent the reduction in numbers of qualified and experienced primary teachers, these teachers should be promoted and remains as primary teachers. Specialised subjects of middle and high school teachers should be the subject that they taught. Two-year education colleges are being upgraded to four-year education degree colleges and through all the above, more qualified teachers will exist in all levels of the education sector resulting in a higher quality education that produces high quality students.

Q. What are the extra-curricular and life-long learning for those who are unable to continue formal education?

A. Arrangements were being made for those who are unable to continue formal education. New arrangement was being made for those who are unable to continue formal education.

Q. How many teachers and students organisations were formed during the two-year period in the higher education sector?

A. In the 133 universities and colleges, 53 teachers organisations and 90 students unions were established.

Q. What is the future plan of the ministry on raising the quality of education?

A. There are many challenges to Ministry of Education in raising the education quality and reforming the education such as assisting those who are facing difficulties in acquiring education, fulfilling requirements in the regions, retaining students in school and reducing drop-outs, meeting the requirement for school rooms due to rising number of students, having a good student-teacher ratio, raising the quality of the teachers and curriculum, changing assessment and examination system, changing from rote-learning to active or meaningful learning, raising the ethnic nationals literature, history and culture etc.

Attempts are being made to raise the education level and for the education system to become sustainable according to National Education Strategic Plan. Reform in education will be divided into basic education, higher education, vocational and technical training sectors and implemented in cooperation with parents, guardians, the public, development partner organisations, Hlahtaw representatives, states/regions government and related ministries.
Two committees were formed as a mobile team to issue a certificate of identity (CI) for some 1,033,174 workers in Thailand.

By Sayary Mya (MFA)

I am writing this article from Yangon, the economic and business hub of Myanmar, at a time when all the hazards forebode about chaotic situations in the northern Rakhine State of the nation, where there is neither genocide nor ethnic cleansing nor war crimes. “Come April” and see by yourself.

I am a simple senior citizen who is retired government employee, but not from the Myanmar tourism industry. Thingyan or Water Festival is just around the corner in April in Myanmar, and you and your dear ones may be cordially invited to join the merry making, while the golden opportunity to interact or to do business. Thingyan derives from brahmisk samantam, which means “transit of the Sun from Fleece to Aries.” It is the Myanmar New Year Festival and usually falls around mid-April. It is a Buddhist festival celebrated over a period of four to five days culminating in the New Year. The dates of the Thingyan Festival are calculated according to the Burmese (Myanmar) calendar. Thingyan dates are observed as public holidays throughout Myanmar and are part of the summer holidays at the end of the school year. Water-throwing or dousing one another from any shape or form of vessel or container that delivers water is the distinguishing feature of this festival and may be done on the first four days of the festival.

You are safe

When many people are celebrating Water Festival with the slang word “Water Party”, security police are on full alert across the country at every nook and cranny, in order to prevent crimes.

Life of Thingyan in Myanmar is Faduk

Everybody is happy and joyful, taking part and enjoying every possible way in the water party. It is the eve of Myanmar New Year, and each and everyone is wearing the sweet smile and joy in their hearts with the uptight mood.

We are especially proud of our natural flower “Faduk”, filled with strong bright yellow color, sky rocketing in the air with the sweet fragrance. We ever Faduk in the vase and received in front the Buddha images, while the women young and old where Faduk on top of the hairstyle.

During Thingyan Festival, Faduk is the symbol of love of the entire people of the country. One may feel the sweet fragrance of Faduk in this ever-memorable moment as everybody chants “Too Pu…Too Pu…while they sing, dance, jump and shout.

Cold, clean and clear water is poured among each other with love, happiness and joy.

Why Myanmar?

Myanmar has some of the world’s greatest heritage sites. I hate to use the word “rival”, but our pagodas and temples are not less in grandeur when compared to similar cultural sites in the region. The ancient cities in Myanmar are well preserved and accessible to the tourists and visitors.

Thingyan is comparable to other festivities in the region such as the Songkran in Laos, the Songkran in Thailand, the Phagwa in Nepal, the Bihu New Year and the Bibu festival of Assam.

Thingyan, namely the nathya (sweet delicate scent)/grinding ceremony, the nathya pouring ceremony and the water festival.

On the evening of New Year’s Eve, Rakhine girls assemble to grind blocks of nantha sandalwood used as a traditional ointment in Myanmar on a kyaukpyin (a flat, circular stone used to grind sandalwood, as part of a competition. The following morning, the Rakhine committee members late in the morning to the market to get the needed ingredients for an状s to offer to the parents in order to request for a gesture of ushering the New Year.

The author of the article would like to take this opportunity to include some other traditions of nationalities.

Mon State

As part of Thingyan traditions, the Mon people offer a sterile fish called Thingyan rice, which consists of rice, dried snakehead fish, a generous sprinkle of fish sauce, flower of beetroot and served alongside a salad of green mango.

Tamshkiy Region

The Bamar of Dawei and Mergui regions useriages to present food items to accompany Thanlzon Kyar (mytical tiger) dance performances.

In Chittagong Hill Tracts

The author while serving as a Myanmar diplomat, had been to Bandarban District of Chittagong Hill Tracts some years ago and had participated in Thingyan Festival there. It is in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh. Marma’s people organize water pouring games or dousing one another from vessels in their villages. The main participants are young boys and girls. Apart from water pouring, they also visit the monastics to make special offerings and pray for well-being in the new year. People commonly follow the lunar calendar produced in Rakhine state of Myanmar.

Conclusion

The very act of splashing and pouring water at each other is complimented with Metta (loving kindness), Karuna (compassion), Vayu (equi-

PHOTO: MNA

Regional traditions

Over the years, since a lot of untrue and unconfirmed news on alleged atrocities in Rakhine State are spreading like wild fire in the international media, I am taking the liberty in describing the Rakhine Traditional Water Festival.

It’s alright in Rakhine State

Almost all indigenous eth-

The article titled “Come April” and see by yourself. It is offered to neighbors as a gift of goodwill.

OPINION

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Shan State

The Shan people call Thing-

The Rakhine people also have their own New Year water festival, which is the most noteworthy of all traditional festivals.

The Rakhine people have three unique customs that form
The global New Light of Myanmar

French rail strike has cost around 100 million euros: CEO

PARIS (France) — The head of French railway operator SNCF said on Monday that rolling strikes that began last week have cost the company around 100 million euros ($123 million) as staff carried out further stoppages.

Monday marked the fourth day of the strikes, which unions have vowed to continue until at least 28 June unless the government backs down on its reform plan for the state-owned operator.

SNCF chief Guillaume Pepy told BFM television the action has so far caused losses of around 20 million euros per strike day, though the disruptions often spill into non-strike days.

Rail workers began their strikes on two out of every five working days last week to protest the government's planned overhaul of the operator. PHOTO: AFP

UK govt to launch crime blitz as violence spikes

LONDON — The British government’s new initiative to curb crime, backed by £40 million in funding, aims to steer young people away from crime and tackle violent drug-dealing gangs.

British Home Secretary Amber Rudd will vow on Monday to do “whatever it takes” to curb crime as she unveils a new multi-million-pound response to a surge in violence in London and elsewhere.

The new initiative, backed by £40 million (46 million euros, $56 million) in funding, aims to steer young people away from crime and tackle violent drug-dealing gangs, according to Britain’s interior ministry.

It comes after a deadly start to 2018 in the British capital in which a spate of stabbings and shootings has left more than 50 people dead — pushing its murder rate higher than New York’s in recent months.

“As a government we will never stand by while acid is thrown or knives wielded,” Rudd will say in a speech in London.

“I am clear that we must do whatever it takes to tackle this so that no parent has to bury their child.

“A crucial part of our approach will be focusing on and investing more in prevention and early intervention.”

Rudd is set to announce the introduction within weeks of new laws targeting offensive weapons, including action to stop knives being sent to residential addresses after they are bought on the internet.

She will also call on social media companies to do more to rid the web of violent gang content.

There are funds for new “community projects” for young people and a coordination centre targeting national drug dealing networks, the interior ministry said.

Following a rise in violent crime in towns and cities across Britain, the Conservative government has faced criticism for a reduction in officers.

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said Sunday that Rudd and Prime Minister Theresa May were “ignoring their record” and there were 21,000 fewer officers than in 2010.

But the government insists the rise in robbery, knife and gun crime is due to improvements in police recording and a rise in drug dealing.

London’s Metropolitan Police deployed an additional 300 officers over the weekend to areas most impacted by crime after a particularly violent week.

Mayor Sadiq Khan, who has devolved powers over policing, announced he would host a summit on Tuesday, as he faced pressure to act over the crime spike.

Rudd, Police Commissioner Cressida Dick, London MPs and other local leaders from across the capital were among those invited, according to City Hall.

The Home Office declined to confirm whether Rudd would attend the meeting.—AFP

Four die in shoe factory fire in Indian capital

NEW DELHI — At least four people were killed in a fire at a shoe factory here on Monday, officials said.

“The fire broke out at the Raja Park factory in Sultanpuri this morning when some 12 workers were inside. While four of them died of burns and suffocation after getting trapped in the blaze, we managed to evacuate others,” a fire official said.

As many as nine fire tenders were pressed into service to douse the flames, he said. “It took nearly three hours to contain the fire,” the official said.—Xinhua

UK police say man in van arrested outside Buckingham Palace

LONDON — London police say a man driving a van has been arrested outside Buckingham Palace on suspicion of a public order offense. Police said roads were closed and cordons put in place outside the palace on Monday while the suspicious vehicle was assessed. The restrictions were lifted later Monday morning.

Police say a man in his early 30s was arrested while driving a white Ford Transit. He was not identified or charged.—AFP

Dozens injured in New York bus crash: police

WASHINGTON, (United States) — Dozens of New York teenagers returning from a school trip to Eastern Europe were injured when their bus crashed on the journey home to Long Island, police said.

New York State Police Major David Candelaria said of the 44 people on board Sunday evening, two were seriously wounded and five moderately, with the rest of the injuries minor.

The passengers included 38 students aged between 16 and 18. Images on local media showed the bus, owned by New Jersey-based Journey Bus Line, with its roof sheared off after reportedly striking an overpass on the Southern State Parkway in Lakeview, around 30 miles (48 kilometers) southeast of Manhattan.—AFP

BRIEFS
Erdogan tells Putin of concern over attacks in Syria’s E.Ghouta

ANKARA (Turkey) — President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday expressed concern to Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin over attacks in Eastern Ghouta, the Turkish presidency said, after an alleged chemical attack killed dozens of people.

“The President expressed concern about the attacks in Douma and Eastern Ghouta and emphasised the importance of preventing civilian deaths and working together to deliver humanitarian aid,” said a Turkish presidential source after telephone talks between the two leaders.

Turkey and Russia have been on opposing sides of the conflict in Syria, with Moscow a chief ally of President Bashar al-Assad but Ankara backing rebels seeking to oust him.

Yet Turkey has worked closely in the last months with Russia and Assad’s other main ally Iran in a bid to bring peace to Syria. Last week, Erdogan hosted a summit in Syria in Ankara with President Hassan Rouhani of Iran and Putin.

The presidential source said that in the telephone talks the two leaders expressed “satisfaction” with the results of the Syria summit.

Turkey has recently largely steered clear of criticising Putin and Russia in public over Kremlin policy on Syria. Rescue workers said dozens of civilians had been killed on Saturday in a chlorine gas attack on Douma, in the former rebel stronghold of Eastern Ghouta — claims denied by Assad’s regime and Russia.

The Turkish foreign ministry at the weekend said there was a “strong suspicion” that Assad’s regime was responsible for the attack.—AFP

BANGUI (Central African Republic) — UN troops and an armed group exchanged gunfire during the night near the president’s residence in the Central African Republic, a security source said on Monday.

The incident in the capital Bangui came hours after United Nations and Central African forces launched an operation targeting armed groups in a mainly Muslim district of the city. At least two people were killed and dozens wounded during the joint operation, according to UN and medical sources.

The security source said the exchanges late on Sunday took place after an armed group armed group arrived “by the Ndeke Luka radio station by the road that leads to the residence” of President Faustin-Archange Touadera.

“The group was repulsed by UN peacekeepers from Egypt,” the source said.

A spokesman for the UN peacekeeping force (MINUSCA), Herve Verhoosel, said 11 peacekeepers, mostly Egyptian, were among the injured in Sunday’s joint operation.

The operation, which had targeted, the “bases of certain criminal groups”, would continue “until the goal is achieved”, Verhoosel told AFP.

Eight people belonging to the armed groups Force and 5/50 had been detained by MINUSCA and ammunition had been seized, he added.

The operation follows a resurgence in violence in the flashpoint PK5 neighbourhood of Bangui. The Central African Republic has been struggling to return to stability since the country exploded into bloodshed after the 2013 overthrow of longtime leader Francois Bozize by the mainly Muslim Seleka rebel alliance.

France intervened militarily to push out the Seleka alliance but the country remains plagued with violence pitting groups competing for control of resources and areas of influence.—AFP

Strike on Syria air base kills 14, including Iranian forces: monitor

BEIRUT, (Lebanon) — An early-morning strike on a Syrian government air base in the country’s centre killed 14 fighters, including Iranian forces allied to the regime, a monitoring group said on Monday.

“At least 14 fighters were killed in the strike on the T-4 airport, among them Iranian forces,” said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor.

Syrian state media had earlier reported dead and wounded in the strike, without giving casualty figures.

The T-4 base lies in Syria’s central Homs province and is also known as the Tiyas airport.

Forces from regime allies Russia and Iran, as well as fighters from the Tehran-backed Lebanese Hezbollah militia, are known to have a presence there, said Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman.

The Observatory, which has a wide network of sources across war-ravaged Syria, said it could not confirm who carried out the attack on the T-4 base.

Israel carried out strikes against a Syrian government base in the country’s centre in February, with the Observatory identifying it at the time as T-4. Israel has struck targets inside Syria on multiple occasions throughout the country’s seven-year war, including those linked to Iran and Hezbollah or to Assad’s chemical weapons programme.

An Israeli military spokesman declined to comment. The raid came as worldwide outrage mounted over a reported chemical weapons attack on a rebel-controlled town outside the Syrian capital.

UN and Central African forces have launched a joint operation targeting armed groups in a mainly Muslim district of the capital Bangui. PHOTO: AFP

Myanma Port Authority Holiday Notice

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 13th April 2018 to 17th April 2018 Thingyan Water Festival (New Year Public Holiday), Ladang, UnLoading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR LEGAL ADVISORY FOR ELABORATION OF CYBER LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Ministry of Transport and Communications (MoTC) invites eligible firm or Lead firm with sub-consulting firm’s (“Consultant”) to indicate their interest to provide their services for Legal Advisory for Elaboration of Cyber Legal and Policy Framework program, which aims to prepare a draft Cyber Law and policies related to Cyber Security, e-Commerce and e-Government for Myanmar under the World Bank/IDA funded Telecommunications Sector Reform Project.

The Consultant is requested to submit the Eol documents to the address mentioned below April30, 2018. Interested Consultant should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the program.

Further information can be obtained from the below addresses during office hours 09:30 to 16:30 hours and www.motec.gov.mm.

Attention: Ministry of Transport and Communications Post and Telecommunication Department Attention: U Than Htun Aung, Office No. 2, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar Tel: +95 67 407435 Fax: +95 67 407539 E-mail: thanhhtunau@pidmyanmar.com, begin scintaye@ptd.gov.mm, tspproject2014@gmail.com

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 13th to 17th April 2018 “THINGYAN FESTIVAL” under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar
Russian Aerospace Forces to get three S-400 regimental sets this year — Defence Ministry

MOSCOW — The Russian Aerospace Forces will get three regimental sets of the S-400 air defence system this year, a Russian Defence Ministry official told TASS in the run-up to the Air Defence Day.

“In 2017, four missile regiments were armed with S-400 Triumph missile systems. Other three S-400 regimental sets will enter service with the Russian Aerospace Forces in 2018,” the source said.

The S-400 Triumph is the Russian long-and medium-range air defence missile system intended to hit attack and reconnaissance planes, including stealth aircraft, and any other air target. The S-400 can engage up to 80 targets at a time at a distance of 400 km and an altitude of 30 km. Deputy Commander of Russia’s Aerospace Force Viktor Gumenny said last April that Russia S-400 air defence systems had begun receiving missiles capable of destroying targets in the near space.

—Tass

Northern Ireland: a fragile peace tested by Brexit

LONDON—Two decades after the Good Friday Agreement formally ended the conflict in Northern Ireland, the peace process remains fragile and Brexit is provoking concerns over its durability.

The accord, signed on 10 April, 1998, by the British and Irish governments and local political parties, ended 30 years of unrest that had left more than 3,500 dead.

It came four years after the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which had waged a deadly campaign of bombings and shootings in Northern Ireland and mainland Britain against London’s rule on the island, declared a historic ceasefire. “I have been a member of the Labour Party for 54 years and a parliamentarian for 32 years and nothing in my life has compared with 5.30 pm on Good Friday, 10 April, 1998,” Paul Murphy, a British Foreign Office minister for Northern Ireland at the time, told reporters as the anniversary approached.

Since then violence by the IRA and unionist paramilitary groups fighting for continued British rule of the province, has receded.

But communities continue to be divided along sectarian lines and political tensions remain—most pointedly around devolved governance.—AFP
Japan foreign minister asks IAEA to verify future N Korea nuke deals

TOKYO — Foreign Minister Taro Kono and the head of the UN nuclear watchdog met in Tokyo on Monday to discuss how the organization might resume inspections of North Korean nuclear facilities if upcoming dialogue with the North yields progress toward its denuclearization.

“We want you to make use of your knowledge and experience,” Kono told International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Yukiya Amano at the outset of their meeting, open to the press.

Ahead of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's planned summits with South Korean President Moon Jae In and US President Donald Trump, both officials said it is still unclear which direction Pyongyang will take on its nuclear programme.

“Any agreement will be meaningless if it isn’t verifiable, so we need the help of the IAEA, and your opinion as specialist in the event that an agreement is made between the United States and North Korea,” Kono said.

The Japanese government has offered to cover the initial costs of IAEA inspections if North Korea agrees to resume them.

The IAEA has not had direct access to North Korean nuclear facilities since its inspectors monitoring them were kicked out in April 2009. North Korea carried out its second nuclear test a month later, and has since conducted four more. “If some kind of agreement is reached this time, the IAEA must fully carry out verification activities so it doesn’t end up like last time,” Amano said.—Kyodo News

China says trade talks with US ‘impossible under current conditions’

BEIJING, China — China said Monday trade talks with the United States are “impossible” under current conditions after President Donald Trump tweeted that he saw an end to the dispute “Up to now, Chinese and US officials have not held any negotiations on the trade dispute,” foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters during a regular press briefing.

“Under the current conditions, it is impossible for the two sides to have any negotiations on this issue,” Geng added.

Asian markets rose earlier in the day as fears about a potentially catastrophic China-US trade war were tempered by hopes the two sides will be able to hammer out an agreement. On Friday, Trump had warned of tariffs on an additional $100 billion worth of Chinese imports, to which Beijing responded by saying it would stand firm. But on Sunday he seemed to back off, tweeting that he saw an end to the dispute: “China will take down its trade barriers because it is the right thing to do,” he wrote.

However, top advisor Larry Kudlow, who has often suggested the tariffs might not go into effect, warned Friday the announcements were not negotiating tactics.

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the White House hoped to negotiate but acknowledged a trade war was a possibility.—AFP

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US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the White House hoped to negotiate but acknowledged a trade war was a possibility.—AFP
Prince Harry’s fiancee craves ‘Diana 2.0’ role: biography

LONDON — Meghan Markle has her heart set on becoming “Diana 2.0,” according to a new biography of Prince Harry’s fiancee that details her lifelong embrace of good causes but also points to a calculating streak.

The US actress, who is set to marry her royal beau on 19 May, is fiercely protective of “Brand Meghan” and sidelines people as she moves ahead in life, according to people who know her cited in the book.

“Meghan: A Hollywood Princess,” which is due out in Britain on Thursday, details how the 36-year-old “Suit” star ditched her first husband in a way that also cost her a lifelong friend.

The biography was authored by Andrew Morton, the British royal writer who penned the blockbuster “Diana: Her True Story,” with the late princess’s covert assistance.

**Diana comparisons**

Morton also details her fascination with Harry’s mother Diana around the time of her death in 1997, watching her funeral in tears and old tapes of her marriage to Prince Charles.

Family friends said she was intrigued by Diana “not just for her style but for her independent humanitarian mission, seeing her as a role model”.

Her childhood friend Ninaki Priddy is cited as saying: “She was always fascinated by the royal family. She wants to be princess Diana 2.0.”

Morton says comparisons with Diana are inevitable, given her humanitarian work and glamorous appeal. However, he notes the crucial distinction between the timid Diana, who married Charles aged 20, and the 36-year-old Hollywood professional.

“In some ways, the groomed and camera-ready Ms Markle was the woman Diana always strove to become,” he wrote.

**Rising networker**

The book also claims that as she finally found success as an actress, Markle shed her old acquaintances — including her film producer husband Trevor Engelson, who helped her get on the acting ladder with early parts.

“Her friends in Los Angeles noticed the change in her now that she was on the way up,” Morton wrote. “She no longer had the time for friends she had known for years.”

“A networker to her fingertips, she seemed to be carefully recalibrating her life, forging new friendships with those who could burnish and develop her career.”

Markle had been with England’s Prince Harry since 2004 and they married in Jamaica in 2011.

Shortly after their engagement, she landed her signature role as Rachel Zane in the US legal drama television series “Suits.” Filmed in Toronto, their relationship became long-distance as she became a star.

The marriage collapsed in 2013. “Trevor went from cherishing Meghan to, as one friend observed, ‘feeling like he was a piece of something stuck to the bottom of her shoe’,” it reads.

Another friend said the decision to end the marriage was made by Markle and another that she sent her rings back in the post.

**Impressive student**

Markle’s parents split when she was two and divorced five years later. She went to a private school and was remembered for her strong sense of right and wrong. Aged 11, her letter-writing campaign got the consumer goods giant Procter & Gamble to change a washing-up commercial, referring to people rather than just women.

Markle graduated in theatre and international relations at Northwestern University.

She landed a six-week internship as a press officer at the US embassy in Argentina.

If she had stayed with the State Department she would have been an excellent addition to the US diplomatic corps. She had all that it takes to be a successful diplomat,” said Mark Krischik, her superior in Buenos Aires.

**Ancestors royals and slaves**

In his new biography, “Meghan: A Hollywood Princess,” Andrew Morton says the 36-year-old “Suit” star “wants to be princess Diana 2.0.”

The book finds Markle is descended from both British royalty and slaves. On her mother’s side, she is descended from slaves who worked on cotton plantations in Georgia. On her father’s, she is a descendant of king Robert I of Scotland. Robert the Bruce reigned from 1306 to 1329.

Diana’s trusted biographer concludes that Markle “will make the monarchy seem more inclusive and relevant to multicultural Britain”.

Armed with a sharp mind, sophistication, beauty and talent, Markle “will complement her husband and the august institution she has married into, bringing a freshness, diversity and warmth to the chilly corridors of Buckingham Palace.”—AFP

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Americans world’s biggest TV addicts watching four hours a day

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The US and Britain remain the world’s two biggest exporters of TV programmes and formats, ahead of France, Germany and Turkey, whose family-oriented soaps have been big hits across the Middle East, South America and the Balkans.

But the report found that there were fewer big international blockbuster shows like “The Voice” than in the past.

“Local productions always go down best” in most markets, said Avril Blondelot of Eurodata TV. She said the big trend was for producers and TV channels to “create content aimed a particular niche audiences (young people, women or older people) rather than look for something that tried to take in a mass cross-over audience.”

Paul Yougbuth of the TAPe consultancy told MIPTV delegates that there was a lot of “fake news” about the death of TV and insisted that “consumption is not decreasing. “New US shows like ‘The Good Doctor’ and ‘Roseanne’ show that linear (traditional) TV can still draw very high live audiences,” he added.—AFP

Replay services on average “added an extra eight percent to audiences” in the 35 countries where they were measured.

And millennials and young adults were spending more time on their mobile phones, often catching up with programmes that way. In Sweden, one of the most digitally advanced countries in the world, young adults watched slightly less than two hours of TV a day.

Eurodata TV found that most young people who watched programmes on the Internet and on replay services were logging on for shows aimed specifically at them. These included reality shows and youth dramas whose audiences were sometimes more than twice as big on the internet as they were for broadcasts.

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Three quit in protest as #MeToo scandal rocks Nobel literature academy

STOCKHOLM — Three prominent members of the Swedish Academy resigned on Friday in protest at close ties between the institution, which awards the Nobel Literature Prize, and a high-profile man accused of sexual assault.

The Academy has been reeling since it was revealed as part of the #MeToo campaign in November that several members, as well as members’ wives and daughters, had allegedly been assaulted by the well-known figure at the centre of the scandal.

Sweden's Dagens Nyheter newspaper broke the news, publishing the testimony of 18 women claiming to have been assaulted or raping by one of the most influential figures in Stockholm’s cultural scene.

The Academy has since cut all ties with the man, who has not been publicly identified. But his identity is generally known by the public as he is a high-profile person in cultural circles. The alleged sexual assaults occurred between 1996 and 2017, according to Dagens Nyheter.

One of the resigning members Peter Englund said the scandal had deeply divided the Swedish literary world.

"Over time, a crack that appeared has continued to grow," he said in a letter to the Aftonbladet newspaper, adding that the Academy's permanent secretary Sara Danius had been subject to "unjustified" criticism.

The three men are lifetime members and cannot technically resign, but there is nothing forcing them to attend meetings. Of the academy's 18 members, five are no longer active after two women, Kerstin Ekman and Lotta Lotass, went on leave for several years. Bjorn Wiman, the culture editor of Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter, said the resignations are "a disaster" for an academy "in ruins". His counterpart at the Aftonbladet newspaper, Asa Linderborg, said "the tower of Babel is crumbling".

The allegations against the man were first revealed as part of the #MeToo campaign exposing sexual misconduct, which began in Hollywood and went on to shake artistic, media and political circles in Sweden, one of the most gender equal countries in the world. In March, Stockholm’s public prosecutor’s office announced that part of the investigation, into claims of alleged rapes and assaults between 2013 and 2015, had been called off as the statute of limitation had passed or due to lack of evidence. —AFP

Gone girl: Hamilton deletes ‘Thank you Jesus’ grid girls post

SAKHIR (BAHRAIN) — Lewis Hamilton created another social media storm on Friday when he backed the return of grid girls at this year’s Monaco Grand Prix — and then removed the post.

The defending four-time world champion had posted a grab from another Instagram user, which had a picture of some grid girls and added “Thank you Jesus”.

The defending four-time world champion had posted a grab from another Instagram user, which had a picture of some grid girls and added “Thank you Jesus”.

The picture-story was in support of the Monaco and Russian Grands Prix indicating they plan to defy Formula One’s decision to use ‘grid kids’ instead of girls this year. —AFP
Reed wins Masters, Matsuyama 19th

AUGUSTA, Georgia — Japan’s Hideki Matsuyama ended his seventh Masters in 19th place after Sunday’s fourth round, 12 strokes behind winner Patrick Reed of the United States.

Matsuyama shot four birdies against a bogey for a 3-under-par 69 to finish at a 3-under 273. Japan’s Satoshi Kodaira, who was five strokes off the pace after the first round of his maiden Masters appearance, cancelled out four birdies with two bogeys to end in a tie for 10th with a 275. America’s Jordan Spieth’s tournament was fifth with a 285 total. Reed, who led since the second round, shot a 71 for a 273 to earn his first major tournament victory.

“I feel like I gave it my best. These shots and approaches, my putting overall — I was able to stick it out for four days in poor conditions, so that was good,” said Matsuyama, whose best finish at the Masters was fifth in 2015.

Matsuyama fell from sixth to eighth in the world rankings, while Reed jumped 13 spots to No 11. Despite six birdies including one on the last hole, American Rickie Fowler finished one stroke back of Reed, while American Jordan Spieth’s tournament-best 64-under was not enough to outdo his 2-under 74 on Day 2, landing him in third with a 275. Japan’s Satoshi Kodaira, who was five strokes off the pace after the first round of his maiden Masters appearance, cancelled out four birdies with four bogeys to end in a tie for 28th with an even 288. “If you just look at the results you’d think I played all right, but there’s a little more to it. Since I couldn’t get into the 60s I want revenge,” said Kodaira, whose best days were 71s in the first and third rounds. Tiger Woods, making his first appearance at one of golf’s major tournaments since he missed the cut at the 2015 PGA Championship, finished at 1-over 72 to advance to the final four for the first time since 1984.

Ibrahmovic’s late spark not enough to power Galaxy again

LOS ANGELES — Johnny Russell and Daniel Salloi scored second half goals as Sporting Kansas City grinded out a well-deserved 2-0 victory on Sunday night over the Los Angeles Galaxy.

The Galaxy were hoping for another miracle late finish by Zlatan Ibrahimovic who gave his team a lift when he finally entered as a substitute in the 62nd minute, but couldn’t erase Sporting’s two goal lead.

Before the game Ibrahimovic had warned Galaxy fans not to expect a repeat of his remarkable debut last week.

The Swedish superstar made a sensational start to his Major League Soccer career last week, scoring twice after coming on as a late substitute in the Galaxy’s 4-3 comeback win over Los Angeles FC.

There were no fireworks this time around, but the 36-year-old striker did create some scoring chances including one where his playmaking helped lead to a shot off the woodwork.

There were other close calls but each time goalkeeper Tim Melia came up with the clutch save.

Ibrahimovic joined the Galaxy from Manchester United, signing a two-year deal last month.

Salloi opened the scoring by collecting a loose ball in the penalty box and blasting it past Galaxy keeper David Bingham for first place Sporting who improved to 4-1-1 on the season.

Scotland’s Russell celebrated his 28th birthday by dancing through the Galaxy defence pair of Ashley Cole and Daniel Steres and then poking it past a startled Bingham. AFP

Roma coach Di Francesco hoping for Barcelona ‘miracle’

ROME — Roma coach Eusebio Di Francesco has urged his side to believe in a “miracle” to overturn a 4-1 deficit against Barcelona and advance to the Champions League semi-finals on Tuesday.

“We have to believe in something important and go for it with great love and passion. They will play their best to confirm the result but we can also produce a miracle,” Di Francesco told a pre-match press conference.

“It’s difficult, but we have to believe. We stopped (Lionel) Messi (in the first leg) and we have to try to do it again tomorrow.”

Edin Dzeko scored a valuable away goal after own goals from Daniele De Rossi and Kostas Manolas in the Camp Nou, but the Italians need a remarkable comeback at the Stadio Olimpico to advance to final four for the first time since 1984.

Here are some talking points ahead of the quarter-final second leg clash:

Messi hoping for more Roman heroics

Barcelona star Lionel Messi returns to the Stadio Olimpico where his stunning header sealed the Champions League title in 2009 against Manchester United.

The Argentine — back from a hamstring problem and subbed in the first leg — warmed up with a hat-trick in a 3-1 win over Leganes Saturday as Barcelona equalled the record longest unbeaten run in La Liga history.

“I don’t see it as being tied up in any way,” said Barcelona coach Ernesto Valverde ahead of the return.

Messi and teammate Andres Iniesta are poised for a milestone of 100 Champions League appearances together. Iniesta is a veteran of 129 Champions League games, and Messi, 242.

Roma struggling at home

Roma have slipped to fourth in Serie A after a 2-0 home defeat to Fiorentina, making it three games without a win, and a seventh home defeat. Di Francesco’s side will be looking to avoid equaling the club’s record of eight home defeats in all competitions going back 70 years.

“Maybe Barcelona away are not the same team as at the Camp Nou, we will try to close down Messi wherever he is on the pitch,” said the Roma coach.

Roma have kept a clean sheet in all of their European games at home this season while the Catalan giants have struggled to get goals away in the Champions League, setting the scene for a low-key scoring affair in the Stadio Olimpico. — AFP

Patrick Reed of the United States pumps his fist after winning the Masters Tournament for his first major title in Augusta, Georgia, on April 8, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Zlatan Ibrahimovic from LA Galaxy (L) is tackled by Jimmy Medranda of Sporting Kansas City at the StarHub Centre. PHOTO: AFP