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State Counsellor stresses youth involvement in education reform on International Youth Day

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addressed the International Youth Day 2019 held at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II (MICC-II) Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

In her address State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said the day's event was held not only for youths but also for the entire education system. The theme of International Youth Day 2019 was transforming education with youth and looking at the theme will see two main points. The first was reform and another was education. For reform, two things can be considered. One was to reform the past

situation as it should be changed and another was to create a new future on our own and reforming.

There were slight differences in the two. For a country like Myanmar that was lagging behind in development both reforms were needed. It was important to change the status of being left behind in the past and to change what ought to be changed. In addition to this a status of being able to change and create the future was needed. A poem prayer was recalled when considering what changes were to be made. The poem prayer says may we have the courage to change.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the opening speech at the International Youth Day ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

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Vice President calls for readiness in facing natural disasters



Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspects the landslide in Thae Byu Gon Village in Paung Township yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

CHAIRMAN of the National Disaster Management Committee and Vice President U Henry Van Thio presided over a ceremony yesterday morning to provide relief assistance for the flood victims in Mon State.

Organized by the Myanmar Rice Federation, the ceremony was held at the Mon State Hall to donate a total of 2,250 rice bags, 20 million kyat and 370 bags of chemical fertilizers contributed by Myanmar Rice Millers' Association, Myanmar Rice Merchants Association and its branches from states/regions and wholesale commodity centers and individual rice merchants to the National Disaster Management Committee in the presence of Mon State's Chief Minister Dr Aye Zan, Deputy Ministers Rear Admiral Myint Nwe, U Tin Myint, U Hla Kyaw, U Soe Aung, departmental officials, Chairman of the Myanmar Rice

Federation U Ye Min Aung and representatives from partner associations.

In his speech, Vice President U Henry Van Thio said that local organizations and businesspersons joined hands with the government whenever natural disasters took place in Myanmar.

He also appreciated the donation made by the Myanmar Rice Federation and its partner associations for the flood victims in Mon State, and encouraged them to provide more support in relief and rehabilitation works of the government.

The Chairman and responsible persons of Myanmar Rice Federation presented 2,250 rice bags to the Vice President for the victims of natural disasters in Mon State.

The Chief Minister of Mon State Government and Deputy Minister U Soe Aung accepted

the cash donation of K20 million and 370 bags of chemical fertilizers.

U Soe Aung then gave the honorary certificates of the National Disaster Management Committee to the Chairman of Myanmar Rice Federation and the responsible persons after which words of thanks were given by the Chief Minister.

Then, the Vice President, together with the Chief Minister, the Deputy Ministers, the departmental officials, visited the temporary rescue camp in Kyaikmaraw Township, and comforted the flood victims, providing relief assistance of cash, rice, packs of dried noodles and canned fish.

They later proceeded to the rescue camps in the schools of Kyaikmaraw Township, and gave cash and relief materials to the flood victims who were forced to leave 7,706 houses in 26 villages

due to flash floods after torrential rains in and round their area.

The Vice President and party also went to inspect the search and rescue works at Thae Byu Gon village in Paung Township. U Myat Thu, Director General of Fire Services Department, and U Kyaw Myint Hlaing, Director General of Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department, presented the works of their departments at the disaster-affected areas.

In response to the explanation, the Vice President gave instructions to give priority to safety in conducting the ongoing search and rescue works and the forthcoming works.

At the site where the landslide occurred search and rescue works were conducted with a combined force totalling more than 500 personnel consisting of Tatmadaw, Police, Fire Department, Red Cross, civil society organizations and locals assisted by machines.

Next, the Vice President and party inspected a planned site at Bayintnaung Town new ward in Bilin Township to settle households affected yearly by flooding and inundation in Bilin Town where Thaton District General Administration Department District Administrator explained about the status of establishing new wards. The Vice President gave advice and comments to ensure coordination where required.

In the late afternoon the Vice President attended an emergency meeting of the Bago Region disaster management team held at the Bago Region government office Royal Hantha meeting hall. At the meeting the Vice President said Myanmar was facing the effect of climate

change like other countries of the world. According to weather experts monsoon will enter Myanmar late and will exit early. Although there would not be any changes in rainfall, the duration will be short and there would be more incidents of flash flooding and inundation and thus more care must be given toward strengthening dams and dikes. Water entry into the dams and reservoirs would be of shorter duration and thus more care must be taken toward effectively collecting water without waste. Not only irrigation personnel but the end user farmers must also be educated. Trees and forests that protect from the effect of climate change must be maintained and planting of trees must be conducted.

Prevention works must be conducted in places where natural disaster could occur and preventive exercises must be conducted. As Bago Region was the major producer of rice, if there were flooding and inundation, backup replacement support and assistance for replanting must be ready. Having correct and timely information was important in conducting search, rescue and rehabilitation works. Emphasis must be placed down to the grass roots for this. The Vice President advised the audience to hope for the best and to be prepared for the worst.

Afterwards Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein, Deputy Ministers, Region ministers and departmental officials attending the meeting explained about natural disaster protection works conducted. The meeting came to a close after concluding remarks by the Vice President.

— MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Vice President U Henry Van Thio presents cash assistance to flood victims at a temporary shelter in Kyaikmaraw, Mon State, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor stresses youth involvement in education reform ...

FROM PAGE-1

May we have the courage to change and have the ability to withstand the change and may we have enough foresight to differentiate what ought to be changed and what should not be changed.

Human beings were different from other animals in changing. Animals change through a long and slow process of evolution. Only human beings have the ability to create huge changes during a period of revolution. Due to those changes our world had become better or worse. It had progressed or regressed. That was why we all must think what ought to be changed, what were to be changed and how. Only a person with knowledge can implement this. We need knowledge and foresight. Looking at the word education or knowledge it is more meaningful to have both knowledge and foresight. The main aim of our education system was to have foresight. Providing education was to have foresight towards facing life problems. A decision must be correctly made on how to face and overcome an issue. That was why it would be more complete to have both knowledge and foresight. If knowledge alone was mentioned, it would mean the knowledge or education gained in a class. Having passed grades and acquiring degrees would not make us have foresight.

That was why our education system must aim towards having the ability in both knowledge and foresight. Youths are better than older persons in acquiring education. Due to sharing times between earning a livelihood and giving time for the family older persons could not give full time towards obtaining an education or knowledge. The advantage of youths was having all the time towards obtaining an education or knowledge. But not all youths have this advantage. This was something that needed to be changed. The education system must be all-inclusive enabling participation regardless of being rich or poor or from rural or urban areas. Only then can all youth have the main advantage they had over older persons and use it to the full extent. This would be a matter of the government. Efforts needed to be made to ensure that all youths acquire education according to the government policy.

The effort towards achieving an education would depend on whether Myanmar was rich or

poor. When a country was rich it could provide full support towards the youth education system. This could not be done to the full extent in a poor country. Myanmar was not a poor country but neither was it a developed country. She was striving towards development. Thus she could not use as much as she wanted on the education system. How could this be overcome? All this could be overcome through working together in cooperation.

Youths also need to take responsibility for their education. The government would take responsibility for establishing the best education system. Success could be achieved if everyone took care of their responsibilities. Regardless of how good an education system was, look at a rich and developed country and there still would be youth that were not good in education as well as those who were good in education. This did not depend on the country alone. It depended on the families and the youths themselves. For the education system to be changed with the participation of youths, youths must let the government know how best to use the time for the best benefit. This was to be a view of the youth. But having a view alone does not mean it was correct. All need to discuss and exchange views to arrive at an answer. Having an education or knowledge and foresight meant living a meaningful life. All must

"We want our country to have an education system that benefits our citizens equally, irrespective of whether they are rich or poor, from urban or rural areas."

have a belief of having an ability to give something to the world. This was the main point in an education system.

The main thing was to provide confidence to all Myanmar citizens who went through the education system to have a belief that they were people who would benefit the world. Some thought that this was something only an outstanding person could do. No. Whether a person was of high or low status, from urban or rural area, where ever they were they can all live a meaningful life that benefitted their neighbors. First was to have this will. Nowadays everyone had high values. It must not be forgotten that each one was a part of all. Life would be



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observes a booth at the International Youth Day ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw.
PHOTO: MNA

meaningless if we stood alone. A meaningful life was raising our values to the highest and using it for the best benefit of all. If this could be done we could say the education system was successful.

That was why youths should assist the government to let it know, for their sake as well as for the public, how to use the education system. If there were a will to change, change could be done quickly. In the past two three years the university education system had progressed. But this progress was slow compared to

Myanmar was lagging behind in development, socially and culturally, education was not dependent on social status or class. Myanmar's social and cultural traditions did not say education was for the upper class. There were no norms or standards in this country which said educated persons come from the upper class. There would not be such norms or standards in the future too. The type of education system that needed to be established was an education system where education could be obtained by anyone from any social class. At the moment there were private schools and public schools. To be quite frank about it, public schools should be developed. A system where the well-off parents send their children to private schools should not be encouraged.

Parents send their children to private schools with a view that private schools provide good education. Looking at the world, in some developed countries rich parents send their children to private schools. But some countries were not like that. Development was the same. Public schools were on the same level as private schools. Some were even better. Such a system should be established in Myanmar. We want our country to have an education system that benefits our citizens equally, irrespective of whether they are rich or poor, from urban or rural areas. On a day like today, the International Youth Day, such matters were to be discussed and suggested.

What should be done for

public schools to be developed and strengthened? How could support on our education system be increased? Some may have noticed the many changes in these two or three years. Two years was not that long. If a correct policy had been laid down, much progress and obvious changes could be made in two years. The progress and development of our education system must be in line with the world. Myanmar could not go against the world trend. Myanmar must develop as the world develops. Myanmar's good cultural practices and cultural values should not disappear. Youths need to take note of this. Youth normally envy what others are doing and imitate. But think through clearly. Education or knowledge is the ability to evaluate matters independently. It was not doing what others were doing. That was not the mindset of an educated or knowledgeable person. Myanmar youths must be given the ability to evaluate benefits for themselves as well as for their surroundings.

These abilities will provide innovative power for the future as well as to change the situation of the past. All must know that education or knowledge was not for one only. Some thought education was for one person only. This was due to an education system that competed for marks. With a view that the best person was the one with the highest mark, people forgot the other values of education. They thought education was to achieve the highest mark.

SEE PAGE-4

State Counsellor stresses youth involvement in education reform ...



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Union Ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman and officials pose for a group photo together with representatives of women organizations and youth organizations at the International Youth Day ceremony 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

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These mindsets need to be changed. The responsibility to change lies not only in the teachers and the students. Parents also have the responsibility. Some parents put much pressure on their children. Such pressures were not good for the children. Encouragement must be made towards learning the education or knowledge keenly and to use it correctly. A change would be made gradually from a system that emphasized on marks. Depending on marks will dim the other qualities of youth. In the old system the more you learnt everything by heart the

more points or marks you got. Deep thought should be given to whether learning everything by heart could make a person understand what was being taught or learnt.

In changing an education system with the participation of youths, youths need to change first. Without them changing, they could not change other things. The government department that was mainly responsible to change the education system must also change.

Youths change from generation to generation. Youths does not always remain as youths. It should not be forgotten that they would become elders in the

future.

A correct path must be for self as well as for others. It must be for Myanmar that was lagging behind in development. At the moment the country was feeling the effect of climate change causing citizens to suffer. All must come together and help the government that was doing the best it can for the security and development of the people. Myanmar and Myanmar society should have the education and knowledge capable of handling and changing the effect of the changes that were beyond the control of the people, said the State Counsellor.

Next, the State Counsellor,

Union Ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman and officials posed for a group photo with youth officials and committee members of Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee, Nay Pyi Taw, state and region youth affairs committees, representatives of women organizations and youth organizations.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor observed the International Youth Day exhibition in the hall displaying state and region youth affairs committee exhibits, youth travel exhibit and ethnic national traditional cultural exhibits. The ceremony was also attended by Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee Chairman Union Minister Dr

Win Myat Aye, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Sein Win, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, U Kyaw Tint Swe, Dr Pe Myint, Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Dr Myint Htwe, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Myo Aung, Nay Pyi Taw Council members, Permanent Secretaries, Directors General, Chairpersons and officials from Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Myanmar Association for Prevention, Care and Protection of Abandoned Children, Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association, Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee members, officials and representatives of international organizations.—
MNA(Translated by Zaw Min)

Myanmar introduces National Youth Policy on International Youth Day

A celebration for the International Youth Day 2019 was held at the Myanmar International Convention Center-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, in coincidence with the introduction of National Youth Policy.

The event was presided over by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye with the opening remark. The Union Minister said that Myanmar has adopted a youth policy as a guideline for the welfare and development of young people, and the policy is intended to help the new generation overcome various challenges by combining their creative ideas with the views and experiences of the elder persons.

He also advised the policy needs to be implemented to fulfill the different requirements in the states/regions and Nay Pyi Taw Council area as the young

people contributed in adopting the strategies in the policy.

Dr Win Myat Aye also remarked young people have some responsibilities while they are following the policy.

He also said the frequent meetings will help the young people inform the ongoing situations, the requirements and different aspects in seeking their collaboration.

The Union Minister highlighted on the education reform and the interrelations among development, learning and teaching in child development programme that is very fundamental for adult learning processes. He also emphasized that the merger of child development programme and the early child development measures will need the contribution of parents and teachers. The Union Minister also affirmed that the government has believed all

the young people should enjoy equal and fair rights regardless of different places where they have grown up. In his conclusion remark, Dr Win Myat Aye invited all the young people, quoting the theme of International Youth Day 2019, "Transforming education", to contribute their efforts together with the government.

Mr Ramanathan Balakrishnan, UNFPA Representative for Myanmar, presented the participation of their organization in developing the National Youth Policy (Myanmar).

Dr Win Myat Aye, also a Chairman of Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee, Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi and Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe presented certificates for the representatives who took part in developing the policy.

Then, the national level stra-



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye presents cash award to a youth representative at the celebration for the International Youth Day 2019. **PHOTO: MNA**

tegic plan for youth policy (draft) was explained by Ko Thura Soe (a) Hein Htet, Joint Secretary of Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee, with an emphasis on the inclusion of 16 major provisions in the strategic plan.

After a talent performance show presented by an invited youth representative and the traditional dance of dance troupe

from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Dr Win Myat Aye presented certificates and cash awards to them.

The ceremony was followed by a dialogue titled "Today's Youth and the Future of Myanmar" to mark the International Youth Day 2019, with the discussions of young people at the event. —
MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

Myanmar Public Sector Accounting Conference takes place in Nay Pyi Taw



Union Auditor-General U Maw Than, Union Ministers Dr Than Myint, U Soe Win and attendees pose for the photo at the Myanmar Public Sector Accounting Conference in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Office of the Auditor General of the Union and the Ministry of Planning and Finance jointly organized the 'Myanmar Public Sector Accounting Conference' in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday with the support of the European Union Trust Fund and the technical assis-

tance of the World Bank.

Union Auditor-General U Maw Than and Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win made key note speeches at the event which was aimed to convey a message about the important role accounting standards at the state departments.

Experts from the World Bank and international accounting profession, together with 13 local accountants, discussed the ongoing reform processes in public sector accounts, the major impacts of the International Public-Sector Accounting Standards, the experiences of two countries which are practicing the IPSAS

and the transformation of international financial reporting standards in private sector.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win made the concluding remark for the discussions.

The conference focused on a transparent accounting system at the state departments through international accounting standards, better financial management, accountability and responsibility and identifying the benefits from the supports of donors in upgrading the state's financial management. — MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin opens the ASEAN Joint Cultural Event- ASEAN Week 2019



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin and ASEAN Ambassadors pose for the photo at the opening ceremony of the ASEAN Joint Cultural Event - "ASEAN Week 2019" in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin attended and made an inaugural remark at the opening ceremony of the ASEAN Joint Cultural Event - "ASEAN Week 2019" which was held at 11:30 am on 12 August 2019 at Side Atrium Hall of the Junction City in Yangon.

Present at the opening ceremony were Mr Pehin Dato Abdu'r Rahmani Dato-Basir, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to Myanmar,

ASEAN Ambassadors and their spouses, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassadors and diplomats from the Embassies in Yangon, Members of Myanmar-ASEAN Women's Friendship Association (MAWFA) and other invited guests.

As part of activities of ASEAN Cultural Year 2019, the ASEAN Joint Cultural Event - "ASEAN Week 2019" was jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar and the ASEAN Embassies

in Yangon under the theme of "Colourful Threads, Diverse Patterns, One ASEAN" with the aim to promote public awareness of ASEAN Community and its rich and diverse cultures.

The event will showcase diversity of ASEAN cultures by exhibiting traditional costumes and textiles of all ASEAN Member States.

The event will be open to the public from 12 to 18 August 2019 at the Side Atrium Hall, Level-2, of Junction City in Yangon. —MNA ■

"Training in Project Management for CLMV Officers" held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE opening ceremony of the "Training in Project Management for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) Officers" was held yesterday at the Park Royal Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw.

At the opening ceremony, U Min Lwin, Myanmar Permanent Representative to ASEAN, delivered welcoming remarks followed by opening remarks by Mr. Kazuo Sunaga, Japanese Ambassador to ASEAN. At the ceremony, a keynote address was given by U Myint Thu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Present at the opening ceremony were senior officials from the Government of Myanmar, representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat and training participants from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam.

In the evening, U Hau Khan

Sum, Director-General of ASEAN Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted the Welcome Dinner to the guests and training participants. The training program was jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar and Permanent Mission of Myanmar to ASEAN with the support of Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI). The program aims to enhance the skills of officials from the CLMV Countries in project cycle management through lectures, practical and sharing sessions, case studies and group work/exercise. A total of 55 participants; 25 representatives from different Ministries of Myanmar and 30 representatives from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam are taking part in the three-day training. —MNA ■



Permanent Secretary U Myint Thu delivers the speech at the opening ceremony of the "Training in Project Management for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) Officers" in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

'Dream of the Red Chamber' begins airing in Myanmar language

THE classical Chinese TV series 'Dream of the Red Chamber' dubbed in Myanmar language began broadcasting on MRTV yesterday, with an inauguration ceremony on the same day at MRTV-Tatkon in Nay Pyi Taw.

MRTV collaborated with Guangxi Radio and Television Information Network Corporation to translate and dub the series into the local language. The series has 30 episodes and will be aired after 7 pm news programme every Monday and Tuesday on MRTV.

The series is adapted from the novel of the same name written by Cao Xueqin in 1765, during the reign of the Qianlong Emperor, and is regarded as one of China's Four Great Classical Novels. The story describes the life and social structures typical of 18th century Chinese society.

The TV series' inauguration ceremony was first opened with artists from the Department of Fine Arts performing the song: 'As long as the world stands'.

Officials' speeches

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint then



Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint delivers the speech at the ceremony to launch Chinese TV series 'Dream of the Red Chamber' dubbed in Myanmar language in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

delivered a speech where he said the project was achieved with fifteen MRTV voice actors, audio engineers from Guangxi Radio & TV and translators conducting the re-recordings in Myanmar and China.

The collaboration between the two media institutions have allowed for technical and experiential exchange, said the

Union Minister. He also said that broadcasting Chinese TV series on Myanmar television adds variety to its programmes and believes this well-known series will be equally adored by Myanmar viewers.

Next, Chinese Ambassador Mr Chen Hai said being able to broadcast a Myanmar-dubbed Chinese TV series energizes

the cultures of both countries and vividly portrays the bilateral relations between them.

Following this, Mr Huang Yu, Deputy of the Publicity Department of CPC Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Committee (Concurrently) Director-General of Guangxi Radio and Television, said the dubbed TV series will offer in-

sight into Chinese literature, culture and society to the Myanmar audience, believing that it will foster deeper understanding and closer friendship between the people of both countries.

Viewing ceremony begins

Afterwards, a documentary video on the TV series' journey into Myanmar-language dubbing was played and the voice actors included in the project were introduced to the attendees.

This was followed by the Union Minister for Information, Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun, the Chinese Ambassador, Guangxi Radio & TV's Director-General and permanent secretary unveiling the LED screen for viewing the first airing of the dubbed 'Dream of the Red Chamber', after which they viewed a playing of some of the TV series' scenes. The Union Minister and attendees then toured the translation and audio mixing offices of the MRTV studio.— MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Union Minister signs book of condolences for India minister's passing



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin signs book of condolences for the Minister of External Affairs of India, Smt Sushma Swaraj at the Indian Embassy in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Union Minister for International Cooperation, U Kyaw Tin, signed the book of condolences for the Minister of External Affairs of India, Smt Sushma Swaraj, at the Indian Embassy on Merchant Road,

Yangon, yesterday morning.

The former India's external affairs minister served the position from 2014 to 2019 and was 67 years old when she passed away. — MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Deputy Construction Minister inspects returnee camps in Maungtaw

DEPUTY MINISTER for Construction U Kyaw Linn and Rakhine State government's Transport Minister U Aung Kyaw Zan inspected the camps for the returnee families in Maungtaw district on 11 August.

They first visited Ohhtane camp where the construction of houses has fully completed. The deputy minister asked to continue the remaining works on building roads inside the camp.

A total of 122 houses— 72 units by UEHRD and 50 units by Japan— have been set up together with one unit of community centre for the displaced local ethnic people.

The deputy minister and party then proceeded to Kye-inchaungtaung camp, and looked into constructions of the houses and the entrance road to the camp. A total of 211 houses— 100 units by UEHRD, 60 units by India and 51 units by Japan— and a community centre are ready to reaccept the refugees.

As the deputy minister and party arrived at the Hla Pho

Khaung transit centre, the supervising officer of the facility presented about the construction of new buildings and the reconstruction of buildings damaged by strong winds this year. They also looked into the plans for feeding and healthcare services for the refugees at the camp with 623 buildings for 8 households each.

The Hla Pho Khaung transit centre has a total of 1,090 assemble board houses which were donated by China. Among them, 90 units have been erected with concrete water tanks,

faucets, toilets and septic tanks. Another 100 unites are ready for installation, and the remaining 900 units will be set up depending on the number of returnees.

The deputy minister and party arrived at Shwezar camp to inspect the houses donated by India for the displaced Hindu people at Thatkalbyin.

They also meet with officials at the office of Maungtaw District General Admiration Department, and advised for collaborative measures on resettlement programmes.—MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Deputy Minister U Kyaw Linn and authorities inspect houses to be used for the returnees in Maungtaw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Maritime trade continues to slow

THE value of Myanmar's maritime trade for the period between 1 October and 2 August in the current fiscal year totalled US\$20.65 billion, a decrease of over \$1.3 billion compared with the year-ago period, according to data provided by the Ministry of Commerce.

Over the ten-month period, maritime exports were valued at \$7.9 billion, while imports were registered at \$12.67 billion. Compared to the same period in the previous fiscal, imports were lower by \$993 million, while exports registered a drop of \$315.6 million.

For the same period, the value of trade through the border gates was estimated at \$8.78 billion, an increase of \$1.2 billion amid tight confiscation of illegal untaxed goods and trade suspension by Myanmar's main

trade partner, China.

Meanwhile, the country's total external trade reached over \$29.43 billion, which is lower than the \$29.54 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, fishery products, minerals, livestock, forest products, finished industrial goods, and other products, while it imports capital goods, consumer goods, and raw industrial materials.

The country currently has nine ports involved in sea trade. The Yangon Port is the main gateway for Myanmar's maritime trade, and includes the Yangon inner terminals and the outer Thilawa Port. — Mon Mon ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

FoodBev and Retail Sourcing Expo to be held on 15-17 Aug at Tatmadaw Hall

THE 6th Myanmar FoodBev and the 4th Myanmar Retail Sourcing Expo will be held from 15 to 17 August at the Tatmadaw Exhibition Hall in Yangon.

The exhibition aims to connect international suppliers to Myanmar supermarkets, hypermarkets, retailers, importers, distributors, hoteliers, restaurants, and cafes operators, according to the organizers. The expo will be a great opportunity for professionals, retailers, wholesalers, supermarkets, convenient stores, hotels and restaurants, distributors, and business entrepreneurs to study trends and start industry networking, they added.

More than 60 companies and international brands from Hong Kong, South Ko-

rea, Malaysia, Thailand, and Saudi Arabia will exhibit their food and beverages, and retail products, services, solutions, and technologies at the expo.

On the first and second day, a Rice Plating Competition, organized by the Myanmar Restaurant Association (MRA), will be held and winners will be presented awards. A panel discussion on 'How Franchise Business Work' will be organized by the MRA on the final day. Additionally, a seminar on operations and waste management in the restaurant industry will be organized by the Myanmar Retailers Association (MMRA).

With Myanmar's middle-class earners forecast by the Economic Intelligence Center to reach 10 million by 2020, the demand for imported

meat, seafood, dairy products, beverages, and organic products is expected to grow. The expo will serve as a platform to showcase the latest food and beverage products as well as retail business technology, solutions, equipment, and also sourcing opportunities for retail products to Myanmar businessmen, according to the organizers.

The expo is being organized with the support of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), the Myanmar Restaurant Association, and the Myanmar Retailers Association. Visitors will also get a chance to participate in a lucky draw at the expo. — GNLM ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Imports outperform exports in Myanmar's trade with Singapore

THE value of Myanmar's imports exceeded exports in bilateral trade with Singapore over the past ten months of the current fiscal year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Singapore is Myanmar's second largest trading partner in the region, after Thailand. In the ten months since October, Myanmar's exports to Singapore reached just US\$287.4 million, while imports were valued at \$2.47 billion, with total trade pegged at \$2.76 billion.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, footwear, textile and clothing, minerals and animal products to Singapore, while it imports plastic, fuel oil, capital goods, intermediate goods, consumer products, metals, and chemicals.

Myanmar's bilateral trade with Singapore was registered at \$1.99 billion in the last mini-budget period, \$3.83 billion in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, \$2.96 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$3.69 billion in the 2015-2016FY. Twenty-one

Singapore-listed enterprises have brought in investments of \$2 billion in the current fiscal year, according to data released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

Additionally, Singapore has stood first on the list of countries with the largest FDI inflows in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone, followed by Japan and Thailand. — Ko Khant ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Natural gas exports touch \$3 bln in Oct-July

MYANMAR'S exports of natural gas as of July-end in the current financial year amounted to US\$3 billion, showing a slight increase compared with the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, according to the Commerce Ministry.

The increase in the value of exports is linked to the rise in the price of natural gas in the global markets, according to an expert.

Natural gas is included in the list of major export items of Myanmar. Over 20 per cent of the country's total export earning comes from the sale

of natural gas.

The Shwe natural gas field, located offshore from Rakhine State, was discovered in 2014. Natural gas extracted from the field is exported to China.

The Yadana natural gas project is being carried out by the TOTAL Company, with its pipeline supplying natural gas to Thailand. Natural gas is also extracted in Yedagon, located offshore from Taninthayi and discovered in 1992.

The Zawtika Project in the Gulf of Mattama mainly supplies natural gas to neigh-

bouring Thailand.

Production at Yadana and Yedagon is declining, and those projects will be halted in the coming years.

According to the second five-year National Development Plan (from 2016-2021), the Yadana, Yedagon, Zawtika, and Shwe gas projects are expected to collectively produce over 630 billion cubic feet of natural gas in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. — Ko Htet ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Correction

Please read "U Moe Swe, Director of the Department of Mines" in the story "Mining plots in Mogok divided into three zones for allocation to locals in Page 2 of the 12 August Issue of the Global New Light of Myanmar. — GNLM

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State Counsellor, Vice Chairman of NDRC of China, discuss implementation of projects

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Vigilance will save us from disasters

THE current season has beset natural disasters on many other countries around the world, including Myanmar. Heavy rains have caused floods and landslides and stormy winds. People across some of our states and regions are forced to relocate away from these disasters while a number of innocent lives have been lost.

Global natural disasters these days are no longer caused by unusual weather patterns but are becoming regular occurrences due to climate change. As such, we the people and those in authority need to envision possible natural disasters that may occur in our region and make preemptive plans for prevention, rescue, relief and rebuilding efforts.

If we review the frequent flooding and heavy rains happening

However, while other countries face natural disasters on a much larger magnitude, their casualty rate is quite low due to having effective warning systems and action plans in place.

around the world, we can see that providing early warnings and maintaining vigilance is the key difference between high and low casualties and deaths from the natural disasters. Myanmar's natural disasters are smaller in scale compared to those of our neighbors, yet they are urgent all the same.

However, while other countries face natural disasters on a much larger magnitude, their casualty rate is quite low due to having effective warning systems and action plans in place. We can say that each of the natural disasters in Myanmar with high number of casualties were the consequences of inattentiveness and poor prior planning.

Just a few days ago, the village of Thalphyugone in Paung Township, Mon State, was hit

with heavy rains and landslides that have caused the highest number of casualties this season. Vice President U Henry Van Thio visited the village almost immediately after the disaster struck and oversaw rescue operations in action.

Also serving as the Chairman of the Natural Disaster Management Committee, U Henry Van Thio instructed authorities concerned and the local residents to set preventive measures in place in order to protect themselves against unpredictable natural disasters. He also told them to spread awareness on natural disasters and regularly practice rescue and relief procedures, citing that vigilance never sleeps.

It is saddening to witness the landslide in Thalphyugone that destroyed entire communities. It was one of five areas afflicted with landslides in Paung Township and the death toll reached 50 as of last Friday while search and rescue operations continue for the missing.

Numerous villages in Myanmar settle themselves at the base of hills and mountains and they must be cautious of heavy rains that bring torrential floods down the mountain and soften the earth to the point of causing landslides. Likewise, government and civilian organizations must provide the proper training and warning procedures to better prepare the local residents. If necessary, they must help them relocate at the earliest convenience.

We urge everyone and their families who live at the base, on the slope or on the edge of hills and mountains to remain ever vigilant and properly prepared for natural disasters that can strike without warning.

■ ■ ■

Myanmar's Offshore Oil Fields

By Retired Petroleum Expert

THE article will bring the message about energy sector of the country, with high expectation to increase electricity consumption of the country in next five years and to share knowledge of energy sector.

Myanmar already has four offshore natural gas fields at present. The total production capacity from three projects in Mottama/Martaban offshore—Yadana, Yetagon and Zawtika—is 1,280 million cubic feet per day, while Shwe natural gas project in Rakhine offshore is producing 500 million cubic feet each day. The figures have shown that although Myanmar is producing excess amount of natural gas, the joint-venture contracts have limited to 430 million cubic feet per day for domestic consumption. Another restraint is the long processing period in offshore natural gas exploration industry. As Myanmar saying goes; 'As soon as a well is dug, we cannot get clear water', oil and gas cannot be extracted from their reservoirs immediately after they were found.

Discovery of natural gas reservoir

Myanma Oil Corporation, for example, discovered a natural gas reservoir in 1982. After the

Total E&P company signed an agreement in 1992, the preliminary extractions were started. The French oil company could begin extraction at Yadana project in 1998, six years after the tests. Moreover, Yetagon natural gas field was found in 1992, and the extraction was started about eight years later, while the Dae-woo International Corporation Myanmar E&P could produce its first gas from the Shwe gas field in 2013 that is nine years after it initiated the project.

Technological challenges

These natural gas fields are located at deep sea areas not more than 150-meter depth. The recently found A-6 gas field is situated at ultra-deep water with more than 2,000 meter, and that the project will need more time and investments than its precursors projects. It encountered bigger technological challenges.

Real enjoyments

An announcement was made on the 68th Independence Day on 4th January 2016 that a natural gas reservoir was found at the preliminary oil field Shwe Yee Tun (1) in Block A-6 at western offshore of Myanmar. The similar announcement for commercial production was also issued for Pyithit (1) and Shwe Yee Tun (2) oil fields in the block. These announcements brought real enjoy-



Yadana offshore natural gas production project in Mottama Gulf. PHOTO: MNA

ment for Myanmar citizens. The first commercial discovery of oil and natural gas in southern part of western offshore of Myanmar has become a potential source for generating more electricity that is a major driving force for the economic development of the country.

Return of projects

The history of oil and gas exploration in western offshore of Myanmar was very interesting amid many challenges. The MPRL E & P Pte Ltd. invested 100 per cent capital for A-6, and signed a Production Shar-

ing Contract for Offshore Block A-6 on January 18, 2007 with the Myanma Oil & Gas Enterprise (MOGE). It also conducted all the exploration processes, including geological surveys along Rakhine coastal areas and offshore seismic measurements. During this period, a Malaysia-based oil company gave up their surveys at the A-5 Block that is next to A-6 Block, and a Korean oil company also withdrew their investments in A-7 Block. These two foreign companies returned the projects to the MOGE.

Conclusions of experts

However, the preliminary oil field Pyithar (1) was successfully

mic in 2013, 'Shwe Yee Tun (1)' in 2015, 'Thazin' 3D Seismic in 2016 respectively. They also dug Pyithit (1) in 2017 and Shwe Yee Tun (2) in 2018 for the preliminary tests. These companies held a press conference to announce that they could definitely calculate the volume of natural gas reservoirs at these oil fields.

First ultra-deep-water extraction

The A-6 Block is recorded as the first ultra-deep-water project for Myanmar as it is located at the sea depth of 2,500 meter. As there are not more than 16 ultra-deep-water projects across the world, the A-6 Block is a significant project in the region. The project will need a considerable amount of capital investment and human resources to complete it in time amid technological and

An announcement was made on the 68th Independence Day on 4th January 2016 that a natural gas reservoir was found at the preliminary oil field Shwe Yee Tun (1) in Block A-6 at western offshore of Myanmar.

dug at A-6 Block in March 2012, and discovered the natural gas. It is located southern part of western Ayeyawady offshore. Some geologists remarked that this discovery has shown Paleo Ayeyawady System, with the deposits from the eastern Myanmar to the western offshore, that is different from Bengal Fan System, with the deposits from north to south in western Ayeyawady offshore.

Struggles from difficulties

Based on the data received from Pyi Thar Discovery and 2D seismic measurements, the A-6 Block was found to be located in a geological feature of huge natural gas reservoir. However, the MPRL company faced with difficulties in capital and technology for exploration works in the ultra-deep project. Therefore, the Australia-based Woodside company and the French Total E&P joined the project. These companies explored 'Padauk' 3D Seis-

mic in 2013, 'Shwe Yee Tun (1)' in 2015, 'Thazin' 3D Seismic in 2016 respectively. They also dug Pyithit (1) in 2017 and Shwe Yee Tun (2) in 2018 for the preliminary tests. These companies held a press conference to announce that they could definitely calculate the volume of natural gas reservoirs at these oil fields.

Supports for future development

These companies have announced in the press conference that the natural gas from A-6 Block will be used for both the domestic consumption and the export. Therefore, the A-6 Block will become the fifth offshore natural gas field after seven years when Shwe Natural Gas Field was discovered in 2014. And, it is hopeful that the new project will be very supportive for the development of the country in the future.

(Translated by Aung Khin)

■ ■ ■



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 12th August, 2019)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over Northwest Bay of Bengal still persists. Monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and vigorous elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 13th August, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing Region and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavyfalls in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States and isolated heavyfalls in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40)m.p.h. Wave height will be about (9-11) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Strong monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13th August, 2019: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13th August, 2019: Some rain or thundershowers which may be heavy at times. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13th August, 2019: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Over 1,600 taxis register with YRTA under new deadline

By Nyein Nyein

OVER 1,600 of the 5,000 taxis which had failed to register or renew their registration earlier have applied for and have been granted registrations and renewals under the extended deadline, said U Hla Aung, the joint-secretary of the Yangon Region Transport Authority.

The deadline for those who had failed to register their city taxis or renew their registration had been extended to 30 September. Those taxis which had failed to register within the earlier deadline were notified of their licenses being revoked according to rules and regulations, according to the YRTA.

Following the notification of the extended deadline, 501 taxis were registered and 1,111 taxi owners renewed their registration between 12 July and 6 August, said U Hla Aung.

"Earlier, over 100-200 taxis applied for registration per day. Now, only 60-80 taxis come to register," he added.

City taxi registrations



Taxis run in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

were started in 2002 to bring transport services on par with Yangon's image as a commercial hub and for regulating the taxi service.

The YRTA was formed on 8 July, 2016 to improve transport facilities in Yangon for the convenience of the public. The authority is carrying out city taxi registration.

In a bid to ensure traffic discipline, the YRTA, through

an announcement in state-owned newspapers, had asked city taxis to register with the authority by 31 December, 2017.

However, for some reason, the registration period was extended to 31 January, 2018. Some taxis tried to register on the last day, but their registration could not be completed, and they were allowed to complete the process by 6

April, 2018.

Still, more than 5,000 taxis remained to be registered or needed to get their registration renewed. So, the transport authority notified the extended deadline of 30 September.

At present, there are 67,085 registered city taxis in Yangon Region, according to data from the YRTA. ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

MCDC upgrading roads in Mandalay City to manage growing traffic

WITH the number of vehicles increasing in Mandalay City, the Mandalay City Development Committee (MCDC) is extending and upgrading a total of 28 roads to curb traffic problems, said Dr Ye Lwin, the Mayor of Mandalay.

The upgrade will cover asphalt roads, concrete roads,

and basic maintenance. Six roads in Aungmyethazan, Chanayethazan, and Amarapura townships, five roads in Maharaungmyay Township, four roads in Pyigyidagun Township, and one road in Chanmyathazi Township are being upgraded simultaneously.

"Most of the roads require

to be extended and new roads will be built, if necessary. We would have to control the number of vehicles if road extending operations are not conducted. The roads are being extended to tackle traffic problems because the Transportation Management System is not being applied in our city,"

said the Mayor.

On Sunday, Dr Ye Lwin, who is the Minister of the Mandalay Development Affairs and officials inspected the road upgrade operations in Aungmyethazan Township and took up the necessary issues with the head and engineers of the Engineering Department (Roads and Bridges).

The Mayor and a team also inspected the basic repair and asphalt road operations in Chanayethazan Township.

"During road upgrade operations, it takes more time to remove tents, electric pillars, and transformers on the roads within limited time, and sometimes the MCDC pays the workers' fees," the Mayor added.

The MCDC is currently upgrading 774, 807 feet (146.744 miles) long asphalt and concrete roads in Mandalay City for city development. — Aung San Maung ■



MCDC staffs inspect upgrading a road in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay. PHOTO: AUNG SAN

(Translated by La Wonn)

Death toll in Paung landslide rises to 59

THE death toll in the landslide that struck Paung in Mon State rose to 59 yesterday, according to the Paung Township General Administration Department. The deadly landslide occurred around 7 am on 9 August following torrential rain.

Rescue teams are conducting operations and aid has been flowing into landslide and flood-hit areas in the state, according to the department.

"The Myanmar Fire Services Department took aerial photos over the mountain using a drone and detected a possible landslide in the mountain," said U Zaw Moe Aung, the head of the Paung Township General Administration Department.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspected the site of the landslide again yesterday, and made arrangements with the



Photo shows an aerial view of the deadly landslide area in Paung Township yesterday. **PHOTO: KO ZAW MIN**

Irrigation Department to take preventive measures against potential landslides.

The local authorities have

opened an account with the KBZ bank for receiving donations for people affected by the landslide.

The landslide has affected

179 persons from 27 households and about 35 are receiving medical treatment at the Mawlamyine and Thaton hospitals.

Special rescue teams from the Myanmar Fire Services Department (Central) are carrying out rescue operations at the site by using modern machinery and the help from Tatmadaw members and volunteers.

Some volunteers said they have found some people buried under the soil, and it is believed that they are dead, but it has been difficult to retrieve the bodies.

Landslides have occurred in six areas in Paung Township since 9 August, and the authorities have alerted locals for the following incidents.

Aid from private donors and the government has reached the victims of the deadly landslide in Thae Byu Gon Village in the state. — Ko Hein (Paung)

(Translated by GNLM)

Illegal drugs seized in Lashio

LASHIO police confiscated 175g of heroin, 3,860 psychotropic tablets and K693,000 from the house of a woman named Daw Kyein Ar Lan in Lwe Laung village, Mahn Ai village-tract in Lashio Township, on 11 August.

In a separate incident, Lashio police arrested three men identified as Laukti (a) Laukpein, Sai Phaung Kha and Laukhwa (a) Ar Pauk in Laukti's maize farm in Ward 12, Lashio Town, after discovering illegal

drugs in their possession.

Laukti was in possession of 5g of the drug ICE and 0.3g of heroin, Sai Phaung Kha possessed 0.3 heroin, and Laukhwa possessed 630 psychotropic tablets, 130g of ICE and K20,000. Police also searched two motorcycles and a truck parked in front of their fence and discovered an additional 481g of ICE and 1,090 psychotropic tablets hidden within them.

All four suspects are being charged with the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, according to Myanmar Police Force. —Ko Ye (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Daw Kyein Ar Lan, Laukti, Sai Phaung Kha and Laukhwa seen with the illegal drugs. **PHOTO: KO YE**

Heavy rains damage crops, houses in Magway villages

HEAVY RAINS and strong winds in Magway Township, Magway Region, on 10 August caused Sar Taing creek near Mikyaungye village to flood, destroying the nearby plantations, and nine houses and seven sheds in

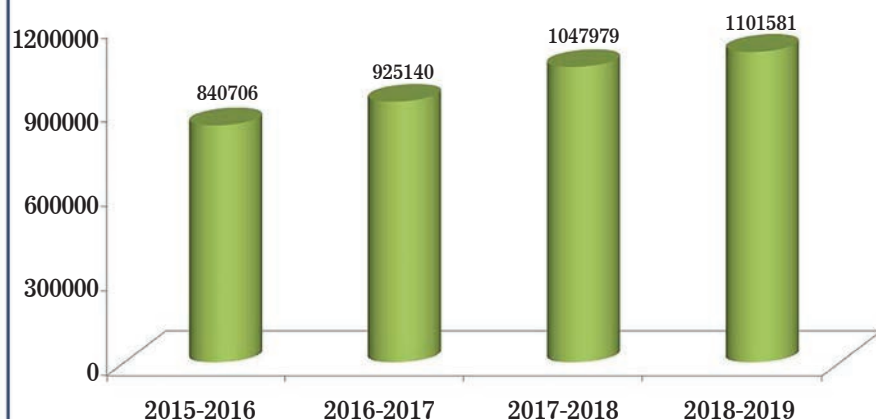
Patanagoh village. Local authorities are providing necessary support and assistance to residents, with no human or animal casualties reported. —Than Naing Oo (Ngaphe)

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



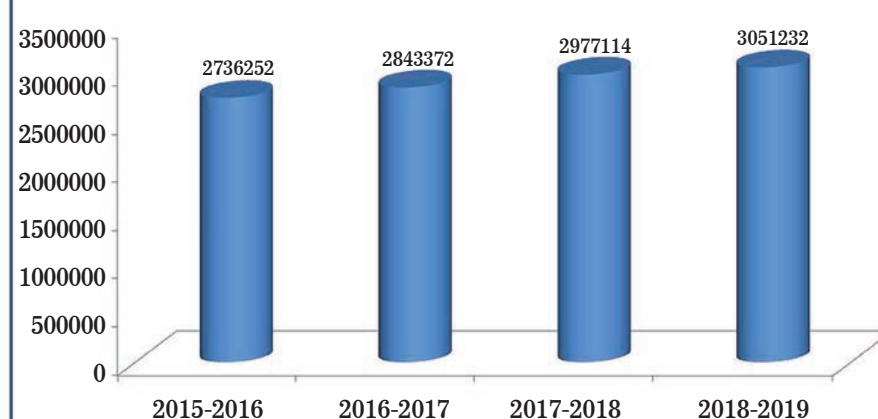
PHOTO: THAN NAING OO (NGAPHE)

Number of High School Students in Myanmar



Remark : Year refers to Academic Year
Source : Ministry of Education
Information Unit : Central Statistical Organization

Number of Middle School Students in Myanmar



Remark : Year refers to Academic Year
Source : Ministry of Education
Information Unit : Central Statistical Organization

Saudi Aramco says half-year net income slips to \$46.9 bln

RIYADH (Saudi Arabia) — Saudi energy giant Aramco said Monday its first half net income for 2019 slipped nearly 12 percent to \$46.9 billion, a first such disclosure that still reinforces its position as the world's most profitable company.

The revenue drop amid lower crude prices was reported as speculation swirled that the secretive company was preparing for its much-delayed overseas stock listing, dubbed potentially the world's biggest.

The news also coincided with an announcement by India's Reliance that it had agreed to sell a 20-percent stake in its oil and chemicals business — worth \$15 billion — to Aramco, a deal that would potentially boost the Saudi giant's valuation ahead of an IPO.

Reporting its revenue, Aramco said in a statement: "The company's net income was \$46.9 billion for the first half (of) 2019, compared to \$53.0 billion for the same period last year."

It is the first time the company has published half-year financial results and comes after Aramco opened its secretive accounts for the first time in April as it prepares to raise funds from investors.

The company is slated to hold its first-ever earnings call later on Monday, giving investors a chance to discuss the results with Aramco's management in another step towards greater transparency.

"Despite lower oil prices during the first half of 2019, we continued to deliver solid earnings and strong free cash flow underpinned by our con-



File photo shows labourers work on the construction of a house in the Saudi capital Riyadh on 17 April 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

sistent operational performance, cost management and fiscal discipline," Aramco CEO Amin Nasser was quoted as saying in the statement.

Analysts say record

demand for a \$12-billion debut international bond launched this year has propelled the world's top oil exporter to speed up efforts to float the company.

But Monday's state-

ment made no mention of the planned initial public offering.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has previously said the IPO — which could potentially be

the world's biggest stock sale — would take place in late 2020 or early 2021.

'Generate buzz'

Saudi Arabia plans to sell up to five percent of the world's largest energy firm and hopes to raise up to \$100 billion based on a \$2 trillion valuation of the company. But investors have long debated whether Aramco was really valued so much.

Failure to reach a \$2 trillion valuation as desired by Saudi rulers is widely considered the reason the IPO — earlier scheduled for 2018 — has been delayed. The preliminary deal with Reliance, which the Indian giant hailed as the "biggest foreign investment" in its history, underscores Aramco's efforts to diversify its operations and boost its valuation. —AFP

European stock markets down as Hong Kong protests force airport closure

LONDON (United Kingdom) — European stock markets dropped Monday as escalating protests in Hong Kong forced the closure of the financial hub's airport.

London, Frankfurt and Paris all slid into negative territory approaching the half-way stage, having rallied at the open, as news of the shutdown spread.

"Reports that authorities have closed the airport in Hong Kong sent markets lower after what had been a positive open in Europe," said Neil Wilson, chief analyst at traders Markets.com.

"Hong Kong has kind of been under the radar of most traders... but increasingly I feel like that this has the potential to spiral into a bigger market worry. Today's moves highlight the risks," he added.

All flights in and out of Hong Kong were cancelled late Monday after thousands of pro-democracy

protesters flooded into the city's airport to denounce police violence.

The abrupt shutdown came as the Chinese government signalled its rising anger at the protesters, denouncing some of the violent demonstrations as "terrorism".

Hong Kong's main shares index closed lower just as news of the shutdown emerged.

The Hang Seng Index ended with a loss of 0.44 percent to 25,824.72 points, as investors focused on the outlook for China-US trade talks. Hong Kong airline Cathay Pacific meanwhile on Monday warned staff that they could be fired for supporting "illegal protests", as the firm comes under pressure from Beijing.

The carrier's stock slumped more than four percent after Beijing imposed new rules banning airline staff involved in the protests from flights to or over the mainland. —AFP ■

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K-pop superstars BTS to take 'long-term break'

SEOUL (South Korea) — K-pop superstars BTS will take a 'long-term break' from the music scene, their agency said Monday, after the boy band topped charts in the US and Britain earlier this year.

But the pause may only last a few weeks, with the septet due to play a controversial show in Saudi Arabia in October.

The K-pop industry is known for cutthroat competition and around-the-clock work hours that include concerts, press events and grueling singing and dancing training when the stars are offstage.

BTS will take their "first official long-term break since their debut" six years ago, managers Big Hit Entertainment said, adding it will be a time to "recharge and refresh as musicians and creators".

It would also be a time for them to "enjoy their daily lives as normal 20-something young men", the agency said in a mid-night statement.

"If you run into BTS at an unexpected place, we ask for the fans' consideration to allow the members to enjoy their private time."



The pause may only last a few weeks, with the massively popular boy band due to play a controversial show in Saudi Arabia in October. **PHOTO: AFP**

BTS — or Bangtan Sonyeondan, which translates as Bulletproof Boy Scouts — have gained a massive global following in recent years, becoming the first K-pop group to top charts in the US and Britain with a string of sold-out shows in Los Angeles, Paris and London's Wembley Stadium.

The floppy-haired musicians, all in their 20s and often sporting earrings and lipstick, appeal to a generation that feels comfortable with the idea of fluid gender identity. They maintain close relationships with

their fans, flooding social media with selfies, videos and tweets in Korean and English.

The statement did not say how long the break will be but the band is scheduled to perform in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on 11 October.

Hundreds of thousands of fans wrote on the BTS Twitter account — which has 21.3 million followers — to wish them a happy vacation.

"I love you very much and hope you enjoy your break to the fullest," a fan commented.

Another wrote: "We are going nowhere and will be here to welcome you back with fanfares!"

The group's popularity has generated huge profits for Big Hit Entertainment, which is even collaborating with Barbie maker Mattel for BTS dolls.

South Korean performers such as Psy — whose 2012 hit "Gangnam Style" became the first video to top a billion views on YouTube — have previously broken into Western markets, but none have achieved BTS' sustained success. —AFP ■

'Hobbs & Shaw' loses speed but still leads N American box office

LOS ANGELES (United States) — Universal Pictures' "Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw" slowed a bit but clung to the top spot in North American theaters this weekend, taking in an estimated \$25.4 million, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations said Sunday.

That was a drop-off from the previous weekend's \$60 million, but was enough to keep the Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and Jason Statham action film ahead of new Lionsgate release "Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark," which placed second with \$20.8 million for the three-day weekend.

"Scary Stories," based on the children's horror books, was produced by actor Guillermo del Toro.

The movie stars Zoe Colletti, Michael Garza and Gabriel Rush in a story about small-town teenagers who are tormented by a book they removed from a haunted house in 1968.

In third place, in its fourth week out, was Disney's "The Lion King," at \$20 million.

The remake of the popular 1994 film has an all-star voice cast including Donald Glover, Beyonce, Seth Rogen, James Earl Jones and Chiwetel Ejiofor.

Fourth spot went to new Paramount comedy "Dora & the Lost City of Gold," at \$17 million. The live-action adaptation of the Nickelodeon kids' program "Dora the Explorer" features Isabela Moner, who became a bona fide movie star with 2017's "Transformers: The Last Knight."

And placing fifth, in its second week out, was Sony's "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood," at \$11.6 million. The Quentin Tarantino film — which he says is the ninth of the 10 he plans to make — stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt, Margot Robbie and Al Pacino in a drama set in the changing Hollywood of 1969. —AFP ■

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Conservative Giammattei elected Guatemala president

GUATEMALA CITY (Guatemala) — Conservative Alejandro Giammattei was elected as Guatemala's president on Sunday, defeating former first lady Sandra Torres in a run-off, the central American country's electoral court said.

The institution's president Julio Solorzano declared the result "already irreversible" part-way through the counting.

"The aim is fulfilled," Giammattei said.

He had polled almost 58.5 per cent with a lead of 550,000 votes and only a few thousand left to count when the court declared him the victor. More than 99 percent of ballots have now been counted.

Giammattei will take over in January from corruption-tainted President Jimmy Morales, who congratulated his successor and promised a "transparent and orderly" transition. He will be under immense pressure from the United States to implement a controversial migration pact that would allow Washington to send most Honduran and Salvadoran asylum seekers who passed



Conservative Alejandro Giammattei will be Guatemala's next president. **PHOTO: AFP**

through Guatemala back to the poor, crime-ridden country.

The two candidates had both avoided committing to strong positions on the US deal.

Corruption was the main issue leading up to the first round of elections in June — which Torres topped — but that has been superseded by the political scandal over the migration deal.

'Lose-lose scenario'

Neither candidate arrived with a glowing reputation.

The center-left Torres, whose ex-husband Alvaro Colom was president from 2008-2012, has been suspected of involvement in corruption.

Influential businessman Dionisio Gutierrez recently described her as "a questionable politician with a history that should worry any citizen."

Giammattei has hardly come off any better. Investigative website Nomada branded him as "impulsive... despotic, tyrannical... capricious, vindictive," among

other undesirable traits.

But the 63-year-old, a doctor by profession, scored well on voter concerns such as the economy, corruption and security, according to Risa Grais-Targow of the Eurasia Group.

However, he now faces "a lose-lose scenario" regarding the migration pact, Grais-Targow said.

One of Morales's last acts as president was to authorize an agreement with the US administration of Donald Trump designating Guatemala as a "safe third country," which would permit Washington to turn away asylum seekers who did not seek refuge when passing through Guatemala.

The pact — part of Trump's campaign to stem the flow of migrants to the southern US border — has proved highly unpopular in Guatemala, with demonstrators blocking roads and occupying the University of San Carlos in protest.

In a poll by Prodatos for the Prens Libre newspaper, 82 per cent of respondents opposed it. —AFP ■

8 killed in Nigeria jihadist attacks, say military

KANO (Nigeria) — Eight people, including three soldiers, were killed in jihadist attacks on an army base and village in north-east Nigeria ahead of Monday's Eid al-Adha festival, military sources said.

Three troops and three civilians died on Saturday when fighters from the IS-aligned Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) group attacked a base in Gubio, a town 80 kilometres

(50 miles) from the regional capital Maiduguri, two sources said Sunday.

Three soldiers were killed "defending the base from ISWAP terrorists who wanted to overrun it", the first source said.

"Three civilians were hit and killed in crossfire," said the source, an officer who asked not to be identified for fear of punishment.

Two soldiers and six civilians

were injured, he said.

The jihadists attacked the base in eight pickup trucks fitted with machine guns, leading to a two-hour long battle, said the second source, who gave the same toll. The attack was repelled with the aid of a fighter jet which deployed two hours into the clashes, said the officer.

"The terrorists were pulverised and forced to withdraw. Eleven of them were killed and three

of their vehicles were seized," he said. ISWAP ransacked the same base in May, killing three soldiers.

In a separate assault on Sunday, fighters from rival jihadist faction Boko Haram killed two residents and burnt homes in an attack on the village of Ngwom, 14 km (eight miles) from Maiduguri.

Gunmen in pickup trucks stormed the village in a pre-dawn attack, shooting dead two male residents before robbing women of jewelry and torching four houses, anti-Boko Haram militia leader Babakura Kolo said.

"A woman had one of her ears chopped off by the insurgents as punishment for resisting being robbed," Kolo said.

The jihadists attempted to seize a nearby military base after the raid, but were rebuffed following a one-hour gunfight, Kolo and a military source said. The decade-long insurgency in northeast Nigeria has killed over 27,000 people, displaced some two million and spilt over into neighbouring countries.

The jihadists are notorious for stepping up attacks during the Eid season, prompting heightened security across the region. —AFP ■



At least 20,000 people have been killed and more than 2.6 million people made homeless in northeast Nigeria since the Boko Haram launched an insurgency in 2009. **PHOTO: AFP**

WORLD BRIEFS

Seven dead in DR Congo lake boat

BUKAVU (DR Congo) — Seven people drowned after a transport boat sank after hitting rocks on a lake in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo over the weekend, local authorities said on Monday.

Lake and river transport is widely used in the DRC as the highway system is poor, but accidents are common, often caused by overloading and the unsafe state of vessels. —AFP ■

S Korea says Japan to be removed from preferred trade list in September

SEOUL — South Korea's trade ministry said Monday that Japan will be removed around September from a list of countries entitled to preferential treatment in trade.

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy said Japan will be placed in a newly established third category in which, in addition to narrowed conditions for applying comprehensive licenses for strategic goods, the approval process will be extended to between five and 15 days, with procedures being tightened. —Kyodo News ■

Death toll climbs to 75 in Tanzania fuel tanker blast

MOROGORO (Tanzania) — The death toll from a fuel truck explosion in Tanzania rose to 75 on Monday as four more people succumbed to their injuries, a hospital official said.

"We deplore four new deaths. Their bodies are currently resting at the morgue while we wait for relatives to identify them," said Aminie-Aligaesha, spokesman for the National Hospital in the economic capital, Dar es Salaam. —AFP ■

HONOR 20 Lite launched in Myanmar

SMARTPHONE brand HONOR introduced its latest device in Myanmar recently. The HONOR 20 Lite, packing a potent 24MP Triple-Lens front camera and a 32MP selfie master camera setup, into a sleek modern design.

The HONOR 20 Lite will be available starting from 8 August this month in captivating Phantom Blue and Phantom

Red color options.

With the smartphone's signature look and feel, embodying the brand's design principles which appeal to younger, bolder consumers, it would be the ideal smartphone for those looking to make a statement, with its visually dynamic prism-shaped color gradient with a gleaming effect at the back, shining whenever it moves.—GNLM



HONOR 20 Lite "Triple Lens Triple the Fun" will be available in Myanmar with 3D color gradient which is Phantom Blue and Phantom Red. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

India imposes Kashmir clampdown to head off Eid protests

SRINAGAR(India) — Indian troops clamped tight restrictions on mosques across Kashmir for Monday's Eid al-Adha festival, fearing anti-government protests over the stripping of the Muslim-majority region's autonomy, according to residents.

The Himalayan region's biggest mosque, the Jama Masjid, was ordered closed and people were only allowed to pray in smaller local mosques so that no big crowds could gather, witnesses said. Kashmir has been in a security lockdown for eight days as the Hindu nationalist government in New Delhi seeks to snuff out opposition to its move to impose tighter central control over the region.

Internet and phone communications have been cut and tens of thousands of troop reinforcements have flooded the main city of Srinagar and other Kashmir Valley towns and villages.

Authorities had eased restrictions temporarily on Sunday to let residents buy food and supplies for Eid, one of the most important Muslim festivals of the year. But security was tightened again after sporadic protests involving hundreds of people during the day, residents said. Police vans toured the streets late Sunday telling people to stay indoors. "I can't believe we are forced to be in our homes on this festival. This is the festival of joy and happiness," resident Shanawaz Shah told AFP.—AFP ■

Hong Kong's airport shut down after thousands protest

HONG KONG (China) — All flights in and out of Hong Kong were cancelled on Monday after thousands of pro-democracy protesters flooded the city's airport to denounce police violence.

The abrupt shutdown at one of the world's busiest hubs came as the Chinese government signalled its rising anger at the protesters, denouncing some of the violent demonstrations as "terrorism".

The developments marked yet another dramatic escalation in a 10-week crisis that had already become the biggest challenge to Chinese rule of Hong Kong since the 1997 British hand-over: A crowd of protesters that authorities said numbered more than 5,000 descended on Hong Kong airport on Monday carrying placards and chanting slogans denouncing police violence.

Although other rallies had been held at the transport hub over the previous three days, the airport authority said Monday's one had caused significant chaos.

"Airport operations at Hong



Thousands of pro-democracy protesters rally at Hong Kong's airport. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kong International Airport have been seriously disrupted as a result of the public assembly at the airport today," it said in a statement.

"Other than the departure flights that have completed the

check-in process and the arrival flights that are already heading to Hong Kong, all other flights have been cancelled for the rest of today." It warned that traffic to the airport was "very congested" and the facility's car parks were

completely full. "Members of the public are advised not to come to the airport." Loudspeakers at the airport were periodically telling people: "All flights have been cancelled, please leave as soon as possible".—AFP ■

Yemen separatists say ready for talks after Aden 'coup'

ADEN (Yemen) — The head of Yemen's separatist movement said he was ready to take part in Saudi-brokered peace talks after clashes with pro-government forces killed dozens in second city Aden.

Southern Transitional Council (STC) leader Aidarus al-Zubaidi also said late Sunday that he was committed to a ceasefire in Aden, where the separatists have seized the presidential palace and army camps.

Last week's fighting pitted the UAE-trained Security Belt Force dominated by fighters who back the STC — which seeks independence for south Yemen

— against loyalist forces.

For the past five years both camps, backed by a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have been engaged in a war against Iran-aligned Huthi rebels.

Zubaidi, in a televised speech, said last week's violence had been "provoked" by forces loyal to Riyadh-based Yemeni President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi.

Separatist fighters were left with "only two options: either self-defence, or surrender and accepting the liquidation of our just cause," Zubaidi said, according to an English translation of

his comments posted on the STC website.

He claimed that loyalist forces wanted "to implement a plan based on the assassination of our leaders, and then to provoke our people and liquidate our presence".

Yemen's government has accused the STC and the UAE of staging a "coup" against it.

Separatists and government soldiers have theoretically been allied in a Saudi-led coalition against the Iranian-supported Huthi rebels since 2015. Huthi forces control vast swathes of Yemen's north, including the capital Sanaa.—AFP ■



Yemeni separatists who seek an independent south say they are ready for Saudi-brokered peace talks after days of deadly fighting with pro-government forces in the southern city of Aden. **PHOTO: AFP**

AFF Under-18 Next Media Cup 2019: Myanmar beat Brunei 2-0

MYANMAR beat Brunei in the group stage of the AFF U-18 Next Media Cup 2019 yesterday at the Binh Duong Fields in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

Team Myanmar lined up with goalkeeper Nay Lin Htet, and players Khun Kyaw Zin Hein, Naung Naung Soe (Captain), Saw Htaw Nay Mue, Shin Thant Aung, Ye Min Kyaw, Moe Swe, Zaw Win Thein, Pyae Phyto Aung, Aung Ko Oo, and Nyi Nyi. The two teams were tied in the first half, with Myanmar finally scoring two

goals in the second half to win the match. So far, the Myanmar U-18 team has played and won four matches in the group stage. The last match for the Myanmar team in the group stage is against Indonesia and it is scheduled to take place tomorrow (14 August).

The group stage matches will conclude on 15 August. The semifinals will be held on 17 August at the Go Dau Stadium, and the play-offs for the third place and the finals will take place on 19 August at the Thong Nhat Stadium in Ho Chi Minh City. — Kyaw Khin



A Myanmar U-18 player (red) vies for the ball with Brunei player (white) at the Binh Duong Fields in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam on 12 August. **PHOTO: MFF**

MPT MNL 2019: Chinland beat Hantharwady Utd 2-0 in game week 20

CHINLAND F.C. beat Hantharwady United F.C. by 2-0 in Week 20 match of the MPT Myanmar National League 2019, held yesterday at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon, according to the Myanmar National League website.

The goals for Chinland F.C. were scored by George at the 22nd minute and Mung Theih Pau at the 63rd minute.

A total of six matches, including the match between Chinland and Hantharwady,

were played in game week 20, with Yadanarbon F.C. beating Dagon F.C. 5-2, Ayeyawady F.C. tying with Yangon 1-1, Shan trouncing Zwegabin by 2-1, Sagaing defeating Rakhine by 2-1, and Magwe drubbing Southern by 5-0.

With game week 20 concluding, each team has now played 20 matches, and Shan United is at the top of the standing table, with 40 points from 10 wins and 10 draws. Yangon United is in the second place

with 39 points from 11 wins, 6 draws, and 3 losses, followed by Ayeyawady with 38 points from 10 wins, 8 draws, and 2 losses.

Hantharwady United is in the fourth place with 32 points, followed by Rakhine United with 30 points, Yadanarbon with 29 points, Sagaing with 27 points, Magwe with 24 points, Southern Myanmar with 19 points, Zwegabin United with 16 points, Chinland with 16 points, and Dagon with 14 points. — Kyaw Khin



Chinland F.C. and Hantharwady F.C. players vie for the ball in their game week 20 match of MPT MNL 2019 at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 12 August. **PHOTO: MNL**

Liverpool keeper Alisson out for 'next few weeks' says Klopp

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker has been ruled out for "the next few weeks" by boss Jurgen Klopp after suffering a calf injury in the 4-1 win over Norwich.

Alisson limped off in the first half of Liverpool's Premier League opener at Anfield on Friday.

Klopp revealed on Monday that he does not expect the 26-year-old Brazil international to be available for several weeks.

"Not too cool. It's a calf injury which takes him obviously out for a while," Klopp told Liverpool's website.

"I don't want to make now an exact prognosis on when he will be back but it will not be Wednesday for sure, so now then we have to see.

It takes a while, it takes a couple weeks for sure, and we have to see.

"I saw already like 'six weeks' and stuff like this, but Ali was not a lot injured in his career so I would like to wait a little bit to see how he develops in that process now, but he is not in for the next few weeks."

Alisson was replaced by experienced Spaniard Adrian against Norwich.

The former West Ham keeper, who joined on a free transfer last week, is likely to keep his place for Liver-

pool's European Super Cup date with Chelsea in Istanbul on Wednesday.

Third-choice Liverpool keeper Caoimhin Kelleher is not fully fit after a broken wrist, so the club are reportedly considering signing 35-year-old former Middlesbrough player Andy Lonergan on a free transfer.

Lonergan was part of Liverpool's pre-season tour as cover for their other keepers.

The European champions return to domestic action at Southampton on Saturday.

Liverpool defender Trent Alexander-Arnold, speaking after the Norwich game, insisted Adrian will prove a quality deputy for Alisson.

"His experience is the main thing, he knows what he is doing. He's played a load of games, so he knows what it is about," Alexander-Arnold said.

"Obviously when a keeper has to come off, it's never too promising, so, yes, I think everyone needs to get their head around the fact that he probably will be our keeper for the next few weeks and if so, then we have to live with that, embrace that and I'm sure he will learn from us.

"We will be able to make good connections with him and I think a lot of the lads have made bonds with him already because he's such a good lad off the pitch." —AFP ■