

NATIONAL

Joint Committee on Amending 2008 Constitution holds meeting 46/2019

PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets with ROK PM in Seoul

PAGE-2

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VI, No. 170, 6th Waxing of Thadingyut 1381 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Friday, 4 October 2019

Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony Leading Committee holds coord meeting in Nay Pyi Taw



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the coordination committee meeting for Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Union Government Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony Steering Committee meeting was held yesterday morning in the assembly hall of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture. The meeting was addressed by Vice President U Myint Swe, patron of the steering committee.

In his address the Vice President said an eleven member Union Government Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony Steering Committee headed by himself had been formed to successfully hold the Union Government Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony in the compound of the Sasana Maha Beikmandaw building at Uppatasanti Pagoda, Nay Pyi Taw. A 20-member working committee led by Depu-

ty Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture was had also been formed to accomplish four tasks. 11 sub-committees were then established to successfully implement the four tasks.

A coordination meeting of the working committee led by its chairman Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture was held on 20 September where nine decisions were made. It may be noted that these decisions have already been implemented by relevant sub-committees.

Kathina Robe Offerings to Sanghas has been permitted by Lord Buddha as a donation in accordance with the 'Vinaya' and can be done within the first Waning Day of Thadingyut and

the Full Moon Day of Tazaungmon. That was why the Kathina Robe offering was a periodical donation that can be done one month in a year, one day in a month, one monastery a day and once for each monastery.

This special donation has been conducted by the Union Government starting from 2012 and this is the eighth time.

Before Thadingyut during the period of lent, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture had identified and selected monasteries that were in accord with the "Vinaya" and informed the respective leading monks of the monasteries to offer Kathina Robe.

As this Kathina Robe Offering was a union level event

relevant committees were to coordinate and do the necessary works to hold this event systematically and successfully. Since this event was held annually relevant committee members and departmental officials were expected to carry out their activities based on the experience of previous years and coordinate in order to make improvements year by year.

Necessary arrangements were to be made to invite and transport to the event the venerable sayadaws – totaling 63 that included State Sanghamahanayaka Sayadaws and Tipitakadhara Tikpitaka Kawvida Sayadaws. Appropriate lodgings as well as healthy foods were to be kept in readiness in addition

to providing health care services as well.

Preparations were to be made at the Sasana Maha Beikmandaw Building where the event would be held and Kathina offerings should also be prepared accordingly. Kathina offering trees were to be at designated places at the specified time and were to be sent systematically to the monasteries once the event was completed. Trial runs should be conducted so that everything would go smoothly when the event was held. In today's meeting, work committees and sub-committees were urged to discuss and openly provide necessary suggestions, said the Vice President.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

MoE, DFID, affiliate orgs discuss education development

PAGE-3

NATIONAL

Health Ministry launches drive against cardiovascular disease to mark World Heart Day

PAGE-4

LOCAL BUSINESS

Lantern makers see demand pick up ahead of Thadingyut festival

PAGE-7

LOCAL NEWS

All YBS drivers to have smart cards by this month

PAGE-6



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets with Korean Prime Minister in Seoul

PRIME Minister of the Republic of Korea Mr Lee Nak-yon received Myanmar Hluttaw goodwill delegation led by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat at his office in Seoul on 2 October.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed and exchanged views on matters related to friendship and cooperation between the two governments, parliaments, and peoples, legislative matters of parliament, and democratic reforms.

Also present at the meeting were Pyithu Hluttaw Judicial and Legal Affairs Committee Chairman U Tin Htwe, Pyithu Hluttaw Electricity and Energy Development Committee Chairman U Kyi Moe Naing and Pyithu Hluttaw Ethnic Affairs and Internal Peace Implementation Committee members U



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat (Left) shakes hands with Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea Mr Lee Nak-yon in Seoul. **PHOTO: MNA**

Kyin Wan and U Tun Kyaw and Myanmar Ambassador to the ROK U Thant Sin.

Before the meeting, the Myanmar Hluttaw goodwill delega-

tion visited the National Palace Museum of Korea, Changdeokgung Palace and Namsangol Traditional Garden in Seoul.—MNA ■ (Translated by TTN)

Joint Committee on Amending 2008 Constitution holds meeting 46/2019



Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

MEETING 46/2019 of the Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution was held at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The meeting was attended by Chairman of the Joint Committee Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy

Speaker U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Deputy Chairman of the Joint Committee Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Joint Committee secretary Dr Myat Nyana Soe and members who were Hluttaw representatives from political parties and Tatmadaw Hluttaw

representative and officials from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.

The day's meeting covered suggestions and comments up to Chapter IV Legislature of the Constitution made by political parties, groups and independents in the committee.—MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Min)

Union Attorney-General receives Ambassador of Britain, UNDP Res Rep separately

UNION Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo received separately the Ambassador of Britain to Myanmar Mr Daniel Patrick Chugg and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative (Res Rep) Mr Peter Batchelor in the meeting hall of the Union Attorney-General's office in Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning.

During the meeting with the

Ambassador of Britain matters relating to duties and responsibilities of Union Attorney-General Office, projects on rule of law and justice conducted by the office, cooperating with relevant prosecuting entities in cases relating to Anti-Money Laundering Law, the office participating and cooperating with Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Money Laundering and Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money

Laundering and cooperation with relevant organizations and departments in preventing and eradicating transnational crimes were discussed.

In the meeting with UNDP Res Rep cooperation between UNDP and Union Attorney-General Office, successes achieved in this cooperation, future cooperation and training of law officers were discussed.—MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Min)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President

Order 41/2019
5th Waxing of Thadingyut, 1381 ME
3 October, 2019

Appointment of Judge for Kachin
State High Court

In accord with the provisions stated in article 308 section (b) sub-section (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; article 82 section (d) of the Union Government Law and article 50 of the Union Judiciary Law, article 18 section (d) of Region or State Government Law, U Tu Maw has been appointed as Judge for Kachin State High Court.

Sd/ Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

ASEAN countries discuss advancing harmonized, rights-based approach to EIA

REGIONAL Consultation on Commonalities of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) in the ASEAN Member States and Advancing a Harmonized and Rights-Based Approach to EIA in ASEAN from 2 to 3 October, 2019 at the Melia Hotel in Yangon.

It was co-organized by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation of Myanmar in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Representatives from AICHR, representatives from Environmental Institutions and Human Rights Institutions from ASEAN Member States, representatives, academia and experts from Civil Society Organizations (CSO), representatives from UN Agencies and officials

from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation attended the regional consultation.

The consultation is a follow-up activity of the "AICHR Workshop on Rights-based Approach to Regional Management Strategy for an Effective Environmental Impact Assessment", held in 2017 and discussed existing legal frameworks for the Environment and EIA in ASEAN Member States and identified gaps and challenges in their implementation as well as opportunities for a harmonized and rights-based approach with the focus on steps towards the preparation of a compendium of commonalities of existing national EIA procedures and of a regional framework for effective environment impact assessment in ASEAN Member States.—MNA



Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo meets with Ambassador of Britain Mr Daniel Patrick Chugg in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony Leading Committee holds coord meeting in Nay Pyi Taw

FROM PAGE-1

Next, Steering Committee Chairman Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko explained about arrangements made to successfully hold the event. Afterwards, Deputy Minis-

ter for Religious Affairs and Culture U Kyi Min explained about sub-committees formed, transportation arrangement made for the Sayadaws, arrangements made for trial runs and coordination made with other ministries. This was followed by respective sub-committees

explaining about the preparations and works conducted by each sub-committee. Meeting attendees provided suggestions on the discussions and explanations and the Vice President also gave his comments to ensure proper coordination based on the suggestions,

discussions and explanations presented. The meeting ended after concluding remarks by the Vice President. Present at the meeting were Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Deputy Minister U Kyi Min, Nay Pyi Taw Council member

U Aung Myin Tun, Nay Pyi Taw Command Deputy Commander Col Soe Nyunt, Permanent Secretaries, Myanmar Police Force Chief Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo, heads of departments and officials. — MNA
(Translated by Zaw Min)

Ninth Myanmar-Thai JCC ministerial level meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE NINTH Myanmar-Thailand Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) Meeting for the Comprehensive Development in the Dawei Special Economic Zone (SEZ) was held at Park Royal Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. Central Work Committee for Myanmar Special Economic Zones Chairman Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint and Thai Transport Minister Mr Saksayam Chidchob delivered speeches at the meeting. The JCC Meeting discussed

programs to be conducted by Myanmar and Thailand on comprehensive development of Dawei SEZ, implementation matters to conduct main project together with the preliminary project, the role and organization of special purpose vehicle (SPV) Dawei SEZ Development Co., Ltd., future works on construction of two-lane motor vehicle road and holding of Myanmar-Thai Joint High-level Committee (JHC). From the Myanmar side, Deputy Minister for Transport and Communications, Depu-



Ninth Myanmar-Thai Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) ministerial level meeting in progress. PHOTO: MNA

ty Minister for Electricity and Energy, Deputy Minister for Construction and Dawei SEZ Management Committee Vice

Chair Dr Myint San and representatives of relevant ministerial departments numbering 36 people attended the meeting. From

the Thai side, a total of 35 people attended the meeting. —MNA
(Translated by Zaw Min)

MoE, DFID, affiliate orgs discuss education development



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi addresses first committee meeting of Myanmar-UK Partnership for Education (MUPE) at the Ministry of Education in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE first steering committee meeting of Myanmar-UK Partnership for Education (MUPE) was held at the Ministry of Education in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. Firstly, Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi thanked the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) for cooperating on MUPE. He said the Towards Results in Education and English (TREE), Assessment and Education Reform Support (AERS),

and Evaluation, Evidence and Learning Component (EELC) were all 5-year projects. He said they would bring constructive changes to Myanmar's education sector. The Union Minister also thanked the DFID and other affiliate organizations for supporting the Strengthening Pre-Service Teacher Education in Myanmar (STEM), and cooperating on the Learning Together Project. He expressed his belief that MUPE will produce positive results for developing the education sector.

The affiliated organizations include British Council, Oxford Policy Management, IMC Worldwide, UNESCO, UNICEF and Myanmar Education Consortium. Next, Ms Becky Richard of DFID delivered an address, followed by various project coordinators explaining their progress. Afterwards, MoE department officials and MUPE officials discussed further cooperation in the education sector. —MNA
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Township art show to be held at Bogoyoke Aung San market

UNDER the supervision of the Myanmar Artists Organization, the township artists organizations will showcase their paintings at the Myanmar Artists Organization's gallery at the Bogoyoke Aung San market every week. "The artists associations from the townships in Yangon Region will showcase their paintings. This week artists from the Pazundaung Township will exhibit their work, while next week, it will be the turn of Kyimyindine and Sangyaung Townships," said U Phyu Win, the chairman of the artists association of Pazundaung Township. "This week from 2 to 6 October, more than 100 paintings of over 20 artists from Pazundaung Township will be displayed. This

week, we are showcasing figures, landscapes, and portraits," said Daw Khin May Kyi, an artist. "At the Bogoyoke Aung San market, art can be picked up from art shops and the Myanmar Artists Organization's gallery. Most of the paintings from the Myanmar Artists Organization's gallery are slightly expensive compared to the art shops because they are using good quality paper and colors. The quality of the paintings is also different from the shops," said U U Phyu Win, an artist. The Bogoyoke Aung San art market was started 50 years ago. Most tourists purchase paintings at the market. The price of the paintings ranges between US\$30 and \$800.—Myint Maung Soe
(Translated by Hay Mar)



Painting capture the essence of Myanmar culture. PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG SOE

Union Minister Dr Aung Thu receives Finnish Under-Secretary of State for External Economic Relations



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu holds a meeting with Finnish Under-Secretary of State for External Economic Relations Ms Nina Irmeli Vaskunlahti in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu received Finnish Under-Secretary of State for External Economic Relations Ms Nina Irmeli Vaskunlahti at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to electrifying Myanmar's households in off-grid areas with the aim of National Electrification Plan (NEP), providing solar electricity in private houses and public buildings, investment in Myanmar's solar energy projects by Finnish private entrepreneurs and promoting of rural socio-economic conditions by using solar energy. – MNA

(Translated by TTN)

Health Ministry launches drive against cardiovascular disease to mark World Heart Day



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe addresses the ceremony to commemorate World Heart Day 2019 at the Ministry of Health and Sports, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

A CEREMONY to commemorate World Heart Day 2019 and commencement of preventive works on heart and cardiovascular disease was held at Ministry of Health and Sports, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

In addressing the event Union Minister for Health Dr Myint Htwe spoke of the importance of preventive works and treatments on heart and cardiovascular diseases as the number of such non-contagious disease occurring were rising. The importance of the public's knowledge on health was also mentioned. The Union Minister also commented on drawing up a framework system and implementing it systematically with the participation of related departments, organizations, non-government organizations, civil society organizations and traditional health groups to effectively conduct preventive works on heart and cardiovascular diseases in states/regions, townships and rural regions.

The Union Minister also said the ministry was following the suggestion of the World Health Organization to its member countries on monitoring cigarette and tobacco policy, danger to the public of second-hand smoking, assistant to those who want to quit smoking, a total ban of advertisement on smoking and cigarettes and raising tax on tobacco and cigarettes.

Next, HelpAge International (Myanmar) Technical Lead Professor Anil Krishna delivered a message of greeting. This was followed by Yangon General Hospital University of Medicine 1 cardiac department head professor Dr Nwe Nwe and Department of Public Health director Dr Kyaw Kan Kaung explaining about preventive guide against heart and cardiovascular diseases and future work programs.

Afterward, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe, Deputy Minister Dr Mya Lay Sein and officials inspected the exhibits shown at the small commemorative exhibition. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

SWRR Minister attends elderly rights conference, observes PLWD inclusive works in ROK

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Dr Win Myat Aye, attended the 4th ASEM Conference on Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons at Westin Chosun Hotel in Seoul, Republic of Korea, yesterday.

After this, the Union Minister met with Ms Choi Kyung-suk, President of Korea Disabled People's Development Institute (KODDI) where they discussed raising the living standards and employment opportunities for people living with disabilities, providing them with assisted devices, and enabling them to move around efficiently.

From there, the Union Minister visited the 'I got everything' coffee shop opened by PLWDs with assistance from KODDI. He observed how a safe working environment was established for people with disabilities, including handling machinery.

The Union Minister observed how this cooperation between the government, agencies and private companies to emulate similar shops in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw and other major cities.

Afterwards, the Union Minister met with Myanmar students studying in South at the local embassy while accompanied by Ambassador U Thant Sin. He explained the processes of his ministry and attendees asked questions in return. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and President of Korea Disabled People's Development Institute Ms Choi Kyung-suk pose for a documentary photo at the meeting in Seoul. PHOTO: MNA

Anti-Corruption Chairman U Aung Kyi receives UNDP resident representative

CHAIRMAN of Anti-Corruption Commission U Aung Kyi received United Nations Development Programme's Resident Representative Mr Peter Batchelor at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed the progress of cooperation tasks between the commission and UNDP, research and further cooperation.

Also present at the meeting were Commission's Secretary U San Win and member U Zaw Win.—MNA (Translated by TTN)



Chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission U Aung Kyi meets United Nations Development Programme's Resident Representative Mr Peter Batchelor in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Hluttaw improvement body meets HSF delegation

DAW SU SU LWIN, Leader of Advisory team to Promote Legislative Capacity-Building of Pyithu Hluttaw, received Mr Achim Munz of Hanns Seidel Foundation at the Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They openly discussed the Myanmar Hluttaws and future public and international relations, implementing federal policies, addressing public com-

plaint letters, and assisting state and regional Hluttaws.—MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Leader of Advisory team to Promote Legislative Capacity-Building of Pyithu Hluttaw, Daw Su Su Lwin meets with Mr Achim Munz of Hanns Seidel Foundation at the Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Attendees pose for a photo at the third day of the 35th Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

35th ACDM held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE third day of the 35th Meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) was held at Shwe San Eain Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Taking the rotating Chairman position of ACDM was Dr Ko Ko Naing, Director-General of the Department of Disaster Management, and the Joint Chairman position was taken by Mr Kistoffer James E Purisima, Assistant Secretary/Deputy Administrator for Administration,

the Philippines.

The meeting on joint emergency rescue and humanitarian aid was held on the third day and attended by representatives, ASEAN defence meeting representatives, health and development officials, social welfare and development officials, and ASEAN natural disaster management representatives where they discussed various relevant topics.—MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Nay Pyi Taw Seminar discusses smoke free areas

THE Seminar on Smokefree Hotels, Restaurants and Heritage Places was held at Mingalarthiri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Permanent Secretary Dr Thar Tun Kyaw spoke at the seminar. He said Myanmar joined WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2003 and enacted The Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Product Law on 4 May 2006. He said smoking should be strictly prohibited in crowded places.

Dr Thar Tun Kyaw said

designating smoke free areas creates a healthier environment, makes travel to that particular destination more attractive, and reduces damage to heritage sites and the risk of stray fires.

He said current strategic plans are vying to incorporate Yangon, Bago, Bagan, PyinOoLwin, Pindaya, Nyaungshwe and Kyaikhto with smoke-free areas.

Next, Dr Dinesh Jeyakumaren, WHO department representative, and Dr Domillyn of Southeast Asia Tobacco Control



Permanent Secretary Dr Thar Tun Kyaw delivers the speech at the Seminar on Smokefree Hotels, Restaurants and Heritage Places in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday **PHOTO: MNA**

Alliance delivered separate addresses. This was followed by explanations on state and regional implementations for smoke-free areas and discussions on future action plans. The meeting continues today.—MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Deputy Director-General U Zaw Zaw Htike hands over the published materials to IPRD Director-General U Ye Naing at the ceremony. **PHOTO: MNA**

IPRD receives Hluttaw-related materials for its community centres

THE Pyithu Hluttaw handed over 6,175 books and brochures and 1,300 posters on the Hluttaw to the Information and Public Relations Department with a ceremony at the Ministry of Information yesterday.

The donated items will be distributed to public libraries in district and township level IPRDs across the nation. The

published materials are a collaboration between the Hluttaw offices and Hanns Seidel Foundation.

Deputy Director-General U Zaw Zaw Htike of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office handed over the published materials to IPRD Director-General U Ye Naing during the ceremony.

The donation aims to

increase public literacy on Hluttaw matters and its inner working in the 325 townships that participated in the 2015 General Elections. At the same time, MoI is swiftly upgrading its IPRD libraries into community centres to promote public participation. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

ACTING CHIEF EDITOR
Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORS
Zaw Min
Zaw Htet Oo
INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR
Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

LOCAL NEWS EDITORS
Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com

TRANSLATORS
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun

REPORTER
Nyein Nyein Ei,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Aye Yamon Oo

PHOTOGRAPHER
Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar
Kyaw Zeya

COMPUTER TEAM
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Hnin Pwint,
Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin,
Thein Htwe, Nyi Lin Thu

EDITORIAL SECTION
(+95) (01)8604529,
Fax – (+95) (01) 8604305

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
www.facebook.com/TheGNLM



Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.
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.

All YBS drivers to have smart cards by this month

BY Nyein Nyein

ALL drivers employed with YBS bus lines will have smart cards this month, said U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw, the managing director of the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).

“Of the 4,675 YBS drivers who applied to the YRTA for smart cards, 4,547 have been issued smart cards, and the cards remain to be issued to only over 100 drivers. We will make sure the smart cards are handed to all those drivers in early October,” he added.

“Following the issuance of smart cards, drivers will be strictly checked by the YRTA’s inspection team on whether they are holding the cards or not. We have asked the team to check them this month,” said U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw.

According to the YRTA, passengers will be able to send their complaints to the inspection team through Viber contact numbers — 09 448147149, 09448147153-4.

The YRTA will have the personal information of every single



A passenger drops money into a cash box in the YBS bus in Yangon. PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE

driver, so, it will be simpler for the authority to deal with complaints or take action against undisciplined drivers, said the YRTA managing director.

The transport authority will have a centralized database detailing the job history and work experience of YBS drivers. This

will make it easy to trace drivers quickly, according to the YRTA.

As per data compiled by the transport authority between 1 January and 30 September this year, it is currently dealing with driver indiscipline involving 76 cases of drivers changing routes, 6,316 cases of fine

receipts, and 2,108 complaints against drivers.

At present, over 100 bus lines are operating 4,500 buses on about 130 routes, along with the Airport Shuttle. The number of daily commuters has been estimated at 1.8 million. ■
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Upper Yeywa plants to generate 1,409 mln kilowatt hours of hydropower in 2022

UPON completion in 2022, the upper Yeywa hydropower plants will be able to generate 1,409 million kilowatt hours annually, according to the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

The upper Yeywa hydropower project is being implemented on the Dokhtawaddy River, which lies 20 miles south of Kyaukme Town in Shan State (North).

The project began to be implemented by the Ministry of Electricity and Energy in the

2010-2011 fiscal year. Under the upper Yeywa hydropower project, four power plants are being set up, which can generate 70 megawatts (MWs) each. They can generate 1,409 million kilowatt hours.

Construction was started in August, 2018. The upper Yeywa hydropower project was taken up with the aim to distribute electricity across the country through the national power grid. Upon completion, the plants would distribute electricity to

3.7 million people through the national power grid, according to the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy has already approved 51 State-owned and private-owned power plants across the country. They have been generating over 5,600 MWs of power.

The hydropower plants have been distributing electricity to over 4.9 million households out of 10.8 mil-

lion households across the country.

By the end of 2019, the authorities will be able to distribute electricity to 50 per cent of households across the country. To produce sufficient electricity, three projects will be implemented — Mee Laung Gyaing in Ayeyawady region (1,390 MWs), Ahlon in Yangon region (377 MWs), and Kanbawk in Taninthayi region (1,230 MWs). —Aye Maung ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

Poaching of wild elephants on decline in Ayeyawady Region

HUNTING of wild elephants in the Ayeyawady region has declined annually, beginning from 2017. Only three wild elephant deaths were reported between January and September this year.

According to statistics provided by the Ayeyawady police, there were 16 wild elephant deaths in 2017, while eight cases were recorded in 2018, and among them, one was a case of slaughter. Between January and September this year, two

elephants were killed, while in another case, an elephant was hunted down for its hide.

“This year, eight poachers were involved in three cases of elephant deaths. But, we apprehended only six poachers. Two poachers escaped, and we have launched a hunt for them. We are also conducting awareness talks for local people and are patrolling elephant habitat regions. We have also opened elephant base camps. Two camps have been opened in Pathein,

and one each in Thabaung and Ngapudaw,” said an official from the Ayeyawady regional police.

Myanmar has also been celebrating World Elephant Day with the aim of preventing illegal smuggling of elephant hides, tiles, teeth, and tusks as well as to curb reduction of their pasture land. Currently, six elephant base camps have been opened to protect wild elephants in Ayeyawady region, in cooperation with the forest department, the Myanmar police force, other related depart-

ments, and NGOs.

There are around 2,000 wild elephants in Myanmar. Human-elephant conflict is one of the big issues in Myanmar. Such conflicts are especially reported from Taikkyi Township in Yangon region, Ayeyawady region, and Rakhine State. To reduce human-elephant conflict, the related departments need to cooperate with local villagers and other social organizations, said officials. —Aye Cho ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

Manufacturing exports up \$1.99 bln

EXPORTS of finished industrial goods touched a high of US\$9.83 billion between 1 October, 2018 and 20 September, 2019 in the current fiscal, an increase of \$1.99 billion compared with the corresponding period of the previous financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

As per figures provided by the ministry, the exports of finished industrial goods totaled \$7.84 billion during the same period in the 2017-2018FY.

Additionally, the manufacturing sector is likely to attract the most foreign investments in the 2019-2020 FY, according to

the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packaging basis, and it contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

The CMP industry has emerged as a very promising one in the export sector. The value of CMP exports was just \$850 million in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, but it tripled within two years to reach \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY, as per figures

provided during the Myanmar Global Investment Forum 2018, held on 12 September.

During the mini-budget (April-September, 2018) period, exports of clothes produced under the CMP system were valued at \$2.27 billion.

Japan is the largest market for Myanmar apparel, followed by the European Union.

There are currently over 400 garment factories in Myanmar, which employ more than 300,000 workers. Investors prefer to invest in cheap-labor countries like Myanmar.—GNLM ■ (Translated by EMM)

Myanmar FDI inflows reach \$4.15 bln in current fiscal; fall short of target

BY Nyein Nyein

BETWEEN 1 October, 2018 and 27 September, 2019 in the current fiscal year, foreign direct investment of US\$4.158 billion flowed into the country against the target of \$5.8 billion, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The total figure includes investment of \$362.28 million in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

The FDI fell short of the target by around \$1.65 billion, according to the DICA.

"Unlike before, the DICA has tightened investment screening, and is following up the history, responsibility, and reputation to check whether there are bankruptcy and insolvency records of investment enterprises. There-

fore, the FDI target was not reached this fiscal year," said U Thant Sin Lwin, the director-general of the DICA.

"We are prioritizing responsible businesses. It is better if the company is a member in the Global Impact Investing Network. As we carefully and systematically screened the proposals, we were not able to reach the FDI target this FY," he said.

According to a press statement issued by the DICA, 282 foreign enterprises obtained MIC permits and endorsements from regional and state investment committees between 1 October and 27 September in the current fiscal, bringing in a capital of \$2.76 billion. Singapore-listed enterprises were the largest investors in the current fiscal year, followed by China and Hong

Kong.

Transport and communications absorbed over \$1.5 billion in FDI, topping in the investment sector line-up, followed by the manufacturing sector.

In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, foreign investments have flowed into agriculture, livestock, manufacturing, power, transport and communications, hotels and tourism, real estate, industrial estate, and other services sectors. Under the Myanmar Investment Law, the Region and State Investment Committees are allowed to endorse local and foreign proposals, where the initial investment does not exceed K6 billion, or \$5 million. This is aimed at simplifying the verification process of investment projects. ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Traditional hand-made paper Lanterns. PHOTO: SOE MOE THU (SALIN)

Lantern makers see demand pick up ahead of Thadingyut festival

MYANMAR traditional lantern makers at Salin and Sinphyukyun towns of Magway Region said they are witnessing a high demand ahead of the Thadingyut Light Festival.

"We need to collect bamboos and trim them for raw drawing. Later, we have to mold them into desired shapes and attach colored paper to the shaped lanterns. Lantern toy makers make various shapes such as rabbits, elephants, peacocks, airplanes, cars, ships, and other animal shapes. The prices range between K500 and K2,500, depending on the size and quality. The handmade lantern toys are usually sold in crowded places, including night markets, pagodas, and playgrounds. We can earn from K25,000 to K30,000 per day," said U Aung Min, a lantern maker

from Salin Town.

Although China-made lanterns are flowing into the market, the residents of Magway Region are likely to buy Myanmar traditional handmade lantern toys instead of Chinese lanterns, said lantern makers.

The Thadingyut festival, known as the Lighting Festival of Myanmar, is usually celebrated for three days — before the full moon day, on full moon day, and the day after. During the festival, pagodas, temples, and monasteries are crowded with pilgrims, and people light candles around and illuminate pagodas and homes. In keeping with the culture and tradition of Myanmar, people go round paying respects to grandparents, parents, teachers, and elderly relatives.—Soe Moe Thu (Salin) ■ (Translated by La Wonn)

Peanut growers anticipate good yield in Wundwin



A peanut plantation in Wundwin Township, Mandalay Region. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

PEANUT farmers in Htanaungkone village, Wundwin Township, Mandalay Region said they are expecting a good yield from crops planted in the mid-monsoon season.

Farmers in the western regions of Wundwin Township rely on rainfall for cultivation because of the scarcity of dams. If there are any climate changes, they cannot meet the targeted yields for a season, the farmers said.

Peanut growers said they have earlier endured losses due to lack of rainfall in Wundwin Township and damage to other crops. "We had planted peanuts on 26 August after the rainfall on 24 August. It has been over

40 days since the peanuts were planted. And, we guarantee that those peanut farms can yield high amount of peanuts and the growers are also expecting to earn high prices. Peanuts can be harvested after 100 days of cultivation, and normally an acre can produce between 70 and 90 baskets of peanut," said U Kyaw Nyein, a peanut grower.

Currently, peanuts have been cultivated over 90 acres in Wundwin Township, with yield rate of 70 baskets of peanut per acre. Farmers mainly cultivate peanut and pigeon peas in Wundwin Township, central region of Myanmar.—Htay Hlaing (Wundwin) (Translated by La Wonn)

Ensure our teachers and students acquire 21st century skills

WHEN it comes to reforms for improving the education system to bring it on par with other countries, the quality of teachers is crucial.

In this globally and digitally interconnected era, those who learn sustainably succeed.

All learners and educators need to upgrade their skills and knowledge, from cradle to career, to overcome challenges and grab opportunities offered by today's world.

To upgrade our education system, the Union Government is implementing the National Education Strategy Plan 2016-2021. To meet the goal set under the plan, teachers need to acquire 21st century skills themselves and cultivate these skills among their students.

Why? The driving force for the 21st century is the intellectual capital of the citizens. These 21st-century skills are more important for our youths now than ever before.

They not only provide a framework for successful learning in the classroom, but ensure students can thrive in a world where change is a constant and learning never stops.

Besides, in the 21st century world, our teachers should prepare our students to acquire soft skills, such as understanding diversity and equality, paying heed to democratic norms and human rights, and develop capabilities which can help promote the literature, culture, language, customs, and heritage of our ethnic people.

Only then, they will become good citizens who are civically engaged, and have the ability to think critically, solve problems, be creative and innovative, and are digitally literate and globally aware.

Our goal of building a Federal Democratic Union demands good citizens with these skills.

Hence, capable teachers who are moral, free from bias, responsible, and accountable can be considered the backbone of a democracy.

In other words, honesty, accountability, responsibility, and transparency of confident civil servants representing the government are important factors for promoting trust between the government and the people.

Good citizenship is essential for our country, which is rich in natural resources and endowed with the cultural heritage of our ethnic people.

Our teachers and civil servants reflect the image of our country. Hence, they are obliged to uphold our laws and ethics.

At the same time, it is the duty of our teachers to help our ethnic youths become good citizens with strong morals and good character.

■ ■ ■

Three days in Mandalay on the Orbis flying hospital

By Dr Nilar Thein (Lin Yaung Thit)

I WAS pleased when the Orbis Flying Eye Hospital was coming to Myanmar. There are people who are well acquainted with Orbis and there are those who are not. This will be the fifth time Orbis has visited Myanmar and the fourth time landing in Mandalay.

Some of our frequently asked questions include Orbis' country of origin, what services do they provide, whether it's free, what benefits do they offer, what diseases do they treat, and whether just anyone can seek treatment from them.

Well, the answer to the first question concerning their origin is not very straightforward. While Orbis is headquartered in New York, USA, it's not a US company nor is it affiliated with the United Nations. Orbis also has branches in London, Houston and Hong Kong.

The 200 or so people working full-time on Orbis also have different jobs across the globe. The doctors volunteering on the plane include prominent ophthalmologists, physicians and professors. Even the pilots commandeering the plane are captains from different nations volunteering.

Orbis is actually funded by a diverse set of entities. The US Agency for International Development provides the capital, United Airlines donated the DC-8 plane, Alcon Foundation donated the MD-10 aircraft, while philanthropic organizations and major companies provide assistance and donations.

Orbis is an international non-profit non-governmental organization dedicated to saving sight worldwide since its establishment 35 years ago. This is makes it the only airplane hospital that provides treatment for eye disorders and related training as well.

The hospital's visit this year

er with Mandalay Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital and provided a training course onboard its aircraft from 23 September to 4 October.

This training programme included theoretical and practical training for Myanmar ophthalmologists, exchanging know-how related to eye disorders, and conducting workshops. The courses and surgical operations will be carried out in conjunction with a connection to the Internet and, therefore, the doctors can choose to observe the section that interests them in real-time.

The training programmes will mainly focus on developing the study of strabismus in youths, cataract, glaucoma, corneal diseases, eyelid disorders, tear duct obstructions, and other vision-related topics.

They will also provide practical training for medical engineers, phacoemulsification practice for

cess is a small-incision cataract surgery that involves making an incision in the side of the cornea and inserting a tiny probe into the eye. The probe emits ultrasound waves that soften and break up the lens so it can be suctioned out.

With the help of the Alcon Foundation, the training programmes will be accessible for ophthalmologists, nurses, anesthetists, medical engineers and experts from all over Myanmar. They say this entire visit aims to raise public awareness on the National Eye Health Plan 2017-2021 among Myanmar's citizens.

The first time Orbis visited Myanmar was in 1991 where it landed in Yangon and then again in 1992, 1993, 1994, 1997 and 1999. I was a postgraduate in ophthalmology during 1999 and all of us postgraduates gained invaluable experiences from their training.

We received practical training for treating cataracts with a



There were 38 ophthalmologists and 7 cabin crew on Orbis this time.



The Orbis flying hospital houses a state-of-the-art teaching facility.

trainees all boarded the Flying Eye Hospital. Security was tight from the entrance of the airport up to the airplane. We were all given ID card with straps.

You will first see an office immediately upon entering the plane. On the left is a classroom with 46 seats. The number of people permitted to board the plane at a time is limited and are rotated by the medical university and date. No food is allowed on the plane. Since there is an operation theater on board, they give the highest regard for keeping it sanitized and free of germs.

I was able to board the plane on Tuesday and Wednesday. I was able to witness a child receive surgery to correct strabismus on my first day. I also observed them using a shunt for treating glaucoma. They continued treating patients with glaucoma in the evening.

They let us on the plane at 9 a.m. the next day. With two patients at 1 p.m. and two more in the evening, the Flying Eye Hospital is only able to operate on 20 patients per week. This may not seem like a big help to the nation for some.

But the true objective of Orbis is to spread the knowledge and training on eye disorders and treatment to postgraduate students and specialists. They begin classes as soon as you board the plane.

A light will go on during class to signal the beginning of an op-

When selecting patients for treatment on Orbis, they prioritize the poor, those with zero eyesight and those who have chances of successful operations.

eration and class is halted. The operation is shown on TV and the doctor inside the theater and in the classroom exchange greetings first.

We were given 3D glasses so it felt like we were actually in the operation room and it was like the patient's eyes were right in front of us. We can ask any questions directly to the doctor performing the surgery.

Then, after the operation is complete, they close the TV channel as they prepare the operation room for the next surgery and our class resumes from where it left off.

Our lunch break is at 1 p.m. and we have our meal at the airport before returning to the plane as a group at 2 p.m. The classes continue until 5 p.m. We had to answer questionnaires before taking the classes. We were each given a remote control to choose the correct answer. Our answers were presented to us in a bar graph. We had to answer the same questions after each class. I could help but feel proud of some

Myanmar doctors who had the right answers on both times.

On Wednesday the next day, the performed surgery on a patient with both corneal disease and cataract. The removed the cataract first using the probe and ultrasound process mentioned earlier. Then they replaced the fourth layer of the cornea with a minor incision.

We simultaneously received teaching on the nature of glaucoma, medical treatment, laser surgery and surgical processes. They provided detailed explanations on laser treatments and injections used to treat impaired vision caused by diabetes.

Learning never stops and you are never too old nor too young to start or continue learning. We have to catch up technology advancing from day to day, year to year, era to era. There was always something to learn to emulate from observing the professionals operating on the plane.

They are organized, strategic, punctual and also value time by not wasting a single minute. They are decisive and efficient, and have a wealth of international experience and practice that makes them admirable to everyone.

When selecting patients for treatment on Orbis, they prioritize the poor, those with zero eyesight and those who have chances of successful operations. They also prefer to select patients who have diseases that will provide a good sample for Myanmar's ophthalmologists and postgraduate students to gain practical training.

I think this will answer the question of who to contact and how much it would cost to seek treatment on Orbis. Some of the patients could be cured by Myanmar doctors while some could not be cured by the doctors on Orbis or other global medical professionals.

I was once asked by a patient if she could give her eyes to her son who was born without any. She asked if they could perform

that surgery on the plane. I calmly explained to her that while a mother's love is strong, no doctor or modern technology yet can help someone who was born without any eyes. I had to tell her there was no cure for someone who lost their vision while in the womb as a result of past karma.

I was unable to peek inside the operation room on the plane but I was busy enough absorbing everything they were teaching and even forgetting to blink sometimes.

There were 38 ophthalmologists and 7 cabin crew on Orbis this time. Among them were Dr Robert Chang who taught and treated glaucoma and is an Assistant Professor from Stanford University, California, Dr Monte from Michigan University who taught and treated eye disorders in children and strabismus, Dr James from the University of Texas Health Science Center for cornea and external diseases, Dr Javier from Colombian University for vitreoretinal simulation, and anesthetists Dr Mark Gunn and Dr Nathan from universities in Texas.

In the classroom was written 'With support from Alcon Foundation' and the foundation has been partnering with Orbis to treat eye disorders around the world for over 40 years. In fact, they were already working with Orbis in 1979, way before they initiated the flying hospital project.

Alcon has been donating medical equipment, medicine and other support to hospitals around the world with the Flying Eye Hospital for 40 years, and Alcon's professionals and engineers also give training for handling machinery, repair and maintenance.

They will be teaching about eyelid and tear duct related diseases, cornea and nervous system disorders next week. My three days in Mandalay were immensely fruitful. It was also a rare opportunity for postgraduate students. I would like to thank the professors and ophthalmologists of Mandalay EENT Hospital for helping me attend the Orbis classes.

Seeing is believing and I was able to witness the positive changes in Mandalay and enjoy its beauty during my time attending the courses on the Flying Eye Hospital.

Translated by Pen Dali

■ ■ ■

Dy Info Minister receives DVB CEO



Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun and a delegation led by U Aye Chan Naing, CEO of DVB Media Group pose for a photo at the Ministry of Information yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

DEPUTY MINISTER for Information, U Aung Hla Tun, received U Aye Chan Naing, CEO of DVB Media Group, and his entourage at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. At the meeting, they openly discussed matters relating to news broadcasting —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

YGN nursing university observed World Patient Safety Day

THE University of Nursing, Yangon, commemorated World Patient Safety Day yesterday. A video clip urging prioritizing patient safety was shown first, followed by opening remarks from the chief regional health officer and explanations on World Patient Safety Day from experts. Dr Khine Zar Win from the Eastern District of Yangon Region explained that patient safety involves mitigating negative side effects in the hospital. It is a preventable case and is given top priority. The World Health Organization estimates that one out of four patients in developing countries faces difficulties when receiving medical treatment. This means that about 134 million people are experiencing this issue and 2.6 million die while receiving medical attention every year. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



The commemoration to mark World Patient Safety Day held at the University of Nursing, Yangon, yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Venezuela says wants to double oil production next year

MOSCOW —Venezuela, the biggest exporter of oil in South America, Thursday announced an ambitious goal of doubling production by 2020 amid an economic crisis and US sanctions. He said Caracas would “target more than 2 million barrels a day in 2020”. In August 2019, its production amounted to 933,000 barrels per day according to official figures quoted by OPEC, down from more than two million in 2017. Venezuela is home to the largest proven oil reserves in the world. The country derives almost all its revenues from oil and plunged into crisis in 2014 during a collapse in crude prices. Caracas is also the target of a large number of US economic sanctions aimed at putting pressure on President Nicolas Maduro, including an oil embargo. Russia is a key international supporter of Venezuela and has made a number of investments in the country through the oil giant Rosneft. —AFP



Venezuela is home to the world’s biggest proven oil reserves. PHOTO: AFP

Correction

Please read “Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin” instead of “Deputy Minister Dr Tun Naing” in the story titled “National Day, Armed Forces Day of ROK celebrated in Nay Pyi Taw” on page-3 of the October 3 issue of the Global New Light of Myanmar. MNA regrets the error. —MNA

Portugal economic crisis a fading memory ahead of polls

COIMBRA (Portugal)— After Liliana Inverno lost her job in 2012 at the height of Portugal’s economic crisis, she reluctantly accepted a position in China. the country was battered by the eurozone debt crisis, sparking its deepest recession since the transition to democracy in the 1970s and a major wave of emigration. In exchange for the international aid, Lisbon agreed to harsh austerity measures, such as “drastic cuts” to higher education which Inverno said led her to lose her job at a university in the southern province of Algarve. Her husband, who worked in the entertainment industry, went months without being paid, she added. Inverno desperately started to look for work abroad and was hired in 2012 at a training centre in Macau, a tiny Portuguese colony which Lisbon handed back to China in 1999.—AFP

Extinction Rebellion sprays UK finance ministry with fake blood



Four people were arrested on suspicion of criminal damage following the incident. PHOTO: AFP

LONDON — Members of the environmental activist group Extinction Rebellion on Thursday used a decommissioned fire engine to spray fake blood over the front of Britain's finance ministry in London.

Protesters, who sprayed 1,800 litres of the fake blood outside the Treasury, also held up banners at the site demanding Britain "stop funding climate death".

Extinction Rebellion said it staged the protest to show "the inconsistency between the UK government's insistence that the UK is a world leader in tackling climate breakdown, and the vast sums it pours into

fossil fuel exploration and carbon-intensive projects".

The liquid was water coloured with food dye, it added.

London's Metropolitan Police said four people — three men and one woman — were arrested on suspicion of criminal damage following the incident.

"People on a privately-owned fire engine had sprayed a liquid at the Treasury building," it added in a statement.

"No reported injuries."

It comes ahead of a planned day of "international rebellion" on Monday in more than 60 cities around the world.—AFP ■

'Ocean Cleanup' ship sweeps first Pacific plastic

ROTTERDAM — A special ship designed to clean the oceans has harvested its first plastic from the Great Pacific Garbage Patch since setting sail from San Francisco last month, its Dutch inventor said Wednesday.

The project by The Ocean Cleanup, a Dutch non-profit group, involves a supply ship towing a floating boom that corrals marine plastic with the aim of cleaning half of the infamous patch within five years.

"Today we announce that our cleaning system in the Great

Pacific Garbage Patch has been catching plastic for the first time," Boyan Slat, the 25-year-old Dutch CEO and founder of The Ocean Cleanup, told a press conference in Rotterdam.

"It's the first time actually anyone harvests plastic from the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. So we think that we can actually clean the oceans."

Slat came up with the idea seven years ago, and the system has been undergoing tests for the past year.

The Maersk Launcher ship

finally sailed from San Francisco on 9 September for trials on cleaning the patch, a floating trash pile twice the size of France that swirls in the ocean halfway between California and Hawaii.

It was towing a 600 metre (2,000-foot)-long boom device designed by Slat dubbed System 001, aimed at containing floating ocean plastic so it can be scooped up and recycled.

The system includes a tapered three-metre skirt to catch plastic floating just below the surface.—AFP ■



The project by The Ocean Cleanup, a Dutch non-profit group, involves a supply ship towing a floating boom that corrals marine plastic with the aim of cleaning half of the infamous patch within five years. PHOTO: AFP

Tougher penalties to protect Sri Lanka elephants after mass deaths

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka announced harsher penalties in a bid to protect wild elephants on Tuesday, as investigators probed whether seven jumbos found poisoned over the weekend were killed by villagers.

Sri Lanka announced harsher penalties in a bid to protect wild elephants on Tuesday, as investigators probed whether seven jumbos found poisoned

over the weekend were killed by villagers. Wildlife and Tourism Minister John Amaratunga said he will impose tougher sanctions on offenders to boost laws enacted three years ago but not yet implemented due to administrative delays.

Elephants are a protected animal in the South Asian island nation and the new rules will increase the length of jail time and

amount of fines for those found to have been cruel to the beasts.

Authorities will also be given wider powers to investigate offenders, Amaratunga said, though no further details were released. Investigations into the deaths of seven elephants at a forest reserve in central Sri Lanka showed the animals had ingested poison, but it was not yet clear if they were murdered.—AFP ■

Gabon juggles competing demands in fight to protect nature

LIBREVILLE (Gabon) — The lush green canopy stretches over the Akanda National Park — one of the many forest jewels that Gabon is fighting to conserve.

But those living in poverty in the shadow of the park are ambiguous.

They see the forests less as a global treasure to be cosseted and more as a resource that they need to use to survive.

A bank employee, making his arduous daily commute to the nearby capital Libreville, glanced up at the immense trees almost with hostility.

"I've lived here for two years and I can tell you that I have no electricity and no water," said the man, dressed in a business suit as he walked along an earthen road to get to work.

"Gabon's forests are a source of national pride, but you can't be

proud and live without a roof over your head."

Last week, Norway announced a \$150-million (137-million-euro) contract with Gabon to reduce its carbon emissions.

The initiative comes under the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), a UN-launched scheme aimed at encouraging Western help for cash-strapped forest custodians.

But the fight against climate change spurred little enthusiasm among local people who spoke to AFP. A retired cook, Luc Boudzanga, said he had no pension. To get by, he had to grow food on land where such activities are banned.

"We eat thanks to the forest," Boudzanga says before heading off along the edge of the park, machete in hand. "Otherwise, how would we survive?"—AFP ■



Two forest rangers walk on a road in the Akanda forest, a national park a few kilometers from the city centre of the capital, Libreville on 27 September, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

Global auto industry to lose 700 bln euros in sales because of US trade policy: think-tank

BERLIN — The global automotive industry could miss 700 billion euros in sales (765 billion US dollars) over the next seven years due to trade war started by the US government, according to estimates by the Center for Automotive Research (CAR) at the university Duisburg Essen on Wednesday.

According to CAR director Ferdinand Dudenhoeffer, US-started trade war was one of the “main reasons for the drop in sales of the worldwide automotive industry”.

The automotive think-tank estimated that between 2018 and 2024, US trade policies could lead to loss of sales of more than 35 million cars, resulting in 700 billion euros of lost sales.

“Since the Chinese market is a key market for the German auto industry, the German auto industry has been severely damaged by US customs policy. The behavior of the USA is thus the opposite of alliance policy,” Dudenhoeffer stressed. —Xinhua ■



Attendees look at the the Volkswagen lineup of cars and SUVs during the 2017 North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan on 9 January, 2017. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS In BRIEF

France, its partners to retaliate if US sanctions EU imports: ministry

PARIS — France and its European partners would take firm counter-measures if Washington goes ahead with imposing sanctions on EU imports as retaliation for European aircraft subsidies, the French Foreign Affairs Ministry said on Wednesday.

Agnes von der Muhll, the ministry's spokesperson, warned “the escalation of trade tension ... will have negative impacts on economies, international trade and the aviation industry,” stressing that such dispute with a partner was “undesirable.” She added that “the EU would prefer an amicable settlement in this 15-year-old dispute and the development of new common rules on government support for aviation companies” after the World Trade Organization (WTO) ruled that the US could target 7.5 billion US dollars of EU imports over illegal subsidies for plane-maker Airbus. —Xinhua

Malaysia threatens ride-hailing firm Grab with \$21 million fine

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia's competition watchdog on Thursday threatened to hit Grab with a \$21 million fine for practices that allegedly reduce competition, the latest problem for the ride-hailing giant.

Grab is the biggest ride-hailing firm in Southeast Asia, and has strengthened its hold on the market since buying US rival Uber's operations in the region last year. But the Singapore-headquartered firm has come under scrutiny from regulators in several countries due to concerns about its dominant position. The Malaysia Competition Commission proposed fining Grab almost 87 million ringgit (\$21 million) for preventing its drivers from providing advertising services for the company's competitors. This had the effect of “distorting competition” by creating barriers to Grab's rivals, it said. “It is important that barriers to entry for new players remain low, and for existing players to have the ability to grow and compete on merits to ensure that competition can remain healthy,” said Iskandar Ismail, the watchdog's chief executive. — AFP ■

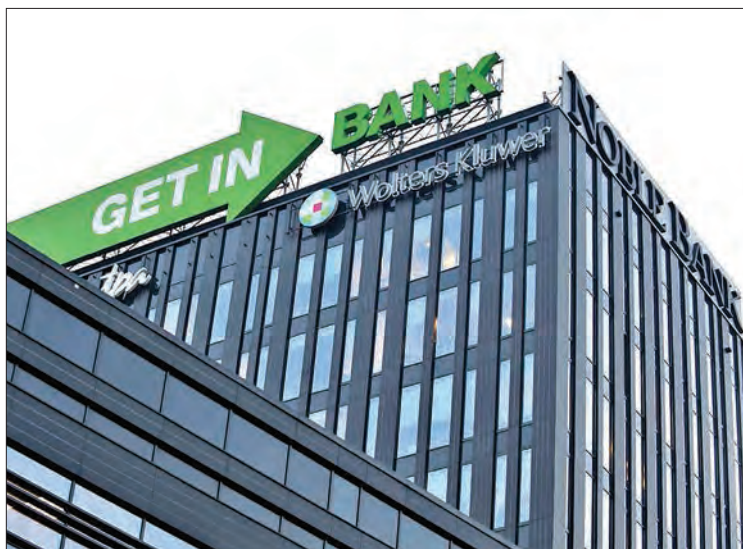
Polish banks brace for lawsuits after EU court ruling

WARSAW — Polish banks braced for a slew of lawsuits on Thursday after the EU's top court ruled Poles holding crippling foreign-currency mortgages could renegotiate them, a potentially costly move for both banks and the Polish economy.

Estimates of the potential losses for lenders vary, with experts indicating the banks concerned could reach from one to six times of their 2018 earnings.

The Luxembourg-based Court of Justice of the European Union ruled on Thursday in favour of Polish mortgage holders, affirming their right to petition domestic courts to restructure loans containing abusive clauses.

“Some banks used illegal, abusive, terms that were prohibited,” Polish Finance Minister



Logo of Getin Noble Bank is seen on the building in downtown Warsaw, Poland. **PHOTO: AFP**

Jerzy Kwiecinski told reporters in Warsaw, reacting to the CJEU's ruling.

“This means that the owners

of this type of (Swiss) franc mortgages will be able to claim their rights in courts,” Kwiecinski said, adding that the finance ministry

was monitoring the situation in the banking sector.

Around 700,000 Polish households took out mortgages in Swiss francs more than a decade ago, attracted by low interest rates.

They were hit hard when the zloty depreciated sharply against the franc, nearly doubling the costs of their loans.

The CJEU ruling will serve as a precedent for further litigation in the Polish courts, a lengthy process which experts say will give banks time to build up buffers. Swiss franc mortgage holder Barbara Husiew accused banks of “greed” and acting in “bad faith” at a special press conference in Warsaw on Thursday organised by fellow borrowers to watch a live broadcast of the CJEU ruling. —AFP ■

Russian man sues Apple for ‘turning him gay’

MOSCOW — A Russian man has filed a lawsuit against Apple for moral harm claiming that an iPhone app had turned him

gay, according to a copy of the complaint seen by AFP.

The man filed suit in a Moscow court asking for one million

rubles (\$15,000) after an incident this summer in which a cryptocurrency called “GayCoin” was delivered via a smartphone app, rather than the Bitcoin he had ordered.

His lawyer Sapizhat Gusnieva insisted the case was “serious,” telling AFP that her client was “scared, he suffered”.

The GayCoin cryptocurrency arrived with a note saying, “Don't judge until you try,” according to the complaint.

“I thought, in truth, how can I judge something without trying? I decided to try same-sex relationships,” the complainant wrote.

“Now I have a boyfriend and I do not know how to explain this to my parents... my life has been

changed for the worse and will never become normal again,” he added.

“Apple pushed me towards homosexuality through manipulation. The changes have caused me moral and mental harm.”

Apple's representatives in Russia did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment.

Gusnieva said the US technology giant “has a responsibility for their programmes” despite the alleged exchange taking place on a third-party app.

The suit was filed on September 20 and the court will hear the complaint on October 17, according to information on its website. —AFP ■



The man filed suit in a Moscow court asking for one million rubles (\$15,000) after an incident this summer in which a cryptocurrency called “GayCoin” was delivered via a smartphone app, rather than the Bitcoin he had ordered. **PHOTO: AFP**

Nobel buzz for Greta and literature duo

STOCKHOLM — Experts are cautious, but bookies are tipping teenage climate campaigner Greta Thunberg for the Nobel Peace Prize next week, while two literature laureates will be crowned after last year's award was postponed over a sex harassment scandal. Odds from bookmakers such as Ladbrokes indicate the 16-year-old activist is the one to beat for the Nobel Peace Prize after she launched a school strike that inspired millions to join her "Fridays for Fu-



Bookmakers are tipping teenage activist Greta Thunberg for the Nobel Peace Prize but observers are sceptical. PHOTO: AFP

ture" movement. However any prediction carries a great deal of uncertainty, since the list of candidates considered by the Nobel Committee isn't made public, and experts are still divided over whether there is a direct link between climate and violent conflicts. A day before the Peace Prize announcement on 11 October in Oslo, the Swedish Academy, which awards the Literature Prize, will reveal its choices in Stockholm. The literary body is at pains to restore its honour after a scandal exposed members' scheming, conflicts of interest, and a culture of silence and harassment.—AFP ■

Darwin, Islam: Kosovo imam expelled for accepting both

PRISTINA — When not leading prayers in his village mosque in western Kosovo, imam Drilon Gashi was scribbling some unorthodox thoughts on social media — like his belief in the theory of evolution. Eventually, the embrace of both Islam and Darwinism cost him his job. The 31-year-old was unceremoniously expelled from his post by top clergy last month, in what he says is evidence of the growing threat to Kosovo's traditionally moderate brand of Islam. "Living creatures are created by evolution, but this evolution is led by God," Gashi told AFP of his theory of how Islam and science can work in tandem. "Science reveals natural phenomena as God created them," he added. The political future of Kosovo, a young and troubled democracy on the EU's fringe, will be decided in a general election this Sunday — the fourth since the former Serbian province declared independence in 2008. But behind the headlines is a different battle for the soul of its dominant faith. Embracing the theory of evolution would not seem that unusual in Kosovo, whose population of 1.8 million has long been known for its moderate flavour of Islam.—AFP ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(5 / 2019-2020)
1. Open tenders for 2019-2020 fiscal year are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats.
Sr No. Tender No. Description Remarks
(a) DMP/L-004(19-20) 13 5/8" x 5K Annular BOP (1) No Ks
(b) DMP/L-005(19-20) Swivel / Drill Pipe Power Tong (2) Items Ks
(c) DMP/L-006(19-20) Travelling Block with Hook (2) Sets Ks
(d) DMP/L-007(19-20) LAS-E350 Continuous Liquid Additive Skid (1) Set Ks
(e) DMP/L-008(19-20) 840 KW Generator for Rig Engine (1) Set Ks
(f) DMP/L-009(19-20) Water Cooled Electromagnetic Eddy Current Brake (2) Sets Ks
(g) DMP/L-010(19-20) 2900 Series Well Head & Christmas Tree Equipment (4) Sets Ks
(h) DMP/L-011(19-20) 1500 Series Well Head & Christmas Tree Equipment (2) Sets Ks
(i) DMP/L-012(19-20) Single Pump SJS Cementing Unit With Engine and Accessories (1) Set Ks
(j) DMP/L-013(19-20) Batch Mixer (1) Set Ks
(k) DMP/L-014(19-20) 1.5 MW Gas Engine Driven Generating Set Attach With Switch Gear Panel (1) Set Ks
(l) DMP/L-015(19-20) 900 Series Well Head & Christmas Tree Equipment (1) Set Ks
(m) DMP/L-016(19-20) Lathe Machine with Motor (2) Items Ks
(n) DMP/L-017(19-20) Steam Boiler / Foam Pump (2) Items Ks
(o) DMP/L-018(19-20) Trolley Way (1) Set Ks
(p) DMP/L-019(19-20) 50 Ton Hydraulic Mobile Crane (1) Unit Ks
(q) DMP/L-020(19-20) Truck Mounted Double Drum Well Servicing Unit (1) Unit Ks
(r) DMP/L-021(19-20) Marine Engine with Gear Box Assy; (2) Sets Ks
(s) DMP/L-022(19-20) Caterpillar 3512 Engine with Generating Set (2) Sets Ks
(t) DMP/L-023(19-20) Model 8040 D 10 Dual Cell Pressure Size Consistometer (1) Set Ks
(u) DMP/L-024(19-20) Crawler Type Dozer (1) Unit Ks
(v) DMP/L-025(19-20) Replacement & Installation of the Metering System For Shwe Taung GCS (1) Lot Ks
(w) DMP/L-026(19-20) CNG Ground Storage Cascade (2) Sets Ks
(x) DMP/L-027(19-20) Control & POS for Dispenser & Computer Communication System (1) Lot Ks
(y) DMP/L-028(19-20) Skid Mounted Gas Dryer (1) Unit Ks
(z) DMP/L-029(19-20) 400 KW Gas Engine Generator (Complete Set) (1) No Ks
(aa) DMP/L-030(19-20) Cascade Tube Skid/Cascade Trailer/Tractor (3) items Ks
(ab) DMP/L-031(19-20) Air Compressor Engine Driven Skid with Air Dryer (2) Sets Ks
(ac) DMP/L-032(19-20) Container (2) Items Ks
(ad) DMP/L-033(19-20) Excavator (2) Items Ks
(ae) DMP/L-034(19-20) 6" x 8" R Mission Pump with Motor (2) Sets Ks
(af) DMP/L-035(19-20) Mud Chemicals (1) Lot Ks
(ag) DMP/L-036(19-20) Fuel Bowser (2) Units Ks
2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from 4 October 2019 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
3. The interested Bidders should submit the Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 14:00 pm on 4 November 2019.
4. Tender Closing Date & Time 4-11-2019, 14:00 pm
Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 - 411206

For rent condominium in ground floor
It is to rent new condominium with inner ladder including mezzanine, breadth 22'-6", length 60', height 20' ground floor No.166/168, Sule Pagoda Road. Especially suitable for bank and company. Ph : 09 263480300
CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE
M.V CHRISTINA SELMER
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CHRISTINA SELMER VOY. NO. (020L) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 04-10-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of T.M.I.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WILHELMSSEN SHIPS SERVICES PTE., LTD
Phone No: 2301928
TRADEMARK CAUTION
Yara Asia Pte Ltd, a company incorporated in Singapore and having its registered office at Harbour Front Tower One #09-01/04, 1 Harbour Front Place S098633, Singapore is the owner and proprietor of the following Trademarks;
ခရော့လ်
Reg. No.4/24565/2019 (30.8.2019)
ဘတ်ဘူစတာ
Reg. No.4/24566/2019 (30.8.2019)
နျူထရာဇော့စ် ကယ်ရ်ဒ်
Reg. No.4/24567/2019 (30.8.2019)
All in respect of "Chemicals used in industry, agriculture, horticulture and forestry; fertilizers" included in International Class 01.
Fraudulent or unauthorised use or actual or colourable imitation of the Marks shall be dealt with according to law.
Daw Htoo Htoo, H.G.P
For Yara Asia Pte Ltd,
C/o Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.,
Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),
Corner of Mahabandoola Road and Thein Phyu Road,
Botahtaung Township, Yangon,
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
Dated 4th October 2019 hh@kcyangon.com

Advertise with us
HOTLINE
09255597511
09974424848

N Korean, Japanese physicians agree to deepen technology exchanges

BEIJING — North Korean and Japanese professional medical associations have agreed that they will deepen exchanges about health care technology, according to a Japanese physician who returned from Pyongyang on Thursday.

Mitsuaki Maseki, chairman of the Japan Medical Association's House of Delegates, also told reporters at Beijing airport en route to Japan that North Korea's physicians organization is

willing to enter the World Medical Association.

Maseki visited North Korea from Saturday, along with former Japanese lawmakers such as Hideki Miyazaki, a former upper house member of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

It was the first time for Japan's largest professional organization for physicians to send its senior official to North Korea to offer medical aid. The idea of the

visit was proposed by Yoshitake Yokokura, president of the association, close to Abe.

Maseki said the Japanese group visited four facilities in North Korea's capital, including the Pyongyang Maternity Hospital, known as the country's top hospital for women's health.

The Japanese medical association will consider what kind of support it can provide for North Korea, Maseki said. — Kyodo News ■



Mitsuaki Maseki (r), chairman of the Japan Medical Association's House of Delegates. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Death toll in east India's rain-related incidents rises to 42

NEW DELHI — As many as 42 people have died since last week in rain-related incidents in India's eastern state of Bihar, media reports said on Wednesday.

Over 20 lakh (two million) people are reeling under the impact of flood in 15 districts including Katihar, Begusarai, Khagar-

ia and Bhagalpur, according to state-run broadcaster All India Radio. It is reported that Patna, the capital of state Bihar, has been affected the most due to the worst-ever waterlogging in the city. The other districts affected by the heavy rainfall are Bhojpur, Samastipur, Begusarai, Lakhis-

arai, Vaishali and Darbhanga.

The state government has intensified rescue and relief operations in the affected areas.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted that heavy rainfall is very likely at isolated places in Bihar on Thursday. —Xinhua ■



Residents move on a makeshift raft in India's eastern state Bihar on 2 October, 2019. As many as 42 people have died since last week in rain-related incidents in India's eastern state of Bihar, media reports said on Wednesday. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Pakistan urge Taliban to “grasp the opportunity” for peace

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told a visiting Afghan Taliban delegation Thursday that a reduction in violence by all warring parties would facilitate resumption of the now-suspended peace process.

A Foreign Ministry statement quoted Qureshi as saying it is up to the parties to the nearly 18-year conflict in Afghanistan “to grasp the opportunity” for peace. The statement said “both

sides agreed on the need for earliest resumption of the peace process.”

“It was emphasized that reduction of violence by all parties to the conflict was necessary to provide an enabling environment for resumption of the peace process at an early date,” it said.

The 12-member Taliban delegation led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, a co-founder of the militant group who heads its office in the Gulf state of Qatar,

flew into Islamabad in the wee hours of Thursday morning.

After the meeting with Qureshi, it met with Prime Minister Imran Khan and apprised him about developments in the Afghan peace process.

During the nine rounds of direct talks with Taliban, the United States had urged the militants to announce a ceasefire and enter into talks with the government in Kabul to end the war. —Kyodo News ■

Hong Kong to ban face masks in protest crackdown: reports

HONG KONG — Hong Kong will soon ban the wearing of face masks at public protests, local media reported Thursday, in a clampdown on pro-democracy rallies that have rocked the strife-torn city.

Seething public anger against Chinese rule of the semi-autonomous city has underscored increasingly violent confrontations between police officers and demonstrators, with no sign of an end to nearly four months of unrest.

Protesters have used face masks to avoid identification — along with yellow helmets, goggles and respirators to protect themselves from tear gas and police projectiles. Officials plan to deter future gatherings by introducing the ban under a colonial-era emergency law that bypasses the city's legislature, according to the South China Morning Post.

City leader Carrie Lam is expected to announce the measure on Friday, the Post reported.

Pro-Beijing lawmakers in the financial hub have renewed their calls for Lam to introduce the emergency ordinance since

Tuesday, when protests in Hong Kong overshadowed 70th anniversary celebrations for the founding of the People's Republic of China.

In the worst day of violence since the protests movement began, police shot and wounded a teenager who attacked officers with a stick, and fired a record 1,400 rounds of tear gas to disperse crowds across the city.

“If we had the law... then this would have a deterrent effect on some people,” lawmaker Elizabeth Quat told reporters on Thursday. “We are not talking about peaceful protesters. We are talking about people who use illegal violence,” she added.

But pro-democracy lawmaker Dennis Kwok said the emergency law would signal “the beginning of a slip towards an authoritarian state”.

“The authorities by now should have listened to the Hong Kong people. Their yearning for freedom, liberty and democracy, is not going to go away,” he said.

Reports of the face mask ban lifted the Hong Kong stock market, which ended the day 0.3 per cent higher. —AFP ■



Protesters have been wearing masks to protect themselves from tear gas and hide their identities in Hong Kong. **PHOTO: AFP**

Israel's parliament to be sworn in without new government

JERUSALEM — Israel's parliament will be sworn in Thursday without a new government formed as a deadlocked general election leaves Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu scrambling to find a path to extend his long tenure in power.

Members of parliament elected in September 17 polls will take their oaths of office at 4 pm (1300 GMT) in a ceremony that will to a large degree be hollow due to deadlocked coalition talks.

The stalemate has even raised the risk that the new parliament's term will be extremely

short since it could cause yet another election.

It would be the third in the space of a year after April polls too ended inconclusively, with Netanyahu unable to form a coalition afterwards.

The prime minister faces even longer odds this time, and as a result has been seeking to form a unity government that would include his main opponent Benny Gantz and his centrist Blue and White alliance.

At the same time, Netanyahu's lawyers are seeking to fend off corruption charges against

him at a four-day, closed-door hearing that began at the attorney general's office on Wednesday.

His unity government efforts have failed so far, with the two sides at odds on a range of issues, including who would be prime minister first in a rotation arrangement.

On Thursday morning, Netanyahu met with ex-defence minister Avigdor Lieberman, whose nationalist Yisrael Beiteinu party could end up as kingmakers.

Lieberman has declined to endorse either Netanyahu or



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is still scrambling to find a path to extend his long tenure in power as the new parliament elected on 17 September is set to be sworn in. **PHOTO: AFP**

Gantz for now and has called for a unity government between the three parties.

Netanyahu's right-wing Likud said the meeting ended

without a breakthrough, while Lieberman said afterwards that he had reiterated his demand for a unity administration. —AFP ■

Nigeria's Buhari urges protection for foreigners in S.Africa summit

PRETORIA — Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari on Thursday began a visit to South Africa with a call to beef up protection of foreign nationals, weeks after xenophobic attacks in Johannesburg stirred tension between Africa's leading economies.

Buhari and his counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa went into long-planned talks aimed at bolstering trade ties and political cooperation as both leaders struggle to boost their flagging economies.

But the talks were expected to be overshadowed by the violence in South Africa targeting foreigners, which included Nigerians.

Mobs descended on foreign-owned stores in and around Johannesburg in early September, destroying properties and looting. "We call for the strengthening and implementation of all the necessary measures to pre-



Handshake: Buhari, left, and Ramaphosa. **PHOTO: AFP**

vent the re-occurrence of such actions," Buhari said at the start of the talks.

The violence — in which at least 12 people were killed, most of them South Africans — sparked fury in Nigeria and saw hundreds of migrant workers repatriated to the country.

Buhari condemned "the

very few incidents of retaliatory attacks" which saw some South African businesses in Nigeria forced to close shop.

"We took strong and decisive measures to stop the attacks and prevent any re-occurrences," he said at Union Buildings, the seat of the presidency in the capital Pretoria.—AFP ■

Death toll rises to 18 as Iraq protests spread across south

BAGHDAD — The death toll from mass rallies in Iraq against corruption and unemployment rose to 18 on Thursday, as the leaderless protest movement spread to virtually all of the south.

Braving live fire, tear gas and local curfews, Iraqis flooded the streets for a third day in the biggest challenge yet to Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi.

The embattled premier ordered a ban on all movement across the capital starting at 5:00 am (0200 GMT), but dozens of protesters defied the order and gathered in Baghdad's emblematic Tahrir (Liberation) Square.

"We slept here so the police don't take the place," one demonstrator told AFP before riot police fired into the air in a bid to disperse them. The protests began in Baghdad on Tuesday but have since spread to cities across the mainly Shiite south. On Thursday, medics and security sources told AFP that four protesters were

shot dead in the southern city of Amarah and another in the province of Dhi Qar.

The new deaths bring the overall toll from three days of demonstrations to 18, including one police officer. More than 600 protesters and security personnel have been wounded.

Tensions have been exacerbated by a near-total internet blackout, the closure of government offices in Baghdad and calls by firebrand cleric Moqtada al-Sadr for "a general strike."

Before dawn twin explosions hit the Green Zone, where some ministries and embassies are located and which was struck by two rockets last week, a security source in the area told AFP.

The apparent attack came hours after security forces sealed off the compound "until further notice" just a few months after reopening it to the public, fearing angry protesters would overrun it.—AFP ■

Facebook suffers legal blow in EU court over hate speech

LUXEMBOURG — Facebook on Wednesday was dealt a major blow in the EU's top court, which ruled that national courts in Europe can order online platforms to remove defamatory content worldwide.

The decision will be seen as a victory for EU regulators, who are ambitious to see US tech giants meet tightened European standards over hate speech and offensive content.

Last week, the same court

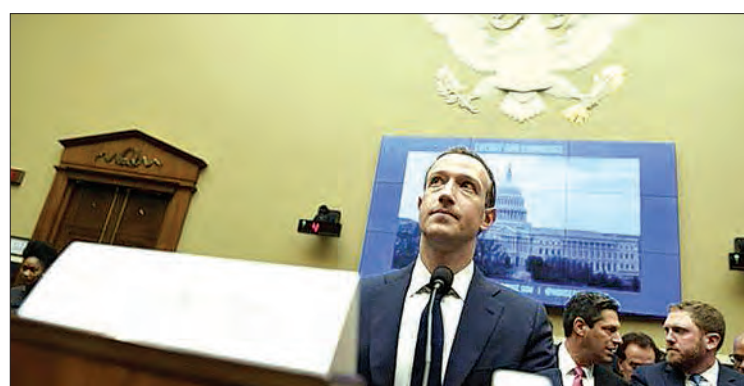
decided that Google was not legally compelled to apply the EU's strict "right to be forgotten" rules globally, in a victory for the search giant.

In a closely watched judgment, the European Court of Justice said EU law "does not preclude" courts from ordering "the removal of information or to block access worldwide," a statement said.

The latest case was brought originally to an Austrian court

by Greens party politician Eva Glawischnig-Piesczek, who requested the removal of Facebook posts that the judges found defamed her and could be seen by users of the social network around the world.

The complaint also concerned messages from fictitious accounts, which according to the Greens, had called Glawischnig-Piesczek a "corrupt" person and which the social network refused to delete.—AFP ■



Facebook CEO and founder Mark Zuckerberg testifies during a US House Committee on Energy and Commerce hearing about Facebook on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, 11 April, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**



Myanmar's Htet Aung Oo (R) and Japan's Higashi (L) during the main bout (64.5-kg weight class) of Lethwei in Japan 14 event at the Korakuen Hall in Tokyo. **PHOTO: ILFJ**

Lethwei in Japan 14: Two draws, one loss for Myanmar fighters

MYANMAR lethwei fighters conceded two draws and one loss on 2 October in the Lethwei in Japan 14 event at the Korakuen Hall in Tokyo, Japan. The main bout in the 64.5-kg weight class between Myanmar's Htet Aung Oo and Japan's Higashi ended in a draw after five complete rounds.

In the co-main event in the 75-kg weight class, Tokeshi of Japan beat Myanmar's Aung Khine in three rounds of 2 minutes and 27 seconds. In the 61.5-kg weight class, Saw Mu Htaw Gae of Myanmar fought to a draw against Pilao Santana of Brazil.

After the competition, Pilao Santana said: "I fought against a fighter from Myanmar and managed to deliver a good knock-

down in the first round. But, the fighters from Myanmar are very resistant, and the fight went to the fifth round without a winner. Because, without a KO, the fight almost always ends in a draw." "I'm not very satisfied with how I did this night, but unfortunately things don't always end up how you want them to," he said.

"Thanks to my adversary for giving me an incredible experience. A lot of respect to the fighters from Myanmar. True resistance machines and persons who are very likable. One day I want to fight in Myanmar and get to know this fight, which I'm getting passionate about, a lot better," he added. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

WLC: Fearless Tiger lethwei event to be held in Mandalay today

A lethwei contest entitled 'Fearless Tiger' will start at 5 pm today at the Mandalay Thiri Indoor Stadium in Mandalay. The event is being organized under the supervision of the World Lethwei Championship.

The event will feature bouts between local and international fighters. In the main event (light middleweight), Myanmar's Thway Thit Win Hlaing (69.9 kg) will take on Germany's Burutlek Petchyindee Academy (67.6 kg).

In the co-main event (light welterweight event), Myanmar-born Nicola Barke (63 kg) will face Hungary's Bianka Balajti

(61.1 kg). In the featherweight event, Myanmar's Mite Yine (56.5 kg) will be pitted against Viet Nam's Nguyen Thanh Trung (56.6 kg). In the light welterweight event, Myanmar's Shuklaine Min (62.2 kg) will fight against Cambodia's Elite Peakdey (62.9 kg).

In another light welterweight class event, Myanmar's Thway Thit Maung (62.8 kg) will face Omar Elouers (63.5 kg).

Two Myanmar fighters — Saw Min Naing (61.7 kg) and Saw Kaung Htet (62 kg) — will meet in another light welterweight event.

The lightweight event will feature two Myanmar fighters,

Hein Tun Aung (57 kg) and Auk Chin Lay (62 kg).

In the bantamweight event, Myanmar's Thein Soe (53.3 kg) will fight against Myanmar's Soe Win Than (53 kg).

The Fearless Tiger event will also feature a special challenge fight between two Myanmar fighters: Phyan Thway vs Shwe Yar Mann.

The 'Fearless Tiger' lethwei event will be broadcast live on local broadcaster CANAL+ Channel at 5.30 p.m. (Myanmar Standard Time), according to the World Lethwei Championship.

—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



PHOTO: WORLD LETHWEI CHAMPIONSHIP

Chelsea duo Abraham, Tomori earn England call-ups

LONDON — Chelsea's Tammy Abraham and Fikayo Tomori were rewarded for a fine start to the season under Frank Lampard with a call-up to the England squad on Thursday for Euro 2020 qualifiers against the Czech Republic and Bulgaria.

Abraham, who has won two caps for the Three Lions before in friendlies against Brazil and Germany in 2017, had flirted with switching his international allegiance to Nigeria, who he quali-

fies for through his father.

However, the 22-year-old, who scored his first Champions League goal for the Blues in a 2-1 win in Lille on Wednesday, now looks set to declare for England.

Abraham has scored seven times in seven Premier League games so far this season.

"It was (an easy decision), he's the leading English scorer in the league," said Southgate.

"It's brilliant the opportunity he's been given by Frank,

along with other English players at Chelsea, that's been fabulous for them and great reward for their academy. It's a great chance for Tammy. He's always scored goals with our junior teams, with the Chelsea youth teams, on loan in the Championship consistently and now he's really grasped this opportunity at the beginning of the season, so it's thoroughly well-deserved."

Tomori, who could also represent Nigeria and Canada at in-

ternational level, has also shone at centre-back for Chelsea after playing under Lampard on loan at Derby last season.

Should either Abraham and Tomori feature in the upcoming qualifiers, they would no longer be allowed to switch international allegiance.

"I don't think it's ethically right to select someone just to make sure he can't play for somebody else," added Southgate. "The two boys Fik and Tammy are in

on merit. "They've both been part of our youth system, Fik came in a bit later but he was part of the team that won the (Under-17) World Cup.

"As far as we're concerned they're English players. I'm sure they have huge desire to play for England at senior level." The emergence of a host of young players, though, has come at the expense of some of the stars of a run to the World Cup semi-finals 15 months ago.—AFP ■