People celebrate Thadingyut Full Moon Day at pagodas across Myanmar

ON THE full moon of Thadingyut yesterday, the Shwedagon Pagoda and other pagodas across Myanmar were packed with Buddhist devotees. With several activities organized since early morning, devotees celebrated the Abhidhamma day at the Shwedagon Pagoda. At night, visitors and religious groups lit oil lamps on the platform of the pagoda.

Religious ceremonies were held under the guidance of senior monks, with the Union ministers and departmental officials donating provisions and gifts to monks. The full moon day of Thadingyut is the Significant and Noble Day of Abhidhamma Day, marking the day when the Buddha descended from a celestial abode after preaching Abhidhamma (Profound Dhamma) for three months to His deceased mother, who was reborn in the celestial abode. 

SEE PAGE-4
Yangon hosts 10th Mekong Literature Award presentation ceremony

THE 10th Mekong Literature Award presentation ceremony was held at CBC Ball Room of Saya San Plaza in Yangon on 12 October.

At the ceremony, Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein said that as the Mekong Literature Award had cemented the friendship among man and woman of letters and the peoples of the region, inclusive involvement was required for the sustainability of this fine tradition.

Chairman of Myanmar Writers Association U Kyaw Win (Manutha Kyaw Win), and chairmen of writers associations of the six Mekong countries, Mr Huu Thinh of Vietnam, Mr Thongbay Phothisane of Laos, Mr Proeung Pranit of Cambodia, Mrs Kanokwalee Kanthiaraj of Thailand and Mr Fan Wen of China (Yunnan) extended greetings.

In his speech, U Kyaw Win (Manutha Kyaw Win) said that two books from each country were selected for the awards. Myanmar’s actual turn to host the event was last year, but Myanmar transferred with the job to Vietnam at its request, he explained. Under the roster Cambodia would be the host of next year’s event, he added. The Mekong River Literature Award really is a symbol of solidarity, friendship among literatures in the region, and is consistent with the trend of exchange, cooperation, dialogue among cultures, and it has united fully all the countries in the Mekong river basin. Also present were Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Tin Maung Tun and Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Chief Justice of Yangon Region U Hla Aye, region cabinet members, departmental personnel and guests. — Zaw Gyi

(Translated by TMT)

Yangon Region Chief Minister presents award to a writer at the 10th Mekong Literature Award presentation ceremony in Yangon on 12 October. PHOTO: PE ZAW
Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker donates offerings to Buddhist monks

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker U Mahn Win KhaiThan and his wife and family members took part in a donation ceremony held at Shwe Myin Wun Pagoda in Myawady Town in Kayin State yesterday.

In the morning, the Myawady district administrator, town administrator and departmental officials offered the day meal to the members of Sanghas and nunns. Then, the monks organized Pavarana event that marked the annual occasion to mark the end of Buddhist Lent.

Then, U Mahn Win KhaiThan and family members donated over 3,000 monks, novices and nunns from 342 monasteries and nunneries in Myawady District.

Myanmar Nephro-Urology Society holds 4th conference in Yangon

THE Myanmar Nephro-Urology Society held its fourth conference at Sule Shangrila Hotel in Yangon on 12 and 13 October.

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe delivered an opening remark at the conference on 12 October afternoon. He said the conference was intended to share knowledge on developing technologies in nephrology and urology, operation techniques, modern medical equipment, new methods and experiences of international experts to the new generation in medical professionals.

He also said the ministry has formed the expert teams of retired medical practitioners and professors in this branch of medicine to promote the healthcare industry, including purchases of medicines and medical equipment, as well as continual teaching of medical subjects.

The Union Minister added that the safety of patients will be managed by forming the teams at union level and township levels, with the participation of experts from related branches of medicine, and by distributing handbooks and standards of the ministry for various branches of medicine to the healthcare professionals in states and regions.

He also urged all medical professionals to put emphasis on the prevention of urinary and renal diseases, as well as public health.

Dr Myint Htwe pledged that the ministry will provide support for promotion of all medical sciences, and also called for the participation of all stakeholders.

Then, Chairman of Myanmar Nephro-Urology Society, Dr Kyaw Zwa Hlaing, extended greetings.

The two-day conference was attended by local specialists in nephrology and urology and foreign professors from Cambodia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India, the Philippines, Greece, the United Kingdom, Japan and China — MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

IFER Union Minister attends RCEP Intersessional Ministerial Meeting

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun attended the 9th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Intersessional Ministerial Meeting and related meetings held in Bangkok, Thailand on 11-12 October 2019.

The minister was accompanied by the Director General of the Foreign Economic Relations Department, U Than Aung Kyaw and senior officials of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

At the meeting, the ministers welcomed the significant progress of RCEP negotiations and recognized that there remain a few outstanding issues. The Ministers reaffirmed their determination to achieve the Leaders’ mandate to conclude negotiations in 2019 and aim for a positive announcement to be made at the 3rd RCEP Summit on 4 November 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand.

The RCEP is regarded as a testament to an open trade and investment environment that will further expand and deepen regional value chains for the benefits of businesses.

It will turn the region into a new center of growth and contribute positively to the global economy, while serving as a supporting pillar to a strong multilateral trading system.

The RCEP trade pact is a proposed free trade agreement between 10 ASEAN Member States and 6 of the partners-Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand. Up to date, 28 rounds of negotiations, seven regular ministerial meetings and numerous intersessional meetings at ministerial and working levels have been held.

The RCEP when concluded will be one of the largest trading blocs. It will cover a third of the global GDP — MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)
PEOPLE celebrated the end of the three-month Buddhist Rain Retreat on the Thadingyut Full Moon Day yesterday donating offertories to Members of the Sangha and offering lights at pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw.

On the auspicious day, Buddhists took Precepts, recited Pathana and Parrittas, paid respects to elders and made charity. On the full moon day of Thadingyut (the Abhidhamma Day), pagodas and monasteries in Nay Pyi Taw was crowded with people who took Precepts and made donation, and pilgrims.

The Yan Aung Myin Shwe Lat Hla Pagoda, the Koe Na Win Pagoda, the Su Taung Pyae Lawka Marazein Pagoda, the Datusaya Pagoda, the Sansara Nyein Aye Pagoda, the Phaya Koe Hsu, the Koe Khan Gyi Pagoda, the Aung Min Khaung Pagoda, the Min Wun Taung, the Suna Mani Pagoda, the Maha That Kya YaniThi Standing Image and the Thatta Thatta Hla Maha Bodhi Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area were also crowded with meditators, merit-doers and pilgrims.

The night life on the full moon day was also filled with multi-colored lights alongside the streets and houses across the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

— Kyaw Thu Htet
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

FAMOUS pagodas and dhammayons (religious buildings of wards and communities in Mandalay are crowded with devotees offering flowers, lights and water to the Buddha and keeping Sabbath on the fullmoon day of Thadingyut.

At dawn, devotees paid home to Maha Muni Image and offered flowers, lights, water and gold foils. Likewise, famous pagodas such as Shwe Kyemyin Pagoda, Kyauktawgyi Pagoda, Sandamuni Pagoda, Aunglwmin Pagoda, Jade Pagoda and Swedaw Pagoda of the cultural city were also crowded with pilgrims doing meritorious deeds.

Moreover, dhammayons in wards are also packed with people keeping Sabbath and serving free food. Streets were also full of people who were offering provisions and other provisions to members of Sangha and nuns.

In the late evening, ten thousand lights were offered to the Maha Muni Buddha Image and Kyauktawgyi and other pagodas in Mandalay. Wards of the city also offered lights to their respective pagodas in preserving the age-old tradition.

Three pagodas, Kyauktaw, Sandamuni and Kuthodaw, at the foot of Mandalay Hills held the pagoda festival. There were free entertainment shows and over 100 booths to go shopping. The festival is crowded with visitors till late at night.—Min Htet Aung
(Sub-printing House)
(Translated by TMT)

ON this auspicious day, Buddhists perform meritorious deeds at the pagodas and monasteries across the country.

People enjoy the three-day holiday, visiting pagodas, donating alms to the Members of the Sangha, offering candle lights, and paying respects to elders.

The buildings are illuminated at night. — Yi Yi Myint, Ohnmar Thant
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

FROM PAGE-1

Well-wishers donate meals to the people at religious build- ings in the townships of Yangon. Similar activities were held at other pagodas in Yangon to mark the holy day.

Religious associations and people offered lights, food, and flowers and recited religious verses celebrating the Abhidhamma Day since early yesterday morning at the Maha Wizaya Pagoda, Thiri Mingalar Kaba Aye Pagoda, Shwe Phone Pwint Pagoda, and Botataung Pagoda in Yangon.

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The buildings are illuminated at night. — Yi Yi Myint, Ohnmar Thant
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)
Price of quality paddy slides by K50,000 at harvest time

The price of high-quality Pawsan paddy (per 100 baskets) has registered a drop of K50,000 as newly harvested paddy is flooding the market, according to the Pathein commodity depot.

"The market has cooled. New paddy is entering the market, bringing down the prices of old stocks. Old paddy has also piled up in the market," said a dealer.

Myanmar people mainly consume high-quality Pawsan rice grown in the Ayeyarwady Region and Shwe Bo Pawsan rice grown in Shwe Bo townships of Sagaing Region.

Pathein Pawsan paddy was previously priced at K24,000 per 100 baskets, and now, the price has fallen by K46,000 compared to the year-to-period.

The prices of Pawsan paddy grown in Myanma, Dedaye, and Phyarpon areas have registered a drop of K34,000-61,000 per 100 baskets.

"The price of the most common variety of paddy usually drops at the time of harvest. The basic price of paddy is likely to be released in the coming week," according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

The MRF had urged merchants, millers, agents, private companies, and MRF members to buy paddy at the existing basic rate, market intervention, and market control.

The Ministry of Commerce also sought suggestions from the MRF and its associates on fixing the basic rate, market intervention, and market control.

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However, the export market remains uncertain due to unstable global demand.

Myanmar faces slower access to market information, which sometimes poses obstacles in the market.

The country has poor logistics and warehouse infrastructure, which leads to degrading of the quality of fruits, said an official from the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer Association (MFVP).

According to the Myanmar Rice Federation, quality control and food safety are key to the promotion of exports.

Therefore, improved agricultural practices need to be developed.

Additionally, the country requires specific export plans for each agro product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply and demand.

The Commerce Ministry is working to help farmers deal with challenges, such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions. — Ko Htet

Price of quality paddy slides by K50,000 at harvest time

Workers spread paddy to dry under the sun at a field in Kanyidank Township, Ayeyawady Region. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Agricultural products exports up $390 mln in 2018-2019 FY

Myanmar’s exports of agricultural products between 1 October and 30 September in the previous fiscal year reached over US$3.26 billion from $2.86 billion in the corresponding period of the 2017-2018 FY, which is an increase of $300 million, according to trade figures released by the Ministry of Commerce.

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Additionally, the country requires specific export plans for each agro product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply and demand.

Contract farming systems, involvement of regional and state agriculture departments, exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required in order to meet production targets, said an official from the Agriculture Department.

The Commerce Ministry is working to help farmers deal with challenges, such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions. — Ko Htet

(Translilated by EMM)
Inle Lake teeming with holidaymakers

INLE Lake was crowded with holidaymakers on the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut yesterday, and souvenir shops have been recording high sales since Friday, the start of the five-day holiday.

“Local visitors have bought mostly local textiles. Foreign visitors have mostly bought silverware,” said Ma Myat Pan Ein of Ngwe Sin Tun Traditional Silver Wares and Textile Shop, located at the lake.

Traditional weaving of textiles with lotus fiber, silk and cotton hand-weaving, workshops of goldsmiths and blacksmiths in villages around the lake are popular with tourists and local visitors as well.

The procession of boats are seen as the Phaungdaw Oo Buddha Images are conveyed for public obeisance at the Inle Lake. PHOTO: MNA

Htamanthi Wildlife Sanctuary designated ASEAN Heritage Park

THE Htamanthi Wildlife Sanctuary was declared an ASEAN Heritage Park (AHP) at the 15th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment, held from 7-10 October in Siem Reap, Cambodia, according to the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity.

The Taninthayi Wildlife Sanctuary in Taninthayi Region and the Htamanthi Wildlife Sanctuary in Sagaing Region had applied for AHP status, and Htamanthi was selected as its commitments meet AHP’s standards.

Covering an area of 2,151 square kilometers, the Htamanthi Wildlife Sanctuary is rich in biodiversity and it is a protected area for wildlife animals.

Myanmar now has eight parks recognized as AHP: Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary, Khakaborazi National Park, Inle Lake, Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park, Mainmahtla Kyun Wildlife Sanctuary, Natmataung National Park, Lampi Island Marine National Park, and Htamanthi Wildlife Sanctuary. — Myo Win Tun (Monya)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Number of travelers doubles at Monywa station during Thadingyut holidays

THE Monywa-Bodhi Taung circular train is always busy on the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut, said U Than Tun Aye. — Myo Win Tun (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

The number of passengers has become high starting from 10 October. Normally, only 80 passengers are seen, but now their number has increased to 180. More trips to KhinU, Monywa, and Pakokku have been added. Some people are intentionally taking trains as they have never experienced a train ride, he added.

Train fares range from K700 per head for the Monywa-Mandalay train (1 p.m.), K600 for Monywa-Pakokku (2 p.m.), and K600 for Monywa-KhinU (2.15 p.m.).

“The Monywa-Bodhi Ta-hutaung circular train is always packed with travelers on the full moon day. Around 200 passengers take the train on that day. Each train has two coaches, with a seating capacity of 100 persons per coach,” said U Than Tun Aye. — Myo Win Tun (Monya) (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)
The Ngalaik Sakanthar Elephant Camp is situated in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, and it is about 2 furlongs from the Milepost (217/0) of the Yangon-Mandalay Highway. It is located in the area of the Ngalaik Reserved Forest and near Ngalaik Dam.

Here are the voices of visitors there during the Thadingyut Holidays.

Daw Htay Htay Han (Retired high school teacher)
This is the second time I visited here. I came to take refreshments during their holiday vacations.

Daw Mya Thida (Advocate)
We are from Mandalay. The children can ride elephants here. This is a place to rest and find refreshment for mind and body. We will also visit in and around Nay Pyi Taw. We like this trip.

Mg Hein Min Htet (Student)
I am a first-year GTI student. We have got a vacation after we finished the exam. I am very pleased with making a vacation. This is the very first time I visit this elephant camp. I have taken an elephant ride and fed these huge creatures.

Daw Mya Thida

Voices of visitors at Ngalaik Sakanthar Elephant Camp

Travellers visit Chaungtha beach in Pathein Township during the Thadingyut Festival.

Visitors enjoy elephant ride at Ngalaik Sakanthar Elephant Camp.

Crowds of holidaymakers throng Chaungtha beach resort during Thadingyut Festival

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Crowds of holidaymakers throng Chaungtha beach resort during Thadingyut Festival

The Brother and Sister Rock and the Elephant Camp located about 4 miles in the north of Chaungtha beach were the places for pilgrims, picnickers, viewers of sunsets over the sea, horse riding, elephant riding and tricycle riding.

U Shwe Wah Tun, the mahout of elephant camp, said “Most of the visitors to Chaungtha beach arrived here. It takes each elephant ride about 15 minute on the beach. More visitors are seen this year.”

Other destinations for the visitors included Ma Gyi-Swe Thaung Yan beach, Wat Thay Chai beach, Uto creek, Goyangyi island and Ngwesaung beach.

(Translated by Aung Rhin)
Love, tolerance, diversity

As Myanmar is in the process of making strenuous efforts for restoring internal peace and bringing about national reconciliation, the majority of Myanmar people believe that it is time all ethnic armed conflicts ended.

As the fight against smoking and betel-chewing, even if they have been a long-lasting tradition, in order to benefit future generations.

More widespread cigarette usage as well as increased life expectancy during 1930s made adverse health effects more noticeable. In 1929, Fritz Eckhardt of Dresden, Germany published detailed statistical evidence of lung cancer from tobacco use, which subsequently strong anti-smoking movement in Nazi Germany. The subject had largely remained untouched until 1934 with British Doctors Sherlock and mullin 1940s in the United States Surgeons General’s report. Tobacco became stigmatized, which led the largest civil settlement in US history.

Diseases caused by smoking
Long can be very badly affected by smoking: cough, colds, whooping and asthma are just the start of a long list of negative effects such as pneumonia, emphysema and lung cancer. Smoking causes 83% of deaths from lung cancer and 83% of deaths from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

We must not give up the fight against smoking and betel-chewing, even if they have been a long-lasting tradition, in order to benefit future generations.

A written statement on the history of smoking (3/4)
A written statement on the history of smoking (3/4)

PHOTO: HTAIN

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of letters, articles, essays, interviews, interviews, and creative writing for its weekly Sunday Feature section. Interested candidates are invited to submit work to The Global New Light of Myanmar (c/o: 142, No. 1-12, Ist Street, Bago Road, Pyay, Shan State). The Global New Light of Myanmar has a good scale base on any other major news or magazine publishing houses. (3) Email photo of the submission (5) of your TNC card.

The Global New Light of Myanmar, 14th October 2019

THE SPEAKER OF THE AMYOTH Ahatta Hluttaw has invited letters to the Amyoth Ahatta Hluttaw representatives to attend fourteenth regular session of the Second Amyoth Ahatta Hluttaw to be held at Amyoth Ahatta Hluttaw’s meeting hall at 10 am on 4 November 2019 (Monday).

The Amyoth Ahatta Hluttaw representatives, either they receive the invitation letter or not are urged to contact Pyithu Ahatta Hluttaw hall (2-12) not earlier than 2 November (Saturday) and not later than 3 November (Sunday) along with their identity cards.

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ASEAN agriculture, fisheries cooperation helps Brunei diversify economy: minister

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN — Agriculture and fisheries cooperation among members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will help Brunei expand its economy and strengthen its diversification efforts, the country’s Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism Haji Ali said Saturday.

The minister made the remarks at the Senior Officials’ Meeting of the 41st Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers’ on Agriculture and Forestry, in Bandar Seri Begawan, capital of Brunei, on Oct. 12, 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA

The growth and diversification of the country’s economy towards achieving Brunei vision 2035.

The minister added that another important factor to achieve rapid and continuous growth in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors for Brunei is promoting the use of modern technology and techniques. “This is very important to increase the sectors’ productivity and enhance the sectors’ international competitiveness,” he said. After SOM-41st AMAF, Brunei will also host the 41st AMAF, the 19th AMAF plus Three (China, Japan and South Korea) on Oct. —XINHUA

Foreign fans at World Cup traveling beyond match-hosting cities

TOKYO—Fans who have come to Japan for the Rugby World Cup are traveling beyond cities hosting the matches during their stays, be it to Mt. Fuji, temples in Kyoto or the Hiroshima peace memorial, to take in a myriad sights across the nation.

The inbound rugby fans, whom organizers predict to top 400,000 at the six-week tournament, are enjoying the hosts’ hospitality and savoring beers and local cuisines, while Japanese retail and tourism industries try to woo such long-stay, generous spenders.

Jon Moore and his wife Cindy said they came to Japan for two weeks to watch Wales play Georgia in Aichi Prefecture in central Japan, France and the United States in Fukuoka in southwestern Japan and South Africa and Italy in Shizuoka Prefecture, in central Japan.

The Moores, from Springfield, Missouri in the United States, were visiting Japan for the first time.

Everyone has been awesome. Not even understanding English, they have helped us as much as they possibly could. And everything is so clean and nice. So we would like the country to know, we’re very proud of you guys and that you’ve done well,” Cindy said ahead of the France-U.S. clash in Fukuoka.

“The noodles have been awesome and the tempura, the shrimp and the vegetables, I just loved,” she said. The couple also stopped at Kauaiwara on the Sea of Japan coast, popular for its centuries-old samurai residences and home to one of the most famous gardens.

The pair said they are celebrating their wedding anniversary by coming to the World Cup, having been to the Waless, England, France and New Zealand tournaments and plan to go to France in 2023.

“Rugby is just part of our life. Rugby is international, the game is played the same all over the world, and because of that we have friends all over the world,” Jon said.—Kyodo News
Britain’s Johnson pushes for last-ditch Brexit deal

LONDON — Prime Minister Boris Johnson was to brief his ministers Sunday on progress in Britain’s last-ditch efforts to strike a new Brexit agreement with the EU.

Negotiators went behind closed doors for intensive talks in Brussels after Johnson outlined a new set of divorce terms to Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar on Thursday.

But they have very little time left to succeed.

EU leaders will meet in Brussels on Thursday and Friday for a summit held under the pressures of the October 31 Brexit deadline just two weeks away.

They would ideally like to have a full proposal to vote on by then.

But the sides are trying to achieve in a few days what they had failed to in the more than three years since Britons first voted to leave the European Union after nearly 50 years.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel will discuss the available options with French President Emmanuel Macron late Sunday and Johnson is to brief his cabinet at lunchtime.

European officials said the bloc’s Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier will also brief EU ambassadors on the state of play on Sunday evening.

Turkey assault could displace 400,000 in Syria: UN

Geneva — Turkey’s deadly assault on Kurdish positions in northeastern Syria has forced 130,000 people to flee their homes, the UN said Sunday, adding it was preparing for that figure to more than triple. “We have moved into a planning scenario where up to 400,000 people could be displaced within and across the affected areas,” Jens Laerke, a spokesman for the UN humanitarian agency OCHA told AFP in an email, adding that these people would be “in need of assistance and protection.” The UN had said Friday that some 100,000 people had been forced to flee their homes since the beginning of Turkey’s military incursion on Wednesday, after US President Donald Trump ordered American troops to pull back from the border.

But by Sunday it warned of further displacements from rural areas around Tell Abiad and Ras al-Ain with latest estimates “surpassing 130,000 people”.

“Exact numbers cannot yet be ascertained,” the agency said in a updated assessment document. Most of the displaced had reached relatives or host communities, but growing numbers were arriving at collective shelters, including in schools. —AFP

4 dead, 3 injured at illegal gambling site shooting in NYC

New York — Four people were killed and three others injured in a shooting in New York’s Brooklyn borough on early Saturday, according to the police.

The shooting took place in an illegal gambling site inside a three-floor building in Crown Heights shortly before 7 a.m. (1100 GMT). Four men were pronounced dead at the scene. Another two men and a woman were shot and taken to an area hospital, police said.

The incident apparently stemmed from a dispute, and there’s no evidence that it’s gang-related, police said. At least 15 shots were fired and two guns were recovered from the scene.

The block where the building is situated was cordoned off by crime-scene tapes. Police and investigators could be seen walking in and out of the site. No arrests have been made and investigation is underway.—AFP

IS families escape Syria camp as Turkey battles Kurds

QAMISHLI — Hundreds of relatives of foreign fighters escaped from a displacement camp in northern Syria, Kurdish authorities said Sunday, as the number of people fleeing a Turkish assault soared to 130,000.

Fighting raged along the border on the fifth day of an offensive that has provoked an international outcry and left dozens of civilians and fighters dead.

Kurdish authorities and foreign powers have warned repeatedly that the hostilities could undermine the fight against the Islamic State group (IS) and allow jihadists to break out of captivity.

The Kurdish administration in northern Syria said that Turkish bombardment near a camp for the displaced led to nearly 800 relatives of IS members fleeing.

Fighting has engulfed the area since Wednesday when Ankara launched a long-threatened offensive against the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), who it considers “terrorists” linked to insurgents inside Turkey.—AFP

Mozambique election to test fragile peace

Maputo — Mozambique holds a general election on Tuesday that will test the country’s fragile peace as the Frelimo party, faced with economic crisis and chronic conflict, prepares to relinquish at least some control after 44 years in power.

The impoverished southern African nation has seen one of the most violent campaigns in its brief and turbulent history, raising fears that the presidential, parliamentary and provincial polls could be marred by bloodshed. Frelimo has ruled Mozambique since independence from Portugal in 1975 and — barring a major upset — is expected to again beat its rival Renamo, a former rebel group turned opposition party.—AFP
Xi wraps up Nepal visit with agreements on railway, tunnel

KATHMANDU—Chinese President Xi Jinping wrapped up a two-day visit to Nepal on Sunday after overseeing the signing of 20 agreements, including one for a much-touted high speed railway connecting the two countries.

Delegations from the two countries also agreed to cooperate in building a 28-kilometer tunnel in Nepal, apart from setting up an office of the consulate general of Nepal in Chengdu, southwestern China.

Xi’s visit was the first by a Chinese president to the Himalayan nation since 1996.

The 72-km railway, from Rasuwagadhi on Nepal’s northern border to Kathmandu, will eventually be connected to the Qinghai-Tibet railway at Paiku Lake in China. Rasuwagadhi is 60 km from Paiku Lake.

The tunnel, to be built along a section from Kathmandu to Rasuwagadhi, will more than halve the road distance from Kathmandu to this border crossing from 145 km to 70 km, said Rajeshwar Gyawali, spokesman of the Physical Infrastructure Ministry. “Apart from reducing road distance, it will be safer,” Gyawali told Kyodo News.

China is keen on developing this crossing into the biggest between the two neighbors. Xi praised the agreements at a state banquet hosted by President Bidya Devi Bhandari in Kathmandu late Saturday.

“We will help Nepal realize its dream of transforming from a landlocked nation to a land-linked nation,” Xi said.

He also said China would open as many ports as possible for trade with Nepal to build a “multi-dimensional trans-Himalayan connectivity network.”

However, Sunday’s agreements made no mention of new ports. Speaking at the same function, Bhandari said Nepal is eager to see the Chinese train reach not only Kathmandu, but extend to Lumbini, birthplace of Lord Buddha.

Trade connectivity with China has been a major priority for Nepal since it faced a five-month-long trade blockade imposed by India between 2015 and 2016. It was the third time India blocked Nepal.—Kyodo

At least 26 dead after Typhoon Hagibis slams Japan

TOKYO — At least 26 people were killed by powerful Typhoon Hagibis, local media reported Sunday, a day after the ferocious storm slammed into Japan, unleashing unprecedented rain and catastrophic flooding.

More than 100,000 rescuers, including 31,000 troops, were working into the night to reach people trapped after torrential rain caused landslides and filled rivers until they burst their banks.

The destruction forced the Rugby World Cup to cancel a third tournament match, though a key Japan-Scotland fixture was ruled safe to play.

The storm moved off land on Sunday morning, and while it largely spared the capital, it left a trail of destruction in surrounding regions. The government put the death toll at 14, with 11 people missing, but local media said at least 26 people had been killed, and at least 15 were still unaccounted for.

Rivers overspilled their banks at nearly a dozen locations, including in central Japan’s Nagano, where a levee breach sent water from the Chikuma river gushing into residential neighbourhoods, flooding homes up to the second floor.

Military and fire department helicopters winched survivors from roofs and balconies in several locations. In Iwaki City, Fukushima, a rescue went tragically awry when a woman died after falling while she was being winched to safety.—AFP

S. Korean prime minister to attend emperor’s enthronement ceremony

SEOUL—South Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak Yong will visit Tokyo next week to attend Emperor Naruhito’s enthronement ceremony, the prime minister’s office said Sunday.

As ties between Japan and South Korea have sunk to their lowest level in decades over wartime history and trade policy, it will be closely watched whether the visit leads to improved relations.

The Prime Minister’s Secretariat said in a statement Lee will visit Japan from Oct. 22 to 24 to participate in the enthronement ceremony on Oct. 22.

Lee will attend a banquet hosted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, while meeting with other politicians during the three-day trip, it said.

Lee, a former Tokyo correspondent of the South Korean newspaper Dong-A Ilbo, is a fluent Japanese speaker and known to hold a positive attitude toward Japan.

Diplomatic sources well-versed in bilateral affairs said last week that Lee would likely attend the event instead of Prime Minister Moon Jae In.

Bilateral ties started to chill after a series of South Korean court rulings late last year, ordering Japanese firms to compensate for wartime forced labor during Japan’s 1910-1945 colonization.

Japan says the rulings are in breach of their bilateral accord, based on the position that both nations agreed in 1965 to settle the issue of compensation finally and completely.

After the rulings, Japan—which says its implementation of trade restrictions is unrelated to the compensation dispute—tightened controls on South Korea-bound exports of key manufacturing materials, and took Seoul off its list of preferred trading partners.

South Korea retaliated by scratching Japan from its own list of trusted partners.—Kyodo

Photo taken from a Kyodo News helicopter on Oct. 13, 2019, shows houses in Nagano, central Japan, submerged after the Chikuma River overflowed due to Typhoon Hagibis. PHOTO: KYODO

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Property investors turn to SE Asia amid Hong Kong unrest

East Grinstead — On the face of it, Ellie Woodcock’s organic farm two hours south of London, shouldn’t be affected by Britain’s impending departure from the European Union.

“We don’t export anything, so that wouldn’t affect my farm. We sell very much directly to the English public and quite locally,” she told AFP.

But even with no customary duties or head-aches at the border, Brexit can deliver an unexpected bite.

“I think for the farming community, Brexit will have quite a negative impact,” said Woodcock, who co-manages Brambletye Farm, near East Grinstead, in Sussex.

“The farming community around here really rely on foreign workers, so changes to the legislation and people movement could really affect them.”

“There’s not one positive thing that I can spring out of it, even if I was to twist my mind,” added co-owner Stein Leenders, as he harvested the final fruits of the season.

- Rising overheads - Brambletye grows apples, pears, raspberries and blackberries, and sells eggs laid by dozens of free-range chickens over its nearly 45 acres (18 hectares) of land. Woodcock, Leenders and their 20-odd employees make or grow virtually everything on site, including fruit purées and bottled juice from a shed housing three busy workers. —AFP

RCEP trade ministers hold “tough” meeting in Bangkok

Bangkok — Ministers from 16 countries negotiating for an Asia-wide trade pact met Saturday in Bangkok for another round of talks, with host Thailand characterizing the meeting as “very tough and serious.” A senior Thai trade official said that Singapore was critical of India, which has been accused of stalling progress in the negotiations. A joint statement was notably not issued after the meeting.

“The meeting was very serious in the afternoon. They had almost banged the table,” another official said.

Thai Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanawisit said the meeting is very crucial for all 16 countries to find an agreement so that the RCEP leaders can announce the accomplishments at their summit in November. Japanese Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Isshu Sugawara told a press conference after the meeting that while progress was made in a number of areas, some points of debate remain to be settled. As for whether the negotiations can be concluded within the year as planned, Sugawara said, “It depends on whether a solution can be found for difficult issues in the remaining period.” Prior to the meeting, Sugawara met with his Australian, New Zealand, and India counterparts to seek cooperation. RCEP, covering a third of the global economy, has a history of missed deadlines with varying degrees of ambition among the members that include the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Talks began in 2013 and the initial goal was to wrap them up in 2015. —Kyodo

Down on the farm, Brexit casts its shadow

Kuala Lumpur — From luxury Singapore apartment blocks to Malaysian seashore condos, Hong Kong investors are shifting cash into Southeast Asian property, demoralised by increasingly violent protests as well as the China-US trade war. Millions have taken to the streets during four months of pro-democracy demonstrations in the southern Chinese city, hammering tourism while also forcing businesses to lay off staff — and the property sector is feeling the pain.

Property stocks in one of the world’s most expensive housing markets have plummeted since June, with developers being forced to offer discounts on new projects and cutting office rents. Hong Kong businessman Peter Ng bought a condominium on the Malaysian island of Penang — which has a substantial ethnic Chinese population and is popular among Hong Kongers — amid Hong Kong unrest.

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A flock of seagulls resting on the surface of the Indawgyi Lake. **PHOTO: MAUNG THA (ARCHAEOLOGY)**

A S an ethnic Kachin family from Kachin State Mohinyin Township had invited me to a traditional new crop eating festival, I went to Hopin Township, Lon Sant Village Tract, Ywathit Village from Yangon by train and motorcycle. I bought a Yangon-Myitkyina train ticket and first took a train to Mandalay. In Mandalay, I changed to Myitkyina train and reached Hopin Town.

Everyday there were five trains from Mandalay to Myitkyina. I took the 4:45 pm train from Mandalay and reached Hopin around 7:30 am the next day. There Ma Lu Lu Aung was waiting for me with a motorcycle and I took a 2-hour motorcycle ride to Ywathit Village.

Hopin Town was 19 miles from Mohinyin Town while Ywathit Village in Lon Sant Village Tract was 30 miles away from Hopin Town. Ywathit Village only had about 300 houses and was the smallest village of the 19 villages around Myanmar’s biggest freshwater lake Indawgyi lake. Red Shan, Bama and Kachin ethnic people lived in Ywathit Village and villagers are either Buddhists or Christians. The village had a Buddhist monastery and a Christian church.

**Indawgyi**

Indawgyi Lake is Myanmar’s biggest freshwater lake. It is 10 miles from Hopin Town and the lake measures 8.1 miles east to west and 15 miles north to south. The lake is 65 ft. deep at the deepest part and is only 3 ft. deep in the shallowest part where the lake bottom can be seen.

Indawgyi can be reached via Hopin and Hopin Town is at the junction of the roads to Phakant, Hannmakhan, Sai Taung, Lonkin and Nantmon region. Hopin Town situated between Mogaung and Mohinyin towns can be reached from Mandalay and Myitkyina by rail or car. Hopin to Indawgyi is either by car or motorcycles. Pilgrims from various regions usually visit Indawgyi directly by cars.

Water flows into Indawgyi from the mouth of the creek at the north. The water in Indawgyi then flows through Kamine and Mogaung creeks and onto Ayeyawady River. Indawgyi is a lake with water flowing from north to south. Indawlay, a smaller lake 3 miles long and 2 miles wide, is situated in Sagaing Region Indaw Township.

11 village tracts with 38 villages were situated near Indawgyi and 19 villages were on its bank. Mostly Shan and Kachins lived in those villages I went around the lake by motorcycle to visit all of it. As Indawgyi region receives an average annual rainfall of 78 inches, most people in the region lived on agriculture.

Indawgyi region extends up to Kachin State Mogaung Township to the east, Kakyaw mountain pass between Hopin and Mohinyin to the southeast, Sagaing Region Homalin Township to the south, Sagaing Region Bamauk Township and Kachin State Kamine Township to the northwest covering 314.67 square miles.
Indawgyi region was surrounded by mountains rising up to 1,000 ft to more than 4,000 ft. 13 creeks flowing down from those mountains flow into Indawgyi. Although those creeks flow into Indawgyi from four directions, it was only through Mogaung creek that the water flows out from Indawgyi. Indawgyi was on an elevation of 546 ft. above sea level and Indawgyi Lake was the main part of seven miles (east to west) wide, fourteen miles (north to south) long wildlife conservation area.

Of the four major wetland area of Myanmar, the three others being Inle in Shan State, in Bago Region and Moeyungyi and Meinmahla Island in Ayeyawady Region, Indawgyi was the biggest.

**Pagodas around Indawgyi**

A trip by motorcycle around the lake starting at Chaungwya Village took me first to Ngwe Myintzu pagoda in Lwe Mon Village. Lwe Mon Village was 33 miles from Hopin, Sai Taung and Phakant road junction. This pagoda was built 80 years after Shwe Myintzu pagoda and was smaller. So it was named Ngwe Myintzu pagoda as a younger brother pagoda to Shwe Myintzu pagoda. Near Ngwe Myintzu pagoda is Mote So Ma (widow) pagoda built right on the bank of Indawgyi Lake. Curiously there were many statues of women that were said to be widows. At Nammilaung Village was a cane Buddha image that was about 16 ft. high. From there, I went onto Shwe Myintzu Ye Le (ye le means in the middle of water).

**Shwe Myintzu Ye Le pagoda**

Of the many mountain top and in-water pagodas that Myanmar had, there were three famous in-water pagodas in southern Myanmar and three in northern Myanmar. The three southern in-water pagodas were Kyauk Ka Mi Ye Le Pagoda in Mon State Thanbyuzayat Township, Sawtizinaz Pagoda in Ayeyawady Region Ngapadaw Township and Kyauktan Ye Le Pagoda or Kyakhmawwun Yele Pagoda in Yangon Region Kyauktan Township.

The three in northern Myanmar were Phaungdaw-Oo Pagoda in Shan State Nyaungshwe Township, A Nya Thihataw Pagoda in Sagaing Region KhinU Township and Indawgyi Shwe Myintzu pagoda.

Pagodas in Indawgyi can be visited by land or water. Pagoda festival of Shwe Myintzu Pagoda situated in the water about two furlongs from the west bank of the lake was held from 8th Waxing of Tabaung to 1st Waning of Tabaung. As the day for the festival approaches, water level in the lake falls and two pathways to the pagoda emerges. Locals term the 3 ft. wide southern pathway as a road for the Nats (celestial being) and the 9 ft. wide northern pathway as a road for the human beings.

Devotees took the northern pathway to walk over the lake to the pagoda and around the closing days of the pagoda festival, the pathways became submerged under water as rain falls. At the northern pathway, the road for the human beings, was now paved with concrete and had lamp poles along the way, people can easily visit the pagoda during the pagoda festival period.

However, before and after the pagoda festival period, the water level in the lake rises submerging the pathways. During such time, Shwe Myintzu pagoda surrounded by water can only be visited by boats. The boat ride cost K 1,000 per person and during the boat ride, many water dwelling birds or water birds can be seen.
Aung La beats Vera, retains ONE light heavyweight title


Aung La defeated Vera ‘The Truth’ in round two during which the pair pelted each other with a dazzling array of offense — punches, kicks, elbows, and knees — with fight-ending intention.

Aung La swarmed Vera when Vera reached the floor, and landed punch after punch until Vera crumbled to his knees. There, official stoppage came at 3:23 minutes into the second round.

After successfully defending the light heavyweight title, Aung La posted a message on his social media. “First of all, I want to thank God for this victory! I want to thank my father, my family, my team, and all the fans that have supported me on this journey. I want to say that we must always try to be a better version of ourselves as individuals and together as Myanmar. That is the only way we can move forward to a brighter future. Thank you ONE Championship for the amazing night! Love and bless you all!” he stated.

With the victory, Aung La Nsang has made his first successful defense of the light heavyweight title. He won the light heavyweight title on 23 February, 2018 by defeating Alexandre Machado in Yangon.

Aung La also holds the ONE middleweight title. He won the title against Vitaly Bigdash on 30 June, 2017 in Yangon. He has successfully defended the middleweight title thrice. He managed to hold on to his title for the third time in Tokyo, Japan, where he bested Japan’s Ken Hasegawa on 31 March.

Teenage star Gauff beats Ostapenko to win first WTA title

LINZ (Austria) — Teenage prodigy Coco Gauff won her first WTA title on Sunday following a 6-3, 1-6, 6-2 victory over Jelena Ostapenko in the final in Linz that saw her hold her first trophy aloft aged 15.

Gauff, who only entered the field as a lucky loser after failing to qualify, completed a dream week in Linz in front of a supportive crowd to become the youngest player to win a WTA event since Czech Nicole Vaidisova, who triumphed in Vancouve r and Tashkent two months apart in 2004.

“I’ll remember this day for the rest of my life,” the delighted Gauff said after receiving a minutes-long standing ovation from 3,000 spectators.

“I had an amazing week and I hope to be back in the future.”

“I’m still overwhelmed, it’s shocking and crazy to say I’ve won my first WTA title,” she added.

“This tournament was definitely not even on the calendar for me at the start of the season.

“I didn’t think I’d have a chance to get in - now I’m the champion.”

Gauff will shoot up from 110 in the rankings into the 80s, according to WTA calculations, after becoming the youngest American to earn a WTA trophy since Jennifer Capriati at Toronto in 1991.

The hype surrounding the youngster has grown this year after solid performances this summer at both Wimbledon and the US Open, where she was defeated in the third round by defending champion Naomi Osaka, and her displays in Linz have enthralled tennis fans.

Gauff had to make a recovery in the final after sweeping the opening set but losing serve three times in the second as 2017 Roland Garros winner Ostapenko levied.

“She started hitting the ball fast and coming up with winners,” Gauff said. “There was not much I could do.”

Aung La Nsang (3rdR), his father (2ndR) and his coach (3rdL) pose for a photo at the ‘ONE Championship: Century Part 2’ event in Tokyo, Japan.

PHOTO: AUNG LA NSANG FACEBOOK PAGE

Neymar limps off as Brazil draw with Nigeria

Brazil’s forward Neymar (L) shakes hands with team coach Tite as he leaves the field during an international friendly football match between Brazil and Nigeria at the National Stadium in Singapore on 13 October 2019.

PHOTO: AFP

SINGAPORE (Singapore) — Neymar limped off injured early on as Brazil played out a 1-1 friendly draw against a spirited Nigeria at the Singapore National Stadium on Sunday.

The five-time world champions fell behind in the first half, but Casemiro’s equaliser early in the second period spared their blushes before Brazil wasted a string of chances to leave Southeast Asia with a victory after also being held by Senegal on Thursday.

Brazil started well, with Liverpool forward Roberto Firmino firing just wide in the third minute after a smart turn near the penalty spot.

However, Brazil were dealt a major blow when Neymar limped off in the 12th minute with what appeared to be a left thigh problem — the Paris Saint-Germain striker replaced by Bayern Munich’s Philippe Coutinho to bring a premature end to his 101st international appearance.

Neymar’s return to Champions League action may now be delayed, with PSG facing Club Brugge on October 22 after the world’s most expensive player missed the first two games through suspension.

“During the match he felt a muscle injury, so I took him off as a precaution,” Brazil coach Tite said. “Neymar did not have a muscle issue before the match. I would never start a player if they had a hint of a problem like this. I would never pay that price,” Tite added of the 27-year-old, who has added of the 27-year-old, who has...