State Counsellor receives Princess Yoko of Mikasa of Japan

H.E. MR. Nguyen Xuan Phuc was born on 20 July 1954.

Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc started his career at the National Economics University (NEU) as Student of economics from 1973 to 1978. He also studied economic management at the National University of Singapore from 1993 to 1996. From 1978 to 1979, he worked as the Staff at the Quang Nam-Da Nang Economic Management Board. From 1979 to 1993, he worked as the Staff, Deputy Chief, Chief of the Office of Quang Nam-Da Nang Provincial People’s Committee, Party Secretary of the Office. From 1993 to 1996, he worked as Director of the Tourism Department, Director of the Planning and Investment of Quang Nam-Da Nang Province.

From 1997 to 2001, he worked as the Deputy Chairman, Permanent Deputy Chairman of Quang Nam Provincial People’s Committee cum Head of the Management Board of the Quang Nam Industrial Zones cum Chairman of the Quang Nam Cooperative Alliance. From 2001 to 2006, Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc worked as the Vice Secretary of the Quang Nam provincial Party Committee, Chairman of the Quang Nam Provincial People’s Committee, deputy to the 11th National Assembly, member of the 11th National Assembly’s Economic and Budgetary Commission, Vice Secretary of the Quang Nam provincial Party Committee, Chairman of the Quang Nam Provincial People’s Committee, deputy to the 12th National Assembly, member of the 12th National Assembly’s Economic and Budgetary Commission, Deputy Secretary of the Central Committee for the Prevention and Control of Corruption, respectively.

Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc was elected as Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam by the 11th session of the 13th National Assembly on 7 April 2016.

He is married to Mrs. Tran Nguyet Thu, and they have two children.
Second Pyithu Hluttaw 14th regular session holds 16th-day meeting

THE 16th-day meeting of the 14th regular session of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw was held at the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall of the Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Asterisk marked questions and answers

During the asterisk marked questions and answer session, questions raised by Dr Sein Mya Aye of Dala constituency and U Sein Bo of Myawady constituency on electric meters and electricity supply to Myawady were answered by Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy U Khin Maung Win.

Questions raised by U Aung Myint of Thayawady constituency on upgrading Myawady District People’s Hospital, U Kyaw Soe of Bamauk constituency on health care coverage for Bamauk Township, Daw Aye Aye Mu (a) Daw Shamin of Kalay constituency on a plan to construct a station hospital in Kalay Township Maskulinn village tract, U Nyein Thit (a) U Thaung Tun of Mahaaungmyay constituency on accommodation for 403 nurses serving in Manda- lay General Hospital and U Pa Htan of Matupi constituency on upgrading a rural health centre to a station hospital in Matupi Township were answered by Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr Mya Lay Sein.

Amendment motions on Tax Appellate Tribunal Rule

Following the asterisk marked question and answer session Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat answered for Hluttaw representatives who want to table amendment motions on Tax Appellate Tribunal Rule sent by Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry to register their names.

Hluttaw discusses, approves and accepts Hluttaw Rights Committee annual report

Next, Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representatives Lt-Col Moe Myint Aung and Lt-Col Kyaw Hoe Aung discussed Pyithu Hluttaw, Hluttaw Rights Committee annual report. Committee secretary Dr Hla Moe responded to the discussion and committee member Dr Myint Thein tabled a motion for the Hluttaw to approve and accept the annual report. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the comment of the Hluttaw and approved and accepted the annual report.

Pyithu Hluttaw Banks and Financial Development Committee annual report

Similarly Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Colonel Myint Han discussed Pyithu Hluttaw Banks and Financial Development Committee annual report and committee chairperson Daw Khin San Hlaing responded to the discussion. Committee Secretary U Tin Tun Naing tabled a motion for the Hluttaw to approve and accept the report and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced the Hluttaw’s approval and acceptance after obtaining the comments of the Hluttaw.

Pyithu Hluttaw Investment and Industrial Development Committee annual report

Pyithu Hluttaw Investment and Industrial Development Committee annual report was also discussed by Tatmadaw Py- ithu Hluttaw representative Maj- or Min Min Tun and committee chairman U Win Thein Zaw responded to the discussion. Committee secretary U Aung Kyaw Kyaw On then tabled a motion for the Hluttaw to approve and accept the report. Here too Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the comment of the Hluttaw and announced the Hluttaw’s approval and acceptance of the report.

Pyithu Hluttaw Electricity and Energy Development Committee annual report

Afterwards, Pyithu Hluttaw Electricity and Energy Development committee secretary U Soe Myint (a) U Aung Zaw Myint tabled a motion of the Hluttaw to accept and approve the annual report. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced the Hluttaw’s approval and acceptance of the annual report after obtaining the comment of the Hluttaw.

The 17th-day meeting of the 14th regular session of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw is planned to be held on 18 December. — Aye Aye Thant (MNA) (Translated by Zaw Min)

Amyotha Hluttaw

16th-day meeting of 14 regular session of Second Amyotha Hluttaw

THE 16th-day meeting of the 14th regular session of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw was held at Amyotha Hluttaw building yesterday morning where asterisk marked questions were raised and answered, a motion debated and approved and a report read and submitted.

Asterisk question and answer session

In the question and answer session a question raised by U Min Swe Naing of Kachin State constituency 6 on a plan to combine five wards and village tracts in Kachin State Mohinyin Township Mohinyin town to a town wards was answered by Union Government Office Ministry Deputy Minister U Tin Myint.

Questions raised by U Kyaw Thaung of Sagaing Region constituency 1 on a plan to conduct river water pumping project to provide water to a village in Sagaing Township and U Tin Aung Tun of Magway Region constituency 5 on farm land were answered by Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw.

Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun meanwhile responded to a question raised by U Myint Naing of Rakhine State constituency 5 on upgrading two schools in Rakhine State Kyauktaw Township.

Hluttaw approves Industrial Zone Bill

Following the asterisk marked question and answer session Amyotha Hluttaw bill committee member Brig-Gen Tin Lwin reread the committee report on Industrial Zone Bill approved and sent with amendments by Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Maung Win Khang Thaing obtained the decision of the Hluttaw and approved it.

Hluttaw discusses and approves motion on regulating tissue-culture banana plantations

Next, a motion tabled by Dr Khun Win Thaung of Kachin State constituency 11 on properly regulating tissue-culture banana plantations tabled by Dr Khun Win Thaung of Kachin State constituency 11 on properly regulating tissue-culture banana plantations was discussed by U Hla Soe of Magway Region constituency 1, U Sa Khin Zaw Lin of Ayeawady Region constituency 2, U Khin Win of Magway Region constituency 2, U Maung Maung Ohn of Ayeawaddy Region constituency 3, Naw Min Tun (a) Dr Arkar Moe of Kayin State constituency 7 and Deputy Minis- ter for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw.

As Dr Khun Win Thaung wanted the motion approved by the Hluttaw, the matter was put to a vote where 168 voted for 4 against and 2 abstaining and an announcement was made of Hluttaw approving the motion.

Committee report read

As a final agenda of the day, Amyotha Hluttaw Government Guarantee, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee report for the period from Second Amyotha Hluttaw first regular session to 13th regular session was read by committee member U Pyu Lwin.

Afterwards, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker announced for Pyithu Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the report to register their names. The 17th day meeting of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw’s 14th regular session will be held on 18 December. — Aung Ye Thwin

(Translated by Zaw Min)
Vietnamese Prime Minister lands in Nay Pyi Taw

UPON the invitation of President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho, Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam arrived on an official visit and landed in Nay Pyi Taw at 7:45 pm yesterday. The Vietnamese Prime Minister was first welcomed by U Min Thein, Director-General of the Protocol Department, and Vietnamese Ambassador Dr Luan Thuy Duong on board his special flight.

The Prime Minister and delegation were then welcomed with a Guard of Honor at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Myo Aung, Myanmar Ambassador to Viet Nam U Kyaw Soe Win, MOFA Permanent Secretary U Soe Han and other officials. — MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

WHO’s public health prize handed over to National Archive Department

THE handover ceremony of Dr Lee Jong-wook memorial Prize for Public Health (2019) to the National Archive Department was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The WHO presented the prize to Myanmar in August this year during the 72nd session of World Health Assembly to recognize public healthcare services at PinU rural health centre in Ngaphe Township, Magway Region. The report was produced by Deputy Director-General Dr Than Lwin Tun from the Department of Traditional Medicine and his team from the Department of Public Health.

Dr Than Lwin Tun handed over the prize and related document to the Director General of National Archive Department.

The WHO also awarded this prize to Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Professor Balram Bhargava this year.

Myanmar has won the Sasakawa Health Prize in 1986 and the Leon Bernard Foundation Award in 2007.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

45th Rakhine State Day commemoration held in Sittway

THE 45th Anniversary of Rakhine State Day was observed at U Ottama Hall in Sittway, Rakhine State on 15 December. PHOTO: MNA

The event was opened with a performance of Tharliswa Rakhine State by the local cultural troupe. Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu then read a message from President U Win Myint commemorating 45th Rakhine State Day.

This was followed by a historical explanation on the formation of Rakhine State by the lecturer of the Myanmar Literature Department, Sittway University, U Zaw Win Naing. Next, the Chief Minister and wife, the Deputy Speaker of the State Hluttaw, State Chief Justice, state ministers and their wives, and the State Advocate-General conferred awards on winners of the outstanding performances regarding the 45th Rakhine State Day, including literary excellence, essay composition for the occasion, cartoon drawings and storytelling competitions.

This was followed by Grade-6 student Maung Ye Wunna Lin of B.E.H.S. (2) Sittway retelling his first place story, ‘Kye-phyu-ywar’ to the audience, after which the Chief Minister took a documentary photo with all attendees.

The commemoration was attended by department officials, local elders, teachers, writers, receivers of outstanding awards and students.

Earlier at 5:30 am, Rakhine State cabinet members led the offering of the first meal for Buddhist monks at daybreak to commemorate Rakhine State Day at Khine Thazin Hall. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)
National Urban Policy Forum held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Ministry of Construction organized the National Urban Policy Forum for final consultation at the Myanmar International Convention Center-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The event was attended by Chairman of Constitutional Tribunal of the Union, Chairman of Union Election Commission, Union Ministers, Union Attorney General, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, Committee Chairs of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, Deputy Ministers, State Region government ministers, Majors of Yangon and Mandalay, Vice Mayors, Hluttaw representatives, departmental heads, Korean Ambassador to Myanmar, officials from UN-Habitat and partner organizations, representatives from local and international organizations.

In his opening remark, Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw talked about insufficiencies of infrastructure in global countries resulted from rural to urban migrations, random settlements and natural disasters.

He added Myanmar also has many challenges, like other countries, in handling urban management, public services, living and safety of people amidst tremendous changes in various situations, and that the country needs to develop urban laws for sustainable development of urban areas and a strong link between urban and rural and city to city. According to survey on Myanmar urban development, the number of urban population 15.4 million (30 per cent of the country’s population) in 2014 is expected to reach 20 million by 2050. Another research has also shown that Myanmar cities with over 0.2 million of residents would see double number of population by 2050. The country also needs to invest US$7 billion annually in urban development plans as a total of $146 billion is required for 20 years. Myanmar is also implementing smart city projects in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay, while the Union-level projects Korea Myanmar Industrial Complex Project, New Mandalay Resort City and Smart District Project are being developed under smart development programmes.

The National Urban Policy Forum focused on implementation of prioritized sector in urban policy in line with the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP), township administration and financing, enactment of urban law, land management, real estates, urbanization, environment and climate changes, regional development programmes, infrastructure and public services, and socio-economic development.

Korean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Lee Sang-hwa and Regional Director of UN-Habitat Mr Atsushi Koersawa extended greetings before ‘The Future of Asian & Pacific Cities’ video was shown. UN-Habitat Myanmar’s Country Programme Manager Mr Bijay Karmacharya briefed on national urban policy, followed by the show of ‘The New Urban Agenda’.

During the forum, consultations were made on the four prioritized areas in National Urban Policy, strategies for Smart City plans, draft National Urban Law and creating city profile of Kalaw.

The forum was aimed to adopt national urban policies which could implement the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP) and the Sustainable Development Goals.—MNA

(MNHNRC conducts advanced human rights course

MYANMAR National Human Rights Commission is organizing its second advanced human rights course at the headquarters of Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. Vice Chairman U Sit Myaing and Training In-charge Deputy Director-General Dr Khai Khaih Win explained the course which is attended by 37 trainees and will be conducted until 17 January 2020.

The course is intended for better understanding about basic concepts of human rights, practicing them and supporting to emerge a society with high human rights norms.

The MNHNRC has already organized the five basic human rights courses, and one advanced course to disseminate human rights knowledge.—MNA

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Find solution based on discussions and negotiations

Our ethnic brothers and sisters must find a solution based on discussions and negotiations free from mistrust and firm in faith. From there, we can proceed in lasting solidarity for the emergence of a Constitution that is fitting for our country and in accordance with democratic practices and federal principles.

(Extract from Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint to the 7th Anniversary of Independence Day Ceremony on 4 January 2019)

Joint Committee on Amending 2008 Constitution holds meeting 69/2019

MEETING 69/2019 of the Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution was held at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. The meeting was attended by Chairman of the Joint Committee Pyidaungsu 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, Joint Secretary U Htay Win Aung (a) U Pyone Cho and members who were Hluttaw representatives from political parties and Tatmadaw Hluttaw representatives and officials from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office. The meeting of the Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution so far had covered suggestions and comments from Preamble of the Constitution up to Chapter VIII Citizen, Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Citizens. It was now covering suggestions and comments on Chapter IX Election. — MNA (Translated by TTN)

MOGE signs agreements with private companies on development of offshore block A-6

THE Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Electricity and Energy signed agreements with MPRL E&P Pte Ltd., Woodside Energy (Myanmar) Pte Ltd., and Total E&P Myanmar on production sharing contract and upstream midstream ratio for development of the discovery area in offshore block A-6.

The signing ceremony was held at Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon, and Union Minister U Win Khaing delivered a speech, calling for successful cooperation of partner companies, safety measures and commercial production commencing at the end of 2023.


The offshore block A-6 is a very reliable project for domestic natural gas consumption, and that it is jointly implemented by the private companies.

The signing ceremony was also attended by Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win, Union Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Soe Win, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun, the Executive Vice-President of Woodside Energy Ltd, and multiple representatives from partner companies.

U Thaung Tun, the Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, held talks with Ms Meg O’Neill, Executive Vice-President of Woodside Energy Ltd, at his ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on 16 December.

Union Minister for IFER receives Executive Vice-President of Woodside Energy Ltd

U Thaung Tun, the Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, received Executive Vice-President Ms Meg O’Neill of Woodside Energy Ltd, Australia’s largest oil and gas production company, at the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The Union Minister and the Executive Vice-President of Woodside Energy company discussed matters relating to plans to develop the A-6 offshore block as well as the company’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs.

Woodside Energy company has a 40 per cent stake in the A-6 block with Myanmar Petroleum Resources Ltd. (MPRL E&P) form Myanmar which holds 20 per cent. French Energy Company TOTAL has a 40 per cent share. — MNA (Translated by TTN)
**Myanmar, India election commissions hold joint capacity building training**

THE Union Election Commission of Myanmar and the Election Commission of India have jointly organized a training course on voting, vote counting and announcing the results, with the opening ceremony for the course held at the UEC Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Firstly, UEC member U Aung Myint spoke of the UEC’s emphasis on raising the capacity and capabilities of staff to ensure the upcoming 2020 General Election are held successfully to the standards of the five norms.

He said the processes of voting, counting the votes and announcing the results are all integral parts of the electoral process. He said he hoped that this training course will produce good experiences in having participants compare the electoral processes of India and Myanmar, in line with its election laws, by-laws and protocols.

Next, Dr Noor Mohammad, Consultant of the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), delivered an address. The first day of the training course then commenced and will continue for 5 days till 20 December. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

**Mass rally in Maubin shows support for State Counsellor**

RESIDENTS of Maubin in Maubin District, Ayeyawady Region, held a mass rally yesterday to show support of State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who contested the case filed by The Gambia against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice.

Regional Chief Minister U Hla Moe Aung and his cabinet, Maubin Township Hluttaw Representative U Zaw Moe, district/township-level department officials, philanthropic organizations, religious groups, teachers, students and residents of 76 village-tracts, 12 wards and 442 sub-villages showed up at the rally.

The forty-thousand strong mass rally first gathered in the compound of Maubin’s Shwe Phone Myint Pagoda holding placards with ‘We Stand With Our Leader’ on them. They then peacefully marched through Phayar Street to Myo Shaung Street, from Bogyoke Statue to Yele Main Road to Kannar Road and back to the first rendezvous location. — Aung Khaing, Aung Myint Myat (Maubin)

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

**Police seizes heroin, stimulant tablets in Muse**

LOCAL police seized drugs worth K312 million in Muse on 15 December.

A combination team including police personnel from Drug Enforcement Division searched a car driven by Li Kyar Hlan near Oriental toll gate on the Lashio-Muse Road, Mongyu 105-mile Village, Muse Township, and arrested him together with 6.6 kilogram of heroin and 120,000 stimulant tablets worth K312 million and two hand phones.

The police charged the 30 years old suspect under the Anti Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, according to Myanmar Police Force. — GNLM

(Translated by TTN)

**Hluttaw Committee scrutinizes completion of government pledges**

THE Government’s Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee of the Pyithu Hluttaw in progress on 16 December.

THE Government’s Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee of the Pyithu Hluttaw is checking implementations of government ministris at both Union and State/Region levels on their answers to the questions raised from the first regular session to the 13th regular session of Second Pyithu Hluttaw.

On the first day of coordination meeting, Dr May Win Myint, the Chair of committee, urged officials from government ministers for implementation of these works without delay.

The meeting will be held until 19 December to coordinate discussions and recommendations between the committee and government officials. — MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)
Three more companies expected to list on YSX next year

In accordance with Section 42(a) of the Securities and Exchange Law and Section 4 of the Trading Participant Business Regulations, the YSX has granted trading qualification to some securities companies — Myanmar Securities Exchange Centre Limited (MSEC), KEZ Stirling Coleman Securities Co. Ltd. (KZSCC), CB Securities Limited (CBSC), AYA Trust Securities Co. Ltd. (AYATSC), KTZ Ruby Hill Securities Co. Ltd. (KTZRH), and UAB Securities Limited (UABSC). According to the exchange, investors have to send their buying or selling orders to the YSX through securities companies which have a securities license issued by SECM as well as a trading qualification provided by YSX.

The stock exchange was launched three years ago to improve the private business sector. It disseminates rules and regulations regarding the stock exchange and knowledge of share trading through stock investment seminars. The YSX has doubled its stock trade matching time from two to four per day. In addition to this, it has held promotional events to attract new investors and encourage existing investors to trade more actively. The YSX has also sought the government’s support to get more public companies to participate in the stock market and to help more institutional investors, such as financing companies, investment banks, and insurance companies, to emerge.

By Nyein Nyein

At the seminar, U Than Aung, founder and CEO of Maximax Solution Executive Learning Institute, made a presentation on Investors’ Perspective on Foreign Participation in Myanmar Stock Market. At the seminar, the YSX held a seminar on Foreign Participation in Myanmar Stock Market on 14 December at the stock exchange.

At the seminar, U Than Aung, founder and CEO of Maximax Solution Corporate Advisory and Corporate Governance, made a presentation on Investors’ Perspective on Foreign Participation in Myanmar Stock Market. U Than Aung, ex-ecutive senior manager of Yangon Stock Exchange, discussed the advantages of foreign participation in the Myanmar stock market compared with experiences in other developing countries, highlighting better capital inflow, low-term and sustainable investment, encouragement to good corporate governance, and support for market orientation. He also discussed trends on the YSX.

As per the Yangon Region Government’s announcement, plots of land will be sold in three phases. Land-use applications for 500 land plots in Hline-thayar, Shwepyitha, and Thayar Industrial Zones were designated to be sold in Phase 2, but they have been sold at the same time with those in Phase 1. There are more than 170 plots in the industrial zone. Currently, land types are being processed for the applications we have received. We will divide the applications for public housing and industrial businesses,” said U Than.

Three more companies — First Myanmar Investment SEZ Holdings (MTSH), First Private Bank (FPB), and TMH Telecom (MCB), First Myanmar Investment Bank (FMI) are making preparations to list on the Yangon Stock Exchange, said an official with the YSX.

The SECM will strive to encourage companies to list on the YSX and proceed with foreign participation on the exchange, he added. At present, there are five listed companies — First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB), and TMH Telecom Public Co. Ltd. — are being traded on the stock exchange. The value of shares traded on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) declined sharply last month to K9,692.69 million compared with K1,36 billion recorded in October.

When 141,361 shares were traded on the stock exchange in November, the shares of FMI closed at K13,000, MTSH at K3,650, MCB at K8,000, FPB at K25,500, and TMH at K2,700. On 12 July, the SEC, under the Ministry of Planning, Finance, and Industry, had issued a press statement announcing that foreigners would be allowed to invest in shares listed on the YSX within a few months and currently they are making preparations for this. The YSX held a seminar on Foreign Participation in the stock exchange.

In the next phase, he added, more than 9,000 acres, previously marked as agricultural land, in East Dagon and Dagon Seikkan townships will go under the hammer. “Earlier, lands at the Yangon Industrial Zone were designated to be sold in Phase 2, but they have been sold at the same time with those in Phase 1. There are more than 170 plots in the industrial zone. Currently, land types are being processed for the applications we have received. We will divide the applications for public housing and industrial businesses,” said U Than.

At present, there are more than 3,000 cases with the Yangon Region Government’s Committee for Scrutinizing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands. Compensation of K9.9 billion was awarded to farmers on 28 September. In the 2019-2020 Financial year, compensation of K31 billion was provided to the original farmland owners. (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)
Seventy years since independence

ON January 14, 1948, the Union of Burma successfully fought the three-day battle of colonialists and achieved sovereignty. However, the nation had almost been reduced to a war zone during the three-day battle. The colonialists systematically destroyed all economic resources they had built when they withdrew from Burma, and the government of General Aung San had almost left nothing.

Speaking of Myanmar’s rehabilitation after the war, our national leader Bogyoke Aung San had said the country needed leadership that could raise it from the ashes and help the people deal with the large-scale destruction. Sadly, he never got to see Myanmar achieve complete independence and development.

While a free Myanmar was envisaging development within a few years armed conflicts surged into the doors of war. The parliamentary democracy was ruined, and the country faced for over 70 years of internal armed conflicts.

Only genuine cooperation between the people and the State can resolve the delays we have faced for over 70 years in realizing these hopes.

Peace, stability, development, and democracy are all interconnected. They are essential requirements for our nation, our nation and the common hopes of the people. Only genuine cooperation between the people and the State can resolve the delays we have faced for over 70 years in realizing these hopes.

A TTHE invitation of the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Win Myint and Madam, the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc and his spouse will pay an official visit to Myanmar on December 17-19.

During this official visit to Myanmar, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc will sign the Agreement on the Operation of the Cooperative Partnership between Viet Nam and Myanmar for the period from 2019-2024. This significant document will give the instructions for the development of the relationship between the two countries with a long-term vision and the increasingly deep and durable cooperation.

Comprehensive cooperation Since upgrading the relationship between Viet Nam and Myanmar into the framework of Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership, the relations between the two countries have been increasingly deepening in all aspects, bringing benefits to two peoples.

While the scope of political relations has been increasingly expanded to all levels, ministries, sectors, and countries, the mutual trust between the two governments and the peoples and the governments of the two countries has been increasingly strengthened.

Over the past two years, our two countries have conducted a number of visits of various sizes and on different levels of the two countries. President Tran Dai Quang paid a state visit to Myanmar in March 2018 by Myanmar’s Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc.

It was the birth of the Myanmar-Vietnam Friendship Association and the Vietnam Business Association in Myanmar on August 17, 2017, held by the President of the Vietnam Business Association in Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw, the visit by Myanmar State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her delegation and the visit by Myanmar President U Win Myint to Vietnam in May 2019, the visit to Myanmar by Vietnam Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh on November 27, 2018, and the 2019 and now the official visit of the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc to Myanmar.

The two countries also exchanged visits at various levels, and the visit of the Myanmar Foreign Affairs, Public Security, National Defence, Industry and Trade, Information, Transport, Culture (Ministers), Communications, Education, Science, Tourism (Ministers), etc. The visits by delegations from the National Assembly Committees of the two countries to Vietnam (the Committee on Mass Mobilization and Religious Affairs) and the Union of Myanmar, the Farmers’ Association have also been carried out, and the role of the Friendship Association has reached the provincial level, the universities, businesses, and fields (construction, industrial production, finance and banking, information technology, telecommunications, tourism, goods and services, consumer goods).

The Embassy’s assignment of an official in charge of trade and investment, an official in charge of the Vietnamese community in Myanmar and the launch of the Myanmar Business Club in Vietnam in 2019 are creating more channels for Vietnamese businesses to get the information, to know more about investment procedures and to find more partners.

New fields of investment and trade, automobile manufacture and assembly, production of highly added agricultural products, beverages, food processed and frozen industry, high-tech application products, telecommunications, etc. have been developing greatly.

The two governments are also considering the possibility of building a friendship diplomatic airport by Myanmar on the Thai border. We are also willing to discuss the issue of investment and trade.

Sustainable future Viet Nam and Myanmar are traditional friends and reliable partners in ASEAN as well as within the frameworks of national and regional forums. During high-level meetings and talks, Myanmar always expresses the desire to learn from experiences of Viet Nam in the process of economic development and innovation. These factors create favorable conditions for Viet Nam to continue contributing and developing the Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership with Myanmar.

At the meeting, the coop- eration in security and defence sectors has been enhanced and deepened, bringing about practical cooperation. During the visit, the Prime Minister will witness the signing ceremony of agreements between the two countries.

The Vietnam National Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation of the two countries has been established, and two cooperation mechanisms will be further deepened at international and bilateral levels.

Viet Nam and Myanmar have managed to achieve economic growth as well as in the history of struggling for national independence. Myanmar has shown that the world is open and that every Myanmar people strictly follow their belief and doctrine. Myanmar’s cultural and religious diversity, custom and tradition, bringing attention to festivals. That is the true rule of law. Myanmar’s national unity, culture and religion at the cause to foster the bilateral relations, strengthen the national unity, create this partnership make this partnership stronger. With that calm, the Embassy has included the cultural activities and exchange into the programs of the annual events such as the National Day reception, the commemoration of the establishment of the diplomatic relations and other activities.

Many Myanmar friends and partners have come to the events of the Embassy, becoming closer to the Myanmar Community in Myanmar, thus enhancing the bilateral relations. The Myanmar Community in Vietnam also made great contribution to promoting the relationship between the two countries to be stronger and closer.

Cultural activities not only help the Myanmar people to better understand Vietnam but also help the Vietnamese people better understand Myanmar.

That explained why the tourists from one country visit the other country. When the two peoples are engaged, Vietnamese businesses will also benefit as they will see more Myanmar markets and as a result will win more trust and confidence.

The Vietnamese business community in Myanmar brings a very specific feature to the Vietnam market, having a great influence on the economy of Myanmar, including for its standing for long time in Myanmar; less than 100 people out of about 11 million people living in Vietnam (VH-100%, smart home). The two governments are also considering the possibility of building a diplomatic airport by Myanmar on the Thai border. We are also willing to discuss the issue of investment and trade.

Viet Nam has been, and continues to be a trusted partner with the Government and people of Myanmar in the cause of building a democratic, prosperous and free country.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17TH December, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18TH December, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17TH December, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18TH December, 2019: Generally fair weather.
Yangon Region commemorates 45th Rakhine State Day with festive event

The Yangon Region government led the commemoration of the 45th anniversary of Rakhine State Day at the National Races Village in Thakayta, Yangon, yesterday.

Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Rakhine Ethnic Affairs Minister U Zaw Aye Maung, Chairman of Organizing Committee U Soe Win and other officials cut ceremonial ribbons and opened the ceremony.

Firstly, the Union Flag and Rakhine State Flag were saluted in succession and the Chief Minister then read a commemorative message from President U Win Myint on the occasion.

The Chief Minister and the Rakhine Ethnic Affairs Minister then conferred the Rakhine Dagun Award and cash rewards on 5 Sayadaws and 13 common people.

The Regional government that handed over K3 million to Aryana Literary Group to install copies of the Ananda Chandra Stone Inscriptions in the National Museum, and Rakhine Ethnic Affairs Minister U Zaw Aye Maung spoke words of thanks in return.

Traditional Rakhine accessories were on display at the event, which also organized traditional Rakhine Kyin wrestling, pillow fighting and women’s tug-of-war.

—— MNA
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

New outpatient building inaugurated at Ywar Thar Gyi Mental Health Hospital

A new emergency and outpatient building was opened yesterday at the Ywar Thar Gyi Mental Health Hospital in Dagon Myothit (East) Township, under the supervision of the Yangon Region Government.

A medical devices donation event was also held the same day.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and officials formally opened the event by cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

The Chief Minister said it was auspicious to donate a new building for people with mental health issues in Yangon. “We will support the hospital to provide good services to the public. Moreover, we are trying to fulfill the need for staff nurses. Also, I am grateful to those well-wishers who donated medical devices,” he said.

The head of the Mental Health Hospital delivered eulogies.

An outbreak of fire at the hospital on 24 December, 2018 had damaged the two-storey building. “The hospital’s inpatients were shifted to safety,” an official said.

To reconstruct the building, the Myanmar Engineering Society had inspected the building under the guidance of the regional government. “We will support the hospital with disaster management funds of K173.88 million allocated by the Yangon Region Government,” an official said.

—— San Kyaw Aung
(IPRD)
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)
A central-level launching ceremony for malaria elimination in Myanmar was held yesterday morning at the Mingalar Thiri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw, as part of efforts for meeting the country’s target of ending malaria by 2030.

Speaking at the event, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe called for a review of the existing directives and rules for elimination of malaria so they are in conformity with the current situation.

The Union Minister also stressed the importance of active cooperation between the ministry and NGOs, INGOs, private hospitals, and health organizations.

Myanmar is implementing a malaria elimination strategy (2016-2030) and procedures. It is making efforts for meeting the targets of eliminating plasmodium falciparum malaria by 2025 and all kinds of malaria in Myanmar by 2030.

There were about 600,000 people who contracted malaria in 2009, and 672 people died from the disease. In 2018, the number of infected persons decreased to 76,518 and the number of deaths to 19. Sixty-four per cent of the infected persons were from 12 townships, according to the Union Minister.

“The responsible persons from regions and states and participants in the process need to study the plans, strategies, and processes for preventing malaria and develop the plans so they are in line with the current situation by reviewing the plans and standard procedures for preventing malaria,” said the Union Minister. Afterwards, deputy director Dr Aung Thi, project manager of the National Plan for Malaria Elimination, explained the responsibilities and procedures of the national-level committee for a malaria-free Myanmar, the Malaria Elimination Roadmap for Myanmar, and the National-Level Strategic Plan for Freedom from Malaria (2020-2025). Consultant on disease prevention with the Ministry of Health and Sports, Dr Saw Lwin, explained the upcoming projects for eliminating malaria and answered questions from attendees. — MNA (Translate by Ba Htoo)

Magway Chief Minister supports local youth festival in person

MAGWAY Region Chief Minister Dr Aung Moe Nyo visited the Youth All-Round Development Festival at Magway University yesterday.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by his cabinet ministers and other officials as they observed the traditional Myanmar dances, ethnic dances and puppet performances, organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, in the university’s Convocation Hall.

Next, they viewed the exhibitions, booths and book stalls on display at the festival and then conferred prizes on winners of the puzzle programme.

Later in the evening, the Chief Minister and officials observed more performances in the Convocation Hall and encouraged participants of sports competition at the university’s gym, after which he conferred awards on the winning teams. — Wai Hlan (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Japanese Princess Yoko departs from Myanmar

JAPAN’S Princess Yoko of Mikasa and her delegation departed from Yangon at 10 pm yesterday night and were seen off at Yangon International Airport by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japanese Ambassador Mr Ichiro Maruyama and other officials. — MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Japanese Princess Yoko of Mikasa seen off by officials at the Yangon International Airport on 16 December. PHOTO: MNA

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MOHS, WHO organize workshop on standard packaging legislation

THE Ministry of Health and Sports and WHO jointly organized the Workshop on Developing Road Map for Standard Packaging Legislation at Grand Amara Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his speech, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe said the consumption of cigarettes and tobacco seriously affects health and causes damages in other sectors across Myanmar and the world. He said this workshop aims to address this issue by reducing the consumption of cigarettes and tobacco.

The Union Minister said statistics show an average of 64,000 Myanmar citizens die as a consequence of cigarettes and tobacco consumption every year. He said the WHO STEPS survey conducted in Myanmar in 2014 reveals that 94 per cent have one same reason to develop noncommunicable diseases while 19.6 per cent have 3-5 reasons for the same thing.

The Union Minister said if usage of cigarettes and tobacco are not effectively controlled within the next five years then it will become exceedingly harder to control by then. He said it has the potential to become a public health crisis and will cause grave losses in the nation’s health, economic and other sectors. The Union Minister said the standard packaging practices to be discussed in the workshop are implemented worldwide and is essential to controlling tobacco. He said suggestions from the Union Attorney-General Office will be taken into consideration when implementing standard packaging. He said the results of this workshop will be submitted to the Union Government.

This was followed by an explanation from Mr Andrew Black, Technical Officer of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, on how consumption of tobacco in Myanmar has negatively affected 3.3% of national GDP, how standard packaging can effectively change first time usage habits among youths and what makes up standard packaging.

The workshop then began with participants from the Ministry of Health and Sports, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Ministry of Information, Union Attorney-General Office, WHO FCTC and Public Health Foundation officials, and retired experts. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye receives NIS delegation

UNION MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye received the delegation of Nordic International Support Foundation (NIS), a Norwegian-registered non-profit organization, yesterday morning.

During the meeting at ministry’s headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw with Country Director of NIS Ms Elizabeth Jane Armstrong, they discussed preparations for signing MoU between the NIS and the Department of Social Welfare, enhancement of civil communities, social harmony, unity of different communities, empowerment of women, closure of IDP camps and plans for holding a state-level event on social community.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Qatar Embassy celebrates National Day of Qatar in Yangon

QATAR Embassy in Yangon celebrated the National Day of Qatar yesterday at the Novotel Yangon Max Hotel.

The event began with the national anthems of Myanmar and Qatar.

Afterwards, Chargé d’affaires a.i of Qatar Embassy Mr Mansoor Mubarak Al-Khayarin and Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung cut the National Day commemorative cake to celebrate the national day. —MNA
European stocks rally, pound steadies

LONDON (United Kingdom) — European stock markets pushed higher Monday, led by strong gains for London thanks to a steadier pound.

The dollar largely weakened and Asian equities mostly retreated as markets waited for details of a key China-US trade deal. Sterling held up, but was down from Friday’s 18-month highs against the dollar and more than three-year peak on the euro. The pound surged Monday after Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s crushing election win that allows him to push through his Brexit agreement.

Remittances from Filipinos abroad rise to 3 bln USD in October 2019

MANILA — Personal remittances sent by Overseas Filipinos (OFs) reached 3 billion US dollars in October 2019, a 7.7 per cent increase from 2.8 billion US dollars in October 2018, the Philippines central bank Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said on Monday.

On a year-to-date basis from January to October, the BSP said remittances grew by 4.3 per cent to 27.6 billion US dollars, higher than last year’s level of 26.5 billion US dollars.

By type of worker, the BSP said personal remittances for January to October from 2019 are land-based workers with work contracts of less than one year rose by 8 percent to 2.7 billion US dollars in October from 2.5 billion US dollars in October 2018.

According to the BSP, the combined remittances of sea-based and land-based workers with short-term contracts also increased by 7.5 per cent to 5.9 billion US dollars during the period compared to 5.5 billion US dollars a year ago.

Meanwhile, the BSP said cash remittances channeled through banks by OF workers with work contracts of less than one year rose by 8 percent to 2.7 billion US dollars in October from 2.5 billion US dollars in October 2018.

By country or region source, the BSP said the United States registered the highest share to total remittances during the period January to October 2019 at 37.6 per cent.

It was followed by Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Britain, Canada, Germany, China’s Hong Kong, and Kuwait.

The combined remittances from these sources accounted for 78.4 per cent of total cash remittances during the period.

— Xinhua
China’s Xi gives Hong Kong leader ‘unwavering support’

BEIJING (China) — Chinese President Xi Jinping told beleaguered Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam on Monday that she had Beijing’s “unwavering support” despite another huge pro-democracy rally earlier this month and her government’s thrashing at recent local elections.

The city has been upended by six months of massive pro-democracy protests that have seen violent battles between police and hardcore demonstrators, as well as regular transport disruption.

Protesters have called for the unpopular Lam to stand down as leader, but she received the backing of China’s leadership during a visit to Beijing on Monday. “The central government fully recognises the courage and sense of responsibility you have demonstrated in such an exceptional period in Hong Kong,” Xi told Lam at the imposing Great Hall of the People.

“We will continue to provide unwavering support for you to lead the SAR (special administrative region) administration to govern according to the law,” Xi said. Lam thanked Xi for his concern for the city’s situation, “for his guidance for us, and for the trust and support for the SAR government and me to handle such a big crisis”. Lam met earlier with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, who said her government had “tried its best to maintain social stability” amid “an unprecedentedly severe and complicated situation”. But he also called for the Hong Kong government to “step up studies of the deep-seated conflicts and problems that hinder Hong Kong’s economic and social development” in order to restore calm to the city.

“Hong Kong is yet to get out of its plight. The SAR government must continue its hard work, stop violence and subdue chaos according to laws and re-store order,” Li told Lam. —AFP

Police action over student protest attack on soul of India: Priyanka

NEW DELHI (India) — Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday alleged that police action in Delhi and Aligarh following the protest by students against Citizenship Amendment Act was “attack on the soul of India” and said the party would fight against it.

“The government has given a blow to the Constitution. It is an attack on the soul of the nation, youth is the soul of the nation,” Priyanka told reporters at the India Gate here against the police action during students’ protests over the citizenship amendment Act in the Jamia Millia Islamia and the Aligarh Muslim University.

“The protest started at 4 pm and continued till 6 pm with Congress leaders holding placards. The placard held by Priyanka Gandhi said “Stop attacks on young students”. Another placard said “not lathi and shoot- ing, give us employment”. Party leaders KC Venugopal, AK Antony, PL Punia, Ahmed Patel and Randeep Singh Surjewala were among those present.—ANI

Japanese artists celebrate Reiwa Era at Sydney’s Opera House

SYDNEY — The largest-ever gathering of traditional Japanese artists in Sydney performed together on Monday in celebration of the new imperial era, Reiwa, at the World Heritage listed Sydney Opera House. All proceeds from the “Japan Spectacular” performance were donated to a Japan Club of Sydney charity established in the wake of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that devastated north-eastern Japan, which brings children from across Fuku-shima Prefecture to have homestay experiences in Sydney.

“At this time when the new era, Reiwa, has begun and the Tokyo Olympics will be occurring next year, I hope we can also look back to the good old days through the appeal of traditional Japanese culture,” Yukiko Hiran- no who leads the JCS Rainbow Project told Kyodo News.

About 400 people came to see the two-hour performance featuring taiko drummers and Okinawa sanshin string in- strumentalists, along with non-instrumental performances by swordsmen and kimonono-clad traditional dancers for the one-night-only show.

Rufus Whitlemore, 24, and Rhian Owen, 25, came to the show as part of their holiday to Australia from Britain.

“It’s very different from any Western theatre I’ve been to. There’s such a huge range of performances,” said Whit- tlemore, who was particularly impressed by an ikебana (Japa- nese traditional flower arrangement) demonstration performed to live koto music.

“The respect the perform- ers show to nature is lovely,” said Owen, commenting on the show’s “Day in the life of Japan” theme, which began with a sun-rise and sounds of the ocean.

The new Japanese era started on May when Emperor Naruhito ascended the Chrysanthemum Throne after former Emperor Akihito abdicated the previous day.—Kyodo News

Musicians play "sanshin" three-stringed instruments from the southern island prefecture of Okinawa during a Japanese traditional arts show at the Sydney Opera House on 16 December 2019. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

New Zealand observes silence as PM warns of long volcano probe

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — New Zealand marked one week since the deadly White Island eruption with a minute’s silence Monday, as Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern warned grieving families they face a lengthy wait for answers.

At 21.31pm (GMT) — exactly one week since the eruption — offices and shops fell silent as New Zealanders remembered the 16 international tourists and two local guides who died, along with at least 18 more now receiving intensive treatment for severe burns.—AFP

Samajwadi Party seeks emergency session of Parliament to amend citizenship law

NEW DELHI (India) — Samaj- wadi Party (SP) leader Prof Ram Gopal Yadav on Monday demanded an emergency sitting of Parliament to make amendments in the Citizenship Amendment Act or the citizenship law should be revoked.

Speaking to ANI, Prof Yadav said “I demand that an emer- gency session of Parliament should be called. Amendments should be made to the Citizenship Amendment Act to see that no discrimination is done on the basis of religion or the Act should be revoked. Citizenship should not be based on religion.”

At least 10 dead from fan factory fire in Bangladesh capital

DHAKA — At least 10 people died in a fire at a fan factory in Gazipur on the outskirts of Bangladesh’s capital Dhaka on Sunday, Fire Service Headquarters Duty Off- cer Lima Khanom told Xinhua.

Firemen brought the blaze under control at around 7.00 p.m. local time after a hectic effort of about two hours.

Firemen had recovered 10 bodies from the scene, most of whom charred beyond recog- nition, according to the official. —Xinhua
First stop, Brexit: UK’s Johnson gets down to work

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Prime Minister Boris Johnson got down to work Monday following his sweeping election victory, appointing ministers and announcing plans to publish legislation this week to get Britain out of the European Union.

The Conservative leader was expected to carry out a limited cabinet re-shuffle before welcoming new MPs to parliament following his landslide win in Thursday’s general election.

But his main focus is on fulfilling his promise to get Britain out of the European Union by the end of next month after years of acrimonious debate in parliament around the issue.

Johnson will present legislation on Friday that begins the process of ratifying the divorce terms he struck with Brussels on October 31.

The main opposition Labour party meanwhile was relegated to its worst defeat since before World War II, forcing leader Jeremy Corbyn to announce a plan for his departure.

**Canada-style deal**

Johnson is only expected to tinker around the edges of his current government and conduct a real overhaul once the first stage of Brexit is safely out of the way.

London and Brussels will then have to embark on yet more negotiations aimed at striking new trade and security partnership.

The withdrawal deal sets out a post-Brexit transition period until the end of 2020 to hold these talks, during which time UK-EU ties will remain broadly the same.

London has the option to extend the transition but Johnson has insisted this will not happen, saying it is time to break free of EU rules.

His spokesman repeated on Monday that he would be seeking a “Canada-style free trade agreement”, similar to the recent deal signed between the EU and Canada.

But EU officials caution that trade deals can take years, and experts warn that failure to reach agreement before the transition ends could lead to a severe economic shock.—AFP

France extradites ‘butcher’ of Argentine dictatorship

PARIS (France) — An Argentine ex-police officer linked to the murder of hundreds of people during the country’s “dirty war” was on a plane to Buenos Aires on Monday, after France extradited him to face trial over the disappearance of a student.

Mario Sandoval was arrested Wednesday at his home near Paris, after French authorities gave the final go-ahead for his extradition, ending an eight-year legal battle between the nations.

The 66-year-old who had been living in France since 1985 and obtained French citizenship with few aware of his full identity, was sent back on a plane that left Paris around midnight on Sunday.

“Everything happened as expected,” a lawyer for the Argentine state told AFP.

Argentina suspects that Sandoval took part in more than 500 cases of kidnapings, torture and murder at a time when some 30,000 were “disappeared” during the 1976-83 military dictatorship. The extradition concerns only the military dictatorship. But the military junta fell.

**Legal tussle**

Abriata was detained at the notorious ESMA navy training school in Buenos Aires, where an estimated 5,000 people were held and tortured after the military coup of 1976 — many of them thrown from planes into the sea or the River Plate. Sophie Thomon, a lawyer acting for Argentina, told AFP that Abriata’s 92-year-old mother Beatriz Cantarini de Abriata had been “desperately waiting” for Sandoval to “explain himself before Argentine justice”.

Sandoval, who has dismissed the accusations as fabrications, fled Argentina after the military junta fell.

Despite taking French nationality he can be extradited as the alleged crime took place beforehand. Sandoval was a professor at the Sorbonne’s Institute of Latin American Studies in Paris and the University of Marne-la-Vallee outside the French capital.

His colleagues at both schools called for his arrest when they recognised his picture during his legal battles.—AFP

Lebanese protesters clash with police for a second night

BEIRUT (Lebanon) — Lebanese protesters clashed with police for the second consecutive night near parliament on the eve of much-delayed consultations to form a new cabinet needed to fix a deepening economic crisis.

The renewed clashes in Beirut came as Interior Minister Raya El-Hassan ordered security forces to open a “rapid and transparent” enquiry after dozens were wounded on Saturday night.

Undaunted by the violence, thousands of demonstrators flooded central Beirut Sunday ahead of the parliament consultations due to begin on Monday to appoint a new premier after weeks of largely peaceful street protests forced the previous cabinet to quit.

The unprecedented rallies have swept Lebanon since 17 October, demanding the overhaul of a political system deemed inept and corrupt and the formation of an independent government of technocrats.

Clashes again erupted near parliament, with demonstrators throwing water bottles and firecrackers at the security forces who responded with tear gas and water cannon, an AFP photographer said.

There was no immediate reports of casualties. But the clashes threatened a repeat of scenes on Saturday evening that had seen dozens of people hurt when security forces used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse demonstrators who tried to breach metal barricades near the legislature.

The Lebanese civil defence said they took 36 injured to hospital and treated 54 people at the scene on Saturday night. The Lebanese Red Cross said it ferried 15 people to hospitals, while 37 others were given first aid on site.

The Red Cross said the injured included protesters and security forces, with some affected by tear gas and others struck by stones.

Lebanese security forces said about 20 from their ranks were hospitalised.

An AFP photographer saw men in plainclothes hitting protesters on Saturday, while anti-riot police fired rubber bullets at protesters throwing stones.

Hassan demanded the identification of those responsible for the most violent episode since the anti-government protests began in October. — AFP
Medical check-up conducted ahead of 2020 Myanmar National League

WITH the instruction that players for 2020 Myanmar National League must submit their contracts with respective clubs and medical check-up certificates, medical check-ups for the players were being conducted ahead of 2020 Myanmar National League.

Myanmar Football Federation's medical department is providing medical check-up for the footballers, in which Ayeyawady United FC was examined yesterday.

With the guidelines from FIFA and AFC and professional criteria, the check-up are being made to prevent sudden death among athletes and to improve their ability.

The medical check-up will be alternatively provided to the clubs until 24 December. — Kyaw Khin

Liverpool face Atletico in Champions League last 16 clash

NYON (Switzerland) — Holders Liverpool will return to the scene of last season's Champions League triumph after they were drawn against Atletico Madrid in the last 16 of the competition on Monday and Manchester City face 13-time winners Real Madrid. Jurgen Klopp's side will travel to the Wanda Metropolitano, where Liverpool lifted the trophy in June, for the first leg of their tie against three-time runners-up Atletico.

"Madrid is the place where we only have fantastic memories, all of us, so that's great, but this time we play Atletico there and it's their home ground," said Klopp. "It's a tough one, but if you go through all of the draws, there are pretty much four or five potential finals already in the last 16."

Pepe Guardiola's City, who are trying to win a first Champions League crown, face a tough task against Real, the record winners of Europe's top club prize, for a place in the quarter-finals. The two clubs met in the 2015-16 semi-finals, the furthest City have progressed in the tournament. That tie was won 1-0 on aggregate by Real.

"It is a difficult one, of course. Real Madrid have won 13 times so they are the best," City director of football Txiki Begiristain told BT Sport. "We want to be the best so we want to beat them." The clash is a first competitive meeting between Guardiola and Zinedine Zidane, who won the Champions League three times in a row with Real from 2014.

Ben Arfa's compensation claim against PSG thrown out: sources

PARIS (France) — Hatem Ben Arfa's demand for millions of euros of compensation from Paris Saint-Germain has been dismissed by an industrial tribunal in the French capital AFP's learned from both parties on Monday.

Contacted by AFP, PSG's lawyer Marie-Helene Cohen-Guillemet said all of Ben Arfa's "requests have been thrown out".

Ben Arfa's legal representative Jean-Jacques Bertrand told AFP the 32-year-old forward, who is currently without a club after being released by Paris Saint-Germain has been dismissed by the club's president Nasser Al-Khelaifi.

French newspaper Journal du Dimanche reported he claims he was shut out after the club took exception to him appealing directly to PSG's owner, the emir of Qatar, over a lack of contact with the club's president.

Ben Arfa has already had some revenge against PSG after helping Rennes to a penalty shoot-out win over the capital club in last season's French Cup final. — AFP

MFF president inspects work at Thuwunna Stadium

PRESIDENT of the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) U Zaw Zaw yesterday inspected the work of planting new grass and construction of a futsal stadium and training playground at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon, according to the official website of the football federation.

U Kyaw Lin Htwe, in charge of the MFF turf, explained the growing of new grasses at the stadium.

U Zaw Zaw instructed that new grasses be planted in accordance with international standards, international competitions be hosted, and an all-round renovation of the stadium be undertaken as it is the only stadium being maintained by the MFF and it is where the Myanmar National League and other competitions are being held.

The MFF president also inspected the construction of a new training ground as it has only two training grounds, No.1 and No.2, and so that the teams of the MNFL and international teams can train. — Kyaw Khin

Ben Arfa claimed PSG had sidelined him for non-footballing reasons. PHOTO: AFP

A player from Ayeyawady United FC receives medical check-up ahead of 2020 Myanmar National League. PHOTO: MNL

MFF President U Zaw Zaw inspects the construction of futsal stadium at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 16 December. PHOTO: MFF