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The agriculture sector is among the 10 investment areas prioritised by the government yesterday. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAH

MIC announces prioritised sectors for investment

The Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) announced yesterday 10 areas which will be given priority when entrepreneurs submit their investment proposals.

The prioritised areas include agriculture, livestock, export promotion, import substitution and the power sector.

“Both foreign investors and Myanmar citizen investors are welcome to invest in the stated investment areas. The

Myanmar Investment Commission and the government of respective states and regions will provide necessary assistance to investors”, according to a statement released yesterday.

The complete lists of priority sectors are:

- (1) Agriculture and related services, plus value-added production of agricultural products
- (2) Livestock production and

breeding, and production of fishery products

- (3) Export promotion industries
- (4) Import substitution industries
- (5) Power sector
- (6) Logistic industries
- (7) Education services
- (8) Health care industry
- (9) Construction of affordable housing
- (10) Establishment of industrial estate

The new Myanmar Investment Law was enacted on 18th October 2016 by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw law No. 40/2016. With the approval of the Cabinet Meeting, the Ministry of Planning and Finance issued the Myanmar Investment Rules on 30th March 2017 as Notification 35/2017. This legislation and the Rules give investors easier access to business activities in Myanmar.— Myanmar News Agency ■



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Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw discusses new government housing project, meat slaughter tenders

Nay Pyi Taw Council Member U Aung Myint Tun told the Pyithu Hluttaw yesterday that 43 government staff housing complexes are planned in Nay Pyi Taw in FY2017-2018, costing approximately Ks16 billion. A separate construction project is planned for retired workers and rental residences for government staff.

U Aung Myint Tun also responded to a question about competition in the animal slaughter industry.

“Until FY 2012-2013, slaughtering licenses for meat production were not subject to competitive bidding on an annual basis,” he said. “It was lucrative as it allowed one person to bid a maximum, non-competitive price and allowed him to monopolize the meat market.” U Aung Myint Tun said that by introducing a new tender system, the meat slaughtering industry would be made more fair and affordable. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Amyotha Hluttaw

Free health services, medicinal plants discussed at Amyotha Hluttaw

Thura Zaw,
Hmwe Kyu Zin (MNA)

Free or low-cost health services, the upgrading of a sports ground in Hopan, and the export of medicinal herbal plants were among the issues discussed at yesterday's Amyotha Hluttaw meeting in Nay Pyi Taw.

Dr. Zaw Lin Htut of Mon State constituency 9 asked about services provided free of charge by the Ministry of Health and Sports, the annual budget allocated for medications provided to state, region, district and township hospitals and how it is distributed.

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe replied that a cost sharing system was introduced to reduce the people's health care cost before the National Health Insurance System



Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe. **PHOTO: MNA**

is implemented. In financial years when additional funds are allocated, some cancer medications, for instance, were provided free of charge.

Anti-venom are bought from

the Ministry of Industry and provided free together with vaccines for the Department of Public Health's extended preventive vaccination campaign. Depending upon the funds and laboratory available in hospitals, patients were provided with free basic lab tests and cost sharing for high level lab-tests. The National Health Plan (2017-2021) was drawn up to provide essential health care at low cost to all by FY 2020-2021.

This plan will be implemented in stages, the Union Minister said.

In response to a question by U Sai San Aung of Shan State constituency 12 on upgrading a sports ground in Hopan town, Hopan District, Wa Self-administered division, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe said the sports ground in

Hopan was constructed in FY 2014-2015 with state government funds of Ks21.574 million. A wall for the sports ground was built in FY 2015-2016 with state government funds of Ks16.89 million. Further upgrades were made in FY 2016-2017 with state government additional funds of Ks54 million. Priority is given to upgrade the sports ground into an indoor stadium in FY 2018-2019, said the Union Minister.

Replying to a question by Dr. Kyaw Than Tun (Canton) of Mandalay Region constituency 3 on plans to plant and export medicinal herbal plants, Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe said export licenses were permitted for a variety of medicinal herbal plants such as ginger and turmeric, of which 22,611.354 tons valued at US\$12.66 million in FY 2014-2015,

14,918.881 tons valued at US\$9 million in FY 2015-2016 and 21,159 tons valued at US\$11.895 million in FY 2016-2017 were exported.

Next, eight hluttaw representatives supported a motion put forward by Dr. San Maung Maung of Bago Region constituency 1 urging the Union Government to deal with the weakness in authorities taking action in accordance to laws on control of cigars and tobacco, and Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe provided explanations.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced the approval of the motion after a vote by the Hluttaw resulted in a majority supporting it. The 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw 5th regular session 22nd day meeting is scheduled for 29 June. ■

UNFC elects new leaders, allows four armed ethnic groups to leave

THE United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), a coalition of armed opposition groups that campaigns for the rights of ethnic minorities, elected new leaders on Monday and allowed four groups to leave the council.

At the second conference of the UNFC held from 20 to 26 June, Nai Han Thar from the New Mon State Party (NMSP) was elected as the chairman of the council, Dr. Khin Maung from the Arakan National Council (ANC) was elected as vice-chairman, Khu Oo Reh from the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) was

elected as General Secretary, Say Onn from the Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP) as joint-general secretary-1 and Solomon from the Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) as joint-general secretary-2. The Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), the Wa National Organisation, the Palaung State Liberation Organisation (PSLF) and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) received permission to leave the council. The conference also decided to accept the Chin National Front (CNF) and Kachin National Organisation (KNO) as new mem-

bers of the council. Currently, the UNFC is comprised of the NMSP, KNPP, SSPP, ANC and the LDU. Following the conference, the UNFC kicked off a three-day session discussing issues reached at the 2nd conference. Signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), ethnic political parties and community-based organisations are participating in the meeting. During the meeting, they will review the issues discussed at the conference and results of the Union Peace Conference- 21st Century Panglong. —Ye Khaung Nyunt ■



N'Banla from KIO delivers address at the 2nd Conference of United Nationalities Federal Council-UNFC. **PHOTO: AUNG AUNG**

President U Htin Kyaw accepts credentials from ambassadors of Philippines and Nepal

MR EDUARDO E. Kapunan, Jr., the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, presented his letter of credence to U Htin Kyaw, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, at Presidential Palace, Nay Pyi Taw at 2pm yesterday.

Mr. Bhim K. Udas, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, also presented his letter of credence to U Htin Kyaw, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, at Presidential Palace, Nay Pyi Taw at 2:35 pm yesterday.

Present on the occasion were Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and Director-General U Thant Sin of the Protocol Department.—Myanmar News Agency ■



The newly-accredited Ambassador of Nepal presents his credentials to President U Htin Kyaw in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**



The newly-accredited Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines presents his credentials to President U Htin Kyaw. **PHOTO: MNA**

More wreckage found from Tatmadaw plane crash

TATMADAW naval vessels, civilian fishermen and military divers continued to search for wreckage of a Chinese-made Y-8 Myanmar military transport plane that crashed into the Andaman Sea on 7 June with 116 people aboard, according to a report yesterday by the Myanmar News Agency.

Additional pieces of aluminium believed to be parts of the fuselage were discovered yesterday evening, according to the Ministry of Defence.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Photos show wreckage of Y-8 military transport plane found by Tatmadaw naval vessels, civilian fishermen, military divers. **PHOTO: MNA**



Fierce fighting, several deaths after uncovering hidden TNLA training camp



Tatmadawmen celebrate after conquering TNLA training camp. **PHOTO: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OFFICE**

SEVERAL Tatmadaw officers and troops and four men of an ethnic armed group were killed over a six-day period during fierce fighting that began last week after the discovery of a Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) training camp in northeast Shan State. The fighting began when Tatmadaw columns, acting on a tip-off, conducted a search on 20 June and discovered a hidden TNLA training camp about 2,000 meters northeast of Manlan village, Namsang Township in Shan State.

Tatmadaw troops engaged TNLA troops five times between

20 June and 26 June, military officials said. After sometimes heavy fighting, TNLA troops withdrew toward the west and northwest.

During the engagements, several Tatmadaw officers and troops were killed and a few were wounded. Four bodies of enemy troops were also found, military officials said.

The training camp included a 40-foot square space of cleared ground and six huts used as training halls, living quarters, a kitchen and a dining hall. A generator, 40 military uniforms with TNLA badges, several improvised explosive devices (IEDs), detona-

tors, medicines and foodstuffs were also found in the camp.

A further search of the area uncovered more IEDs on 23 June.

Found with the bodies of enemy troops were 12 M-22 assault rifles, one medium machine gun, one K-12 rifle, one M-22 assault rifle with a folding stock, 26 rounds of RPG bombs, 11 rounds of 60mm mortar bombs, 14 M-22 magazines, three sniper rifle magazines, assorted military equipment and documents, according to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—Myanmar News Agency ■

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Market festival, trade expo aims to mark International Cooperative Day

A TRADE exhibition and market festival will be held in Nay Pyi Taw on 1-3 July to mark the International Day of Cooperatives, according to a report in the Myawady Daily

newspaper.

The event will operate between from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation headquarters and will show-

case products manufactured by region and state cooperatives.

Products will include traditional food and clothes, household utensils, cosmetics

and handmade crafts.

The International Day of Cooperatives is an annual celebration of cooperative movements around the world.—GNLM ■

Plans for new rubber plant discussed in Thaton Township

MINISTRY of Industry and Thaton Township officials discussed plans to build a new rubber manufacturing plant in the Mon State, according to a report Myawady Daily newspaper.

The plan for the No. 21 Heavy Industry Tyre and Rubber Factory – including the need for agricultural land leases, new manufacturing methods to produce good quality rubber and better use of fertilizer — was discussed at the annual general meeting of Thaton Township Rubber Planters and Producers Association on 23 June.

Association Chairman Dr. Than Myo said the project is needed because



Rubber latex is collected in a bowl at plantation. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

of the high level of international demand for high-quality rubber.

Myanmar has struggled to produce high-quality rubber at sufficient volume to interest in-

ternational buyers. Currently, most of Myanmar's rubber producers are small holder farmers using traditional farming methods.

Thaton Township is a rub-

ber growing hub with 40,000 acres under cultivation, although only half of that acreage produces rubber of sufficient quality for export to China, India, South Korea and Japan.

Myanmar has more than 1.6 million acres of rubber plantations and rubber latex is produced by over 700,000 acres of rubber land.

Most of Myanmar's rubber goes to China through cross-border trade stations, while other countries receive shipments by sea.

Rubber prices are correlated to global petroleum prices and the dollar exchange rate. Recent global economic trends have pushed rubber prices down.—GNLM ■

New DICA branch to open in Chin State

THE Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) will open a new branch office in Chin State in September in its effort to ease investment and company registration throughout all Myanmar's states and regions, according

to a report in Myawady Daily newspaper.

Chin State's economy lags behind other regions and DICA Director General U Aung Naing Oo expressed hope that the new branch would speed its development.

The new office was preceded by a new branch of the Consumer Affairs Department, which was also established to accelerate applications for trade and investment.

DICA plans to open new branch offices throughout the

nation by the end of this year.

Under Myanmar's new Investment Law, many companies are now exempt from central DICA registration requirements and may engage directly with branch offices in states and regions.—GNLM ■

Over 200 people arrested for drug dealing on Thai border since January

DRUG charges have been brought against more than 200 suspects in Myawady District, Kayin State in the first half of 2017, according to an official report of Myanmar Police Force released.

Between January and

third week of June, 278,000 methamphetamine pills, 3.08 grams of crystal methamphetamine, 66.39 grams of marijuana, 80 grams of opium leaves, 20 grams opium power and other illicit drugs were seized from a total of 206 suspected

drug smugglers, including 170 males and 36 females, a region police officer said.

Actions are being taken against suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Law.

Local authorities organ-

ized a commemoration yesterday in Myawady of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking to publicize counternarcotics efforts and the dangers of drug abuse.—Htain Lynn Aung (IPRD) ■



Real estate recorded high prices in downtown Yangon. File photo taken on 20 May 2017. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAH**

Real estate prices reach record highs downtown and at industrial zones

GOVERNMENT real estate assessors estimate that property values on Kabar Aye Pagoda Road and Pyay Road between Kamayut and Sanchaung townships have reached a record highs of Ks400,000 per square foot, according to a report in yesterday's Myawady Daily newspaper.

A square foot of land in Ko Min Ko Chin Street, Bahan Township was estimated to be worth Ks350,000. Downtown real estate, including Lanmadaw, Pabedan, Latha, Kyauktada

and Pazundaung, are estimated to be between Ks100,000 and Ks270,000 per square foot. Land prices in Tarmwe Township are estimated to be between Ks170,000 and Ks200,000 per square foot. A square foot of land in Mingladon Township is set at Ks 70000.

The land prices at Hline-thaya and Ngwepinle industrial zones are estimated to be Ks170 million per acre while Shwepaukkan and Yangon industrial zones were appraised at Ks110 million and Shwepy-

itha and Thadukan industrial zones were estimated to be worth Ks120 million.

Land on the main road of East Dagon is set at Ks120 million while real estate on side streets in the same area was valued at Ks20 million.

An acre of land on the main road of South Dagon Industrial Park is set at Ks120 million and Ks100 million on side street. An acre of land at Thilawa Industrial Zone was estimated to be worth Ks85 million. —GNLM ■

Forty four Individual Trading Cards issued as of 16th June this FY

THE Trade Department issued 44 Individual Trading Cards (ITCs), which are permits issued by the Ministry of Commerce to conduct small trade at land ports of entry, between 1 April and 16 June FY2017-2018, according to a ministry press release issued yesterday.

ITCs allow businessmen to trade up to Ks15 million a day.

The Trade Department issued a total of 1,308 ITCs, including 292 cards from 21 Nov 2012 to 31 March 2013, 261 cards in FY2013-2014, 317 cards in FY 2014-2015 FY, 146 cards in FY 2015-2016, 248 cards in FY 2016-2017, according to the Ministry

of Commerce.

Border trade value by ITC holders between 1 April to 16 June FY2017-2018 reached Ks8.7 billion. Exports by ITC holders as of 16 June this FY was Ks491 million and imports by ITC holders reached Ks8.2 billion, according to the statistics provided by the Commerce Ministry.

Myawady and Kanpiketee land ports of entry saw the largest amount of ITC trade.

ITC traders engaged in trade worth Ks236 million as of 16 June this financial year in Tamu, Ks6.7 million in Muse, Ks6.7 billion in Myawady, Ks415

million in Tachilek, Ks54 million in Lweje, Ks2.4 million in Chin-shwehaw, Ks640 million in Kan Pike Tee, Ks127 million in Kawthaung, Ks142 million in Reed, Ks345 million in Mawtaung and Ks27 million in Kengtung, according to the official Ministry of Commerce statistics.

The aforementioned department issued the ITC with an aim to boosting border trade. A businessman can trade Ks3 million worth of goods a day using ITC, and then, the trade department granted trade value up to Ks15 million a day, which amounted to a five-day-trade-value. —Ko Khant ■

MPT, KDDI and Sumitomo JV Rolls Out 4G/LTE Service with 4x4 MIMO Technology

Myanma Posts & Telecommunications (MPT) has launched 4G LTE service in three cities - Yangon, Mandalay, and Nay Pyi Daw.

The 4G LTE service, which utilizes the 1.8 GHz band will be expanded to around 30 cities throughout the country by September 2017.

MPT was formed via a joint venture with KDDI and Sumito-

mo in July 2014 after Myanmar opened up its telecom sector to foreign investors.

With the high-speed 4G LTE, MPT will become the first telecommunications carrier in Myanmar to adopt 4x4 MIMO (Multiple Input Multiple Output) technology, enabling users to receive high-speed data transfers of up to 150Mbps.—GNLM ■

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Myanmar's tourism industry faces challenges

Myanmar's tourism industry has experienced a significant decline compared to previous years. To understand the causes for this development the Global New Light of Myanmar interviewed U Thet Lwin Toe, chairman of Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association.

By May Thet Hnin

Q: May I know current situation of tourism industry?

The country's tourism sector rose in 2012 like a tsunami. However, the sector returned to normal in 2013 because of a lack of human resources and tourism infrastructure. In 2014 and 2015, the country saw a slight increase in the sector. According to the Hotels and Tourism Ministry, the sector declined 38 per cent in financial year 2015-2016. The tourism sector this year increased 25 per cent over the same period last year, according to half year statistics of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and the Department of Immigration. We need to monitor further development of the tourism market in high season.

Q: Do you think visitor arrivals will reach the ministry's target of 3.5 million this year?

The country hosted about three million visitors last year. It is estimated that visitor arrivals are likely to reach the ministry's target of 3.5 million this year as the country has developed transport infrastructure, lodging facilities, human resources and tourist security at some destinations. Hotel fees have also decreased from their peak prices.

Q: Where do most of the visitors come from?

Among western visitors, most come from the U.S., followed by France, Germany, Italy and Spain. Some Russians also visit the country. In Asia, Thai visitors are ranked first among the top list of international visitors in Myanmar, followed by China, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Malaysia.

Q: May I know demand and supply of tourism industry in the current time?

For the time being, there is excess supply in the tourism industry. The country has 60,000 hotel rooms, more than 5,000 tour guides and 2,300 tour companies. In transport sector, there are 10 domestic airlines in Myanmar with only 30 aircrafts. In Thailand, there are only six domestic airlines with 500 aircrafts. We need to revise the current circumstance to fill the actual requirement of the sector.

Q: What sectors need to develop to increase tourism demand?

In order to get a healthy demand, the sector needs monetary supports as well as infrastructure development. The government plays a vital role in attracting investment for the sector.

Q: May I know the main reason for this decline in tourism sector?

Negative publicity and the weak tourism security strongly impact the tourism development in our country, which is facing conflicts in Kachin area and problems in Rakhine State. But the commercial capital of Yangon with its many historic landmarks is safer than New York City over the past 20 years. Now, it is hard to walk alone on that city's streets. Our neighbor, Thailand, also faces greater security risks, even in downtown areas, but tourism is fine because of positive publicity. In our country, it is not easy to get public support for tourism development.

Q: Can you please point out the need of the tourism sector and give advice on developing it?

Tourism has no boundaries. The country will face big challenges as we merging with the ASEAN Economic Community

after 2017 and establish a single market with free movement of skilled labour, capital and investment. So as to develop the tourism service business, the government needs to reduce some restrictions that do not harm the national interest.

Q: Can you please elaborate?

For example, the Myanmar Investment Commission, the government-appointed body, reformed last year without including people working in the tourism sector. From my point of view, people in tourism sector should participate in the MIC to help develop the sector as tourism directly contributes to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In the past, the former minister for the Hotels and Tourism Ministry served as a vice-chairman of the MIC. At the present time, there is no high-ranking officer of the ministry in the new body. According to the MIC, the investment in the hotel development sector has reached nearly US\$3 billion. We also need to systematically manage and maintain the country's tourism destinations to increase the country's foreign exchange.

Q: Please comment on the government's efforts to improve the sector.

The government should extent the collaboration with private sector for further development. The Hotels and Tourism Ministry is working to promote the sector with limitations, including budget, human resources and infrastructure. Meanwhile the private sector is doing well with full capacity and budgets. The close cooperation between the two sectors ensures the development of the industry. The gov-



U Thet Lwin Toe, chairman of Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association.

ernment should consider actual conditions at ground level. The authorities need to understand and recognize both positive and negative comments on existing policies from the public for the purpose of moving forward. For example, it's as if we were bulls carrying a big broken bullock cart that sinks deeper into the mud. If industry is like the bull, the government must be like the cart – ready to move. We assume that we are bulls and will put more effort to pull out the cart from the mire. But, cooperation is needed to move forward.

Q: Please measure the role of ecotourism in the current time.

Our country is rich with beautiful landscapes, including rivers, lakes, beaches, islands and forests. These are a gift from nature. Sustainable management of the natural environment is necessary to develop ecotourism in resource-rich areas. At the present time, the country sees a small number of foreign visitors entering the country for ecotourism, responsible travel to natural areas. They only enjoy vacation if it is environmentally friendly. They don't want to visit zoological gardens because they only wish to enjoy wildlife protected by an ecotourism plan. Development

works destroy natural setting. Negotiations are needed between experts on ecotourism and local communities to establish checks and balances between the urban development and environmental conservation. Promotion of ecotourism awareness is crucial to successfully develop the plan. Introducing the nature and benefits of the new ideas to local communities is important.

Q: What is needed to implement "green season" during monsoon?

Low season fares have been developed for the past two decades, with 50 per cent discounts for air tickets, hotel fees, restaurants and tour guide fees directly benefiting visitors who enjoy their time, pay reduced expenses and stay an average of at least two weeks in the country. High travel costs and poor service will fail to attract international visitors as they have many options in Asia for new travel experiences. Normally, non-Asian visitors with no travel experience in Asia, first goes to Thailand, Malaysia and Viet Nam, which are known to be more affordable than Myanmar. Myanmar is known as the land of the Lady, and this attracts foreign travellers to visit the country. Foreign visitors are interested in visiting countries with impressive landscapes and charming people. Those who have travel experience in Myanmar spread the good news in their communities, including positive reviews about tourism safety and security and about our charming people. In my opinion, some people need to change their mindsets to maintain our traditions, which make us so attractive to tourists. ■

(Translated by Khaing Thandar Lwin, Edited by Solomon Moore)



Union Minister for Information inspects Pekhon Township IPRD office

Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint inspected Pekhon Township Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) office and met with the staff yesterday morning.

The Union Minister viewed the traditional utensils of ethnic people displayed in the library hall of the IPRD office and inspected the reading room for children at the library.

Afterwards, the Union Minister met with office staff and gave remarks on making the library as a place that is frequented by locals, office staff to become familiar with locals, increase their capabilities and work diligently.—Ko Htwe (Pekhon), Maung Maung Htwe (IPRD) ■



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint visits the library at the Pekhon Township IPRD. **PHOTO: MNA**

SG Min Aung Hlaing receives German ambassador to Myanmar

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives H.E. Mr. Christian-Ludwig Weber-Lortsch German ambassador to Myanmar who is concluding his tour of duty, at Zeyar Thiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

In the meeting matters relating to efforts by Tatmadaw on achieving eternal peace in Myanmar, increasing Myanmar-Germany non-military defence cooperation and status of Germany assisting in Myanmar transition process were discussed.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Senior-General Min Aung Hlaing receives German Ambassador Mr Christian-Ludwig Weber-Lortsch. **PHOTO: MNA**

65 new heavy search and rescue vehicles to arrive in Yangon

Sixty-five new heavy search and rescue vehicles purchased by Yangon Region government with a loan from Poland will arrive at the end of this year to be used by the Fire Services Department, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The size of these vehicles is bigger than the currently used vehicles from Myanmar. The new arrivals are more suitable for high-rise buildings.

Twenty trainees from the Myanmar Fire Brigade will be sent to Poland for training to enable them to operate the new vehicles. The Fire Services Department has previously received 21 medium sized search and rescue vehicles from Japan. Those vehicles are currently being used in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay and other states and regions.— GNLM ■

List of civilian missing /abducted in Maungtaw district (2016 October to 2017 June 27)

No.	Date	Name	Township/Village	Abducted/Lost	Remark
1.	2-11.-2016	Win Maung Thein, Tun Lin Aye @ Nyi Chae, Thein Kyaw	Ywet Nyo Taung Village, Maungtaw Township	3	Lost while on his way from Phawut Village to Ywet Nyo Taung Village
2.	13-12-2016	Habi Rohman	Thawun Chaung Myauk Village, Maungtaw Township	1	After Habi Rohman was abducted, the remaining family was threatened by phone for reporting the abduction to police
3.	2-1-2017	Lalu	Mingyi village, Maungtaw Township	1	Didn't return home
4.	22-1-2017	Ibrahim	Sinthaypyin (east), Maungtaw Township	1	Didn't return home
5.	27-1-2017	Shofi Ramut	Ywet Nyo Taung Village, Maungtaw Township	1	Didn't return home
6.	27-1-2017	Swedot Armain	Myawchaung Village, Maungtaw Township	1	Abducted by 4 men while sleeping with family at home
7.	12-3-2017	Mahmat Shofi	Sitaung Village, Maungtaw Township	1	After recieving a phone call, Mahmat Shofi went into the village and didn't return. He reported to Tatmadaw columns and is suspected to be abducted for aiding the Tatmadaw
8.	30-3-2017	Yaya	Ywet Nyo Tuang Village, Maungtaw Township	1	Didn't return after visiting Yetwin Village
9.	31-3-2017	Nur Mahmot	Kyunpauk Pyusu Village, Maungtaw Township	1	15 masked men abducted him after breaking into his house while he was sleeping with his family
10.	1-4-2017	Ibrahim, Shawlshi Arlong and Alza Huson	Thetkinenya Village, Maungtaw Township	3	30 masked men with matchete and sticks forced into their homes and abduct them. (Abdula Hadulmi was found bounded by ropes)
11.	10-4-2017	Mawfi Arlong	Kunthipin Village, Maungtaw Township	1	Went to catch fish and prawn in a pond 500 yard from his home and didn't return
12.	17-4-2017	Mamat Talong @ Zaw Hlaing	Kyein Chaung Taung Village, Maungtaw Township	1	Rode a motorcycle to Jetchaung village market and was abducted by 2 persons at Myazin Village
13.	29-4-2017	U Aung Mya Kyaw, U Maung Aye Tha	Kyauksataing village, Yathedaung Townshipo	2	Went up Mayyu Mountain range to fetch snails with 3 days ration and didn't return.
14.	19-5-2017	Mozi Rahman	Kyaungtaung Village, Maungtaw Township	1	50 masked men dressed in black cloth abducted that victim toward Gantashu village
15.	27-5-2017	Mahmod Harel	Kyikanpyin middle village, Maungtaw Township	1	Didn't return home
16.	5-6-2017	Ibrahim	Ward 2, Maungtaw	1	While Ibrahim and 4 others were guarding a prawn pond, 25 masked men abducted the victim
17.	2-6-2017	U Hla Sein @ Amaran	Sarkaing Village, Buthidaung Township	1	Unidentified group of persons called him away and didn't return home. His wife reported on 10 June.

KIA/TNLA artillery strike kills two and wounds one civilian

A joint armed group of the Kachin Independence Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army struck Tatmadaw forces stationed near Kutkai in northern Shan State with artillery rounds, yesterday afternoon, killing two civilians and wounding another, according to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

Mortar rockets hit Panehwe Village northwest villagers Daw Aye Am and U Aik De, and wounding U Aik San, who was admitted to Kutkai Hospital for treatment.

A fighting between the Tatmadaw troops and TNLA also happened recently in northeast Shan State.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Our national cause is to uproot drug-abuse

Khin Maung Oo

COUNTRIES all over the world organize events to burn narcotic drugs and denounce drug-abuse on 26th June every year. As regard narcotic drugs, it is described as the greatest danger that can destroy mankind. Each and every one of the countries is fighting strongly against it. And, simultaneously penalties and sentences meted out to drug traffickers are generally heavy. In some countries, the penalty for drug trafficking is death.

Opium was regarded to be an evil legacy left behind by colonial rule in Myanmar. The resources of opium and heroin producers are deep-rooted in Myanmar's border areas, especially in the golden triangle region. The country has been making concerted efforts to eradicate the danger of narcotic drugs in different forms of operations,

regarding it as the national enemy. From 1976 till 1988, operations were launched under different names: Moe Hein, Taung Hteik Pan, Aung Moe Hein, Nga Ye Pan, Taung Yan Shin as major operations and Kauk Yoe, Mae Lone, Hnin Pan, Zin Nu, Moe Gyo, Pha Ye Thi as regional operations.

From 1999 on, two strategies and three tactics were laid down for the prevention of drug-abuse and eradication of drugs. Across the nation, combined forces carried out specific measures for rehabilitation, providing education, prevention, suppression, search and arrests. Due to these measures, production, trafficking and drug abuse must have decreased, but we must reassess why it has increased more and more recently.

Production of drugs, trafficking and drug abuse are directly connected. Without production, trafficking will

not appear, and there will be no drug abusers without trafficking. A drug known as heroin once in the past is being produced nowadays in the form of tablets. Dope, ecstasy and different kinds of amphetamines can cause a great feeling in the minds of users and traffickers can earn much money from them, hence its prevalence and survival in human societies. Whatever it is, we must get rid of it from our environment, because it is our national cause.

Generally speaking, drugs are used by youths. It easily goes into the hands of curious, inquisitive and active youths, thus drugs can destroy the lives of youths and their societies. If drug-abuse and drug addiction becomes widespread and becomes deep-rooted in our society, the future of our country will be in a really desperate situation. For the time being,

inexperienced youths who had never been involved in crimes have been found to be implicated in drug cases. Such incidents happen because these youths soon become drug addicts. Once they become drug addicts, the need for a continuous supply of drugs turn them into criminals.

Presently, narcotic drugs are spreading to every part of the country threatening youths and their future. All varieties of liquors and other intoxicating drinks are ubiquitous whenever we set foot on streets and alleys. The proliferation of narcotic drugs and heavy liquor is a great danger for our youths and our country. We are all responsible for eradicating narcotic drugs in our surroundings and also to make sure that drug pushers are not allowed to do their dirty work near our schools. Schools should be drug-free zones. ■

Narration of Events and Thoughts on Democratization on the 48th Anniversary of Burma's Internal Unity Advisory Board's Submission of Report

(CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY)

By Dr. Myint Zan

On 27 August 1969, U Nu, in a Press Conference held in London announced that QUOTE he was still the legal Prime Minister of Burma UNQUOTE and that he would QUOTE not rest until all the provisions in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are respected in Burma UNQUOTE.

I particularly remember one sentence from U Nu's declaration QUOTE If General Ne Win thinks that he and he alone is wise enough to rule the country the events of the past seven years might prove him that he is totally wrong UNQUOTE and QUOTE in Burma people are facing the same kind of Fascism that General Aung San had fought UNQUOTE. Murmurs of U Nu's declaration in London spread in Burma and the people did not have to wait long, to paraphrase Donald Trump's favourite term, that it was NOT 'fake news'. On 1 September 1969 issues of ALL the government-owned Burmese and English language newspapers, the full text of U Nu's declaration in the original English and in Burmese translation was produced on the front pages.

In a speech at the Fourth Seminar of the Burma Socialist Programme Party on 6 November 1969 General Ne Win in a fairly extensive speech, among others officially rejected U Nu's proposal of 5 February 1969 stat-

ing that KHAUNG SAUNG LOKE YA DAR MYA SEIK NYIT PAR BE THA NET which was translated – I was told the translation was by the late Saya Tet Toe- into English that 'Being a leader is such a bother'. General Ne Win stated that he took power and still held on to it not because he 'enjoyed being a leader' but QUOTE for the sake of the workers and peasants UNQUOTE.

He described U Nu as QUOTE Among those who sought help abroad from the 'Reds' [Communist governments] and from the 'Whites' [Capitalist Western governments] the latest person... [is U Nu]. General (later U) Ne Win, in his own pace and in his own way, served two terms as President starting not in 1969, or 1970 as proposed by U Nu and needless to say not in a 'Parliamentary democracy'. U Ne Win formally became President of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma on 4 March 1974 where his Burma Socialist Programme Party was the ONLY political party and where ALL the laws made by the Party ALWAYS get unanimous support in the one-Party Legislature.

U Ne Win did serve two full (or nearly 'full') terms as President from 4 March 1974 to 9 November 1981. And after his 'retirement' from the Presidency he continued to be the great Chairman of the ruling Party: PATI OKA KA HTA GYEE. From my observation none of his successors as Party Chairman the late U Sein

Lwin and the late Dr Maung Maung received or are described with that hallowed 'great Chairman' appellation. They were Chairman per se (in Burmese OAK KA HTA) without the appellation 'great'. From 9 November 1981 to 23 July 1988 while no longer President, U Ne Win was the Chairman of the sole legal party. U Nu promised in October 1969 (while I think in a news conference in Hong Kong) that QUOTE He would return to Burma within one year [that is by October 1970] UNQUOTE. In a December 1971 issue of TIME magazine carries a news item with the title 'Voice from the Jungle' U Nu or at least his followers AGAIN said or at least the news item stated that his forces would achieve QUOTE final victory by December 1971 UNQUOTE.

On 29 July 1980 U Nu returned to Burma ostensibly at the invitation of President U Ne Win. The 30 July 1980 issue of The Working People's Daily stated, (I do NOT google this or any of the above and reproduce them from memory) QUOTE In consideration, recognition and honour of [U Nu's] leading role in the freedom struggle the President on behalf of the Council of State and the other organs of State power invited former Prime Minister U Nu to return to Burma either temporarily or permanently UNQUOTE. After leaving Burma around April 1969, it took U Nu more than 11 years to return to Burma and when he finally did in July 1980 it was certainly

not the sort of 'return' that he talked about in the years 1969 and 1970.

Is Burma/Myanmar a 'Parliamentary democracy' now in mid-2017 as U Nu apparently and so falsely stated or predicted in early 1969 that Burma would 'revert' to Parliamentary democracy in or around 'June 1969'?

Technically speaking Myanmar is strictly not a 'Parliamentary democracy' in contrast to say, the pre-1962 form of governance in Burma which was comparatively speaking a 'Parliamentary democracy'.

In the generic and comparative constitutional terms Myanmar currently does not practice Parliamentary democracy as, say, India, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, (like Burma, all former British colonies) currently do.

In the legalistic sense of the word even Japan a non-British colony is, in contrast to Myanmar, a Parliamentary democracy. In the opening day of the second session of the Union Peace Conference Second Panglong on 24 May 2017 the announcer in the English language correctly in my opinion did NOT refer to the current Union Legislatures as 'Parliament'.

In contrast, The Global New Light of Myanmar and other English language domestic and foreign media outlets in the English language almost always uses the term 'Parliament' to either or both Houses of the 'Union Legislature'.

SEE PAGE 9

Over 4,700 domesticated elephants registered across Myanmar

MYANMAR has the second largest number of domesticated elephants after India, according to the City News newspaper yesterday.

Myanmar has 4,748 registered elephants that are kept as pets, used for timber extraction and other heavy lifting and at tourism sites for elephant rides.

Seventy-two elephants were killed by hunters between 2010 and 2016. Currently, Myanmar has an estimated 2,500 wild elephants in Myanmar's rainforests.

Myanmar signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) to protect Myanmar wild elephants and has passed laws against poaching.

Myanmar government has also constructed the wild elephant preserves to protect the elephants against hunters and has plans for several more in the new future, including Hukaung Valley Elephant Reserve, Alaungdaw Kathapa Elephant Reserve, Shwe U Daung Elephant Reserve, Myauk Zar Mayee elephant

Reserve, Rakhine wildlife Reserve, and Rakhine Yoma Reserve.

Nationally, Myanmar has set aside 9,205 square miles for elephant sanctuaries. Local and international non-governmental organizations are also planning to expand the amount of land dedicated to wildlife reserves in Myanmar. Mingalar Myanmar, a local NGO, and an elephant conservation organization from Australia have announced plans to establish an elephant reserve in Myanmar.— City News ■



Visitors feeding elephants at Yangon Zoological Garden. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAH**

Myanmar Post Box Grand Renewal Ceremony held

A CEREMONY of Myanmar Post Box Grand Renewal was held at Strand Hotel in Yangon on 27 June 2017.

The ceremony was organized by Fuji Xerox and Nagata Myanmar under Japan-Myanmar cooperation in postal field. All of renewal cost of post box construction will be covered by sponsorship of advertisement. It can provide a sustainable social infrastructure development system with less burden for local society.

Total 250 post boxes in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay will be renewed to the latest Japan style post box.

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication of Japan contributed for Post-



A pedestrian puts a letter into Myanmar Renewal Post Box at Strand Road in Yangon. **PHOTO: TIN SOE (MYANMA ALINN)**

al Service Improvement in Myanmar and introduced new business and services to Ministry of Transport and Communi-

cations of Myanmar based upon new postal service infrastructure since 2014.—Tin Soe (Myanma Alinn) ■

Narration of Events and Thoughts on Democratization

FROM PAGE 8

The announcer mentioned them in transliterated Myanmar names of Pyithu Hluttaw (incomplete translation 'Lower House' of the Legislature) and Amyotha Hluttaw (incomplete translation 'Upper House of the Legislature') which is the (to me) preferred and correct version of naming and describing the two Houses of Legislature. In any case, to the best of my knowledge, currently none of

the former British colonies from Australia to Zambia and perhaps (even) to Zimbabwe has, 25% APPOINTED military representatives in all levels of the Union and State Divisional Legislatures. As President U Htin Kyaw stated in his Myanmar New Year speech of April 2017 that certain actions or moves have to be taken with great delicateness (in Burmese THADI KYEE SWAR HTAR LOKE KAING HSAUNG

YWET YA) and a full 'Parliamentary Democracy' (in the ordinary sense of the term) as predicted by former, late Prime Minister U Nu in early 1969 is, in my opinion, not here as yet. We do face a lot of 'intricacies' and have to tread with caution and care in our 'march' towards a Democratic Federal Union. We certainly (one hopes) would not and we should not revert to the bad old days of the past few decades. ■

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

U Ko Ko Shein appointed as Ambassador of Russian Federation

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Ko Ko Shein, Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Russian Federation.—Ministry of Foreign Affairs ■

Ks 5.2 million worth of yaba seized in Maungtaw district this year

THIRTEEN seizures in Maungtaw District, Rakhine State netted yaba with a street value of Ks 5.2 million during the first six months of 2017, according to a report released from the Rakhine State Counternarcotics Police Force Corps 46 yesterday.

"The number of the drug cases has increased this year compared to the same peri-

od of last year," said Rakhine Counternarcotics Police Major Maung Maung Yin. "We conducted special anti-terrorist operations last February, when we seized yaba worth Ks 4.1 million."

Currently, the counternarcotics forces are conducting drug prevention training courses in Rakhine State wards and villages.—Myint Maung Soe ■



Yaba worth Ks 5.2 million seized during first six months of 2017. **PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG SOE**

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

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

WORLD
BRIEFS

Russian President
Vladimir
Putin. PHOTO: TASS

World trusts Putin more than Trump, says top US survey

NEW YORK — The world has more confidence in Russian President Vladimir Putin than in his US counterpart Donald Trump, says a poll carried out by the US-based Pew Research Center among 40,000 respondents in 37 countries on all five continents.

The results indicate that 27% of respondents voiced

confidence in Putin saying he does “the right thing regarding world affairs.” Some 28% trust Chinese President Xi Jinping, and only 22% feel this way about Trump.

Meanwhile, German Chancellor Angela Merkel enjoys the highest rating with 42%.

Most respondents (75%) branded Trump as being ar-

rogant, intolerant (65%) and even dangerous (62%). Whereas, more than half of the respondents (55%) called Trump a strong leader and another 39% said he is charismatic.

“The share of the global public that expresses a favorable view of America is on the decline,” the survey says. Only 30% of Mexicans conveyed a

positive attitude toward the US, compared with 66% at the end of Obama’s presidential term.

In Canada and Germany, the figure dropped 22 points to 43% and 35%, respectively. In many European countries, confidence in the US is comparable with 2003 figures, when George Bush announced plans to invade Iraq.—Tass ■

UK’s biggest warship HMS Queen Elizabeth sets sail on maiden voyage

ROSYTH, Scotland — Britain’s most advanced and biggest warship, 65,000-tonne aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, set out on its maiden voyage on Monday from the Rosyth dockyard in eastern Scotland.

The ship, which measures 280 metres and can move 500 miles a day, took 11 tugs to manoeuvre out into the River Forth and then must wait for low tide so as to pass under the Forth’s famous bridges — weather and

systems checks permitting.

It took eight years to build HMS Queen Elizabeth and along with its sister ship, HMS Prince of Wales, it is part of a defence programme worth 6 billion pounds (\$7.65 billion), with building and fitting spread over six different shipyards across Britain. It will now spend around two years in sea trials.

“Of course they are expensive, absolutely, it keeps us in the premier league among nations

around the world,” Commanding Officer Captain Jerry Kyd told Sky News.

“The fact is that they are not just ships, but sea bases able to do a whole range of functions and missions ... whether that’s engaging with the enemy at long range or indeed supporting British industry abroad or perhaps even assisting with disaster relief or humanitarian aid.”

The ship’s navigator Jez Brettell compared handling the

ship on its maiden voyage to taking out a brand new sports car before it had been road-tested.

“The first time we put those levers forward will be the first time that we will have been under our own power and moving,” he told the BBC.

It was scheduled to be fully operational by 2020 but that date may now be as late as 2026, Britain’s National Audit Office said earlier this year, because of technical difficulties.—Reuters ■

Kremlin: US warning to Syria over possible chemical attack unacceptable

MOSCOW — White House warnings to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his military not to conduct a chemical weapons attack are unacceptable, the Kremlin said on Tuesday.

“I am not aware of any information about a threat that chemical weapons can be used,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told a conference call with reporters.

The White House warned Assad on Monday that he and his military would “pay a heavy price” if it conducted a chemical weapons attack and said the United States had reason to believe such preparations were underway.

“Certainly, we consider such threats to the legitimate leadership of the Syrian Arab Republic unacceptable,” Peskov said.—Reuters ■

Citi says May’s premiership is not sustainable, UK to have another election within a year

LONDON — Prime Minister Theresa May’s government is not sustainable beyond a few months and there is likely to be another British national election within the next year, Citi said in a research note.

“We continue to think that her premiership is not sustainable beyond a few months, perhaps a year at most, and will be under pressure in the face of contentious parliamentary votes from the very beginning,” Citi said.

“Our base case remains that we will have a Conservative leadership contest followed by a new general election within the next 12 months,” the bank said.—Reuters ■



Smoke rises from clashes in the Old City of Mosul, Iraq on 27 June, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Iraqi forces set sight on Old City riverside, PM sees Mosul victory soon

MOSUL — Iraqi forces on Tuesday pushed towards the river side of Mosul's Old City, their key target in the eight-month campaign to capture Islamic State's de-facto capital, and Iraq's prime minister predicted victory very soon.

Iraqi forces, battling up to 350 militants dug in among civilians in the Old City, said federal police had dislodged IS insurgents from the Ziwani mosque and were only a few days away from ousting militants completely from the Old City.

"The victory announcement will come in a very short time," Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi

said on his website on Monday evening.

"The operation is continuing to free the remaining parts of the Old City," Lieutenant General Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi of the Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) told a Reuters correspondent near the frontline in the heart of the Old City. Iraqi forces had about 600 metres (2,000 ft) left to cover before they reach Cornishe Street alongside the western bank of the Tigris, Federal Police commander Lieutenant General Raed Shaker Jawdat told Iraqi State TV. "In a few days our forces will reach Cornishe Street and bring

the battle to its conclusion," said Jawdat, adding that federal police had forced militants out of Ziwani mosque in the Old City's south-western corner. The fall of Mosul would mark the end of the Iraqi half of the "caliphate" proclaimed by Islamic State though the militant group remains in control of large areas of both Iraq and Syria.

Federal Police and elite CTS units in Mosul are attacking IS fighters in the Old City's maze of narrow alleyways, together with the army and the interior ministry's Emergency Response Division (ERD).

Up to 350 militants are esti-

mated by the Iraqi military to be dug in there among civilians in wrecked houses and crumbling infrastructure. They were making extensive use of booby traps, suicide bombers and sniper fire to slow the advance of Iraqi forces from the west, the north and the south.

Those residents who have escaped say many of the civilians trapped behind Islamic State lines — put at 50,000 by the Iraqi military — have little food, water or medicines. A US-led international coalition is providing air and ground support in the eight-month-old offensive.—Reuters ■

Explosion heard from ship off the coast of Somalia, official says

BOSASSO, Somalia — A huge explosion was heard from a ship off the coast of Somalia's Puntland region late on Monday and flames were seen rising from what might be a foreign vessel, an official in a nearby port said.

"We heard (a) huge explosion and (saw) flame rising from the ship. I believe that the ship is foreign," Ali Shire, mayor of Puntland's port town of Alula, a pirate haven, told Reuters on Tuesday.

It was not immediately clear whether the explosion was caused by an accident onboard the vessel or was triggered by pirate attackers. It was also not clear whether the vessel was still afloat or had sunk.

Jacqueline Sherriff, spokeswoman for the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR), told Reuters in an email they were aware of reports about a possible explosion on a vessel and were working with the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) to confirm details.

"I can confirm that all EU NAVFOR warships and crews are safe and we have not been asked to assist with an incident."

Abdi Jama, a resident of Muranyo village near Alula, told Reuters the vessel had been in the area for two days before the explosion occurred and that he had seen a helicopter land on and take off from the vessel some time before the blast.

He said the explosion turned the vessel "into flames and huge clouds of smoke".

Somali pirates often prowl waters around Alula. In March, they hijacked an oil tanker, Aris 13, with eight Sri Lankan crew on board, the first time a commercial ship was commandeered in the region since 2012.

Several foreign navies, including from the European Union, China and others, often operate in the area as part of anti-piracy missions.—Reuters ■

US eyes arms for YPG fighters in Syria even after Raqqa's fall

MUNICH — US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis on Tuesday left open the possibility of longer-term assistance to Kurdish YPG militia in Syria, saying the US may need to supply them weapons and equipment even after the capture of Raqqa from Islamic State.

NATO ally Turkey, which views the YPG as a threat, has said Mattis assured it in a letter that the United States would eventually take back the weapons it was giving them once Islamic State was defeated.

Mattis, in his first public remarks on the issue, did not directly dispute that account.

"We'll do what we can," Mattis told reporters during his flight to Germany, when asked about weapons recovery.

But Mattis also noted that YPG fighters were well-armed even before the US last month decided to offer more specialized equipment for its urban assault on Islamic State-held city of Raqqa.

Mattis also said the battle against Islamic State would continue even after Raqqa was captured and focused his answers about US weapons' recovery on items he believed the YPG would no longer need in battle.

Asked if Kurdish militia

would revert to their pre-Raqqa level of armaments once the fight was over, Mattis responded: "Well, we'll see. It depends what the next mission is. I mean, it's not like the fight's over when Raqqa's over."

Turkey sees the YPG as an extension of the outlawed Kurdish PKK, which has been waging an insurgency in the country's south-east since the mid-1980s. It has said supplies to the YPG have in the past ended up in PKK hands, describing any weapons given to the force as a threat to its security. The US, however, sees the YPG as an essential ally in the campaign to defeat Islamic State in Raqqa,

the jihadists' main urban base in Syria.

Mattis will meet his Turkish counterpart, Defence Minister Fikri Isik, on Thursday in Brussels.

The US, Mattis said, in the near-term would be recovering weapons that the group does not need anymore as the battle advances.

"We'll be recovering (the weapons) during the battle, repairing them. When they don't need certain things anymore, we'll replace those with something they do need," Mattis said.—Reuters ■

Russia launches serial production of upgraded rockets for anti-submarine warfare system

MOSCOW — The Splav research and production association, part of Russia's state hi-tech corporation Rostec, has launched the serial production of upgraded rockets for the RPK-8 anti-submarine rocket launcher, the company's press office reported on Monday.

The upgraded rockets will be featured at the St Petersburg International Maritime Defence Show on 28 June - 2 July.

"We have completed the upgrade and launched the serial production of munitions for the RPK-8 anti-submarine warfare complex.

The forum will demonstrate the 90R rocket (the upgraded 90R1 version) that is part of the complex," the press office said.

The 90R (90R1) anti-submarine rocket's projectile has also been used to develop a hydro-acoustic jamming shell (Magnetit-MN) to provide protection against homing torpedoes.

This equipment will also be demonstrated at the International Maritime Defence Show.



RPK-8 anti-submarine rockets. PHOTO: TASS

Modernized rocket

The 90R rocket was developed and launched into operation as part of the RPK-8 Zapad anti-submarine warfare system (the modernized version of the Smerch-2 multiple launch rocket complex) in 1991. As the main advantage of the RPK-8 launcher, the R90 rocket with its separating homing underwater gravitational charge can be used instead of RGB-60 depth charge bombs.

RPK-8 rocket launchers are mounted on Project 11540 guard ships and Project 11356

frigates. The new munition is 8-10 times more effective for destroying underwater targets. It operates at a distance of up to 4,300 metres and at a depth of up to 1 kilometre. The projectile's trajectory is adjusted with the help of a sonar system with a response radius of 130 metres.

After Splav specialists finalize the rocket's launch chain, the rocket can be used as part of the RPK-8 system for new-generation warships and as part of the earlier developed Smerch-2 complex. —Tass ■

EU ministers agree on energy savings targets after 2021

BRUSSELS — EU ministers on Monday reached a compromise on energy saving targets after 2021, taking a first hurdle towards implementing the Paris Agreement on lowering carbon emissions and limiting the worst effects of a warming planet.

The European Union vowed to take over international leadership on climate after United States President Donald Trump withdrew his country from the Paris Agreement earlier this month.

Talks to reach a deal among EU energy ministers dragged on for hours at a meeting in Luxembourg, with EU nations divided over those seeking more ambitious targets and those looking for more flexibility in calculating energy savings.

"Not having an agreement today would have been a very bad signal in view of recent events in climate change policy," the EU's energy commissioner, Miguel Arias Canete, said.

The European Commission had proposed a binding overall 30 per cent energy efficiency target and an annual savings target of 1.5 per cent until 2030.

The compromise, still opposed by Britain and some

Central and Eastern European countries, removed the word "binding" from the text.

"The compromise falls short of the level of ambition of the European Commission's proposal," Canete added.

Apart from any environmental benefits, the Commission's estimates that the 30 per cent target would also create 400,000 jobs, increase European economic output by 70 billion euros (\$78.30 billion) and reduce the continent's reliance on gas imports by 12 per cent.

The targets will be reached by improving insulation and the energy consumption of buildings, more efficient consumer goods and introducing advanced electricity metres.

The Paris Agreement seeks to phase out net greenhouse gas emissions by the second half of the century and limit global warming to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels.

Energy savings such as the deployment of more efficient technology and building insulation could make up some 70 per cent of the EU's goals to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the International Energy Agency estimated in 2015. —Reuters ■

Russia starts cleaning up Cold War-era nuclear waste

MOSCOW — Russia on Tuesday sent a first shipment of spent fuel from Soviet-era nuclear-powered submarines to a reprocessing plant as part of an international effort to clean up a dangerous legacy of the Cold War.

The radioactive fuel from more than 100 reactors of over 50 submarines has been stored at Andreyeva Bay in north-western Russia, closed as a naval base in 1992, for the past 35 years.

It presented a serious environmental risk, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), which helps manage financing for the project, said.

From Andreyeva Bay, the spent fuel will be shipped on board a specially-equipped vessel to Russia's Arctic port of Murmansk, then on to its final destination, the Mayak

nuclear reprocessing plant in Chelyabinsk, near the Ural Mountains.

The project aims to remove all of the 22,000 nuclear fuel assemblies stored at Andreyeva Bay. It is likely to take several years, the EBRD said.

The project, established in 2003, supplements Russian, multilateral and bilateral projects and is funded by the European Union and Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom.

"It is particularly pleasing to see that nations put aside their differences to resolve such crucial issues as the legacy of the nuclear-powered fleet in the north of Russia," Pierre Heilbronn, EBRD vice president for policy and partnerships, said in a statement. —Reuters ■

Japan's child poverty rate eases but 1 in 7 children remains poor

TOKYO — The poverty rate among Japanese children slightly improved in 2015 thanks in part to the country's better job market but one in every seven children remains poor, a survey by the welfare ministry showed on Tuesday.

The national livelihood survey showed 13.9 per cent of children under 18 in Japan were in households living on less than half the national median household disposal income, down 2.4 percentage points from the previous survey for 2012, when the rate was the worst on record, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare said.

A ministry official attributed the first improvement in 12 years to "better job market conditions, which pushed up income of households raising

children."

But the rate remains relatively high among industrialized countries and situations are particularly dire for single-parent households.

The relative poverty rate, the percentage of people in all generations living in households with an income below 50 per cent of the national median level, fell 0.5 percentage point to 15.6 per cent.

By household composition, the poverty rate among single-parent households was much higher at 50.8 per cent, according to the extensive survey conducted every three years.

According to the latest data by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the average child poverty rate among 36 countries including its members,

stood at 13.3 per cent and the average relative poverty rate was at 11.4 per cent, both lower than those of Japan.

The rate of single-mother households in Japan with loans or without any savings increased from the previous survey in 2012 and 82.7 per cent of them said their daily livelihood is "tough."

In 2014, a law came into effect to help children in poverty receive education, while another law to assist needy persons came into force the following year.

Although some measures have been taken, more children are said to be suffering from less visible forms of poverty, as it is often difficult to tell whether a child is in poverty just by looking at their belongings. —Kyodo News ■

Philippines says no deal with Islamists who seized Marawi

MANILA/MARAWI CITY, Philippines — The Philippines ruled out negotiations on Tuesday with Islamist militants holding hostages and occupying a southern town, after reports that a rebel leader wanted to trade a Catholic priest for his parents being held by police.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said there would be no deals with the Maute group militants holed up in Marawi City because that was against government policy, and anyone trying to bargain had no authority to do so.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer reported that Abdullah Maute, one of two brothers who formed the militant group carrying their name, had told religious emissaries on Sunday that he wanted his mother and father freed in



An explosion is seen after a Philippines army aircraft released a bomb during an airstrike as government troops continue their assault against insurgents from the Maute group in Marawi city on 27 June, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

return for Father Teresito “Chito” Soganub, vicar general of Marawi.

The authorities believe Soganub and more

than 100 other Christians are being held by the Islamic State-linked insurgents as human shields.

“The government

policy not to negotiate with terrorists remains, hence the local religious leader-led talks with terrorists last Sunday was

one not sanctioned by government, the military and our political leaders,” Abella told reporters.

“Any demands made

inside, therefore, hold no basis. Let us remind the public, the gravity of the terrorists and their supporters’ offences is immense and they must be held accountable for all of their actions.”

Taking advantage of a short truce on Sunday to mark the Eid al-Fitr Islamic holiday, eight Muslim leaders entered the conflict zone alongside rescue teams and met briefly with Maute, whom the military a day earlier said had fled the battle.

The Maute brothers’ father, Cayamora Maute, was apprehended on 6 June in Davao City, also on Mindanao island, about 140 km southeast of Marawi, and their influential businesswoman mother, Farhana Maute, was arrested three days later, closer to Marawi. —Reuters ■

China rolls out national cyber threat response plan

BEIJING — China’s top cyber authority formalised a new nationwide cyber attack response plan on Tuesday, as the country seeks to ramp up protection in the face of increasingly sophisticated global threats. The plan requires provinces to upgrade networks and construct expert response teams as part of the centralised reporting system, said the Cyberspace Administration of China in a notice posted on its website.

The regulations also criminalise any failure by government departments to carry out the plan.

China has increasingly sought to fortify its cyberspace from both internal and external attacks, citing threats to its national infrastructure and political stability.

Last month, dozens of local authorities, including police and industry regulators, were hobbled by the WannaCry ransomware attack that infected more

than 30,000 Chinese organisations and 300,000 worldwide in a matter of days. The national response plan includes a four-tier colour-coded warning system that ranks cyber attacks as either red, orange, yellow or blue depending on severity, with red signalling the highest level of alert. It also requires relevant departments to open international channels of communication during the sudden onset of international security threats.

Cyber attacks in China spiked by over 950 per cent between 2014 and 2016, according to a PwC survey, with “Internet of Things” (IoT) connected devices identified as a particular vulnerability.

Last October, vulnerabilities in Chinese manufactured devices were partially blamed for a large-scale attack which temporarily crippled Twitter, Spotify, Netflix and other major websites. —Reuters ■

Kiev car bomb kills colonel in Ukrainian military intelligence

KIEV — A colonel in Ukraine’s military intelligence was killed by a car bomb in central Kiev on Tuesday, the defence ministry said, describing the incident as a “terrorist act”. Police said an explosive device in the vehicle blew up at 0516 GMT while

the car was moving, killing the driver and wounding a passer-by. “As a result of (the explosion) a member of the defence ministry’s main intelligence department, Colonel Maksim Shapoval, was killed,” the defence ministry said in a statement.

The police and the ministry did not give further details or say who could be behind the attack.

Since fighting with pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine broke out in 2014, the number of incidents involving explosives outside the conflict

zone has increased, but car bombs are relatively rare. The last major incident in Kiev occurred in July, when a prominent investigative journalist, Pavel Sheremet, was killed by the detonation of an explosive device in his car. —Reuters ■

IRRAWADDY GREEN TOWERS CO., သိစေရန်

ကျွန်ုပ်တို့၏အမှုသည် ဦးအေးထွန်း (မန်နေဂျင်းဒါရိုက်တာ)၊ အောင်သိန်းသန်း ကုမ္ပဏီလီမိတက်၊ အမှတ် (၆၄)၊ ဗဟိုလမ်း၊ စမ်းချောင်းမြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊ ၏ လွှဲအပ်ညွှန်ကြားချက်အရ အောက်ပါအတိုင်းသိစေအပ်ပါသည်။

အောင်သိန်းသန်းကုမ္ပဏီလီမိတက်သည် IRRAWADDY GREEN TOWERS CO., (IGT) ကုမ္ပဏီသို့ Genset ရောင်းချခြင်း၊ ငှားရမ်းခြင်း၊ ထိန်းသိမ်းပြုပြင်ပေးခြင်း၊ ဖောက်လစ်ရောင်းချခြင်း၊ IGT ၏ Telecom Site များရှိ ဂျင်နရေတာအတွက် ဒီဇယ်ဆီရောင်းချခြင်းတို့ကို ဆောင်ရွက်ခဲ့ရာ (၂၀၁၆) ခုနှစ်အထိ IGT ကုမ္ပဏီမှ အောင်သိန်းသန်းကုမ္ပဏီလီမိတက်သို့ ပေးချေရန် ကြွေးမြီများအဖြစ် ဂျင်နရေတာထိန်းသိမ်းပြုပြင်ခအတွက် အမေရိကန်ဒေါ်လာ- USD 33260၊ ဂျင်နရေတာငှားရမ်းခအတွက် မြန်မာကျပ်ငွေ ၁၂၃၆၀၀၀/- ဒီဇယ်ဆီရောင်းချငွေ မြန်မာကျပ်ငွေ ၅၃၄၄၅၅၀/- ကျပ်တို့အား ပေးရန်ကျန်ရှိနေပါသည်။

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သို့ပါ၍ IGT ကုမ္ပဏီက အောင်သိန်းသန်းကုမ္ပဏီလီမိတက်အား ပေးချေရမည့်ငွေများကို (၃၀.၆.၂၀၁၇) ရက်နေ့ နောက်ဆုံးထား၍ ဖြေရှင်းပေးချေပါရန်နှင့် အကယ်၍ ပေးချေခြင်းမရှိပါက ဥပဒေနဲ့အညီ တရားစွဲဆိုသွားမည်ဖြစ်ကြောင်း သိစေအပ်ပါသည်။

လွှဲအပ်ညွှန်ကြားချက်အရ-

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CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE
MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY. NO (014)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY. NO (014) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.6.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S YANG MING LINES
Phone No: 2301185

‘Melodrama’ scores Lorde her first chart-topping Billboard album

LOS ANGELES — New Zealand pop singer Lorde landed her first US chart-topping album on Monday as her latest record debuted at the top of the weekly Billboard 200 chart.

“Melodrama,” the second album from 20-year-old Lorde, sold 82,000 albums, 40,000 songs and was streamed nearly 35 million times, totaling 109,000 album units according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The singer is the third consecutive female solo artist to top the Billboard 200 chart after Katy Perry’s “Witness” and Halsey’s “Hopeless Fountain Kingdom.”

Lorde’s breakout first album “Pure Heroine,” which featured her hit single “Royals,” debuted and peaked at No 3 on the Billboard 200 chart when it was released in 2013.

Lorde’s album led six new

entries in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week.

Rapper 2 Chainz’ “Pretty Girls Like Trap Music” debuted at No 2, country artist Jason Isbell/400 Unit’s “Nashville Sound” opened at No 4 and Canadian rockers Nickelback entered at No 5 with “Feed the Machine.”

Rapper Young Thug’s “Beautiful Thugger Girls” landed at No 8 while indie rock band Fleet Foxes rounded out the new entries with “Crack-Up” at No 9.

Last week’s chart-topper, Perry’s “Witness,” dropped to No 13 this week.

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, Puerto Rican singer Luis Fonsi’s summer hit “Despacito” featuring Justin Bieber continued its reign atop the chart with another 139,000 copies sold.

—Reuters ■



Lorde performs during the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in Indio, California, US on 16 April, 2017.

PHOTO: REUTERS

British model Moss immortalized as mannequin-style sculpture

LONDON — British supermodel Kate Moss has been stripped down and immortalized as a naked, armless mannequin in an avant-garde sculpture titled ‘MILF’, which has gone on display in London.

The silicone sculpture of an expressionless Moss and her naked torso was unveiled at the Opera Gallery on Thursday, with the life-like piece priced at 25,000 pounds (\$31,800). Artist Edgar Askelevic, who has previously depicted late British rock star David Bowie as half man-half dog, spent four months working from photographs of Moss on the piece, made from silicone and polyurethane resin and weighing

80kg (176 lbs).

Gallery director Jean-David Malat said he felt Askelevic had met the brief of capturing the 43-year-old model as the goddess of the fashion industry.

“He works also only with photography which is unbelievable because he never met Kate Moss before,” Malat said. “Kate Moss is very special. She’s very beautiful.” It is not the first quirky sculpture of which Moss, one of the most photographed women in the world, has been the subject. A decade ago, British sculptor Marc Quinn depicted Moss as a golden yoga goddess, with her hands and feet contorted behind her head.—Reuters ■



A hyperrealistic nude sculpture of British model Kate Moss entitled ‘MILF’ by artist Edgar Askelevic, is viewed by gallery director Jean-David Malat at Opera Gallery, where it will go on sale for GBP 25,000 (\$31,750) in London Britain on 26 June, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

At platform 9-3/4, Harry Potter fans mark 20 years of magic



A girl waves a wand at the Harry Potter trolley at Kings Cross Station, in London, Britain on 26 June, 2017. The first Harry Potter book, ‘Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone’ was first published 20 years ago. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Twenty years to the day after the first book in the Harry Potter series was published, fans gathered online and in the real world to express their enduring love for JK Rowling’s magical creation.

Since “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone” came out in 1997, with a first print run of just 500 copies, the series of seven novels has sold 450 million copies worldwide in 79 languages and spawned a blockbuster movie franchise.

The book appeared in the United States a year later as “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone”.

On Monday, some fans took

the day off work to celebrate the anniversary, heading to significant locations such as King’s Cross train station in London, which in the stories is one of the gateways into the world of witches and wizards.

The real-life station features a mock-up of Platform 9-3/4, the departure point for trains to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The mock-up is a bustling spot where tourists and fans queue to pose for photos wearing Potter-themed scarves or costumes.

“Harry Potter I think still means so much to so many people even though it’s 20 years now,” said Clara Carson, whose

job at the nearby souvenir shop involves taking photos of the fans and holding up the scarves to achieve a windswept effect.

“I’m a fan myself so it’s really nice to come in and be with people that are all into the same things that you’re into,” she said. “Whether they’re kids or my age or even adults, they’re always just so excited.”

Childhood friends Charlotte Keyworth and Joanne Wylie, both 26, had come down to London from northern and eastern England for the occasion.

They were part of the first generation of Potter fans, having read the first volume as young girls and then endured the agonizing wait for each new episode as they were published over a period of 10 years.

“We’ve grown up with it, with Harry Potter,” said Keyworth, who was sporting a Hogwarts t-shirt. “We’re planning on going to the studio tour this afternoon and celebrating in our own little way,” she said, referring to the studios where the Potter movies were shot. Wylie, who has a permanent tattoo on her forearm of the Deathly Hallows symbol, an important element in the story, said the Potter stories still bring her joy and comfort.—Reuters ■

World's first ATM machine turns to gold on 50th birthday

LONDON — Five decades since it heralded a transformation in the way people obtained and used cash, the world's first ATM was turned into gold for celebrations of its fiftieth anniversary.

The brainchild of Scottish inventor Shepherd-Barron, the first ATM (automated teller machine) was opened on 27 June, 1967 at a branch of Barclays bank in Enfield, north London, the first of six cash dispensers commissioned by the bank.

English actor Reg Varney, who starred in the British TV comedy show "On The Buses", was the first person to withdraw cash from the new machine.

Now there are an estimated three million cash machines across the globe with some 70,000 cash machines in the UK alone which dispensed 175 billion pounds in 2016.

The world's most northerly machine is at Longyearbyen, Svalbard, Norway and the most southerly located at the Mc-

Murdo station at the South Pole. To commemorate the anniversary, Barclays transformed the ATM at its Enfield branch into gold, added a commemorative plaque and placed a red carpet in front for its users.

"Even though recent years have seen a huge uptake of digital banking and card payments, cash remains a crucial part of most people's day-to-day lives," said Raheel Ahmed, Head of Customer Experience and Channels at Barclays.—Reuters ■



A woman walks past a golden ATM, marking the location of the first 'hole in the wall,' which opened fifty years ago, in Enfield, Britain on 27 June, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Canadian soldier becomes first female infantry officer to captain UK queen's guard

LONDON — A Canadian soldier became the first female infantry officer to take command of troops guarding Queen Elizabeth's Buckingham Palace residence in London on Monday.

Captain Megan Couto said it was a great honor to lead her Canadian unit in the Changing of the Guard ceremony at the palace, an event which regularly attracts thousands of tourists. "I'm feeling a little bit of healthy stress but feeling not too nervous," Couto, 24, told Reuters before marching her troops from the Second Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, from nearby barracks to Buckingham Palace. "I just need to focus on saying the right commands." Guard duties are normally carried out by



Captain Megan Couto of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI), makes history as she becomes the first female infantry officer to command the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, London, Britain on 26 June, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

troops from the Household Division, who have protected the sovereign and royal palaces since 1660. A detachment of the unit has carried out duties at Buckingham Palace since Elizabeth's great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria moved there in 1837. "We've rehearsed for weeks and weeks," said Couto, whose unit was visiting Britain to coincide with the 150th anniversary of Canada, one of the 15 nations in addition to the United Kingdom which has the 91-year-old queen as head of state. "This is definitely a big deal for us."

Women were banned from combat roles in the British army until July last year, meaning no female infantry officers had ever had the role of Captain of the Queen's Guard before Couto.—Reuters ■



Programme Schedule

(28-6-2017 07:00am ~ 29-6-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:25	Am	A Novitiation Ceremony in a Rural Township
07:51	Am	Colourful Threads
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	On the River
08:47	Am	Traditional Customs of Holy Waso
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Entrepreneur: Nan Ei Ei Zar
09:39	Am	Dhamma School
09:51	Am	Licuala Palm Leaf
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Herbal Medicine By Thurein (Ta Bin Dine Mya Nan) (Vitis)

10:56	Am	Dances of Myanmar: Enn Traditional Dance
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(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Day In Bagan
07:50	Pm	now in Yangon
08:03	Pm	News
08:27	Pm	Tapestry — A Unique Combination of Painting and Craftsmanship
08:46	Pm	Myanmar Leading Woman: May Sabe Phyu @ L. Hkawn Htoi

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

Shark sightings terrify tourists on Spanish island

PARIS — Holidaymakers were sent fleeing from a tranquil Mallorca beach after a shark swam to the water's edge and thrashed around in the shallows.

The incident, which took place on Sunday at Platja de Palma and was caught on video and shared thousands of times on social media, was one of several shark sightings on beaches on the Balearic island over the weekend.

Three unidentified species of shark were spotted at another nearby beach on Sunday, with bathers called out of the water by lifeguards. No injuries were reported, media on the island said.

More than 40 species of shark are thought to inhabit the Mediterranean and while attacks on humans are extremely rare, they do occur.—Reuters ■



Aung La Nsang (R) Vs Bigdash (L) are seen at the promotional event. **PHOTO: PHO THAW ZIN**

Aung La Nsang and Vitaly Bigdash both confident about 30 Junerematch

MIXED martial arts fighters Aung La Nsang of Myanmar and Vitaly Bigdash of Russia attended a promotional event at Junction Mawtin yesterday for their upcoming 30 June match. Aung La Nsang fought and lost a close fight against Vitaly Bigdash in January in Indonesia. At that time, Bigdash had fought and won nine MMA matches and while Aung La Nsang had won 19 of 29 matches.

“I lost in the first match because I didn’t have time to prepare for that match,” said Aung La Nsang. “I am now well prepared for this rematch and hired a coach to improve myself. Bigdash

is a good opponent but he also had his weaknesses. I’ll exploit these weaknesses to avenge my earlier loss in front of the home crowd and I’m confident of winning the middleweight world champion title.” Bigdash said, “I came here to fight because I have confidence in myself. It is not easy to fight Aung La in front of his home crowd and I am expecting to face more difficulties than normal matches. As he has prepared well for this match, it will be tougher than the earlier match. Since I had prepared myself for two months, I am at the best shape. I will defend my title and believe that I would retain it.” — Ye Yint Shine ■

Serena hits back after McEnroe ranks her 700th on men’s tour

NEW YORK — Serena Williams has asked John McEnroe for “respect” after the seven-times grand slam champion said his fellow American would be ranked “like 700 in the world” if she had to play on the men’s circuit.

In an interview with National Public Radio on Sunday, McEnroe said 23-times grand slam champion Williams was “the best female player ever” but declined to label her the best overall.

“If she played the men’s

circuit she’d be like 700 in the world,” he said.

“That doesn’t mean I don’t think Serena is an incredible player. I do.

“And on a given day, Serena could beat some players... But if she had to just play the circuit — the men’s circuit — that would be an entirely different story.”

Former world number one Williams, who has taken time off to have a baby, responded testily on Twitter.

“Dear John, I adore and respect you but please please keep me out of your statements that are not factually based,” she wrote.

“I’ve never played anyone ranked ‘there’ nor do I have time. Respect me and my privacy as I’m trying to have a baby. Good day sir.”

Williams has won the most grand slam singles titles in the professional era, five more than Swiss Roger Federer, the most prolific winner in the men’s game. She is one short of Australian Margaret Court’s overall record of 24 grand slam titles, which were split between the professional and amateur eras.—Reuters



Serena Williams of the US hits a shot during her Women’s singles quarter-final match against Britain’s Johanna Konta at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Australia on 25 January, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**



Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt reacts during a news conference before the Ostrava Golden Spike athletics meeting in Ostrava, Czech Republic on 26 June, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Bolt brings sunshine and heat on his last trip to Golden Spike meeting

PRAGUE — As Usain Bolt deals with the emotions of closing the curtain on his record-breaking career, one thing that won’t trouble him as he prepares for his ninth and final appearance at the Ostrava Golden Spike meeting is the heat, he said on Monday.

The multiple Olympic and world gold medallist joked that sweltering temperatures and sunshine in the Czech Republic feels more like home in Jamaica as he prepares to compete in the 100 metre race on Wednesday.

“I am happy that I got to come here, it’s one of my favourite meets, and to be here for the last time, it’s a great feeling,” the 30 year-old told a news conference broadcast live on the event’s Facebook page.

“For me the weather stands

out... I am shocked that it’s so warm, I guess I brought some sun from Jamaica.” The double sprint world record holder, who has amassed eight Olympic golds and 13 world championship medals, will take his final bow in August in London, where he will only run the shorter sprint despite having a wild card for the 200 metres. But Bolt confirmed he would not run the 200 metre event in London and said he had no regrets about stepping aside as his glittering career winds down. “For me now, I’ve done everything I wanted to, now it’s coming to an end and I am fine with it, definitely looking forward to coming back to Ostrava, and just watch, to be part of the crowd, to see the younger generation coming up,” Bolt said.—Reuters ■