MYANMAR, THAILAND CLEAR US$133M LOAN FOR LONG-DELAYED DAWEI ECONOMIC ZONE P-5 (BUSINESS)

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar

State Counsellor Office Information Committee

National Security Advisor's Statement ; Update on the Security Situation on the northern Rakhine State

(8th Waxing of Waso 1379 ME)

(1st July 2017)

1. There have been a number of concerning developments regarding the security situation in northern Rakhine State over the past several weeks.
2. These are well documented. They include attacks by insurgents on civilians, gruesome murders of local leaders, and violent threats against both the Muslim and Rakhine communities. Most recently, the military last week found tunnels and arms belonging to terrorist groups, and on Tuesday there were coordinated attacks against Rakhine fishermen.
3. The government condemns these attacks and threats, which appear to be a coordinated attempt to destabilise the situation in northern Rakhine and incite further violence and unrest.
4. The recent violence in northern Rakhine is particularly troubling in light of independently verified evidence following the attacks in October 2016 that extremists have been receiving weapons, funding, and training from abroad.
5. The police are working to identify, capture, and prosecute the perpetrators as part of wider efforts to identify and root out the extremist elements destabilising the region.

SEE PAGE 3

Rakhine State Gov't calls for public cooperation for security

By Myint Maung Soe & Aung Kyaw Oo

SECURITY forces in Maungtaw District has been put on high alert in order to provide security for the local people, according to the Rakhine State Government.

"We will make utmost efforts at most to provide the local people with stability and security," said Rakhine State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col Htein Lin.

Security has been tightened near villages, he added. At the meeting with local people in Kyaukpandu Village in southern Maungaw, he has called for the local people to fully cooperate with the security forces.

SEE PAGE 2

Police forces prepare to patrol in Maungdaw township in Rakhine state on October 12, 2016. **FILE PHOTO: REUTERS**

Today's issue contains an 8-Page special pull-out supplement.

NATIONAL
Int'l Co-operative Day event held
PAGE-3

NATIONAL
Mandalay Region Hluttaw gets new building
PAGE-2

NATIONAL
12 schools in Maungtaw District upgraded
PAGE-2

Speaker U Win Myint unveils the signboard of Mandalay Region Hluttaw. **PHOTO:MNA**

Mandalay Region Hluttaw gets new building

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint attended an opening ceremony of a new office building for Mandalay Region Hluttaw yesterday morning at Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay and opened the building.

The event was graced by Mandalay Region Sanghanayaka Committee Chairman Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasarabivamsa, sayadaws and monks and was attended by Mandalay Region Chief Minister Dr. Zaw Myint Maung, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Kyaw Oo, Deputy Speaker Dr Khin Maung Htay, hluttaw office staffs, region, district and township level officials, donors and invited guests.

First, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker, Chief Minister Dr. Zaw Myint Maung, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Kyaw Oo, officials and donors donated 'soon' to the Sayadaw and 108 monks and listened to the religious recitation of the sayadaws.

Chief Minister Dr. Zaw Myint Maung, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Kyaw Oo, Mandalay Region Chief Justice U Soe Thein, Mandalay Mayor and Minister for municipal affairs Dr. Ye Lwin, Region Hluttaw representative Daw Nyein Thet Nwe and Daw Thida Nyein then opened the new office building for Mandalay Region Hluttaw by cutting a ribbon.

Next, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and Mandalay Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker pressed a button to unveil the Region Hluttaw signboard and sprinkled scented waters. The Chief Minister, Region Hluttaw Speaker and Mandalay Region Chief Justice planted a commemorative tree.

Afterwards, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker, Chief Minister, Region Hluttaw Speaker, members of region level organisations and officials took a commemorative group photo in front of the hluttaw office.

Sayadaws and monks then consecrated the Buddha statutes in the new office building after which event attendees took five precepts from the sayadaws and listened to their recitation of paritas.

Later, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker, Chief Minister, Region Hluttaw Speaker and officials presented offerings to the sayadaws and monks and provided soon. —Tin Maung (Mann Kopwa) ■

Rakhine State Gov't calls for public cooperation for security

FROM PAGE 1

He asked the local people to contact the security forces when suspected situation happen, pledging that the security force will quickly respond to emergency situations.

Troops in northeastern Rakhine State were placed on high alert on Tuesday after nearly 200 Rakhine Buddhist villagers fled the area after a recent spate of killings and amid fears of fresh attacks by armed men.

From October 2016 to 26 June 2017, 38 civilians have been murdered in Maungtaw District, Rakhine State. During that time, 22 additional civilians have gone missing or been abducted, including four community leaders.

There has been a worrisome increase in the number of murders and disappearances in recent weeks. In the past two weeks alone, six civilians have been killed and two have gone missing or been abducted.

12 schools in Maungtaw District upgraded

A total of 12 schools were upgraded in Maungtaw District in the 2017-2018 Academic Year, providing seats for an increasing in number of students.

"With upgrading of schools would promote the education of the students in the district" said U Ohn Myint, head of Maungtaw District Education Department. In Maungtaw Township a primary school was upgraded to post primary school and a sub high school was upgraded to a high school. In Buthidaung Township, two self-help primary schools were upgraded to sub primary schools; a sub primary school to primary school, a primary school to post primary school, two post primary schools to sub middle schools, two sub middle schools to middle schools and two sub high schools to high schools totaling ten schools upgrades. For the district as a whole, two sub primary schools, one primary school, two post primary schools, two sub middle schools, two middle schools and three high schools totaling 12 schools were upgraded. —Myint Maung Soe ■

The upgraded school in Maungtaw is seen. **PHOTO: THAKKA**

Ministry of Construction inaugurates three road sections, one bridge on Yangon-Mandalay Highway

THREE road sections of the Yangon-Mandalay Union Highway-AH-1 were inaugurated yesterday following the completion of the project.

The Yangon-Mandalay Union Highway-AH-1 is more than 422 miles long and is being upgraded by the Ministry of Construction and seven companies -- Max Highway, Shwe Thanlwin, High Star, Kanbawza, Oriental Highway, Yuzana, and Thawdarwin with the BOT system.

The upgrading of the 40-mile-long Pyinmana-Yamethin Road Section to a concrete road was carried out by Oriental Highway. The company is also upgrading the Yedashe-Pyinmana-Yamethin Road Section, which is 85 miles and two furlongs long.

In his keynote address at the inauguration of the Pyinmana-Yamethin Road Section, Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing called on road users to observe the rules of the road that there could be safe and smooth travelling.The Tawdarwin Company upgraded the Meiktila-Mandalay Road Section to a four-lane concrete road. Meanwhile, bridge No. 3/122 over the Tonkan Creek on the Yangon-Mandalay Road was constructed by High Star Company and the Bago-Nyaunglebin Road Section was upgraded to a tarred road by Shwethanlwin Company.— Tin Maung Lwin ■

Union Minister U Win Khaing and dignitaries formally open the Pyinmana-Yamethin Road Section. **PHOTO: MAUNG HMWE**

International Cooperative Day event held

VICE President U Henry Van Thio attended and gave an opening speech at the International Cooperative Day event held yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw.

Present at the event were Union Ministers Dr. Aung Thu, U Thant Sin Maung, U Ohn Win, Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo, Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw, Nay Pyi Taw Council members, chairmen and board of directors of Central Cooperative Society, States and Regions Cooperatives, officials of INGOs and NGOs, cooperative members and responsible persons.

First, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr. Aung Thu, Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw, the Central Cooperative Society Chairman U Khin Maung Aye and officials cut a ribbon to open the event.

Next, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and group toured the International Cooperative Day market and visited the sales booths.

Afterwards the event was continued in the Department of Cooperative meeting hall where Vice President U Henry Van Thio said the event was the 23rd time the International Cooperative Day had been held in Myanmar. As per the theme "Cooperatives ensure no one is left behind" International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) had urged cooperatives to have everyone freely participate without discriminating against gender, race, religious belief, social and political stand. Cooperatives were not investment money centered but people oriented and the cooperatives' prosperity and developments were seen to be shared fairly and equitably said the Vice President.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspects foodstuff produced by cooperative Societies. **PHOTO: MNA**

ICA has 95 member countries, 284 member cooperatives with more than 1 billion members. 250 million of the world's population is known to earn their livelihood in cooperative works. UNESCO had included cooperatives in the list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity and cooperatives need to help face the challenges of inequalities and conflicts added the Vice President.

On the Myanmar cooperative sector, financial support provided to rural farmers were effective and the momentum of success need to be maintained remarked the Vice President. Through the cooperation of Cooperative Department and cooperatives of different levels, cooperative member farmers were provided with small investment loans amounting to hundreds of billions of Kyat in 2016 and 2017. In FY 2016-2017, more than 3,400 farm machineries worth more than Ks 24 billion were sold under an installment system and a loan of more than Ks 11 billion had been provided for mechanized farming in more than 35,000 acres of land. The Vice President urged the cooperatives in the relevant states and regions to provide more loans to farmers who had repaid their loans. It could be seen that the cooperative sector was supporting the country's economic development said the Vice President. The Vice President concluded his speech by urging all to cooperate and work together according to the International Cooperative Day theme and achieve the aim of the cooperative.

Next, Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu explained about International Cooperative Day and Central Cooperative Society executive committee member Dr. Toe Nanda Tin read a message sent by ICA.

Afterwards Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu, Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw and responsible persons presented to Nay Pyi Taw Council, states and regions cooperatives Ks 529.53 billion for small investment loan, support of Ks. 9.45 billion for more than 2,000 farm machineries sold under an installment system and Ks 8.59 billion for mechanized farming in 29,000 acres and awards to best performing cooperatives in manufacturing, service and trade sectors, best performing cooperatives, first, second and third prizes for best performing townships and best sales booths in the sales market.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio and persons attending the event then took commemorative group photos. International Cooperative Day is an annual celebration held worldwide since 1923 by ICA with the aim of increasing relations, cooperation and increase economic cooperation among cooperatives.

In 1992, the 49th United Nations General Assembly marked the centenary of the establishment of ICA by proclaiming the first Saturday of July to be International Day of Cooperatives and the event had been held annually worldwide.—MNA ■

National Security Advisor's Statement ; Update on the Security Situation on the northern Rakhine State

FROM PAGE 1

6. We will continue to assess the security situation on an ongoing basis and will take appropriate action where necessary.
7. Despite the current situation, the government is continuing its work to provide development assistance and relief to communities throughout Rakhine and to help secure long-term stability and peace for the region.

Latest Situation in northern Rakhine State

Security situation

- From October 2016 to 26 June 2017, 38 civilians have been murdered in Maungtaw District, Rakhine State. During that time, 22 additional civilians have gone missing or been abducted, including four community leaders.
- There has been a worrying increase in the number of murders and disappearances in recent weeks. In the past two weeks alone, six civilians have been killed and two have gone missing or been abducted.
- Additionally, the military has found increasing evidence of extremist activity in recent weeks. On 20 June, tunnels, guns, and a training camp belonging to a terrorist group were discovered in the Buthidaung-Maungtaw area's Mayu Mountains.
  * In addition to the tunnel, which measured five feet in width, four feet in height, and 80 feet in length, security forces also found clear evidence of use of the camp as a terrorist training facility, including home-made weapons, huts, rations, utensils, and other items used for training and housing insurgents.
- Security forces have also come under attack, with one machete-wielding man attacking security forces on Tuesday 27 June and two more men attacking the following day. All three attackers were killed in self-defence.

Humanitarian situation

- Humanitarian aid currently reaches 95 per cent of affected people in Rakhine State. This aid is delivered through a combination of government and local and international NGO efforts.
  * The government has provided over USD 1.96 million (2,672.352 million kyat) in humanitarian assistance to Rakhine State by 16 June 2017.
  * This aid has been distributed to both Rakhine and Muslim communities in affected areas.
  * Additionally, the government has continued to deliver health and education support to affected areas. Over 107,000 people have been treated by 40 mobile health clinics operating in 208 villages and temporary camps across Rakhine State. Ministries have also provided a number of vocational and academic programmes to Rakhine State residents, as well as upgrading 300 schools across the state for the 2017-18 academic year, including funds and support to renovate 20 public schools in Muslim villages. The government has reopened all schools in the Maungdaw area, which had been temporarily closed.
- Three camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been closed down in the Kyaukphyu, Pauktaw, and Ramree townships. Fifty-five households from these camps have voluntarily chosen to relocate to Yangon.
  * This is in line with recommendations made in the interim report by the Rakhine Advisory Commission led by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

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Illegal goods checked at Yaypu and Mayanchaung check points

A combined team comprised of officers and staff from the departments concerned is checking for illegal goods at Yaypu and Mayanchaung check points which were re-opened on 1 March, according to a report in the Myanma Alinn Daily yesterday.

There were 660 exported vehicles and 591 imported vehicles along Mandalay-Muse Pyidaungsu road as well as 49 exported vehicles and 194 imported vehicles along Yangon- Myawady road to 30th June.

The combined team found three cases of illegal goods worth Ks 3.43 million at Mayanchaung checkpoint on 30 June 2017. Among those cases, the team stopped at Mayan Chaung checkpoint a passenger vehicle en route to Yangon from Myawady and seized "Epson" LCD Projector (10) U worth Ks 2.8 million for which no legal documents concerning the projector can be produced.—MMAL ■

Illegal goods seized at Yaypu Check Point. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

About 27,000 people commute between Yangon and Dala

ABOUT 27,000 people are commuting daily between Dala and Pansodan in Yangon across the Yangon River, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

"Out of three ferry boats named Cherry 1, 2 and 3, only two are running daily across Yangon River with a ferry boat always standing by. One vessel is always kept on stand by," said U Hsan Tun, the manager from Pansodan Jetty under the Inland Water Transport.

"In the raining season, we are carrying only 1,200 passengers per vessel. We also keep over 1,200 life jackets and 56 lifebuoys as well as other emergency life-saving equipments. The IWT authorities do not allow the vessels to run in the bad weather condition."

The passengers are coming from Dala between 7 am and 10 am and going back from Yangon between 4 pm and 6 pm. Each trip takes about 20 minutes.

The fare is Ks100 per passenger. The passengers can also buy the ticket using the iPay cards and OK$ system.

The ferries run from 5 am to 9:30 daily for 46 rounds. —GNLM ■

Cars without permits to be confiscated

THE customs department will impose fines starting from the second week of July for vehicles that arrive at Yangon ports four to seven days without an I mport car permit, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The fine will be equivalent to one-fourth the amount of the vehicle's value. The customs department will not impose a fine if the vehicles without import permits arrive under three days in advance. However, these vehicles that arrive at the port eight days and above in advance will be confiscated by the customs department. The vehicle importers should learn the rules and regulations of import/ export law, said an official from the custom department.—GNLM ■

River course conservation to be conducted in Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers

WATER Resources and River Development Department has planned to conduct river course conservation in financial 2017-2018 at seven points along the Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The department will spend Ks 865 million on conservation of three points in Ayeyawady River and Ks 432 million on four places in Chindwin River.

"The budget will be appropriated not only for river conservation but also for purchase of the machines, fixing the machines and testing the water quality. The river has become narrow and winding, and this can have negative impact upon the ships cruising.

Therefore, we have to conduct the river conservation, he added.

Moreover, the department has received a budget allocation of Ks 725 million for the smooth flow of the Hsin Kyun water way in Motama and Ks 107 million for Rakhine State river waterways. The Water Resources and River Development Department has planned to implement 16 projects in financial 2017-2018.— GNLM ■

Dawei Special Economic Zone. **PHOTO: MINISTRY OF COMMERCE**

Myanmar, Thailand clear US$133m loan for long-delayed Dawei economic zone

MYANMAR and Thailand finalised terms of a 4.5 billion baht (US$133 million) loan to kick-start long-delayed development of Myanmar's Dawei Special Economic Zone, Thailand's transport minister said on Friday.

The two countries signed an agreement in 2008 to build the zone in Myanmar's southeast. But the multi-billion dollar project has been mired in difficulties, including widespread local opposition and problems mobilizing funding for its construction.

Thai Transport Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith met with Myanmar's Commerce Minister Than Myint on Friday to finalize conditions of the loan, which will have an interest rate of 0.1 percent, with a 10-year grace period and a 30-year repayment timeframe.

Italian-Thai Development Pcl (ITD) signed a deal in 2010 to build a deep-sea port and Special Economic Zone in Dawei. But it failed to secure first-phase financing.

The port, if completed, is expected to open a new gateway to the Strait of Malacca, one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, from Myanmar.

"Prior to this, ITD was not able to start construction because we could not agree on who will build the road", said Arkhom.

"But Myanmar government investment in the road will boost confidence for private investors".

Last year, Japan signed on as a third partner along with Myanmar and Thailand, a move some hoped would boost investor confidence in the long-delayed project.

According to Thailand's government, Myanmar is now responsible for the construction of a 138-kilometer (86-mile) road from Dawei to the Thai-Myanmar border, while ITD will develop a small port, a power plant, a reservoir and an industrial estate.—Reuters ■

Myanmar-Viet Nam trade reaches $46 million in April

MYANMAR'S trade with Viet Nam, an ASEAN member state, amounted to more than US$46 million in the first month of the current financial year, according to a report of the Ministry of Commerce.

In April of this year, import of commodities from the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam totalled $30.764 million, while exports reached $15.491 million.

Bilateral trade was $143.380 million in FY2011-12. The figure increased to nearly $156 million in FY2012-13. In 2013-14 FY, the trade with Vietnam exceeded $280 million. It continued to increase to over $300 million in FY2014-15 and FY2015-16. The trade between the two countries hit a record high of $494.036 million in 2016-17 FY.

The trade between Myanmar and ASEAN countries exceeded $700 million at the end of this April. Thailand is ranked first in the list of top five ASEAN traders with $290 million, including $207 million from normal trade and $83 million from border trade, followed by Singapore with $252.750 million, Malaysia with $67.679 million and Indonesia with $55.098 million.

Vietnam is the last country in the list of top five ASEAN trade partners with $46.255 million in total.

Bilateral trade with the Philippines stood at $3.781 million. However, trade with Brunei, Laos and Cambodia were less than $1 million.

Myanmar monthly exports a wide variety of agricultural products, dried and fresh marine products, minerals and industrial finished goods. The major imported products include consumer goods, electronic devices, capital goods, automobile and accessories, and intermediate goods.—GNLM ■

More than 15,000 citizens saving money for apartments at CHD Bank

THE number of people who are saving for a down payment at Construction and Housing Development Bank for the purpose of buying a low-cost flat have now exceeded 15,000, according to a report of the Myawady Daily issued on 1 July.

With the aim of purchasing a low-cost apartment developed by the government, people save their money at CHD Bank, which pledged to grant housing loans to those who have 30 per cent of the total cost of the apartment they want to buy, a spokesperson of the bank said.

At the present time, the bank had only about a thousand of customers who reached the savings amount equivalent to 30 per cent down payment for a new apartment, said a bank official. —GNLM ■

India launches new economic era with sales tax reform

NEW DELHI — India early on Saturday introduced its biggest tax reform in the 70 years since independence from British colonial rule.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) replaces more than a dozen federal and state levies and unifying a $2 trillion economy and 1.3 billion people into one of the world's biggest common markets.

The measure is expected to make it easier to do business by simplifying the tax structure and ensuring greater compliance, boosting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's economic credentials before a planned re-election bid in 2019.

At a midnight ceremony in parliament's central hall Modi and President Pranab Mukherjee together launched the new tax by pressing a button.

"With GST, the dream of 'One India, Great India' will come true," Modi said.

For the first midnight ceremony in the central hall in two decades, Modi was joined by his cabinet colleagues, India's central bank chief, a former prime minister and major company executives including Ratan Tata.

The launch, however, was boycotted by several opposition parties including the Congress Party, which first proposed the tax reform before it fell from power three years ago.

A supporter of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) holds a placard during a rally to support implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in Mumbai, on 30 June 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh — the architect of India's economic reforms — also gave it a miss.

It has taken 14 years for the new sales tax to come into being. But horse trading to get recalcitrant Indian states on board has left Asia's third-largest economy with a complex tax structure.

In contrast to simpler sales taxes in other countries, India's GST has four rates and numerous exemptions.

The official schedule of rates runs to 213 pages and has undergone repeated changes, some taking place as late as on Friday evening.

Many businesses are nervous about how the changes will unfold, with smaller ones saying they will get hit by higher tax rates.

Adding to the complexity, businesses with pan-India operations face filing over 1,000 digital returns a year.

While higher tax rates for services and non-food items are expected to fuel price pressures, compliance is feared to be a major challenge in a country where many entrepreneurs are not computer literate and rely on handwritten ledgers.

"We have jumped into a river but don't know its depth," said A. Subba Rao, an executive director at power firm CLP India.

Poor implementation would deal a blow to an economy that is still recovering from Modi's decision late last year to outlaw 86 per cent of the currency in circulation.

In a bid to mitigate the impact on the farm sector, the GST rates for tractors and fertilizer were slashed on Friday to 18 percent and 5 per cent, respectively.

HSBC estimates the reform, despite its flaws, could add 0.4 percentage points to economic growth.

An end of tax arbitrage under the GST is estimated to save companies $14 billion in reduced logistics costs and efficiency gains.

As the GST is a value added tax, firms will have an incentive to comply in order to avail credit for taxes already paid. This should widen the tax net, shoring up public finances.

"The old India was economically fragmented," Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said. "The new India will create one tax, one market for one nation."—Reuters ■

Indonesian policemen injured in attack by Muslim militant

JAKARTA — Two members of an Indonesian elite police unit were injured after a Muslim militant attacked them at a mosque near the National Police Headquarters in South Jakarta late Friday, with the attacker shot dead in the incident.

National Police Spokesman Rikwanto said the attack occurred at the end of the evening prayer at the mosque where the militant and policemen were praying.

"The man stabbed the policemen with a bayonet, shouting 'thoghut' ('Satan in human form') and threatened other people inside the mosque not to approach him," Rikwanto said.

The man, identified later as Mulyadi, a 28-year-old student, then ran into the Blok M bus terminal and challenged other members of the elite Mobile Brigade unit, the police officer said.

Ignoring warning shots from the on-patrol policemen, the attacker raised his bayonet and charged the officers while shouting "Allahu Akbar" ("God is Great"), at which point one of the policemen shot him dead, according to Rikwanto. —Kyodo News ■

US, Philippines hold naval patrol to deter Islamist militants

MANILA — The United States and Philippine navies held a joint naval patrol on Saturday in dangerous southern Philippine waters, amid rising international concern about Islamist militancy and piracy in the region.

US Navy littoral combat ship USS Coronado joined a Philippine Navy frigate, BRP Alcaraz, in patrolling the Sulu Sea where numerous pirate attacks on commercial shipping have been made since 2015.

"Our at-sea operations with the Philippine Navy demonstrate our commitment to the alliance and deter piracy and illegal activities," US Rear Admiral Don Gabrielson said in a statement issued by the US embassy in Manila.

There are international fears fighters sympathetic to Islamic State will cross maritime borders between Malaysia and Indonesia to join Muslim rebels who seized Marawi City in the southern Philippines five weeks ago.

About 300 militants, 82 security forces and 44 civilians have been killed in the fighting.

The naval patrols were held at the invitation of the Philippine government, the US embassy said.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte does not allow joint patrols with the United States in the disputed South China Sea to avoid damaging its relations with China, which claims the sea as its own.

But he welcomes cooperation in the south due to increased militant activity. Two weeks ago, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines held joint naval patrols in southern waters.—Reuters ■

Xi expresses confidence in HK new chief executive

HONG KONG — President Xi Jinping on Saturday expressed confidence in new chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in leading the Asian financial hub to achieve new development.

In their meeting shortly after Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor was sworn in, Xi said he believed Lam could lead the new HKSAR government and all sectors of the Hong Kong society to score new achievements in various undertakings in Hong Kong.

As Hong Kong marks the 20th anniversary of its return to China, Xi said "great responsibilities and a glorious mission" had fallen on Lam's shoulders.

"The Hong Kong society is placing great hopes in you, and the central government also has high expectations for you," Xi told Lam. He urged Lam to earnestly carry out her duty as the chief executive, implement the "one country, two systems" principle in a comprehensive and accurate manner, and safeguard the authority of the country's Constitution and the HKSAR Basic Law.

Efforts should also be made to further develop Hong Kong's economy, improve its people's well-being, and maintain the region's prosperity and stability, Xi said.

"The central government will render full support to you and the new HKSAR government to administer Hong Kong according to law and break new ground in the great cause of 'one country, two systems,'" Xi said.—Xinhua ■

Chinese President Xi Jinping speaks at a welcome dinner hosted by the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, in Hong Kong, south China, on 30 June 2017. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Japan, EU resume free trade talks, dairy, autos remain thorny issues

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida (3rd from front R) and EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom (5th from front L) hold talks on a free trade deal in Tokyo on 1 July 2017. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

TOKYO — Japan and the European Union resumed talks on a free trade deal on Saturday, as they look to reach a broad agreement before their leaders meet next week even though they remain apart over tariffs on European dairy products and Japanese automobiles.

"We have not yet reached an agreement. We are in deadlock," Japanese Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Yuji Yamamoto told reporters after the morning session of the meeting with his EU counterparts.

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida also attended the talks in Tokyo with EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom and EU Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner Phil Hogan.

They are set to continue talks throughout Saturday after they failed to reach a compromise in a meeting Friday, seeking to achieve a broad bilateral free trade agreement before their leaders meet ahead of the summit of the Group of 20 major economies in Germany starting on 7 July.

The meeting of the four ministers and commissioners following some three weeks of negotiations between their chief negotiators in Tokyo suggests that a political decision is needed to push ahead with the talks.

Japan and the European Union say they hope to strike a free trade deal to send a message to countries leaning toward a more protectionist stance and to demonstrate the importance of free and fair trade.

The European Union and Japan started talks in 2013 and together account for around 30 per cent of the world economy.

Yamamoto and Hogan held talks before Kishida and Malmstrom joined to understand their respective "political" stances, the Japanese farm minister said.

"Difficult issues remain. I would like to exert political leadership without losing a broad perspective," Kishida said at the outset of talks on Saturday in the portion open to the media.

Ahead of the talks, Malmstrom wrote on Twitter, "Intense negotiations ongoing this morning. Cars and agriculture the two big outstanding issues."

In the negotiations, the European Union is demanding an elimination of tariffs imposed on cheese and further opening the Japanese market of wine, pork, chocolates and lumber.

Farmers in Japan have voiced concerns about the influx of European farm products which are highly competitive.

Japan, meanwhile, is calling on the 28-member bloc to cut its tariffs on Japanese automobiles amid concerns about South Korean rivals having a competitive edge in the European market. Due to the bilateral free trade agreement between the European Union and South Korea, the bloc has eliminated duties on South Korean automobiles.—Kyodo News ■

Cambodia's Angkor heritage site earns 52.1 mln USD in 6 months

PHNOM PENH — Revenue from ticket sales to foreigners visiting Cambodia's Angkor archeological park reached 52.1 million US dollars in the first six months of 2017, up 66.8 per cent compared to the same period last year, according to a press release on Saturday.

The 12th century site received 1.23 million foreign tourists during the January-June period this year, up 12.9 per cent over the same period last year, said the state-owned Angkor Enterprise's press release.

Most tourists to the park are Chinese, South Koreans and Americans.

The remarkable rise in the revenue was due to the hike in ticket prices in February. A current entrance fee to the site is 37 US dollars for a one-day visit, 62 US dollars for a three-day pass, and 72 US dollars for a week-long pass.

Situated in northwest Cambodia's Siem Reap province, the Angkor archeological park, inscribed on the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1992, is the kingdom's most popular tourist destination.—Xinhua ■

Peace, Stability and National Development

Khin Maung Oo

THROUGHOUT Myanmar's history, all internal affairs were solved by the State and her people themselves, till a satisfactory state of affairs was reached. Events that happened in northern Rakhine State were in fact the kinds which had occurred to them similarly since time immemorial, and they were managed and dealt with in a proper and judicious manner in our own way.

At such a time when the State is trying to find solutions systematically and with great care, in accord with rules and laws concerning affairs happening presently in northern Rakhine State, it was a disappointing turn of events that the UN Human Rights Council approved the one-sided decision of the situation on human rights in Myanmar without taking a vote at its 34th regular meeting held on 24 March 2017.

Though not being a member country of the Human Rights Council, it is reasonable for Myanmar to reject the approval of such a decision. As regards making such a decision, the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations Office in Geneva made a statement at the Human Rights Council's meeting that Myanmar would never accept all the contents of the decision, with member countries of Human Rights Council such as India and China as well publicly expressed their disapproval over such a decision.

During her official visit to European Union Headquarters and western countries last May and June, the State Counsellor herself officially said that the matter of sending a mission to the Rakhine State could not be accepted as it did not comply with on-the-ground situations and suggestions made by them were not helpful in solving problems, instead such a move would have created greater hostility between the different communities in the Rakhine State. And she openly disclosed wherever she went that the country has been making efforts to find a just and durable solution by implementing the recommendations of advisory commission on Rakhine Affairs led by Dr Kofi Annan.

Just after armed attacks by terrorists at the border police outposts in the month of October 2016, an investigation commission led by the Vice-President was urgently formed to investigate accusations claiming that there had been violations of human rights in launching area clearance operations, making enquiries and investigations concerning on-the-ground situations in the conflict areas, even in Cox Bazar in Bangladesh. Provided that the said commission will release an internationally acceptable report in the very near future, effective responses against pressure from international communities to accept the fact-finding mission to be sent by the Human Rights Council will be able to be made.

Establishment of security, peace, stability and development in the Rakhine State, resettlement, and increased provision of humanitarian aid and tasks for scrutinizing immigration status are being increasingly carried out with great momentum. As accused by outsiders, there is no violation of human rights.

In case there are obvious evidences of violations, necessary actions will be taken against those violators in accord with the law. Therefore, we firmly believe that the Union Government will never accept any interventions from outsiders. ■

Myanmar expands electricity access through small grids

By Rey Davis Tuplano, Editorial Manager, Oxford Business Group

Investment in off-grid solutions is increasing in Myanmar, as the country seeks to boost connectivity and move towards providing universal access to electricity within 15 years.

In mid-May the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation announced it was accelerating its programme for off-grid power projects in rural areas.

Under these plans, 10 villages will be linked to standalone power sources as part of a pilot programme to improve connectivity in remote regions.

By 2021 the ministry aims to link more than 35,000 households to mini-grid systems and install solar panel units at a further 460,000 homes.

Announcing the plan, the minister for agriculture, livestock and irrigation, U Aung Thu, said the scheme would require input from the private sector, state agencies and overseas support.

"Our target is to generate 30 MW from off-grid power sources, and we hope to supply about 500,000 households within the first five years," he said. "Private sector participation is very critical for accomplishing that goal."

Long-term power plan

Under its National Electrification Plan (NEP) launched in 2014, Myanmar has set a goal of bringing electricity to every household by 2030 using a budget of some $5.8bn. The latest World Bank data place the overall electrification rate at 33% as of 2014, and at just 16% in rural areas, though the national grid has seen expansion in recent years and security of supply in urban areas has improved.

While the main connectivity boost will come from an expanded grid, the NEP concedes that universal access to power will also require off-grid investments in mini-grids and home solar systems for individual or small-scale settlements. It is also likely that, where the costs of connection with the national grid prove prohibitive, some communities will have to rely on off-grid solutions in the longer term.

International lenders have moved to support the targets, including the World Bank – which in September 2015 approved a $400m loan to the NEP – the Asian Development Bank, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Germany's international development agency, GIZ.

Groundwork still needed

With the strong potential for returns on electricity investment, the focus on off-grid solutions promises to offer increased opportunities for service and materials providers, as well as renewable energy independent power producers (IPPs).

However, speaking to OBG, Ken Tun, CEO of Parami Energy Group, highlighted that further work is needed to create strong foundations for renewable IPP projects to succeed.

"There are a lot of uncertainties when looking at renewable IPP projects, and the tariff is one of them. Markets such as India have put in place a good policy environment and financial arrangements to enjoy a tariff of around $0.05 per KWh," he told OBG. "Technical studies should also be conducted to make sure the current grid can take the additional capacity from renewable energy sources, meaning the government could take more time to approve renewable IPP projects."

Curbing growth and communications

Gaps in connectivity are hindering economic development in Myanmar's rural regions, particularly in the telecoms sector.

While mobile phone operators can provide coverage to around 80% of the country, the final 20% of the market is proving difficult to penetrate, mainly due to internal conflict, poor transport links and weaknesses in electricity supply.

"A lack of access to power hinders expansion of telecoms infrastructure and adds to maintenance costs," Daw Phyu Phyu Win, CEO of ABC Telecomm, told OBG.

Philippe Luxcey, CEO of telecom tower company Apollo Towers, expanded on the issue, saying, "Maintenance can be very challenging as it is very difficult to bring, refill and maintain generators at mountain sites in very remote areas. There are many additional costs that the operators are not willing or ready to support". ■

While the main connectivity boost will come from an expanded grid, the NEP concedes that universal access to power will also require off-grid investments in mini-grids and home solar systems for individual or small-scale settlements.

Mr. Filippo Grandi (centre) is welcomed by Director-General Daw Kathy Soe at Yangon International Airport. **PHOTO: MNA**

UN High Commissioner for Refugees and party arrive Yangon

UNITED Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Mr. Filippo Grandi and party arrived at Yangon by air yesterday evening and was welcomed at the airport by Daw Kathy Soe, Director-General of Strategic Studies and Training Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis, resident representative of the UNHCR to Myanmar and officials.

Mr. Filippo Grandi and party is scheduled to leave from Yangon to Rakhine State by air today.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) families honor MMA middleweight world champion Aung La Nsang

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of the Defence Services yesterday awarded a certificate of honor and Ks. 10 million award to Aung La Nsang who beat the reigning Russian MMA middleweight world champion.

In the MMA middleweight world championship fight, the main event of the Light of a Nation MMA match held at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon on 30 June evening, Myanmar national Kachin ethnic Aung La Nsang beat the reigning MMA middleweight world champion Russian national Vitaly Bigdash after a five round bout and clinched the world champion title.

For fighting an opponent with full Myanmar tenacity, valor and courage while displaying Myanmar's tradition and might to attain the MMA middleweight championship title, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) officers, personnel and families full heartedly honor Aung La Nsang and Commander of Yangon Region Command Brig-Gen Thet Pone presented the Commander-in-Chief's certificate of honor and Ks. 10 million award to Aung La Nsang in Kandawgyi Palace Hotel, Yangon.

Yangon Region Commander Brig-Gen Thet Pone and Aung La Nsang exchange gifts. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Commander of Yangon Command first expressed his delights to Aung La Nsang for representing and honoring the nation by attaining the MMA middleweight world championship title and relayed the wish of the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services to a quick recovery from injuries and then presented the certificate of honor and Ks. 10 million award.

Afterward, Aung La Nsang thanks the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) officers, personnel and families for the awards and pledged to double his efforts to retain the title. Aung La Nsang then presented a boxing glove as a commemorative present for Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief which was received by the Commander of Yangon Military Command according to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.
——Myanmar News Agency ■

Two dead after attack in Maungtaw Township

TWO men died after being attacked by terrorists wielding swords at a crab depot in Pyinphyu village, Maungtaw township on 30 June, according to a report of the Myanmar News Agency.

Pyinphyu Village head of 100-household Mahmut Talmuk, crab depot clerk Maung Soe of Paungzar village, Mahmat Araf, Mahmat Inu and Abdulah Kane were in the crab depot at Pyinnphyu Village when they were attacked by about 15 terrorists armed with swords. Mahmat Araf and Mahmat Inu were killed, while head of 100-household Mahmut Talmuk suffered a cut on the cheek and a broken left wrist. Abdulah Kane and Maung Soe were able to escape without injury.

It was learnt that the terrorists fled toward Labaw Bazar Village. Pyinphyu Police are conducting an investigation.
——MNA ■

INGO staff killed in Maungtaw Township

A member of an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) was killed by terrorists in Bayona West Village in Maungtaw on 29 June.

Nor Islam, who is a staff member of the INGO Community and Family Services International (CFSI) was sleeping in his home in Bayona West Village when about 10 masked terrorists entered and attacked him with swords. CFSI is based in the Philippines and is providing child protection and education in the Maungtaw region. The police are investigating the case.—Myanmar News Agency ■

List of civilians killed and missing in Maungtaw region, Rakhine State (October 2016 to 30 June 2017)

In Maungtaw region, Rakhine State, starting from October 2016 when violent attacks began to 30 June 2017, 41 innocent civilians were killed and 22 were missing after being abducted by terrorists.

Month	Killed	Missing (abducted)
2016 October	3	-
2016 November	1	3
2016 December	3	1
2017 January	4	4
2017 February	4	-
2017 March	6	3
2017 April	4	7
2017 May	6	2
2017 June	10	2
Total	41	22

Two students to attend International Student Camp

TWO students from University of Dental Medicine Yangon left Yangon by air for China yesterday to attend International Student Exchange Summer Camp.

The camp is from 2 to 14 July and will be held in West China School of Stomatology, West China Medical Center of Sichuan University. University of Dental Medicine Yangon final year students Maung Pyae Phyo Win and Ma Chit Su are participating in the camp it is learnt.—GNLM ■

US says ex-consultant set up meetings over Iran's nuclear programme

NEW YORK — US prosecutors said in a court filing on Friday that a former consultant to Iran's mission to the United Nations recruited a United States-based atomic scientist to meet with Iranian officials about Iran's nuclear programme.

The filing regarding the former consultant, Ahmad Sheikhzadeh, does not contain criminal charges, but was made to support prosecutors' request for a tough prison sentence for him for tax fraud and conspiracy to violate sanctions against Iran.

Sheikhzadeh pleaded guilty last November to the charges, which do not involve the Iranian nuclear programme.

In the filing, prosecutors said that, starting around 2005, Sheikhzadeh helped arrange meetings between the scientist and Iran's current president, Hassan Rouhani, previously the country's chief negotiator on nuclear issues, and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, formerly Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations.

Sheikhzadeh's lawyer, Steve Zissou, said on Friday, "The only goal Dr. Sheikhzadeh has ever had was to improve relations between the two countries so that they could both live in peace."

A spokesman for Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Ahmad Sheikhzadeh (C), a consultant to the Iranian mission to the United Nation, leaves Brooklyn Federal Court in New York in 2016. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Prosecutors did not name the scientist, who they said was an Iranian national who had worked at a US nuclear power plant.

They said the scientist, working with Sheikhzadeh, provided advice to help Iran negotiate with other countries over its nuclear programme. For example, they said, he gave an estimate of how many gas centrifuges — devices used in enriching uranium — Iran would need to accomplish its nuclear goals.

The scientist also helped develop Iran's public messaging around the nuclear programme, prosecutors said.

Iran reached a deal with the United States and other nations in 2015 to limit its nuclear programme in exchange for relief from international sanctions. US President Donald Trump has criticized the deal and in April ordered that it be reviewed.

Federal guidelines call for a sentence of up to four years and nine months for the crimes Sheikhzadeh pleaded guilty to, but prosecutors on Friday said in their filing that his "brazen" conduct warranted more than that.

Sheikhzadeh is scheduled to be sentenced on July 17 by US District Judge Pamela Chen in Brooklyn. Zissou asked in a letter filed with the court on Friday to postpone the sentencing in light of the new filing.

Authorities originally charged that Sheikhzadeh under-reported his UN income on his personal tax returns. They also said he used his bank account to help US-based co-conspirators invest money in Iran, violating sanctions. —Reuters ■

US, Britain urge Russia to bring Nemtsov murder perpetrators to justice

LONDON/WASHINGTON — The United States and Britain urged Russia on Friday to bring to justice all those responsible for the murder of opposition politician Boris Nemtsov.

A Russian court on Thursday convicted five men of murdering Nemtsov but allies of the politician have said the investigation was a cover-up and that the people who had ordered his killing remained at large.

"We call once more on the Russian Government to ensure that all involved in the killing of Boris Nemtsov, including anyone involved in organising or ordering the crime, are brought to justice," the US State Department said in a statement, calling Nemtsov a "champion of democracy and human rights".

Britain said it wanted Russia to further investigate Nemtsov's murder.

"The Foreign and Commonwealth Office supports Boris Nemtsov's family in their call for a fuller investigation into who ordered his murder," a spokesman for Britain's foreign ministry said.

"Responsibility for his murder goes further than those already convicted, and we call on the Russian government to bring the perpetrators to account."

Russia and Britain have repeatedly clashed publicly over Syria, Ukraine and the 2006 London murder of former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko.

Trump had frequently called during the 2016 US presidential election campaign for warmer ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin, despite criticism from lawmakers in his own Republican Party. Allegations that Russia interfered in the US presidential election last year and colluded with Trump's campaign have overshadowed the businessman's unexpected victory and dogged his first five months in office.

Russia and the United States are also at odds over Ukraine, NATO expansion and the civil war in Syria where Moscow supports President Bashar al-Assad.

Trump and Putin are due to meet in Hamburg at the G20 summit next week.—Reuters ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Australian counter terrorism police charge two teens with weapons offences

SYDNEY — Australian counter terrorism police on Saturday charged two teenage men with selling weapons and drugs, saying they were on the periphery of a large number of terror suspects being monitored.

The two 18-year-olds were arrested in a western suburb of Sydney on Friday and charged with 17 offences, including the unauthorised supply of firearms and firearm parts.—Reuters ■

Taliban key commander in Afghan eastern Wardak province killed

KABUL — A Taliban key commander in Afghan eastern Wardak province has been killed during special operations, interior ministry said in a statement released here on Saturday.

"Mullah Bashir alias Fato, the key commander of Taliban group in Warkdak province who also served as shadow district governor for Nurkh district was killed during special operations launched on Friday," the statement said.—Xinhua ■

Shooting injures 17 people at Little Rock, Arkansas nightclub

LITTLE ROCK, (Arkansas) — At least 17 people were shot after gunfire erupted at a concert in Little Rock, Arkansas early Saturday, police said on social media.

At least one person injured in the shooting at a venue called the Power Ultra Lounge was initially listed in critical condition and has since been upgraded to stable, Little Rock police said on Twitter.

It was not immediately clear if anyone was arrested in connection with the shooting. "We do not believe this incident was an active-shooter or terror-related incident," police said on Twitter. "It appears to have been a dispute at a concert." None of the 17 shooting victims died, added the police.—Reuters ■

Islamic State under pressure in Iraqi and Syrian strongholds

Members of the Counter Terrorism Service are seen in the Old City of Mosul,Iraq, on 30 June 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

MOSUL, (IRAQ)/RAQQA, (SYRIA) — US-backed Iraqi forces pressed Islamic State fighters holding out in Mosul's Old City on Friday, while in Syria the militant group launched a counter-attack against an alliance of militias trying to oust it from its de facto capital of Raqqa.

In Iraq, dozens of civilians poured out of Mosul, long held by IS, and fled in the direction of the Iraqi forces, many of them women and children, thirsty, tired and some wounded.

Iraqi authorities say they are only days away from a victory over militants in their remaining redoubt in Mosul, though commanders of counter-terrorism units fighting their way through the narrow streets of the Old City say die-hard IS fighters are dug in among civilians and the battle ahead remains challenging.

Across the border in Syria, parts of which the IS says fall under its self-proclaimed caliphate, the picture was more complex.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, said the group had retaken most of the industrial district of Raqqa after mounting a fierce counter-attack against the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a US-backed alliance of Kurdish and Arab militias.

But west of Raqqa, the Syrian army put the group under more pressure, driving it from its last territory in Aleppo province, a Syrian military source said, in a strategically-important move that relieves pressure on a government supply route.

Even though the IS group is under pressure in these urban strongholds in Iraq and Syria its fighters still occupy an area as big as Belgium across the two countries, according to one estimate.

In Iraq, grinding warfare in Mosul has displaced 900,000 people, about half the city's pre-war population, and killed thousands of civilians, according to aid organizations.

Major General Maan al-Saadi, of the Counter Terrorism Service, told Reuters it could take four to five days to capture the insurgents' redoubt in Mosul by the Tigris River which was defended by about 200 militants.

Tens of thousands of civilians are trapped in the city in desperate conditions, with dwindling supplies of food, water or medicine and no access to health services, according to those who have managed to flee.

The capture of the city would in effect mark the end of the Iraqi half of the caliphate, although the group still controls territory west and south of the city, holding sway over hundreds of thousands of people.

Those who escaped on Friday streamed through alleyways near the Grand al-Nuri Mosque, where IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared the caliphate in 2014 and which Islamic State fighters blew up a week ago rather than see it fall to the Iraqi army.

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared the end of the caliphate on Thursday after CTS units captured the ground of the ruined 850-year-old mosque.

A Reuters correspondent on Friday saw smoke billowing over the riverside districts amid artillery blasts and burst of gunfire. Western troops from the US-led coalition were helping adjust artillery fire with air surveillance, he said.—Reuters ■

NATO member Turkey, Russia agree on strengthening air defence

ANKARA, — Moscow and Ankara have reportedly agreed upon a deal for the supply of S-400 long-range surface-to-air missile systems to Turkey, which experts say should not alarm NATO.

No other NATO country has bought the advanced air defence systems before, believed to be incompatible with the alliance's systems.

The deal was confirmed on Thursday by Russia's presidential advisor Vladimir Kozhin. "The contract has been agreed and everything is understandable there but the issue of a loan, funds, has not been settled yet," he said, quoted by the Russian press. Recently, top Turkish authorities have voiced an official interest in purchasing advanced S-400 air and missile defence systems from Russia. Turkey's efforts to enhance its defensive strategic military capabilities is not new. For some years now it has sought to have a long-range missile defence system of its own, as it is currently relying on NATO-deployed ballistic missile.

In 2013, Ankara awarded a tender to a Chinese company for missile defence systems procurement, which drew a sharp reaction from its NATO allies and the 3.4 billion US dollars deal had to be scrapped. Other bidders at that time were the United States with Patriot systems, and the French-Italian consortium with the SAMP/T Aster-30 Block-1 variant. It was known that Russia showed interest in the tender, but it was not shortlisted.

This time, amid the tense Turkish-European relations and the ongoing frictions with major NATO ally, the United States on Syria, where the US administration is supplying military equipment to the Syrian Kurds that Ankara considers as terrorists, this major non-NATO arms deal with Moscow could also cause some problems.—Xinhua ■

Brazil unions protest Temer's reforms amid political crisis

RIO DE JANEIRO — Labour unions staged a nationwide strike on Friday to protest against legislative changes to Brazil's labour and pension laws that are central to the economic reform agenda of embattled centre-right President Michel Temer.

Subway and bus services shut down in Brasilia, the nation's capital, while demonstrations blocked roads and snarled traffic in the megacities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro as union activists took to the streets.

However, the protest appeared to have limited impact and triggered none of the violent clashes between police and protesters that marked a much larger strike in April.

It came after Brazil was riveted this week by a corruption charge filed against Temer by the country's top prosecutor.

The charge, the first ever levelled against a sitting president in Brazil, marked a milestone in a three-year probe by investigators that has revealed stunning levels of corruption in Latin America's largest country.

Temer, one-third of his cabinet, four past presidents and dozens of lawmakers are either on trial, facing charges or under investigation for corruption. Over 90 people have been found guilty so far. Brazil's largest oil workers federation said in an emailed statement that Friday's work stoppage would continue for an indefinite period, and that all 10 refineries where it represents workers were affected.

Executives at state-controlled oil company Petróleo Brasileiro SA acknowledged that the job action had a limited impact at oil refineries. But they said exploration and production activity, along with logistics, carried on as normal.—Reuters ■

Riot police clash with demonstrators during a protest against President Michel Temer's proposal reform of Brazil's social security system in the general strike in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 30 June 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Gunman kills doctor, wounds six others in Bronx hospital rampage

A police officer helps a woman from the scene after an incident in which a gunman fired shots inside the Bronx-Lebanon Hospital in New York City, US, on 30 June 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

NEW YORK — A doctor who had lost his job at a New York City hospital opened fire with an assault rifle inside the building on Friday, killing another physician and wounding six other people before taking his own life in a burst of apparent workplace-related violence, officials said.

The gunman, wearing a white medical lab coat, stalked two floors of the Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center, in the New York borough of the Bronx, and tried to set himself on fire before police searching the building found him dead of a self-inflicted gunshot, Police Commissioner James O'Neill said.

One female physician was shot to death, and six other people were wounded, five seriously, including one who was shot in the leg, O'Neill said at a news conference.

Mayor Bill de Blasio characterized the shooting as an "isolated incident" that appeared to be "a workplace-related matter." He said that it was "not an act of terrorism."

"One doctor is dead, and there are several doctors who are fighting for their lives right now amongst those who are wounded," de Blasio told reporters.

"This is a horrific situation unfolding in the middle of a place that people associate with care and comfort."

O'Neill said the gunman was armed with an assault rifle.

Neither the mayor nor police immediately identified the suspect or any of the victims. O'Neill said the gunman was a former employee of the 972-bed hospital.

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, in an interview with WABC News, identified the gunman as Dr. Henry Bello and said he had been fired by the hospital. Other media reports said Bello was 45 years of age.

The New York Times and the New York Daily News reported, citing unnamed sources, that Bello had resigned from the hospital rather than face termination over accusations of sexual harassment. —Reuters ■

British Airways cabin crew begin two-week strike in pay dispute

LONDON — Some British Airways cabin crew began a two week strike on Saturday in a prolonged pay dispute, risking further brand damage and travel disruption, although the airline said most passengers would be able to fly.

Members of BA's "mixed fleet" cabin crew — those who work on both long and short-haul flights — have been in conflict with BA since last year over wage offers which the Unite trade union has described as "poverty pay".

Although the pay dispute has largely been resolved, Unite said the walkout, the longest industrial action in the row, is a response to sanctions on union members involved in previous industrial action.

While the impact on flights is set to be limited, the stand-off is another potential threat to the airline's image a little over a month after thousands of passengers were stranded by a computer systems outage caused by a power surge.

"Customers will take a dim view and a great British brand risks being further tarnished. We call on British Airways to drop the threats and drop the sanctions and resolve this long-running dispute," Unite national officer Oliver Richardson said in a statement.

British Airways warned of further consequences for those who went on strike, but said all customers would reach their destinations.

A full schedule will run from Gatwick and London City, while a small number of Heathrow services will be merged, BA said.

Solicitors Bott & Co said around 400,000 passengers could be affected over the 16-day strike period.

Willie Walsh, CEO of BA's parent company IAG, said on Thursday that he expected all passengers to fly, as BA had applied to use 9 Qatar Airways planes, with staff. That application was approved on Friday.

The mixed fleet crew first threatened to strike over Christmas of 2016. Although that was called off, there have been 26 days of strike action so far this year.

The mixed fleet staff make up about a third of the BA's total cabin crew of around 16,000, although not all members of the crew will take action.

Unite said that 1,400 mixed fleet members who had been on strike previously had seen bonus payments and travel concessions removed.

"We have set out the consequences for crew if they take strike action," British Airways said in a statement.

"The purposes of these consequences are to encourage crew to come to work." —Reuters ■

British Airways logos are seen on tailfins at Heathrow Airport in west London, Britain on 12 May 2011. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

India presses Microsoft for Windows discount in wake of cyber attacks

MUMBAI — India is pressing Microsoft Corp to offer a sharply discounted one-time deal to the more than 50 million Windows users in the country so that they can upgrade to the latest Windows 10 operating system in the wake of ransomware attacks.

Microsoft officials in India have "in principle agreed" to the request, Gulshan Rai, India's cyber security coordinator, told Reuters over the phone on Friday.

A spokeswoman for Microsoft in India declined to comment on the matter. Officials at the company's headquarters in the United States and regional headquarters in Asia also declined to comment. If Microsoft agreed to such a discount, it could open up the global software giant to similar requests from around the world. Rai said the government was in talks with Microsoft management in India. It is not immediately clear whether any other countries were seeking similar deals. Rai said India began talks with Microsoft after the WannaCry ransomware attack last month, noting that both WannaCry and this week's attack, dubbed by some cyberexperts "NotPetya", exploited vulnerabilities in older iterations of the Windows OS.

"The quantum of the price cut, we expect some detail on in a couple of days," Rai said, adding the Indian government expected the company to offer the software at "throw-away prices."

"It will be a one-time upgrade offer to Windows 10 and it will be a discounted price for the entire country," said Rai, who was hand-picked by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to be the country's first cyber security chief. Rai declined to be more specific, but said he was confident that it would be "less than a quarter of the current price."

Rai, who has over two decades of experience in different IT areas including cyber security, said his team began coordinating with government agencies and regulators to push for OS upgrades soon after the WannaCry attack began on 12 May.

The government's quick action helped minimize the impact of the NotPetya attack, which affected two of India's container port terminals, he said.

The government has also worked with banks to ensure that some 200,000 of the more than 240,000 ATMs in the country, most of which run on older Windows XP systems, have been upgraded with security patches released by Microsoft following the WannaCry attack, Rai said. —Reuters ■

Colombia and ELN rebels move peace talks towards ceasefire

QUITO, (Ecuador) — Colombia's government and Marxist ELN rebels agreed to work towards a ceasefire, both sides said on Friday, a move that would improve security in the country where a peace accord with another guerrilla group led to its disarmament last week.

The government and the National Liberation Army (ELN), the second-largest insurgent group, began formal peace negotiations in February after more than three years of secret talks to draw up the agenda and logistics. The parties agreed to form a special panel on "humanitarian actions and dynamics" that will assess whether conditions are adequate to call a ceasefire and an end of hostilities, a Colombian government statement said. Pablo Beltran, leader of the ELN negotiating team in Quito, Ecuador, said the rebels would like to see a ceasefire in place before Pope Francis visits Colombia in September.

Friday's agreement includes the creation of a team that would provide education and communication and representatives of other countries to provide support and cooperation at the negotiating table. Beltran told reporters in Quito that the novelty of the latest cycle of talks is that "we begin discussions of a ceasefire that in addition to stopping offensive operations between the parties, brings humanitarian aid to the population." The next cycle begins on 24 July in Quito.

The government and the ELN want an agreement similar to last year's deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), Colombia's biggest rebel group.

In the past two weeks, FARC fighters have handed in all but a few of their firearms — and the bigger explosive weapons — to the United Nations to end its part in Latin America's oldest conflict in which more than 220,000 were killed over five decades.

The ELN, which has some 2,000 combatants and is considered a terrorist organisation by the United States and the European Union, is accused of kidnapping, killing and attacks on Colombia's oil and energy infrastructure, as well as extortion of oil and mining multinationals.—Reuters ■

Chilean scientists produce biodiesel from microalgae

SANTIAGO — Biodiesel made from microalgae could power buses and trucks and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 80 per cent, Chilean scientists said, possibly curbing pollution in contaminated cities like Santiago. Experts from the department of Chemical Engineering and Bioprocesses at Chile's Catholic University said they had grown enough algae to fragment it and extract the oil which, after removing moisture and debris, can be converted into biofuel.

Biochemist Cesar Saez (L) does a test on the engine of a car with a biofuel made with micro algae for high displacement diesel engines for reducing emissions of gases and particulate matter in Santiago, Chile, on 28 June 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

"What is new about our process is the intent to produce this fuel from microalgae, which are microorganisms," researcher Carlos Saez told Reuters.

Most of the world's biodiesel, which reduces dependence on petroleum, is derived from soybean oil. It can also be made from animal fat, canola or palm oil. Saez said a main challenge going forward would be to produce a sufficient volume of microalgae. A wide variety of fresh and salt water algaes are found in Chile, a South American nation with a long Pacific coast.

The scientists are trying to improve algae growing technology to ramp up production at a low cost using limited energy, Saez said.—Reuters■

Firefighters gain ground on Arizona wildfire

PHOENIX — More residents were allowed to return home and officials reopened a major roadway on Friday in central Arizona as firefighters continued to battle a six-day-old wildfire that forced thousands to evacuate.

The fire has damaged buildings, but there were no reported serious injuries, said Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire spokeswoman Tiffany Davila.

The blaze, dubbed the Goodwin Fire, has charred nearly 25,000 acres (10,120 hectares) and destroyed an unknown number of homes after erupting last Saturday in the Prescott National Forest, 70 miles (110 km) north of Phoenix.

Stoked by high winds as it roared through dense, sun-baked chaparral, the blaze raged largely unchecked for the first few days, but by late Thursday evening firefighting teams had managed to contain 43 per cent of the fire.

Authorities reopened part of Highway 69 in Mayer, a town of 1,400 people, and residents from the east side of nearby Poland Junction were allowed to return home on Friday, Davila said.

Still, at least 1,000 residents from about 10 other communities were waiting to return home.

Officials lifted evacuation orders on Thursday for several parts of the area, including Mayer, that was evacuated on Tuesday.

Diminished winds and increased humidity helped slow the fire's growth and intensity, aiding a force of about 1,000 firefighters, including crews in airplane tankers dumping payloads of flame retardants, officials said.

"Within the first few days of the fire, weather conditions — wind — and thick vegetation really hindered firefighters' operations," Davila said.

The Goodwin blaze was among the largest of the 17 active wildfires burning across Arizona on Friday.

Smoke rises from the Goodwin Fire which had prompted the evacuation of the town of Mayer, Arizona, US, on 27 June 2017. **PHOTO: REUTUERS**

Heavy rainfall in parts of the West over the winter and spring helped delay the onset of the fire season, but also spurred the growth of dense vegetation that has now dried out and become highly combustible as summertime heat sets in.

On Friday, Tennessee prosecutors dropped arson charges against two juveniles in connection with a November wildfire, where fourteen people died, in the eastern part of the state around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, officials said.

Prosecutors are unable to prove criminal responsibility of the two juveniles beyond a reasonable doubt because of weather conditions, according to a statement from Fourth Judicial District Attorney General Jimmy Dunn.

The deadly fire was the highest death toll from wildfires in the United States since 2013, when 19 firefighters died near Prescott, Arizona.—Reuters ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV RATANA THIDA VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV RATANA THIDA VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.7.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV MATHU BHUM VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MATHU BHUM VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.7.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/M.I.T.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 MOL (S'PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

Rapper Jay Z addresses infidelity, newborn twins in "4:44" album

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Jay Z let his music do the talking with his new album "4:44" on Friday as he addressed cheating on his wife Beyonce, the birth of his twins and this year's Oscars best picture.

In the title track, Jay Z admitted in his lyrics that he "often womanize", more than a year after R&B star Beyonce first shed light on his infidelities in her album "Lemonade".

Jay Z pens a remorseful ode to his fractured marriage in "4:44", rapping that it "took for my child to be born, see through a woman's eyes" in reference to the couple's daughter Blue Ivy.

He also mentioned their twins, who were reported to have been born this month but whose arrival has yet to be officially confirmed, saying it "took for these natural twins to believe in miracles, took me too long for this song, I don't deserve you".

Jay Z added: "What good is a menage a trois when you have a soul mate? You risked that for Blue? ... my heart breaks for the day I had to explain my mistakes."

Jay-Z presents the Video Vanguard Award to his wife Beyonce as he holds their daughter Blue Ivy during the 2014 MTV Video Music Awards in Inglewood, California in 2014. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Fans were left stunned last year when Beyonce made accusations in "Lemonade" that Jay Z had cheated on her, a rare crack in the seemingly perfect facade of one of music's highest-profile couples.

In her song "Sorry", Beyonce referred to a mystery woman, calling her "Becky with the good hair", which is echoed in Jay Z's track "Family Feud", a duet with Beyonce in which he raps "Let me alone Becky".

"4:44" was released exclusively on premium music streaming platform Tidal, founded by Jay Z, in partnership with US wireless carrier Sprint Corp, which purchased a 33 per cent stake in Tidal this year and made the album available via a six-month Tidal subscription to Sprint mobile customers.

It can also be heard throughout Friday across 160 US radio stations on iHeartRadio, the digital music service for a network of traditional radio stations.

The 35-minute album features Blue Ivy on the track "Legacy", in which the five-year-old asks "Daddy, what's a will?" as the rapper expresses hope that his children use their wealth to promote "black excellence".

In "Moonlight", Jay Z tackles the impact of the film "La La Land" being named best picture at this year's Oscars while in "The Story of O.J.", the rapper explores black identity in America.—Reuters ■

Paul McCartney settles with Sony/ ATV over Beatles music rights

NEW YORK — Paul McCartney has reached a confidential settlement of his lawsuit against Sony/ ATV Music Publishing LLC in which he sought to reclaim copyrights to songs by the Beatles.

The accord disclosed on Thursday in filings with the US District Court in Manhattan ends the 75-year-old McCartney's pre-emptive effort to ensure that the copyrights, once owned by Michael Jackson, would go to him starting in October 2018.

US District Judge Edgardo Ramos signed an order dismissing the case, but agreed to revisit it if a dispute arose.

The dismissal request had been made by Michael Jacobs, a lawyer for McCartney, on behalf of the singer and Sony/ATV.

It is unclear how the accord affects McCartney's copyright claims. The singer's representatives could not immediately be reached on Friday for comment.

McCartney had sued on 18 January for a declaration that he could reclaim more than 260 copyrights, including for songs credited to him and John Lennon such as "I Want to Hold Your Hand," "Yesterday" and "Hey Jude."

Paul McCartney celebrates after performing with Ringo Starr (not pictured) during the 2015 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Cleveland, US on Ohio in 2015. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

The registrations at issue also covered "Maybe I'm Amazed" and several other songs McCartney recorded as a solo artist.

They even covered such titles as "Scrambled Egg," which is close to the working lyric "Scrambled Eggs" that McCartney once used for the song that became "Yesterday."

McCartney had been outbid by Jackson in 1985 for the Beatles' song rights, which were later rolled into Sony/ATV, a joint venture with Sony Corp.

The pop star's estate sold its stake in that venture to Sony for $750 million last year.

McCartney sued 1-1/2 months after a British court said the pop group Duran Duran could not reclaim rights to their songs, in its case against Sony/ATV's Gloucester Place Music unit.

Changes made in 1976 to US copyright law let authors like McCartney reclaim song rights after periods of time elapsed.

In his lawsuit, McCartney said he could begin exercising his rights on Beatles songs, starting with "Love Me Do," on 5 October 2018.

The case is McCartney v Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC et al, US District Court, Southern District of New York, No. 17-00363.—Reuters ■

'Gypsy' star Naomi Watts promotes new TV thriller

NEW YORK — Actress Naomi Watts says her new television series "Gypsy" is part of a recent trend of productions with strong female characters.

Watts, who is also an executive producer of "Gypsy," plays a Manhattan therapist who dangerously inserts herself into the lives of her patients' acquaintances and family. "Gypsy," a 10-part series created and written by Lisa Rubin, is mainly driven by female characters.

"It's a cautionary tale, more than a psychological thriller," said Watts, adding that it was "very encouraging" to see more women in such strong roles.

"It really feels like we're watching a change take place in the last few years," she said in New York on Thursday.

The cast includes actresses Sophie Cookson, Lucy Boynton and Melanie Liburd.—Reuters ■

A new island in the Mediterranean...just off Gaza

JERUSALEM — At first glance the video looks like a promotion for a luxury offshore development, a Dubai Palm-style project on the Mediterranean. Then it becomes clear it's about Gaza and the future of the impoverished and fenced-in Palestinian enclave.

Israel's intelligence and transport minister has long pushed the idea of an artificial island off the coast of the Gaza Strip, with plans for a port, cargo terminal and even an airport to boost the territory's economy and connect it to the world.

A still image taken from handout video supplied by the Israeli ministry of intelligence and transportation shows animation of an artificial island off the coast of Gaza. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

But now the minister, Israel Katz, has released a slick, high-production video setting out his proposal in more detail, complete with a dramatic, English-speaking narration, colourful graphics and stirring music.

"The artificial island initiative is aimed at providing an answer to a reality that is bad for the Palestinians and not good for Israel," says the narrator, acknowledging that the aim is in part to change the view that Israel is to blame for the deteriorating circumstances of Gaza's two million people.

The Islamist militant group Hamas has controlled Gaza for the past decade, during which time Israel and neighbouring Egypt have maintained a tight blockade, restricting the flow of goods and people in and out, in part to pressure Hamas.

While Israel withdrew its soldiers and settlers in 2005, it still limits Gaza's access to the sea and controls its airspace.

"Today, Israel continues to be perceived as being responsible for the Gaza Strip and is to a large extent the only lifeline to it, even though it withdrew from the strip over a decade ago," says the narrator.

To challenge that perception, and tackle the broader humanitarian and economic problems that beset Gaza — it is currently receiving less than three hours of electricity a day and has unemployment exceeding 40 per cent — Katz's plan calls for a $5 billion investment over five years.

It envisages an international consortium building the 1,300-acre island (525 hectares) some three miles offshore, connecting it to the mainland via a causeway, which would have a bridge in the middle that could be raised, cutting off access.—Reuters ■

Tokyo ordinance to regulate dating services comes into force

TOKYO — A new ordinance to regulate dating services pairing up men with teenage schoolgirls came into force Saturday in Tokyo.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly unanimously passed the ordinance Friday that prohibits girls younger than 18 from working for such operations.

According to the Metropolitan Police Department, this is the first ordinance in Japan specifically targeting the so-called "JK business." JK stands for "joshi kosei," meaning female high school students.

JK business operators are now obliged to file a business registration with the Tokyo Metropolitan Public Safety Commission and make a list of employees to verify their ages. Police officers are also entitled to conduct an on-site inspection under the ordinance. Violators face penalties of up to one year in prison or a fine of up to 1 million yen ($8,900).

In Tokyo, police have confirmed the existence of 110 JK business establishments and 30 businesses without any office or facility. Some establishments have been known to covertly provide sexual services.

Earlier this week, the US State Department issued the 2017 Trafficking in Persons Reports, and Japan was graded Tier 2, the second rank on a four-level scale, for failing to "fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking."

The reports said variants of JK Business continue to facilitate the sex trafficking of children.—Kyodo News ■

The mascot of the Metropolitan Police Department hands out fliers in Tokyo's Harajuku area on July 1, 2017, to raise awareness of the danger of "JK business" pairing up men with teenage schoolgirls. A new ordinance to regulate such dating services came into force in the Japanese capital the same day. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

mitv Myanmar International
Programme Schedule

(2-7-2017 07:00am ~ 3-7-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	19 Hours
07:51	Am	Sagaing: Guitars
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Pole Star for the Blind
08:55	Am	A Photographer's Life at Shwedagon Pagoda
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Tourism development of Bagan
09:41	Am	The Art of Making Glaze Ware
10:03	Am	News
10:27	Am	Life of Sea Urchin Diver
10:38	Am	Adventurous Young Photographer

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)- Saturday 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
07:24	Pm	Myanmar's Traditions and Culture The Golden Land
07:44	Pm	Dances of Myanmar: Rvwang Azulam Dance
07:49	Pm	Today Myanmar: The Luyaychun Clinic, Free Yet Special
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	The Stories of The Great Souls (Mar Mar Aye) (Ep-2)
08:56	Pm	Black Gold (P - II)

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

MRTV
Programme Schedule (2-7-2017, Sunday)

6:00 Am
- Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

7:00 Am
- Breakfast News

8:35 Am
- Cartoon

8:45 Am
- Beautiful ASEAN

9:25 Am
- MRTV Travelogue

9:45 Am
- Poem For Children

10:00 Am
- Sunday Talks

10:35 Am
- Women in Myanmar Society

11:00 Am
- Documentary (Japan Yoga) (Part-2)

11:25 Am
- Taste of Korea

12:45 Pm
- Myanmar Movie

2:35 Pm
- This Week's Special Interest

3:00 Pm
- Teleplay

5:05 Pm
- Documentary

6:20 Pm
- Documentary

7:15 Pm
- TV Drama Series

8:00 Pm
- News/ International News/ Weather Report

8:35 Pm
- Myanmar Movies (Part-2)

9:50 Pm
- Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competition

Olympic Day Men Body Building and Model Physique Competition

MEN body building and model physique competitions in commemoration of 2017 Olympic Day were held yesterday in Myanmar Convention Center, Yangon. The competitions were jointly held by Myanmar Body Building and Physique Sports Federation, NatRay Wellness, Real Fitness, The Gym City Fitness Center, San and My Gym.

More than 180 male and female contestants participated in the competition. Prizes were given for above-50 male body building competition, junior male body building competition, free level male body building competition, Male Sports Physique completion, Female below 160 cm Model Physique Competition, Female above 160 cm Model Physique Competition, Female Athletic Physique Competition and Female Model Physique Competition.

Nan Laung Kham and Tun Tun Aung won the first prizes in the free category of the Model Physique Competition and the Male Body Building Competition. Preliminary selection to compete in the men body building and model physique competition in Seoul, Korea on 20 August will be made from the present competition.—Khin Zarli ■

Nan Laung Kham (Left) and Tun Tun Aung (Right) pose after winning first prizes respectively in the free caterogy. **PHOTO: MICHI KO HAN**

Stars turn out for Messi's wedding in Rosario

ROSARIO, (Argentina) — Some of the biggest names in world football gathered in Argentina on Friday to see Barcelona striker Lionel Messi wed his long-time girlfriend Antonela Roccuzzo.

Past and present Barcelona team mates Carles Puyol, Javier Mascherano, Neymar and Luis Suarez were all there, as was Gerard Pique and his pop star wife Shakira.

Several Premier League players were also among the 260 guests, including Chelsea's Cesc Fabregas and Manchester City's Sergio Aguero.—Reuters ■

Serena's absence leaves vacuum in women's game

LONDON — Brad Gilbert reckons 40 women have a shot at the Wimbledon title which, depending on which side of the fence you stand, means either the WTA Tour is blessed with extraordinary depth or chronically short of capable understudies for Serena Williams.

Its supporters will say the unpredictability adds to the spectacle, while detractors will point to the fact that, unlike in the men's game which is still in the midst of a golden era, there are few players capable of carrying the sport forward.

With Serena on maternity leave since winning a 23rd major title at this year's Australian Open, the door has been open for a bunch of new names to barge through.

Jelena Ostapenko did it at the French Open in stunning style to take the title, prompting none other than Chris Evert to proclaim the birth of a new star.

Only time will prove whether the 20-year-old Latvian can establish herself as a consistent grand slam challenger.

In the past years that has been something beyond pretty everyone apart from Williams, Maria Sharapova, who will be missing from Wimbledon as she makes a stuttering return from a doping ban, and former world number one Victoria Azarenka who is in the early days of a comeback from having a baby.

Serena Williams of the US celebrates after winning her women's singles final match against Lucie Safarova of the Czech Republic at the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, France, in 2015. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Current world number one Angelique Kerber enjoyed an incredible 2016, winning two majors, but has struggled badly this year. The same can be said of Spain's Garbine Muguruza who has faded since winning the 2016 French Open.

Twice champion Petra Kvitova returns to Wimbledon having recovered from injuries sustained in a stabbing last December and the fact that she is being tipped as favourite by many speaks volumes for the vacuum that currently exists.

"I said that at least 30 women could win the French, and I wouldn't even have put Ostapenko's name on the 30 because she hadn't won a WTA tournament," former world number four Gilbert, who will be one of ESPN's analysts during Wimbledon, said this week as he looked ahead to the championships.

"I will double down and say that 40 women could win Wimbledon. The field, without a doubt, is the clear favourite."

Incredibly, since Williams won the Australian Open no fewer than 22 players have won titles on the WTA Tour.

Only world number five Elina Svitolina from Ukraine, with four, and Russian world number 17 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, with two, have managed multiple titles since the Australian Open.

"I think at the top of the game, it's very chaotic right now. I think there's a lot of fragility," 18-times grand slam winner Evert told an ESPN conference call.

"I think the players that have been at the top have not lived up to their billing. I feel terrible saying that, but everyone who's reached number one, they haven't carried on the momentum, and they haven't stepped up and really embraced that position of leadership on and off the court.

"You really can't count on any one player right now like you could count on Serena in the past."

There are signs though that a brash new brigade, led by Ostapenko, could start to usher the old guard, the likes of the still dangerous Svetlana Kuznetsova, Venus Williams and Agnieszka Radwanska, out of the limelight.

Svitolina, 22, Madison Keys, 22, and Croatian Ana Konjuh, 19, are in a similar mould to Ostapenko, as is Estonia's 21-year-old Anett Kontaveit who could be a dark horse at Wimbledon after winning the grasscourt title in Den Bosch this month.

"Everything is really open, everyone can win," she told Reuters. "That's great for women's tennis. It's interesting to watch and to follow.

"It gets a little boring if it's always the same people." —Reuters ■

SUNDAY SPECIAL
2 July 2017
The Global New Light of Myanmar

Financial Inclusion and Microfinance

Khine Zar Thant

WITH the rise of the era of information technology, many of the problems that human beings are facing seem to become easily solved. Technology know-hows and knowledge sharing have become more advanced than ever before in this century. However, despite these circumstances, there are still many issues that need to be addressed. Financial inclusion is one of them.

On global average, level of extreme poverty is decreasing due to rise in economy mostly contributed by the Republic of China. Although average income seems to be rising, this is just a mere reflection of the whole population. Modern technology sadly replaces middle-skilled jobs leaving space for only high and low-skilled jobs, which then leads to grater income inequality. The rich become richer and the poor become poorer. The gap in income and assets become noticeably threatening to the economic development in every country. In order to attain this issue, affordable financial services must be provided to the poor for them to improve their livelihood.

In 2014, two billion adults, which is 20% of the world population, has no bank accounts (Findex 2014). These two billion people who are "unbanked" mostly reside in rural areas, are poorly educated and from agricultural sector. Moreover, only 46% of adults in Asia have accounts, which is the third lowest among the regions. Aside from these, higher percentage of urban population is expected in developing countries which will lead to higher unemployment and urban poverty. Governments need to aware that without full financial inclusion, better living condition for people at the grass root level will not be fulfilled. Hence, financial inclusion has been adopted in the national planning strategies in many countries.

Microfinance, which means providing financial services to the poor, has become wide spread as an effective poverty reduction tool and a possible answer for full financial inclusion. United Nations has declared "no poverty" as its number one Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With this, financial and structural supports for microfinance activities were established in most regions. Although many researches and studies are continuously conducted on microfinance and its impacts on poor people, there is no concrete evidence to support or disagree with its acclaimed benefits of the sector. However, this appears to be the only promising activity in order to meet the goal of full financial inclusion so far.

Although Microfinance is not new in Myanmar, the law was officially passed only in 2011 when the government imposed poverty reduction in its roadmap. Compared to our neighbours, our microfinance sector is relatively young where both challenges and exciting opportunities exist. Private sector involvement is encouraging although the sector is predominated by international NGOs and foreign players. There are still many to learn and adopt from our foreign friends who come with strong expertise and financial supports. Conferences, training programs and knowledge sharing platforms supported by the government as well as easy access to finance and any means of financial aids for local microfinance institutions would help boost the sector to the next level. Nevertheless, I believe that we will be able to improve the welfare of the grass root people if we can serve them with accessible financial services which meet their needs and contribute to the state of "full financial inclusion". ■

The Active and Exciting Day I Will Never Forget

Thune Kyal Cin @ Claudia
Grade 3 (Y.I.S)

It was a fine, calm afternoon at school, 9 months ago. My third grade teacher, Mrs.J, was explaining our class how to do a Party Planning Worksheet with our partners. Then we heard a very loud noise that was making "Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo" for a very long time.

Mrs.J looked outside the window and called us to come out the door without bringing anything. When all of us were out we saw people running and saying "fire". Some third graders were even bringing their backpacks but then they put them back.

Mrs.J led us to the garden door and she was walking very quickly. Then when we walk past the school garden we smelled smoke and thought there was something on fire. We saw many guards running into the building. My hands were shivering and shaking. We crossed the road and went into the gym. Other classes were also coming in. I saw some students with bare feet. Some students were holding their friends' hands very tightly. Some were freezed, gazing outside. They all looked worried.

Then, Mr.Von, the director of Y.I.S said, "Everyone, quiet please, there is no fire in Y.I.S, it is just an idea of what we should do when there is a real fire and the smell of fire was just from another place that was burning twigs, leaves and sticks". Now all students were quiet and I just heard "yah" and "phew".

We got dismissed and got back to our class. Finally, we got to do the worksheet with our partners. It was a very exciting and active day for us. ■

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

Basic English Grammar for Basic Students

Lesson 9: Nouns .. Gender

Hello, dear students,
Hope that you have done your last week's Exercises well!

Today, we are going to study Nouns: Gender.
Gender is how we determine Male, Female or neither male nor female.
In Grammar, we call it "Masculine Gender" for all males, "Feminine Gender" for all females and "Neuter Gender" for all things.

Let us see some examples.

Examples of Masculine Gender are man, boy, father, grandpa, king, cock, ox, drake, lion, tiger.

The Feminine Gender for these examples are … woman, girl, mother, grandma, queen, cow, duck, lioness, tigress.

Some words can be both masculine and feminine.

e.g. The word "teacher" can be used for both male teacher and female teacher.

So also with the word "doctor". But for a female doctor, we use the word "lady doctor".

(Be careful of the difference between " a lady doctor" and "a doctor's lady".)

We can also say "a man teacher " and " a lady teacher". But it is rare that we use like this. We simply say "a teacher".

Examples of "Neuter Gender" are chair, desk, book, tree, cup, laptop, computer, cupboard, road and lake. All things are "Neuter Genders".

But, sometimes , we think of some things as if they were alive and use as "Masculine" or "Feminine".

e.g. Mother Ayeyarwady,
the Maiden Voyage of an Ocean-liner .(as if the ship were feminine)
Oh, look at the moon; she's shining up there (as if the moon were feminine)
Mother India, Mother Myanmar , Mother tongue, Father Country (Japan use like this.) Mother Land (which means Native land)
Here comes the exercises now!

Exercise 9

I. Give 5 examples of Masculine, 5 of Feminine and 5 Neuter Nouns.
II. Please find the Feminine of the following Masculines.
King, prince, duke, son, uncle, actor, singer, steward, pilot, driver.
III. Find the Masculine of the following Feminine nouns.
Nurse, hen-sparrow, she-cat, writer, authoress, women, lady, princess, witch, professor.

How to change Feminine Gender from Masculine Gender
Mostly . we put "ess" after the Masculine Nouns as it is in :..
Prince .. Princess, lion .. lioness, steward .. stewardess,
Sometines , we simply put the word "lady" before or after the Masculine Nouns , as in :.. doctor… lady doctor, land-lord … land –lady .

But, most of the Masculine and Feminine Nouns are quite different as in :..
Ox…cow , hen.. cock, Duke .. Duchess, Lord.. Lady, King.. Queen .
Sometimes we put the word he or she before the Nouns to show them whether they are Masculine or Feminine, as in :..
He-cat… she-cat, he-goat.. she-goat.
Now, here comes the Exercise again.

Exercise 9

IV. Change the Nouns in the following sentences into Feminine.
(a) The King and the prince came on the horses.
(b) Grandpa wanted to see his grandson.
(c) My father and my uncle will go to Europe.
(d) Will the doctor come with us?
(e) The Duke and his son will come to our dinner party.
(f) He did not like to roast the drakes.
(g) How many oxen have they in their farm?
(h) The teacher and his students are preparing for the sports to be held tomorrow.
(i) The Uncle has never seen his nephew.
(j) That gentleman loved his he-cat.

V. Change the Nouns in the following sentences into Masculine.
(a) The rich woman feeds her bitch very well.
(b) Does she really like her sports-car?
(c) You all Ladies, I'm happy to see you all here in this meeting.
(d) Have you ever seen the tigresses in the zoo?
(e) She and her mother like to buy jewelries.
(f) The woman and her daughter will come to work at our house.
(g) The Duchess likes her maid-servant.
(h) The old woman was looking for her nanny-goat.
(i) She owns fifty cows.
(j) Can the little girl sing sweetly?

VI. Fill in the following blank spaces with suitable words.
(a) All the boys and all the …….. go to school.
(b) Ducks'tails, …….. tails , yellow feet a quiver.
(c) Oh! Look at the moon, ……. shining up there .
(d) Although they get a baby-girl, they prefer a ……
(e) We see the lion at the front of the cave, the ……may be in the ……
(f) The old man is looking for his billy-goat, but he saw only his ……...
(g) What are you going to do with your oxen and your…….?
(h) When the wife fell asleep, the …….. slowly slipped out of the bed.
(i) Father and …….. are discussing about their children.
(j) Although the gentleman is very rich, the ……. is very stingy.

Hope that you can do the exercises very well.
Bye for now class! See you next week.
Your English Teacher (GNLM)
Email: dr.nunuwintin.rose.dawn@gmail.com

Here come the answers for last week's exercises.
Exercise 8.

I. To underline the pronouns.
(a) its, (b) you, your, (c) He, his, (d) We, our, (e) She. It,
(f) I, you , I, (g) My, It, his, (h) We, its, its, its, we, its, (i) You, your, I, mine, (j) She, you

II.	**First Person**	**Second Person**	**Third Person**
(a)	I		My friends
(b)	I	you	
(c)		you , you	She
(d)		you, you	They, them
(e)	We		his house
(f)	we	you	
(g)	I	you	
(h)	I		its tail
(i)	we , We	you	
(j)			my words, He

III.	**Subjective Case**	**Objective Case**	**Possessive Case**
(a)	He, he,it, he, he, He,He	them	
(b)	you,we	him	my, his, His,his
(c)	They, It, we	them	their
(d)	She, she ,you	you, you	Our, her,
(e)	he,he,you	him,him	his, his

IV. (a) When Ma Ma saw Maung Maung playing in the dirty mud, she called him to come out of it quickly. He is her younger brother, so she scolded him why he was playing with it. But, as he was only a young little boy, he liked playing in it very much.
(b) Mary had a little lamb and its fleece was white as snow and everywhere that she went, it was sure to go.
(c) Peter Piper picked a pack of pickled pepper and it was picked by him.
(d) Susan saw some seashells on the shore. These were bright and beautiful in the sunshine. She liked to carry them to her home.
(e) Oh! Look at the moon. She is shining up there. Oh! Mother, she looks like a lamp in the air. Last week, she was smaller and shaped like a bow, but now she grows bigger and round as an O. Are the little stars around you, are your little babies?

Hope that you all have done well!
See you next Sunday! Bye Bye class!

How to Improve and What to Improve in Our Education System (2)

Dr. Nu Nu Win
(Retired Professor and Head of Department)

IN LAST week's discussion , the writer has mentioned some important factors we should improve in our Education System and also mentioned that we should know what to improve , how to improve and when to improve.

Let's think of one or two other important factors we should improve in our Education System. Apart from the quality and quantity of teachers, Curriculum is also important to improve.

When we say "Curriculum", we need to think of what to teach, whom to teach, how to teach and when to teach.

First of all, we should know what "Education" is.

"Education" is a process in which children or students are taught or trained what they would need throughout their lives through different approaches or different subjects.

Here we can mention longitudinal study and latitudinal studies. Longitudinal Study means we learn or study a subject matter day after day, month after month and year after year.

In this way the process of study will become higher and higher. For example, we study the Myanmar language starting from writing "Wa Lone" which we need to draw a circle till it is perfectly round and beautiful. Then come the Myanmar alphabets like "Ka Gyi , Kha Kway , Ga Nge ,….. and so on". So, day after day, month after month and year after year , we should learn more and more , a little by little so that we can reach to a higher and higher stage concerning the Myanmar language. It is the same with other subject matters or other approaches. In this way the study of an individual will become higher and higher. That is what we call Longitudinal Study. (We use the same vocabulary in our researches when we study one group of persons or one factor for a long, long, time like some years or some months. In the research studies for the Master's degree and Ph.D. degrees , we need to do such kinds of longitudinal studies.

In Latitudinal Study, what we mean here is at the same time or in the same class, we need to study different matters through different approaches or different subjects. For example, we need to study not only the Myanmar language, but also other subjects as English, Mathematics, Geography , History and Science etc.

The main aim is to let an individual become equipped with different subject matters he or she should know at a specific age.

This kind of study is called "Latitudinal Study".

So, for all these different subject matters, who will be the decision makers for the students what to teach, how to teach , how much to teach to and when to teach . The decision makers should be the Educationists , who know very well about the students of different ages , who know the nature and specific development and interests of students at their different ages , especially the Educational Psychologists , together with the subject matter specialists . If these two different specialists can coordinate and cooperate very well, then a very good subject matter or curriculum will come out.

When the writer attended a Course on " Study Planning and Curriculum Development" in Israel , they chose only Educational Psychologists from our department and during the whole study , most of the Courses were about Educational Psychology, by the Experts in Educational Psychology who had studied under our Great Educational Psychologists namely, Piaget and Bruner and so on.

That is what the writer wishes to underscore, "who should be the decision makers" in writing or producing a Curriculum.

And concerning with the Curriculum, another aspect the writer wants to mention here is the different steps we need to take care in developing a Curriculum.

Different learning steps will come up one after another or step by step , if we do not want our students to do just parrot learning as we see during the present. These different steps in learning are: ..

(1) Knowledge,
(2) Comprehension,
(3) Application,
(4) Analysis,
(5) Synthesis,
(6) Evaluation.

(We can also find the steps "Creativity" and "Critical Thinking" which are now very popular among different persons who are interested in Education. Most of the persons say "We want to change the mindsets, we want to learn Creativity and Critical Thinking instead of rote learning and so on. Although they mention or they call utter they popular words, the writer doubts whether they know what these are or not.)

These above-mentioned steps are the ones, we want our children or our students to learn, one after another, step by step.

(Here, the writer is not against "rote learning", because sometimes and in some matters, we need to learn by heart. That is what we call "rote learning" nowadays, but what I want to say here is, although we need to get other steps, we don't need to throw away this method. It is quite useful in some places, especially the age of students, mostly who are teenagers, we need to let them practice it in one place or the other. As the teenage years are the period during which we can say "the golden age of memory", sometimes we can let them learn by heart. I will discuss about it more in the coming discussions.)

Let's analyze these six different steps one after another.

First comes the "Knowledge" Stage.

Here in this stage , students should learn what they should need to learn at this specific age, through the Teachers' teachings, reading books, listening to talks and radio programmes, and watching television, and also by practical projects, and so on . So they will learn what they see, what they hear, what they read, what they do and so on. And they will learn these by memorizing or learning by heart or rote learning. The important thing here in this step is, we need to let them understand or get the concept of it first. If they just learn just by heart without knowing or understanding the concept of the subject matter they learnt, it is not good.

That is the first step. No complications at all. If teachers and parents make them study by heart without getting any concept, there can be complications and misunderstanding by them which will lead them to frustrations and that is the great blockers to their urge to study more.

The next step is "Comprehension".

Here, as in the English Comprehension questions, we cannot answer the questions if we do not comprehend or understand the passage we have read. The same thing happens here too. This step is before learning by heart or by rote learning, we need to understand what we are going to learn or to study. Only after we understand what we have to learn, we can keep it in our memory very well and for long periods of time.

The next step is "Application".

Here in this step, we should not only "get the concept and memorize a factor", and not only "understand it", we should go a little higher or farther step so that we can "apply it "in suitable places and at a suitable time. It is useless if we just keep in our memory the thing we learnt by heart and although we may have understood it, it is of useless. If we can apply it or contribute it in some other places, its value becomes higher and higher.

The value of a man depends on how much he can contribute for others . Contribution just for his own family, for his community and his society, for his country, and for all human beings will decide how much his value is. The more contributions he can make, the more value he has.

So it is with our curriculum. The more applications or contributions we can make, the more valuable is the subject matter and the more contributions that can be made by the learners. It will decide the value of the learners, the teachers and the subject matters.

The next step is "Analysis".

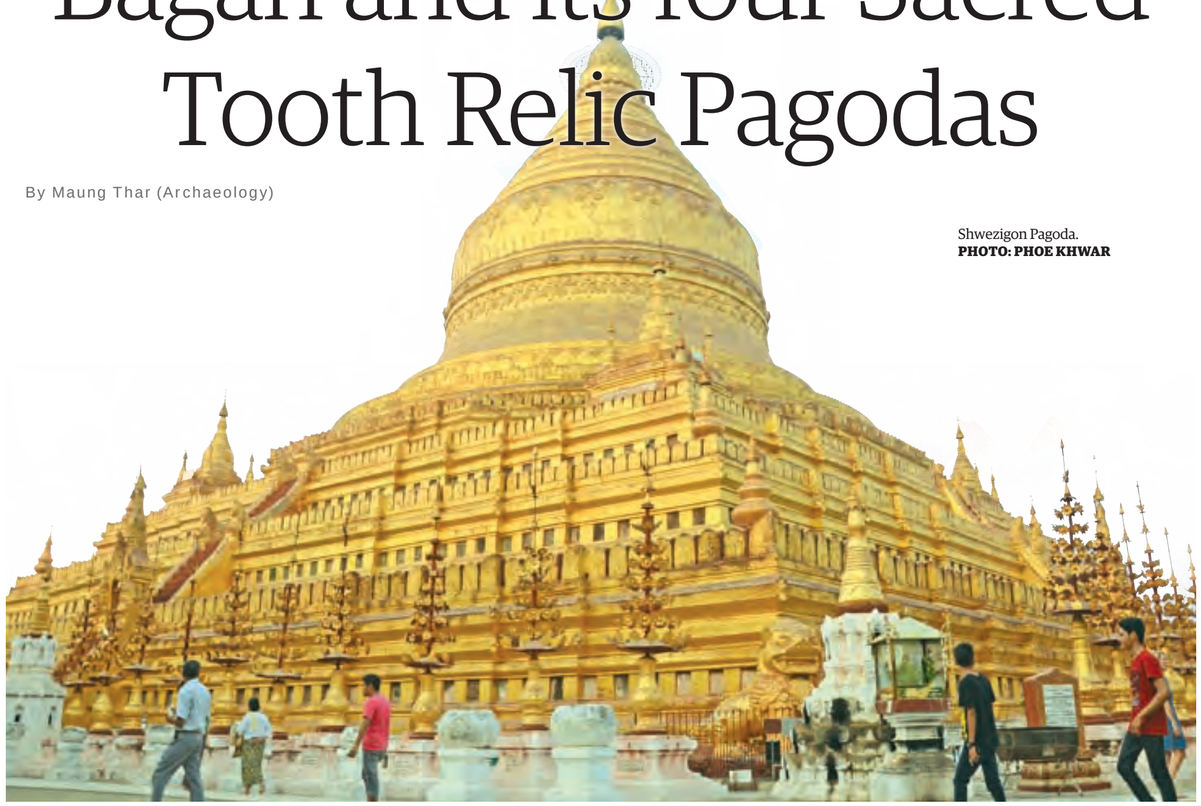
As it is mentioned in its name, this step will lead the learner to analyze what he had already learnt.

(to be continued next week)

2 JULY 2017
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Bagan and its four Sacred Tooth Relic Pagodas

By Maung Thar (Archaeology)



Shwezigon Pagoda. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

MOST of the pilgrims to Bagan usually visit and pray at Shwezigon, Lawka Nanda, Tankyi Taung and Tuyin Taung pagodas. People believe if they can make a complete round visit to those four pagodas within a day making cash and kind donations in equal amount to each of those four pagodas and pray the same wish at those four pagodas, the wishes of the pilgrims will be fulfilled.

Those pagodas are, according to the historical record of Bagan, built by King Anawrahta enshrining a sacred tooth relic in each pagoda respectively. Out of those four pagodas, two pagodas, Shwezicgon and Lawka Nanda were constructed on the flat land of Bagan plain at Nyaung U and Bagan and the other two are located on the hills of Bagan-Nyaung U area, precisely speaking one is on the Tuyin Taung (Tuyin Hill) between Nyaung U and Kyakpadaung with other one on Tankyi Taung (Tankyi Hill) on the west bank of Ayarwaddy River.

During the reign of Anawrahta at Bagan, 1st Wizayabarhu King of Sri lanka made a request to King Anawrahta to send him Tri Pitaka (Treatises on three major disciplines of Buddha's Sermon), Buddhist Monks and a white elephant as donations. King Anawrahta complied with Wizayabarhu's request. Wizayabahu gave a replica of authentic Buddha Sacred Tooth Relic as a token of appreciation of Anawrahta's compliance. The replica was supposed to have the same mystic power as the original one as it is conscecrated by placing together with the authentic one.

King Anawrahta before enshrining the replica of Buddha Sacred Tooth Relic in Shwezigon Pagoda acquired another replica and put it on a white elephant, let it carry to the destination at its discretion. The elephant rested and crouched at Tankyi Taung. Then the king made another replica and did it the same as previous one. This time the elephant stopped at a hillock near a port of Bagan in Ayarwaddy river. When another replica was produced again and did the same, the elephant stopped at Tuyin Taung. King Anawrahta built each pagoda at three places where the elephant located by crouching. So King Anawrahta had built 4 pagodas altogether with one sacred tooth relic enshrined in each of the pagodas.

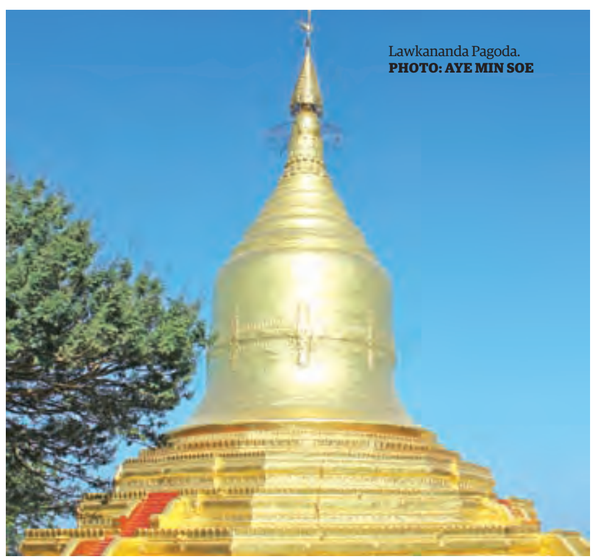
Shwezigon Pagoda

King Anawrahta built Shwezigon Pagoda in AD1060 enshrining one emerald Buddha statue and relic of frontal bone of Buddha. When three terraces had been finished, the King enshrined the tooth relic of Buddha in Shwezigon. King Anawrahta (1044 – 1077) could not finish the construction of this pagoda. King Kyansittha (1084 – 1113) continued building Shwezigon Pagoda enveloping the original stupa built by Anawrahta. The Shwezigon was finished in 1890 AD.

In the book of Bagan Stupas and Temples, it is said that the scholars considered the name Shwezigon was derived from Zeyabon and " Zeyakhone of Nine Wonders" was found in one of the stanzas of the "Shwezigon and its nine wonders" poem written by Kinwun Mingyi. Moreover, in the line 16 of the inscriptions on the bell donated by King Bayintnaung also expressed the word "Zeyabon".

Shwezigon is one of the 43 stupas which were built enveloping on the pre-existing smaller stupas. The main building material of Shwezigon was stone slabs from Tuyin Tauung, hence one of 4 religious edifices built of the stones in Bagan. (4 buildings constructed with stones in Bagan are Shwezigon Pagoda, Kyaukgu Umin, Nan Phaya and Pitaka Taik)

165 ft high Shwezigon Pagoda was built on the square-shaped plinth, each side of which is 160 ft long. Shwezigon was the first pagoda of Bagan built in Myanmar style. The Shwezigon is beautiful and graceful having decorated features of three terraces, bell-shaped structure, mouldings, Bilu floral pendent, up-turned and down-turned lotus petals, banana bud, satellite small stupas at angles and the stairs.



Lawkananda Pagoda. **PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE**

Lawkananda Pagoda

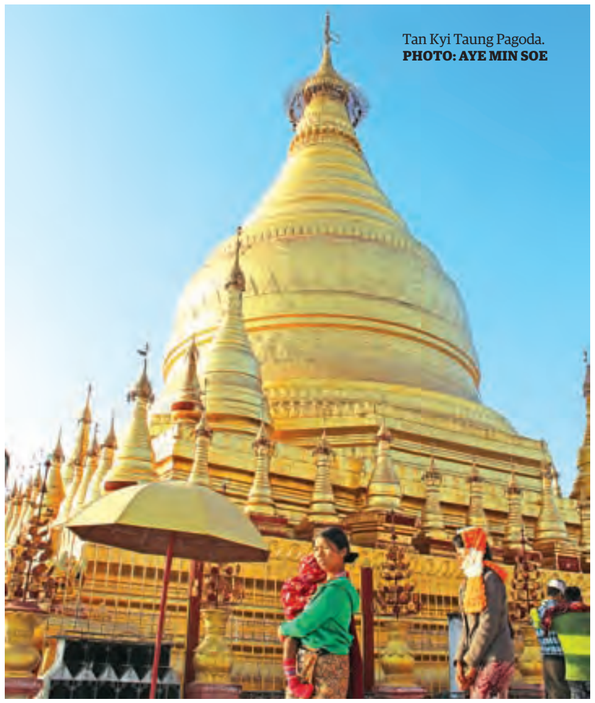
Lawkananda Pagoda is situated just on the bank of Ayarwaddy River like Myathalun of Magwe and Bu Phaya of Bagan. King Anawrahta put the 2nd replica of Sacred Tooth of Buddha in a flower basket which was mounted on the white elephant and let the elephant set off with free destination. The elephant stopped on a hillock on the bank of Ayarwaddy near Bagan port and south of 2nd old palace site of Thiriipyitsaya. King Anawrahta built a pagoda at the place where the elephant rested, enshrining the replica of Buddha's tooth and named the edifice "Lawkananda Pagoda". The stone inscription in the east of the pagoda expressed the name of the pagoda as "Lawkananta".

Out of the four Tooth Relic Pagodas built by King Anawrahta , the Lawkananda is the third one located in the southwest of Bagan. The pagoda was built in 1059 AD manifesting the transitional character in architectural style from Pyu era to Bagan era. It has no structural decoration of upturned and downturned lotus flower and also no Bilu floral pendent above the bell shaped structure indicating the remnant of Pyu architectural style. The scholars made a conclusive remark that Lawkananda is the transitional form from Pyu architectural style to Myanmar architecture.

The bell portion of Lawkananda has displayed a somewhat cylindrical shape with flaring base that characterized Pyu architecture. The bell is set on the terraces and the mouldings are of two types, one is symmetrical convex and another is convex with one side sloping. Girdle moulding has embossed glass mosaic structures.

Eastern praying shrine has a Bagan era stone inscription dated 569 MY that states the pagoda in the name of "Sakkawatay Anuradar Kyaung". In the book "Bagan Stupas and Temples" it is described that the scale model of Lawkananda Pagoda can be found in the straight north of the Lawkananda Pagoda, in the precinct of Kyaukmyet Mawgyi Pagoda.

1975 Bagan Earthquake had toppled the upper part of the stupa and a stone casket was exposed. Inside the stone casket, metal casket was found. Then bronze casket, silver casket and gold casket were discovered serially, gold casket being the innermost one. In the gold casket sesame-sized pearl-coloured sacred relic and tooth shaped stone were found. The sacred relic and tooth-shaped stone were enshrined again in the Lawkananda Pagoda whereas the caskets were displayed at Bagan Archaeological Museum. 2 Bronze statues of early Bagan age were also discovered from Lawkananda Pagoda.



Tan Kyi Taung Pagoda. **PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE**

Tuyin Taung Pagoda. **PHOTO: MMAL**

Tuyin Taung Pagoda

Tuyin Taung Pagoda is situated about 6 miles away in the southeast of Bagan and 2 miles in the west of Nyaung U – Kyaukpadaung Car Road. Tu Yin Taung is connected in the north with the Thetsoe Taung (Thetsoe Hill) and also known as sandstone hill formed 25 million years ago. The stone from Tuyin Taung was used in building Shwezigon Pagoda. Once famous former Bagan Mya Kan (Bagan Mya Lake) was also found on Tuyin Taung. There is a lower range of hills occurring parallel with Tuyin Taung (Tuyin Hill Range). Rain water from Tuyin Range and Thet Soe Range flows into the valley between Tuyin and Thet Soe hills. The water from the valleys and ravines flow into a stream that flows from south to north. That stream was dammed across and a lake was formed. The lake was called Mya Lake. The foot area of the Tuyin Taung is well- known in Myanmar tradition as a place where King Alaungsithu showed his power and strength in the pretext of lord of white horse with striped turban and the cremation of Shin Arahan was undertaken. According to the stone inscription of Tuyin Taung Pagoda Tuyin was derived from Pali word "Tu Ringa" and it bears the meaning "similar to a horse".

Tuyin Swedaw Zedi (Tuyin Taung Tooth Relic Pagoda) was built with octagonal plinth that based the upper bell-shaped dome like Lawka Nanda Pagoda. The base of the stupa has 32 elephant image and the original shape of the stupa was simple, slender and tapering upwards with ovolo mouldings above the dome. The present figure and configuration of the stupa is the result of renovations made successive monarchs, not the original one.

Tan Kyi Taung Pagoda

Tan Kyi Taung pagoda is situated in the west of Ayarwaddy River on the Tan Kyi Taung Hill. Pilgrims have to cross the river from Bagan to reach the Tankyi Taung Pagoda. The pilgrims can enjoy the scenic beauty of Bagan with Popa mountain and Tuyin mountain in the background from the top of the Tankyi Taung. Moreover, tradition says that Buddha had preordained in this Tankyi Taung.

King Anawrahta built a stupa which enshrined a consecrated Replica of Buddha's Tooth at the top of Tankyi Taung. It has the structural elements such as Hti (umbrella), Banana Bud and mouldings. Square plinth were based under the bell-shaped structure. Original forms and shapes and decorative structures has been lost as the pagoda was repaired or renovated by the successive monarches.

Tankyi Taung Pagoda is 90 ft. high and the plinth is 60 ft. high. The pennant-shaped vane installed at the every level of nine-tiered umbrella has been made up of silver. The shape of the stupa is similar to Mya Thalun Pagoda of Magwe. According to the history of the Tankyi Taung Pagoda written on board displayed in the precinct of the pagoda, the height of the Tankyi Taung (Tankyi Hill) is 1050 ft., the first donor was Thiri Dhama Thawka, second donor was Anawrahta and the third donor was Alaung Sithu.

The Archaeological Department recorded as Kyaung Gyi Okni that can be deciphered as 2217 that is the number of amount of religious edifices present in Bagan archaeological zone. Amongst those numerous pagodas, there are only four pagodas that has been recorded as having the Sacred Tooth relic of Buddha enshrined. Out of those four pagodas two built in the plain has retained the original architectural elements and the other two has been overwhelmed by the later addition of architectural features and decoration and ornamentation.

People in Myanmar have usually been obsessed with the idea that the religious edifices with the gold colour are the most attractive and can engender the most reverence. However, we will be able to maintain the archaeological religious structures properly only under the concept that every archaeological structures should be maintained adhering as much as possible to the original shape, form, colour and architecture discarding the liking of religious structures in gold colour.

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SUNDAY COMICS

Negotiation for peace process is a long process and negotiation towards transition is equally complex

A wide-ranging interview with South African Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Geoffrey Quinton Mitchell Doidge by the Myanmar News Agecny and MRTV touched upon democratic and economic reform, peace process and bilateral relations between South Africa and Myanmar.

South African Ambassador Mr. Geoffrey Quinton Mitchell Doidge speaks during the interview in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: AYE THAN**

Q: Good afternoon your Excellency and nice to meet you. We have already known that our diplomatic ties have been over 20 years. In the course of history, we have been able to strengthen friendly ties between the two countries. And with your presence here, we hope that we will be able to strengthen friendly ties and how about your opinion over our friendly ties between the two countries?

A: Our diplomatic relations between the two countries have been over two decades. We are very encouraged by recent developments in Myanmar since 2010. Myanmar has become transition to democracy and made a very good progress. We are very interested in your Panglong Conference I and II and South Africa is eager to share with you our experience to know what South Africa did. Sharing of experience on persistent way for ensuring democracy by South Africa in the past will give Myanmar. We don't tell you what to do but we share our experience for you to learn from our mistakes.

Q: As you know, we are in the process of democratization and national reconciliation. And that process, could you please elaborate on your impression over the government's efforts toward democratization and national reconciliation?

A: Negotiation for peace process is a long process and negotiation toward transition is equally complex. And these are not easy processes and they have to be inclusive and this process can take many years. South Africa also solved these processes for many years. Our negotiations started in the late 1980 before the release of Nelson Mandela. And in 1990, Nelson Mandela was released. That was the beginning of new process that let to the election in 1994 and that was the first democratically election. The then parliament has passed over 700 laws to transform the country and to transform the state missionary. With Nelson Mandela became the President and that was the beginning of democratization of South Africa. We are still facing inequality, poverty and other challenges and other legacies of the successive governments. Most importantly, transitions are still affecting life of South Africa and South Africa is still undergoing transition. Although, we still have concluded our transition, we have not concluded our nation-building. We are still in the process of making peace among each other and we until achieve nation-building only then can peace be prevailing among all of us. So, my message to Myanmar is that we all need to be patient and people of Myanmar need to be patient. South Africa is willing to assess Myanmar and to share experience over the next four years.

> South Africa is willing to assess Myanmar and to share experience over the next four years.

Q: Since coming into office, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been focusing on bringing about peace throughout the country by holding Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong. In that regards, Could you make suggestions on our government efforts toward peace process compared with your country?

A: South Africa has advantages of handing over of one system to another system. That is not the case in Myanmar. You carry on with your system of governance. So you have to do with wide governance and the important thing is we appreciate the mandate in which Myanmar has conducted the peace conference. Yet will be challenges are always challenges. Even in South Africa, our negotiation broke down three times. The first one we failed, the second failed and the third one was successful which is known as multiparty negotiating forum. The third one was successful, two times failure and only three times we got it right. And there are still we have to like the constitution. So these processes are very complex and they cannot be rushed and we must feel everybody involve to understand that although we have made progress we must be sure that we bring people and everybody to participate. These processes can only be successful if there is participation by everybody concerned.

> We encourage everybody to come and participate and that will make a comprehensive solution to the peace process.

Q: We have known that you used to be a minister. You have so many experiences. That's why; we would like to know your personal overview on the efforts of our new government.

A: Both myself and my government that I have represented as foreign minister we commend that the government of Myanmar for the progress that have been made. We know that these steps are with challenges. We commend and encourage the government and the participants in the Panglong Peace Conference even though it was not signed the ceasefire agreement. We encourage everybody to come and participate and that will make a comprehensive solution to the peace process. So South Africa is very encouraged by the process and we would like to see yet more participation and we would like to see progress but we are also very sensitive to the different views and the challenges that are existing in negotiating process and peace process. But South Africa is committed to sharing its experiences with Myanmar. ■

A TALE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 10

A friendly dolphin of the Ayeyawady river in Myanmar

By Khin Maung Phone Ko

Preface: The river Airward is longest river in Myanmar flows from the north to the south delta which is about 800- 1000-mile long. There is a dolphin conservation near Mandalay the northern second capital city of the country. The one in this river is known to be a fresh water dolphin (with scientist name of Orceaella brevirostris). It is widely known as Ayeyawady dolphin which was discovered by an English naturalist John Anderson in 1871 to 1879 expedition.

In our story Ashely, the grey round snouted Ayeyawady dolphin lives in the river section between Kyauk Myaung and Mingun area. He saw daily, a fisherman Maung Pike went out to throw net in river to catch fishes. Each of them saw each other and became acquainted friends. Sometime Maung Pike gave Ashely some fish, thinking the sight of him brings him a successful catch of fishes.

It went on for some time and Ashely sometime jumped and sat on Maung Pike's Boat and watch fishes in the river. In the other time, Ashely being a good swimmer dive in the water and help to drive small cluster of fishes to go into Maung Pike's net.

For Maung Pike, he got many fishes and gave more fish to Ashely for his meal. When other village fisherman heard this news, they also make friends with other merlady dolphins. This was going on for fishing with the dolphin in this region, until today. A reliable report mentions that there are seven villages have fishermen used the Ayeyawady dolphins to catch fishes. The friendship between Ashely the dolphin and Maung Pike the village fisherman is going on for some time.

[P.S.!!! This story is based on the article on rare species-Ayeyawady dolphins by Maung Tha (Archaeology) posted on the Global News Light of Myanmar daily on 20 April 2017. The author was greatly indebted to the writer of the article and the GNLMD papers.]

The Bible verses

… and love your neighbour as yourself." (Luke 10:27, NIV)

Listen to me, please!

Some want me do a business
Saying money second goddess!

Some want me a physician
Saying it a meritorious profession

Some want me a teacher
Saying it the greatest thing ever

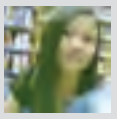
They talk and talk and talk
None is asking which way I want to walk

Though talking same thing for eternity
Nobody ever listens to me

I've got something real in me
Growing like a giant tree

Here is the way I choose right now
Far different they told me how

Dare say I will lead a life of ease
First you have to believe in me, please!



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