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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with the interfaith delegation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor receives interfaith delegation

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received an 18-member interfaith delegation composed of local and international members of Religions for Peace (RfP) and other interfaith groups at 10:00 hours on 25 May 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, the

members of the delegation presented their collective views and efforts in advancing peace and development in Myanmar, highlighting the inter-linkages between peace and development, and the important role of education in building a peaceful society, and expressed their commitment to maintaining peace in

all corners of the world.

The State Counsellor also shared her view that everyone wants peace and love, as well as being loved, and every religion is exerting efforts for peace and love throughout the world. She stressed that the people should focus on positive attitude and refrain from negative. The State

Counsellor requested the interfaith delegation to motivate individuals through the concept of gaining love by giving love, to encourage people to cultivate courage and strength to carry on in their quest for peace and love not only for Myanmar but also for the world at large and the future of humanity.

Present also at the meeting were Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA ■

Union Ministries hold press conference on second one-year performance

As part of the series of press conferences on the Union Ministries' second one-year performances, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, and Ministry of Hotels and Tourism held their

press conference at the Ministry of Information building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Ministry of Information

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint explained of his ministry's role in bridging the gap between

the government and the public and disseminating information among the people.

The Information and Public Relations Department established public libraries across the country and has been upgrading them into community centres

with book clubs. Over a hundred public talks have been carried out in these centres as well.

The Ministry has the task of reporting news to the people and in light of increasing importance of the IT sector the ministry has formed Myanmar Digital News

(MDN) to better reach out to the online sector.

The union minister said MOI has been partnering with private organizations as well in disseminating news, knowledge and entertainment to the public.

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Pyithu Hluttaw

7th-day meeting of 8th regular session of 2nd Pyithu Hluttaw held

By Aye Aye Thant (MNA)

Perpetrators exploiting mountain range in Rakhine apprehended

THE eighth regular session of the second Pyithu Hluttaw convened its seventh-day meeting yesterday.

During the session, U Oo Tun Win of Kyauktaw constituency posed a three-part question: (i) whether the demolition of the historically significant mountain range near Daungtawyo Village in the east of Kyauktaw Township, Rakhine State, would be prohibited, (ii) if the excavation businesses that had sprung up near the discontinued railway project were legal, (iii) how has the income generated from excavation businesses been used for the country and the people since 2010?

Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe replied, on behalf of the Rakhine State government.

He said the Rakhine State Peace and Development Council had leased 20 acres, along with 10 acres of grazing land from the Taungpaukgyi mountain range to state departments and the state



Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe. PHOTO: MNA

police force, respectively, in 2003 for use as agricultural land. The police officers were reportedly using only 3 acres of the leased land, while the remaining 7 acres were left unattended. He explained that in the 2008-2009 period, while working on a project to build a railway line through the mountain range, the Myanmar Railways had discovered laterite rocks during the demolition process. It then contracted with a private company to excavate the rocks, and on 17 December 2013, it contracted with a local resident to continue with the excavations.

The railway project was discontinued on 4 April 2014 after residents protested against the



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat. PHOTO: MNA

demolition of the ancient capital Dhanyawadi and Mrauk-U, which are cultural heritage zones. However, the excavation of laterite rocks continued, and the concerned village administrators and excavators were given final warnings on 4 March 2017, following which the excavation businesses were not allowed to continue operating in the area.

However, a state police investigation revealed that the 7 acres of leased land that had been left unattended by the police force were being used for excavation businesses, with permission from the Kyauktaw Township police chief. Further, legal action was taken against all involved parties,

with the trial held on 26 January 2018. As no legal businesses were permitted after the railway project was discontinued, the government has not accrued any income, explained the deputy minister. The grazing land in Taungpaukgyi mountain range is under the management of the Kyauktaw Township General Administration Department.

Motion to expand nationwide tourism approved for discussion

U Myint Oo of Thanatpin constituency tabled a motion to urge the union government to establish tourism-based festivals

and special events, increase the number of tourism agencies, and expand tourism districts to develop both community-based and eco-tourism throughout the country.

He said countries around the world were using numerous innovative methods to enhance international tourism and boost their local economies. Tourism can cause a country to become popular, while encouraging rural areas to uphold their traditions, while generating sustainable income, he noted. The tourism sector around the world is changing, said U Myint Oo, as the focus is on more authentic interactions with local communities, wildlife and nature, and accessing new and lesser known areas in a country.

He urged the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, other relevant ministries, state and regional governments, the Myanmar Tourism Organisation, and civil organisations to work together with the local people to boost tourism and follow the sustainable development of tourism standards set by the World Tourism Organisation.

Another MP seconded the motion, and the speaker announced the motion would be put forward for discussion. ■

Amyotha Hluttaw

Amyotha Hluttaw MPs suggests forest bill to ensure transparency, public notification

By Aung Ye Thwin (MNA)

Lawmakers of the Amyotha Hluttaw discussed the forest bill sent by the Pyithu Hluttaw, making suggestions for transparency and public notification when forest reserves are established. At the seventh day meeting of Amyotha Hluttaw yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw, U Soe Win of constituency-12 of Rakhine State made a suggestion to add a clause to the bill which guarantees negotiation

and ensures transparency with the local people when reserved forest and protected public forest are designated in paragraph 6 of Chapter-3 titled "Establishing reserved forest and designating protected public forest".

The MP also suggested a clause that wooded areas two miles from villages, pagodas, monasteries, schools, ponds, lakes and farmland which are used by local people should be designated as forest reserves.

The MP also suggested the



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

wording "announcements shall be made in many ways to let the local people know ..." be added in paragraph 7 of the same chapter when the entire forest reserve or a part of the forest reserve is reestablished or is abolished or is reestablished as protected public forest.

In sub-paragraph (b), paragraph 7, he suggested to amend the clause "entire forest reserve or a part of the forest reserve which no longer needs to be re-

served shall be abolished," as "if ... are abolished, a part of the forest reserve with farmland shall be abolished and announcements shall be made to let the local people know these issues."

U Zaw Hein of constituency-7 of the Taninthayi Region suggested deletion of the requirement that people shall seek recommendations from a forest official in Section 23 (A), saying that the bill will cause hardships.

He continued to say that



U Zaw Hein of constituency-7 of the Taninthayi Region. PHOTO: MNA

anyone who smuggles teak or banned hardwood to foreign countries, or those who involve in the smuggle shall get a minimum ten-year prison sentence and a fine of at least Ks5 million.

The new forest law should include a penalty of at least a three-year prison sentence and a fine of Ks2 million to those who are involved in charcoal smuggling to foreign countries, he added. Six MPs also discussed the bill. ■

Anyone who smuggles teak or banned hardwood to foreign countries, or those who involve in the smuggle shall get a minimum ten-year prison sentence and a fine of at least Ks5 million.

I would firstly like to address the three branches of the sovereign power of the State, who have been entrusted with power according to the Constitution, to exercise mutual respect, understanding, and trust as they collaborate for the good of the people. Additionally, I wish to urge the media sector, which serve as the ears and eyes of the public, to understand the seriousness of their duties and to hold in high regard the public sector that they serve.

(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)

Collective strength is vital to build peace and stability which we need. We need to have mutual understanding and mutual respect as the basic foundation to bring to an end the armed conflicts which have existed for many years among the ethnic nationalities. We can make this foundation strong with our collective strength.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1st April 2018)

Rakhine implementation committee holds fifth meeting

The committee formed to implement the recommendations on Rakhine State held its 5/2018 work coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, Dr. Win Myat Aye, Chairman of the committee and Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement said the committee is working hard to release its second report at the end of May.

The first report of the committee was released in February.

In his opening remarks at the meeting, Dr. Win Myat Aye expressed thanks to ministries

concerned for their cooperation with the commission in implementing the recommendations on security, stability, peace and development in Rakhine State.

Regarding the implementation of the recommendations, the Union Minister stressed the need to gain positive results on the ground, urging the state, district and township level authorities to carry out their duties with accountability and responsibility.

The committee is giving priorities to citizenship scrutiny in accordance with the law, free movement in the state,

creating opportunities for access to education, health and jobs, closing IDP camps which were set up in 2012, making tangible progress and releasing correct information.

At the meeting, U Nyi Pu, Joint Chairman and Chief Minister of Rakhine State, urged departments concerned to make more efforts for implementing the recommendations to bring better results, while the Rakhine State Government was working hard to bring about harmony between the different communities in the state.—MNA



The committee formed to implement the recommendations on Rakhine State holds the work coordination meeting. **PHOTO: MNA**

School enrolment week for 2018-2019 Academic Year launches nationwide

By Ye Ye Myint,
Ohnmar Thant

The motto for the school enrolment week is “Every School-Age Children Should Enroll and All Should Cooperate in Ending Dropouts.”

School enrollment week for the 2018-2019 academic year launched nationwide on 25 May, and all students were provided with a set of text books, six exercise books and a school uniform free of charge, and compulsory primary education without any form of payment.

Authorities have urged the parents to send their school-age children to schools because the schools are accepting enrollment of children through 31st May.

As for the Ministry of Education, preparations have been made for the students including kindergarten classes, to enroll for the new academic years. Starting from the primary level, a KG+12 System was implemented.

For the academic year 2018-2019, all five years old children are attending KG and all six years old children are attending Grade-1.

Daw Myint Myint Thein, Headmistress of B.E.H.S 4, Pazundaung

Our school has made an arrangement to provide clean environment, purified drinking water for the school children, and to maintain a clean and tidy classroom besides providing school text books free of charge. As for the kindergarten and primary school children, we will provide books and a pair of school uniform for each student. Moreover we will introduce a new curriculum for Grade 2, and cooperation is needed to change the education system for the better.

Daw Myint Myint Win, Primary Teacher of B.E.H.S 4, Pazundaung

There are a total of 10 subjects for Grade – 2 in this year. The school children can take part in discussions, and can learn arts and paintings with their groups. From academic year 2018-2019, all five years old children are attending KG and all six years old children are attending Grade-1. The school children can learn new courses. I am sure the new teaching method will be effective and can enhance their education.



Daw Myint Myint Thein, Headmistress of B.E.H.S 4, Pazundaung



Maung Aung Khant Min, Grade -9 student, B.E.H.S (4), Pazundaung

U Aung Ko Nyunt, father of school children

My son and daughter are going to B.E.H.S (10), Dagon in Yangon. I am coming here to enroll for my children. The teachers help me with everything and provide text books. Also we don't need to pay school admission fees this



Daw Myint Myint Win, Primary Teacher of B.E.H.S 4, Pazundaung



Ma Phue Pyae Ko, Grade 8, B.E.H.S (1), Dagon

year. That's why my children can study their lessons without any difficulty.

Ma Phue Pyae Ko, Grade 9, B.E.H.S (1), Dagon

I have come here for my school enrolment. The teachers help me with everything we need as much as they can. There



U Aung Ko Nyunt, father of school children

is no school admission fee and I am very happy to meet with my classmates.

Daw Thae Mon, mother of school children

My children are studying in the Grade-2 and Grade -4 in B.E.H.S (4), Dagon. The school provides us with text books and school uniforms free of charge. I think that education should bring about all-round development for the children.

Maung Aung Khant Min, Grade -10 student, B.E.H.S (4), Pazundaung

All the teachers in my school help me everything I need for my school enrolment. Moreover they teach us general knowledge with great care.

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Efforts on to open internationally recognised university in Bago

THE Bago Region government is planning to develop an internationally recognised university, in collaboration with the private sector, to educate well-rounded graduates with excellent abilities.

A plan is underway to open the University of Hanthawaddy (UoH) in the region, which would offer a wide range of research and industries-based courses in the engineering, agriculture, forest management, disaster risk management, technology, economics and vocational fields.

The new university will be developed by Hanthawaddy University Co. Ltd, a private education service company offering continuous education and professional development programmes in Myanmar to solve real in-

dustrial challenges.

During the meeting with the regional government on 24 May, Dr Sein Tun and Dr Zeya Oo from Hanthawaddy University Co. Ltd discussed matters related to the establishment of a new university, and pledged to help students obtain employment in local and foreign companies.

The Bago Region Chief Minister said he welcomed the new scheme for the development of the educational sector, and believed the new university would promote the region's human resources and create more well-paying jobs for residents. The area around Phayagyi Town and the land around mile post No. 40 along the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway are projected to be used for the educational project.—Tin Soe (Bago) ■

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Notification 73/2018

11th Waxing of Nayon, 1380 ME
25th May 2018

Designation of dates for submission of names of candidates, withdrawal of application forms for candidates and scrutiny of application forms of candidates for respective Hluttaws

Exercising the authorities under Hluttaw Election Rule 16, the Union Election Commission designated the following dates-

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) Opening date for submission of names of candidates for respective Hluttaws | 2nd July 2018 |
| (2) Closing date for submission of names of candidates for respective Hluttaw | 11th July 2018 |
| (3) Closing date for withdrawal of application forms of candidates, if ever | 13th July 2018 |
| (4) Dates for scrutiny of name submission forms of candidates | From 16th to 22nd July 2018 |

(Hla Thein)
Chairman
Union Election Commission

New road facility aims to boost agricultural productivity in Dawei

AN agricultural road is being built by the Rural Development Department in Dawei Town in the Taninthayi Region during the current financial year.

The project is being carried out in Pauktaing Village in Kyaukyet Village-tract, with the department providing Ks8 million in funds.

The project includes an earthen road, which will be 700 feet long, 12 feet wide and 2.6 feet high.

The construction of the new road is 90 per cent com-

plete. Initiated on 15 May, the agricultural road is expected to be completed by the last week of May. The road is expected to benefit 500 acres of farms in the village, improve the economic status of the villagers and assist the region's education and health sectors.

U Hsan Win Htay, head of the township Rural Development Department, inspected the site on 24 May to check on the progress of the road construction.—Dawei District IPRD ■



A farm road, which plays a key role in transporting agricultural produce, is under construction in Dawei. **PHOTO: DAWEI DISTRICT IPRD**

Trade improves at Tachilek border zone

THE total volume of trade at the Tachilek border trade zone hit US\$8.6 million, as of 11 May 2018, which is higher than the total trade volume during the same period last fiscal year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Imports at the trade zone were valued at more than

US\$7.6 million, and exports amounted to \$1 million. Last year, the figures were \$5.8 million in imports and \$1.6 million in exports, taking the total trade volume to \$7.5 million.

The Tachilek border trade zone is located on Myanmar's border with Thailand in Shan State. The country has also

carried out border trade with Thailand through the Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese border trade camps.

Myanmar mainly exports tissue-culture bananas, pine-apples, avocados, pumpkins, watermelons, rubber, corn seeds, dried tea leaves and

manganese dioxide to Thailand via the Tachilek border camp. Myanmar also imports cement, vehicle and accessories for tractors, track cars, construction materials, fuel, food products, consumer goods and agricultural equipment from Thailand via the Tachilek border camp.—GNLM ■

Agro exports down by \$53 million

THE export of agriculture products from 1 April to 18 May in the current six-month transitional period for the 2018-2019 fiscal year was valued at US\$394 million, decreasing slightly by some \$53 million compared to the same period in the 2017-2018 FY, according to trade figures released by the commerce ministry.

The decrease in agro exports is attributed to the low demand from China. Chinese buyers are currently watching the market. Additionally, mung bean and pigeon pea markets have not fully recovered yet, following India's restrictions on the

importation of mung beans and pigeon peas.

In the export sector, the agriculture industry performed the best, along with natural gas exports. The main export goods in the agriculture sector are rice and broken rice, pulses, corn and rubber. Fruits and vegetables, sesame, dried tea leaves, sugar and other agro products are also exported to foreign countries.

The commerce ministry is striving to help deal with the challenges faced by farmers, such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs and erratic weather problems. – Mon Mon■



Vendors are seen at Danyingone wholesale fruit, vegetable and flower market in Yangon. PHOTO: ZAW GYI

Myanmar, China preparing for G2G agreement to boost bilateral trade

By May Thet Hnin

IN a bid to promote bilateral trade, Myanmar's Trade Department, operating under the commerce ministry, and the Yunnan Provincial government are preparing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), according to recent news provided by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI). The government-to-government (G2G) agreement will include the export of rice, sugar, corn and other agro products to China. In return, agriculture machinery, electronic devices, and iron and steel related materials will be imported.

The MoU to promote trade will be reportedly signed during the upcoming trade expo in China. Input will be received for drawing up the draft from the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Union Attorney-General's office and UMFCCI.

Concerning the signing of the MoU, businessmen engaged in the rice, sugar and corn industries discussed and voiced their ideas at the UMFCCI office on 24 May. U Aung Htoo, Deputy Minister for Commerce, and entrepreneurs and merchants from Muse and Mandalay commodity depots attended the consultation meeting. Later, matters related to currencies will

also be discussed with banking operators, to sell products according to international trading criteria.

China is the main trading partner of Myanmar. Bilateral trade between Myanmar and China amounted to over \$5.5 billion in first half of fiscal year 2017-2018, according to the Ministry of Commerce. The value of bilateral trade with China was \$10.8 billion in 2016-2017 FY, \$10.9 billion in 2015-16 FY, \$9.7 billion in 2014-2015 FY, \$7 billion in 2013-2014 FY, \$4.95 billion in 2012-2013 FY and \$5 billion in 2011-2012 FY.

Myanmar usually trades with China via Muse, Lwejel, Kanpikete, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung border points. ■

Yangon Region attracts 59 businesses

THE Yangon Region Investment Committee has approved 59 businesses to operate in the manufacturing sector and other service sectors from eight countries, according to the Yangon Region Investment Committee's meeting (7/2018).

Foreign direct investments (FDIs) worth US\$ 68.183 million and domestic investments valued at Ks3.12 billion were attracted to the region.

The 59 approved businesses are likely to create more than 26,000 local jobs, according to news provided by the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

Meanwhile, the Mandalay Region Investment Committee (MRIC) approved four endorsements, according to the MRIC meeting (4/2018).

The Yangon Region draws the greatest amount of domestic investments, as well as FDIs. Investments also flow into the Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Taninthayi and

Ayeyawady regions, as well as Mon, Kachin, Rakhine and Shan states, and Nay Pyi Taw.

The MIC is holding yearly investment fairs on a rotational basis in regions and states across the country to invite investments, in a bid to assure balanced economic development in the country. The fair aims to promote investments in remote areas.

The new Myanmar Investment Law provides tax exemptions and relief for three to seven years for investors, depending on developments in the regions and states. Further, investors in remote areas can enjoy tax breaks for up to seven years.

According to the new Myanmar Investment Law, regional and state investment committees are authorised to grant approval to investment proposals with capital not exceeding \$5 million (Ks6,000 million). – Ko Htet■

Prices of quality rice varieties high, market remains cool

By May Thet Hnin

THE prices of quality rice varieties are up by Ks3,000 per bag, but the market continued to remain cool. Prices saw an increase of Ks5,000 per bag last week. However, prices slipped slightly in the last few days, decreasing by Ks1,000-Ks2,000 per bag.

"The salary increase for civil servants in April prompted them to buy and stock goods, to tide over possible high prices. Retail shops were also stockpiling their goods, thus hiking up the

price. Some sellers manipulate the price. However, the demand is not as high as expected. The market is still cool, with prices on the higher side," said U Than Oo, secretary of Bayintnaung rice depot. Prices of quality rice varieties, which are consumed domestically, have been rising, cooling the trade, said U Hla Win, a rice producer from Labutta Township, Ayeyawady region.

"The prices increased last week, and though they dipped slightly, they are still above the previous market prices. Every

year, rice prices decrease around this time, although I am unable to pinpoint the particular reason," he added. The prevailing market prices of rice increased from Ks32,000 to Ks46,000 per bag for the Pawsan variety, Ks21,000 to Ks21,800 for the Aemahta variety, Ks19,500 to Ks21,000 for Ngasain, and Ks32,000 to Ks33,000 for Mee-done.

The prices are on the higher side, compared to prices in early May, according to statistics provided by Warden commodity depot. ■

Trade
Mark

Ads

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Fair Trial Standards Guidebook launched in Nay Pyi Taw

The release of the Fair Trial Standards Guidebook was held at Nay Pyi Taw's Hilton Hotel yesterday.

Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo delivered the opening speech at the event.

He noted that the Guidebook was written for legal professionals, in a bid to develop the legal sector and see its members provide work that meets international standards. The rule of law is the foundation for security and human rights, and is instrumental in developing the nation, noted the union attorney general.

He added the guidebook would benefit legal practitioners in administering unbiased judgment, and ensure freedom, fairness, and justice for the people, as the Office of the Union Attorney General (OUAG) moves forward with the rule of law, as part of the OUAG's 2015-2019 strategic plan.

Following the speech, Direc-



Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo and officials take a documentary photo at Launching Ceremony of Fair Trial Standards Guidebook in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. —Photo: MNA

tor General Daw Khin Cho Ohn of the Prosecution Department explained, in detail, the contents of the guidebook.

Attending the event were union ministers, the deputy attorney general, members of

the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, chairpersons and secretaries of the Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaws committees, Hluttaw MPs, members of the Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment

Commission, specially invited guests, permanent secretaries and directors-general of union organisations and ministries, officials from the United Nations Development Programme and International Development Law

Organisation, state and region Advocates general, representatives from local and foreign organisations, civil society organisations and other invited guests. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Officials seen at Mekong-ROK Senior Officials' Meeting.—Photo: Htein Nan Naw

Mekong-ROK Senior Officials' Meeting convenes

Mekong-ROK Senior Officials' Meeting was held yesterday at the M Gallery Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw. Delegations from Republic of Korea, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam, Mekong-Institute as well as representatives from the relevant ministries of Myanmar attended the Meeting. At the opening ceremony, U Kyaw Moe Tun, Myanmar SOM Leader and Director General of the International Organizations and Economic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, delivered welcome remarks.

The meeting was co-chaired by Myanmar and

the Republic of Korea. The meeting discussed cooperation under the Mekong-ROK Mechanism, progress of the Projects being implemented under Mekong-ROK Cooperation Fund, and preparations for the upcoming Mekong-ROK Ministerial Meeting to be held in early August 2018 in Singapore.

In the evening of 24th May, a dinner was hosted by Myanmar SOM Leader at the M Gallery Hotel to welcome delegates attending the Mekong-ROK Senior Officials' Meeting.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Deputy Information Minister U Aung Hla Tun receives Netherlands Ambassador H.E. Wouter Jurgens

U Aung Hla Tun, Deputy Minister for Information, received the Netherlands Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Wouter Jurgens at the guestroom of the Ministry in Nay Pyi Taw at 10 a.m. on Friday.

In response to queries by the ambassador, the Deputy Minister said that those who had fled to Bangladesh had not been able to return although Myanmar had done its best to make the repatriation process ready just because Bangladesh had not sent them back.

It is not possible to accept all those people in a single day and Myanmar would like the repatriation process to start as soon as possible since the Monsoon is coming soon, he said.

"To tell my personal opinion frankly, I'm very much concerned that Bangladeshi government might try to misuse this issue to their own political advantage," added the Deputy Minister.

He said Myanmar would not have reached the right track in its transition to democracy without the support by the inter-



Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun holds talk with Netherlands Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Wouter Jurgens in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.—Photo: MNA

national community, including the European Union, and the international media.

"The assistance of the international community and international media is crucial to ensure Myanmar's further transition to democracy is smooth."

Asked about the situation of the media landscape in Myanmar, the Deputy Minister admitted there is room for improvement, and explained that the laws opposing the press freedom had been under review for

amending while some new laws were being drafted to improve the press freedom. Assistance is being provided to government departments and organizations to enable speedy and systematic flow of information.

The Deputy Minister expressed his sincere thanks to the Netherlands for helping Myanmar consistently and also said that he believed the Netherlands would be able to tell Myanmar's real situations to the international community. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Ministries hold press conference on second one-year performance

FROM PAGE-1

MOI has also planned more than ten trips for domestic and foreign independent media to gather news in Northern Rakhine State.

He said the ministry is ready to develop the media sector in accord with the democratic transition and while it is working media freedom there have been cases of action taken against media entities due to breaches of existing laws.

The union minister said that despite the ministry's continued support of independent publications, the rise of online media has contributed to a steady decline in the printing sector. The ministry has approved of five private broadcasting services in accord with existing laws since a broadcasting law or bylaw is not existent yet. Of the five broadcasting services, Mizzima and DVB have begun their services while the remaining three will commence services this year. Khayae FM-Htantabin community radio was also launched as the first community radio on 19 February 2018.

The ministry has held numerous paper reading sessions, literature festivals for the general public, children, and ethnic literature, book sales, and all round development festival for youths while another one is planned to be held in Mandalay soon.

The Printing and Publishing Department has collaborated with Tun Foundation to bring back the Burmese Encyclopedia under a modern format as well as publish 100 Myanmar classics.

The ministry has also held multiple peace music festivals and the democracy film festival and is working to open a film studio in Uttarathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw and a film academy.

Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture U Tun Ohn said eighty-eight members of the Sangha passed the 70th Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Selection Examination organised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture in 2018.

Religious titles were conferred on 199 Members of the Sangha and 60 men and women totalling 268 in 2018 for their outstanding performance in religious affairs. Meanwhile, provisions and cash amounted to over Ks320 million to the Members of the Sanghas and nuns.

In the 2017-2018 Academic Year, over 300,000 school children are learning at 1,547 monasteries and the ministry funded Ks140 million to the monastic education schools nationwide to give salaries



Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint talks to media at the press conference in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

to teachers there.

The ministry also provided cash assistance amounted to over K2.3 million to followers of Hindu, Islam, Christian in the second one-year period of the government.

The ministry donated K5 million each to Congregational Church of Myanmar in Dagon Township, Mary Chapman School for the Deaf in Dagon Township and Islam Home for Aged in Thingangyun Township last year.

Regarding the conservation cultural heritage of the country, the three Pyu ancient cities, Hanlin, Beikthano and Sri Kestra were inscribed by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) into its World Heritage List in 2014, Kuthodaw Pagoda in Mandalay in 2013, Myazedi Stone Inscription in 2015, inscription on the bell donated by King Bayintnaung in 2017 respectively.

The Ministry will submit the Rakhine State's Arnanda Sandrasara stone inscription, which have been listed as a world heritage in Pacific region, to UNESCO soon to be included in the world's heritage list.

The ministry has renovated earthquake-hit 224 pagodas and conserved 86 in Bagan without damaging their original style. A total of 26 are under renovation and further 53 are targeted to be conserved.

As part of efforts for conservation of tangible and intangible arts of ethnic peoples, the ministry has collected over 340 intangible arts of ethnic peoples so far.

Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Permanent Secretary U Myo Aung said the ministry has sent 329,125 people to nine countries for job opportunities.

He said the ministry has cooperated with Thai officials to issue certificate of identity (CI) cards to migrant workers in Thailand with nine CI centres and two mobile teams starting from March 2017. Currently 1,013,748 CI cards have been issued.

The ministry has handled 33,642 social security cases and covered Ks 1,540.143 million to insured workers and

Ks 15,239.833 million as social benefits for 343,1999 cases.

Acting Permanent Secretary U Aye Lwin was the spokesperson for the ministry and said they have added the Russia Federation and Ukraine to their list of visa-approved countries including eVisa business. Airports in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw switched to eVisa in 2014 and border gates in Tachilek, Myawady and Kawthoung switched to eVisas in 2016.

The ministry has removed 280 Myanmar citizens, 403 foreign citizens, and 35 passports from their black list and has installed the MAPPs system (Myanmar Advanced Passenger Processing System) in airports in March 2018 to swiftly identify other black list entries.

Myanmar and other ASEAN countries have reached bilateral visa exemption agreements for holders of diplomatic or official/service passports with twenty-one member countries currently. Talks are in order for visa exemption for ordinary passport holders in eight ASEAN countries.

Foreign citizens residing in Myanmar are issued Resident Return visas for visiting other countries at Ks5,000 processing fee. The visa is valid for 6 months travel abroad and if visa holders stay over the limit then they will have to apply for a return visa again at their relevant embassies or consulate.

International airports in Myanmar have also implemented Border Control System (BCS) for Machine Readable Travel Documents (MRTD). The ministry has received 117 requests for permanent residency (PR) from former Myanmar citizens and 193 from foreign citizens and has given approval to 68 former Myanmar citizens and 129 foreign citizens.

The ministry has issued national registration cards for 14,854 domestic migrant workers and 817,947 NRC cards to students throughout Myanmar.

The ministry has cooperated with Thai officials to issue certificate of identity (CI) cards to migrant workers in Thailand with eleven CI centres and two mobile teams starting from March 2017. Currently 1,013,748 CI cards have been issued.

The ministry is working to procure a complete list of ethnicities in Myanmar based on the 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census as well as drawing the National Population Policy.

Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

Director-General U Tint Thwin was the spokesperson for the ministry. The ministry has been working on passing a new Tourism Law that will create more opportunities for tourism agencies and businesses and detail steps to follow and how the central government and state and region government will regulate authority in the tourism sector.

A reported 1,225,856 foreign tourists visited Myanmar in 2018 and the hotel businesses generated US\$710 million in 2018.

Domestic investment in Myanmar was divided into 23 per cent in Yangon, 12 per cent in Mandalay, and the remaining 65 per cent in other states and regions. Foreign investment in Myanmar was divided into 71 per cent in Yangon, 5 per cent in Mandalay, and 23 per cent in other states and regions.

Direct job opportunities were given to 62,762 people in hotel businesses, 10,896 people in tourism, 4,122 people in transportation, 7,971 people in tour guiding, 330,000 people in restaurants, 5,150 in airlines, and 2,350 people in souvenir businesses in 2018.

As for foreign technical assistance, the ministry received assistance from the Hanns Seidel Foundation in drawing and implementing the one year project for Responsible Tourism Policy, and Inclusive Tourism Policy.

The ministry also received assistance for projects from Asian Development Bank, ICIMOD (International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development), JICA, La Sapienza University, Luxembourg, PfC, Japan Tokyo Metropolitan, Swiss Contact.

The ministry is implementing twenty-one processes in 47 villages nationwide for community based tourism and has opened tourism information counters in Shan, Chin, Mon, and Rakhine states. — Han Hmwae, Lin Naing (MNA) ■

Free access to online law information will speed up reforms

WITH the launching of the online legal information system by the Union Attorney General's office on Thursday, the Union Government has brought free access to legal information to the public.

The website for the Myanmar law information system is www.mlis.gov.mm, which will be available in English and Burmese.

In order to establish the rule of law in a democratic system, citizens must have access, at the very minimum, to the laws of the government. To make this access meaningful, a searchable database of laws should be created to allow users of legal information to find laws based on their particular informational needs. For this reason alone it is important for governments in transitional states to make a commitment to developing online legal information systems.

One advantage of the website is the ease of editing amendments to the existing laws and displaying the original law at the user's fingertips.

The website of the Office of the Attorney-General has information on constitutional laws, union laws, region or state laws, self-administered division/zone laws, subordinate legislation union laws, subordinate legislation region or state laws, subordinate legislation self-administered division/zone laws, international treaties and precedents.

Information on announcements, executive orders, rules and regulations, and efforts by other ministries to include laws and bylaws, and other legal news will be available soon on the online legal information system. The Office of the Attorney-General will also upload rulings by the Union Supreme Court.

The website will also have information on abolished laws, and detailed facts on amendments to existing laws.

Some international treaties require the passing of new laws after signing. The website will also link these laws to the convention related to them.

One advantage of the website is the ease of editing amendments to the existing laws and displaying the original law at the user's fingertips.

The Office of the Union Attorney-General is committed to creating an efficient online legal information system by updating information related to them. But to achieve the goal, other ministries would need to relay information quickly to update the information pertaining to them. ■

A brief study on the book "The Lady, I and Affairs of State"

By Sinpyukyun Than Tun

WITH absorbing and deep interest, I have the pleasure of reading the book entitled "The Lady, I and Affairs of State" authored by Thura U Shwe Mann. Generally speaking, the author is not necessary to introduce to the public as he is a well known figure in the country, and that he has touched on a theme to quench the thirst of the majority who wanted to know over the subject. When I put down the book after reading it, a desire rushed into my mind to share the subject matter with the esteemed readers.

The book "The Lady, I and Affairs of State" is about Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Thura U Shwe Mann and Myanma Affairs. Just look at the title, one will not be able to resist the urge to read it if one is interested in Myanmar politics or person hunting for information on history.

The interesting events in the book centered through the period between 2014 and 2016 which were in fact worth to study. A simple thought crossed in my mind that it would be beneficial for the readers if some of the terms used in the book are hooked up with the relevant definitions. However, the writer of this article has no such expertise to pull up the interpretations out of the book. However, I take the liberty in sharing the definitions as much as I could go for.

The Herculean task of Thura U Shwe Mann in the early part of 2016 was in convening second Hluttaws. At that time the National League for Democracy Party, after winning the general elections, was wondering who would be coming forward to convene the Hluttaw. We witnessed that the fluid and uncertain scenario had occurred immediately after the 1990 General Elections.

Thura U Shwe Mann rang the bell and called for convening second Hluttaw. He was the Speaker of the First Hluttaw (2011-2015) and convened all the Hluttaw meetings. The convening of second Hluttaw was the most crucial task at a time of critical condition in the country. It could be termed as the most decisive act for the country.

As far as I could remember, the last session of the First Pyidaungsu Hluttaw was convened in January 2016. The Speaker, Thura U Shwe Mann expounded as follows.

He said that **the sovereignty of the nation belongs to the people and that whoever holds the sovereignty of the state under any circumstances must entrusted the power back to the people.**

It was mentioned on page (52) of the book. What the writer of this article remembered was the words of General Ne Win, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council. He declared that the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) happened to be the peoples' party, and therefore, the state power was entrusted to the people's party. It was in the year 1971 when the BSPP convened the first Party Congress after the BSPP evidently transformed into the people's party.

There were widespread criticisms that such transfer of state power should not be carried out in such a way. The state power and the sovereignty of a nation could never be handed over or entrusted into the hands of a political party. The sovereignty belongs to the people and therefore, the state power is to be handed over only to the people.

In October 1958, the then Prime Minister U Nu handed over the state power into the hands of General Ne Win systematically through the Parliament. The state power was in the hands of the Revolutionary Council until March 1974 when the first Pyithu Hluttaw convened.

At that juncture, the Revolutionary Council was reorganized. The newly formed Revolutionary Council was a fresh one different and dissimilar to the previous Revolutionary Council and that new council absorbed the directives of the BSPP.

On the page (60) of the book, it was highlighted as follows.

After the 2015 General Elections, the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw first day meeting was convened on 8 February 2016, and that U Htin Kyaw was elected as the President. Thura U Shwe Mann decorated with the words that **She (Daw Aung San Suu Kyi) seemed to be very happy which reflected on her face; that I was also happy and felt the ecstasy; that it was due to the reason that I could fulfill and served the ardent desire of the people with my good wishes and my efforts.**

What permeated into my mind were the words such as that of "I could fulfill and served the ardent desire of the people with my good wishes and my efforts". This valuable word could be evaluated and gauged with the assessment of the RFA interview.

An interview had taken place between Thura U Shwe Mann and the RFA on 13 June 2013 which was mentioned on page 80-86. These pages revealed the valuable information on modern important events and critical attitudes. The past crucial events that occurred between 2011 and 2013 were unfolded. Thura U Shwe Mann touched on the theme such as that of the necessity in changing the mindset; that of his fear on pitfalls when the relevant people do not understand the essence of democracy and going ahead in an unruly journey; that of the biggest challenges existed in the country he thought of to rectify.

At that stage, Thura U Shwe Mann might have heavier challenges on his shoulder than the task in changing the mindset.



Thinking of the priority, the necessity in the changing of the mindset of the people has come to the forefront when compared to the democratic reform for the sake of socio-economic development, and the rule of law.

In the middle of 2013, the top leaders in the political arena of Myanmar have had a stormy weather, however, the necessity of changing mindset was carried out with might and main as it was in line with the democratic norms. It is not the theme and the talk of the day. It was the talk that had taken place at the interview in the middle of 2013 with the RFA Media. Although the democratic reform is always on his mind, but the necessity of changing mindset was pressing and pushed ahead.

At the moment, the topic on the changing of mindset is the buzz word among us, and talked repeatedly. The word federal union has been repeatedly reversed and written. Federal means the sharing of power and sharing of natural resources. It also means sharing the land in harmony and unity by staying together; the critical concept of federal. It is really regretful to witness that this concept could not be put forward to roll ahead.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on many occasions spelled out to the people to reveal what one can offer to the country instead of what the country could give them. I think she meant the spirit of staying together in unison among the brethrens. It was quite clear that the mindset is very important.

When Thura U Shwe Mann

The writer of this article would like to take the liberty in mentioning some sentences on the page (78) and from the back cover of the book.

Thura U Shwe Mann has written that **Mindfulness and steadfastness are required in order not to break the paddle while rowing or not to lose direction while traveling, as old Burmese sayings go. He believes the she (The Lady) and him (Thura U Shwe Mann) are among those who, when confronted by such a situation, have employed discretion, foresight, wisdom and courage in dealing with the challenges, without losing track of our common vision.** The author of this article has a lot of complexity in defining the meaning of this book. On 29 January 2002, a photograph regarding a meeting is inserted showing Senior General Than Shwe (Retired), Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other leaders. The conversation at the meeting with Senior General Than Shwe (Retired) was mentioned on page (49-51), however, the date was not clarified. Perhaps, the meeting took place after November 2015.

Moreover, the notable event occurred on 12 August 2015 was also opened up. The page (42) depicted the failure at the poll in the general elections. The episodes mentioned in the book were crucial and critical in the chronology of Myanma affairs having impact in the internal affairs as well as foreign relations.

When Thura U Shwe Mann

opened up his heart and soul as an army general, state leader and politician along with the changing pattern of life, he unveiled and touched profusely on the lofty subjects such as greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance which brought negative impacts. When digging the background of the events, the direction was aimed at the root cause of the issue in the context of background circumstances rather than personal matters.

The author of this article is not in a position to evaluate on the defilement and attachments in the religious sphere. My intellect is not that high. However, the anti-corruption drive, the democratic transition, and the aspiration and building of federal union are intertwined and tangled with the necessity of changing the mindset. At the same time, internal feeling such as greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance have much influence over the changing of mindset.

The book being produced by Thura U Shwe Mann is a moderate one in size. It may sound simple that a person has merely unveiled his part of life and written in his own personal style, but the person is extraordinary who have had engaged and involved in Myanma political landscape and also in the democratic transition, and still active and mobile in the nation building. In conclusion, the writer of this article bears the view that this book is a good reference for the persons who are interested in Myanma affairs. ■

Translated by UMT

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 24/2018

11th Waxing of Nayon 1380 ME
(25th May 2018)

Union Minister permitted to resign

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 235 (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 68 (a) of Union Government Law, U Kyaw Win, Union Minister for Planning and Finance has been permitted to resign of his own volition.

Sd/ Win Myint
President

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order (25/2018)

11th Waxing of Nayon, 1380 ME
(25th May 2018)

Appointment of Chin State Minister

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 262 (f), article 264 (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 19 (c), section 82 (c) of Union Government Law and Section 8 (g), Section 56 (a) of Region or State Government Law, U Sae Htet has been appointed as Chin State Development Affairs, Electricity and Industry Minister.

Sd/ Win Myint
President

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Appointment of Permanent Secretary

The Union Government has appointed U Aye Lwin, Director-General of the National Registration and Citizenship Department, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, concurrently as Permanent Secretary of the same Ministry.

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

EU's new data protection rules come into effect

BERLIN — The European Union's new data protection laws came into effect on Friday, with Brussels saying the changes will protect consumers from being like "people naked in an aquarium".

The EU's so-called General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has been blamed for a flood of spam emails and messages in recent weeks as firms rush to request the explicit consent of users to contact them.

Even though the rules were officially adopted two years ago, with a grace period until now to adapt to them, companies have been slow to act, resulting in a last-minute scramble this week.

Britain's data protection watchdog, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), said that its site had experienced "a few interruptions" as the deadline loomed, but said that "everything is working now".

Brussels insists that the laws will become a global benchmark for the protection of people's online information, particularly in the wake of the Facebook data harvesting scandal.

"The new rules will put the Europeans back in control of their data," said EU Justice Commissioner Vera Jourova.

"When it comes to personal data today, people are naked in an aquarium."

Companies can be fined up to 20 million euros (\$24 million) or four per cent of annual global turnover for breaching the strict new data rules for the EU, a market of 500 million people.

Explicit consent

The law establishes the key principle that individuals must explicitly grant permission for



The EU's so-called General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into effect on Friday. PHOTO: AFP

their data to be used.

The new EU law also establishes consumers' "right to know" who is processing their information and what it will be used for.

People will be able to block the processing of their data for commercial reasons and even have data deleted under the "right to be forgotten".

Parents will decide for children until they reach the age of consent, which member states will set anywhere between 13 and 16 years old.

The case for the new rules has been boosted by the recent scandal over the harvesting of Facebook users' data by Cambridge Analytica, a US-British political research firm, for the 2016 US presidential election.

The breach affected 87 million users, but Facebook said Wednesday it has found no evidence that any data from Europeans were sold to Cam-

bridge Analytica.

Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg said in a hearing at the European Parliament on Tuesday that his firm will not only be "fully compliant" with the EU law, but will also make huge investments to protect users.

Zuckerberg said he was "sorry" for the Cambridge Analytica breaches, but also for its failure to crack down on election interference, "fake news" and other data misuses.

'Global standard'

Big platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter seem well prepared for the new laws, while smaller businesses have voiced concern.

But EU officials say they are initially focusing on the big firms, whose business models use a goldmine of personal information for advertising, while offering smaller firms more time to adapt.

Meanwhile Brussels has expressed impatience with the eight countries — out of the EU's 28 — that say they will not have updated their laws by Friday.

EU Commissioner Jourova said the new rules are setting "a global standard of privacy".

Many Americans who once criticised Europe as too quick to regulate the new driver of the global economy now see the need for the GDPR, EU officials insist.

"I see some version of GDPR getting quickly adopted at least in the United States," Param Vir Singh, a business professor at Carnegie Mellon University, told AFP in an email.

Japan, South Korea, India and Thailand are also drawing "some inspiration" from Brussels as they debate or adopt similar laws, another EU official said. —AFP ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Experts preserve dinosaur footprints in Beijing

BEIJING — Experts from China and Greece have recently started their first joint preservation work on more than 170 fossilized dinosaur footprints discovered in a suburb of Beijing.

The team has started to clean the surface of the fossils and apply a special reagent to prevent them from weather damage.

The footprints, unearthed in a geological park in Yanqing County in 2011, are the first dinosaur traces to be found inside the city. —Xinhua ■

Foundation stone laid for Apple's first China data center

GUIYANG — The foundation stone laying ceremony for Apple Inc's first China data center was held on Friday in southwest China's Guizhou Province.

The data center, which will cover about 1,000 mu (67 hectares) in Guian New Area, will offer iCloud services on the Chinese mainland.

The center, to be jointly built by Apple and Guizhou-Cloud Big Data Company, is expected to open in 2020. Facilities in the center will all be powered by renewable energy. —Xinhua ■

Beijing's first bicycle-only road to complete by 2019

BEIJING — Construction of Beijing's first bicycle-only road will begin in September, and the project is expected to be completed by 2019, as one of the city's efforts to promote green transit, the Municipal Commission of Transport said Friday.

The 6.5-km road will be built between Huilongguan and Shangdi with a designed speed of 20 km per hour. It will have eight pairs of entries and exits for cyclists only. The road will not have traffic lights and e-bikes will not be allowed for safety reasons, according to the commission. —Xinhua ■

US Naval ships open for public tours during Fleet Week in NYC

NEW YORK — Starting from Thursday, general public in New York city will be able to take free tours to some of the US Navy ships and Coast Guard cutters, as the city's annual Fleet Week takes place.

The general public ship tours will be conducted daily in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island from Thursday to next Monday.

Participating ships include San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS Arlington, Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Mitscher and many more. Visitors will have a chance to take photos with helicopters and Marine Corps vehicles and watch equipment demonstrations.

Now in its 30th year, Fleet Week New York is the city's

time-honored celebration of the sea service. It is an opportunity for residents of New York and the surrounding tri-state area to meet sailors, marines and coast guardsmen as well as witness firsthand the latest capabilities of US maritime service.

Apart from the ship tours, the US sea services will also host a variety of aviation static displays throughout the week,

and Navy Band Northeast, US Coast Guard Silent Drill Team and the Marine Corps Battle Color Detachment will stage performances at various locations. This year's Fleet Week started on Wednesday, and will end next Tuesday. More than 2,000 sailors, marines and coast guardsmen are expected to participate in the events. —Xinhua ■

Catholic priest 'infected with Ebola' in DR Congo

MBANDAKA (DR CONGO) — A Catholic priest has been quarantined after being infected with the Ebola virus in the town of Mbandaka in the Democratic Republic of Congo, medical sources said Thursday.

"We have quarantined a priest from the diocese of Mbandaka-Bikoro who tested positive" for the Ebola virus, a medical source told AFP on condition of anonymity. Religious authorities could not be immediately contacted.

DRC health officials launched a small, targeted vaccination campaign this week to help rein in the latest Ebola outbreak in the country, which so far has claimed 27 lives.

Kinshasa announced on 8 May that there had been cases

of the notorious haemorrhagic fever in a remote northwestern district called Bikoro.

Last Thursday, the first case was reported in a city — Mbandaka, a transport hub located on the Congo River. According to a World Health Organization count, 58 cases have been identified since early April. It was not possible to establish on Thursday whether the priest was among them.

Meanwhile, UNICEF said Thursday it was committed to helping schools and children in the fight against the spread of the virus.

The charity's DRC representative Gianfranco Rotigliano told AFP if a student becomes infected, he or she would be promptly taken care of.



Dispensers containing water mixed with disinfectant are being used in Mbandaka during the Ebola outbreak. **PHOTO: AFP**

Following a visit to schools in Bikoro, Rotigliano said: "I spoke with the schoolchildren, and they know the basic rules including washing their hands regularly, and not shaking hands." Ebola spreads through contact with

bodily fluids and is both highly infectious and extremely lethal.

In Mbandaka, several families have installed buckets of water and soap at the entrance of the house for hand-washing, an AFP correspondent said.

"I asked my children to be careful not to shake hands with people and stop playing with their friends in games that would cause contact between them," Claude, a father of several children, told AFP.—AFP ■

No evidence of 'spy' in Trump camp, Democrats say after intel brief

WASHINGTON — US intelligence agencies offered no evidence to back President Donald Trump's claim that the FBI planted a "spy" in his campaign, congressional Democrats said Thursday after a closed-door briefing.

The Department of Justice and the FBI held two classified meetings with leaders of the Senate and House of Representatives and the heads of the chambers' intelligence panels, after the president demanded a probe into allegations of infiltration into his team, a potential scandal Trump has branded "SPYGATE." US media have reported that the FBI sent an informant to gather possible evidence that Trump campaign advisors had suspicious contacts with Russia. Democrats have warned that Trump's fixation on the issue — he has tweeted about it repeatedly — suggests he is attempting to undermine the year-old investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election and possible collusion with his campaign.

An initial Thursday briefing at the Department of Justice was intended to be only for Republicans, including House Intelligence Committee Chairman



FBI Director Chris Wray was among the intelligence officials who briefed senior members of Congress about the FBI's use of a confidential intelligence source in the Russia investigation. **PHOTO: AFP**

Devin Nunes.

But after outcry from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, the panel's top Democrat Adam Schiff was allowed to attend.

The action then shifted to the US Capitol where Federal Bureau of Investigation direc-

tor Chris Wray, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein who oversees the Russia investigation, and Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats helped brief the so-called Gang of Eight.

The intelligence grouping consists of Senate Majority Lead-

er Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, House Speaker Paul Ryan, Pelosi, Senate Intelligence Committee chairman Richard Burr, top intelligence Democrat Mark Warner, Nunes and Schiff.

Democrats said the meet-

ings were conducted in part to assure lawmakers that no intelligence sources or methods were exposed while probing whether an FBI informant spoke with Trump campaign advisers in 2016.

"Nothing we heard today has changed our view that there is no evidence to support any allegation that the FBI or any intelligence agency placed a 'spy' in the Trump campaign, or otherwise failed to follow appropriate procedures and protocols," the Democrats said in a joint statement. Trump's lead lawyer countering Special Counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe, Emmet Flood, and White House Chief of Staff John Kelly were also allowed to attend the opening of both briefings, a move Democrats decried as a disturbing breach of protocol.

"I've never seen a Gang of Eight meeting that included any presence from the White House," Warner told reporters, clarifying that the individuals left before classified substance was discussed.

Trump and his supporters have cast the apparent informant as a mole possibly sent by the Obama administration to burrow into his campaign.—AFP ■

North Korea open to US talks 'any time' despite Trump axing summit

SEOUL — North Korea said Friday it is willing to talk to the United States “at any time” after President Donald Trump abruptly cancelled a summit, prompting China to urge both sides to show restraint as a pall of uncertainty settled over the turbulent Korean peninsula once more.

Trump blamed “open hostility” from the North Korean regime for his decision to call off the planned talks with Kim Jong Un, and warned Pyongyang against committing any “foolish or reckless acts”.

In a personal letter to Kim, Trump announced Thursday he would not go ahead with the 12 June summit in Singapore, following what the White House called a “trail of broken promises” by the North.

China, Pyongyang’s sole major ally, urged the two foes to “show goodwill” as regional powers braced for the possible diplomatic fallout.

“Stay patient, show goodwill, move in the same direction and continue to stay committed to promoting the denuclearisation of the peninsula,” foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a regular press conference.

So far Pyongyang’s reaction to the sudden U-turn has been conciliatory.

First Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan called Trump’s decision “unexpected” and “regrettable”. But he left the door open for talks, saying officials were willing “to sit face-to-face at any time”.

Just before Trump announced the cancellation of the meeting, North Korea declared it had “completely” dismantled



In a personal letter to Kim Jong Un, Donald Trump announced he would not go ahead with the 12 June summit in Singapore, following what the White House called a “trail of broken promises” by the North. **PHOTO: AFP**

its nuclear test site in the country’s far northeast, in a carefully choreographed goodwill gesture ahead of the summit.

But the chances of success for the unprecedented face-to-face had recently been thrown into doubt as threats were traded by both sides.

Trump’s announcement came a day after Pyongyang hardened its rhetoric, calling comments by Vice President Mike Pence “ignorant and stupid”.

“Sadly, based on the tremendous anger and open hostility displayed in your most recent statement, I feel it is inappropriate, at this time, to have this long-planned meeting,” read Trump’s letter to Kim.

But he said talks could still go ahead “at a later date”.

‘Shocking’

The decision blindsid-

ed treaty ally South Korea, which until now had brokered a remarkable detente between Washington and Pyongyang.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in called the move “shocking and very regrettable” but his government vowed to push ahead with improving ties with the North.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged the parties to keep talking, as did host Singapore, while Russia’s President Vladimir Putin held out hope that dialogue would resume and the talks would eventually take place.

However, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe backed the US president’s move.

“I respect President Trump’s decision and support it,” Abe told reporters during a trip to Russia.

Politically, Trump had invested heavily in the success of

the planned summit. But as the date drew nearer, the gulf in expectations between the two sides became apparent.

Washington has made it clear it wants to see the “complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation” of the North.

But Pyongyang has vowed it will never give up its nuclear deterrent until it feels safe from what it terms US aggression.

US aides stood up

A senior White House official said Pyongyang had demonstrated a “profound lack of good faith” in the run-up to the summit — including standing up the White House’s deputy chief of staff, who had travelled to Singapore for preparatory talks.

The White House viewed North Korea’s objection to the latest US-South Korean joint military exercise — and its recent cancellation of a meeting with

the South Koreans — as a breach of its commitments leading up to the summit. It also was unhappy about the North’s failure to allow international observers to verify the dismantling of its Punggye-ri test site, the staging ground for all six of its nuclear tests which was buried inside a mountain near the border with China.

But the North’s Kim Kye Gwan countered that their angry statements were “just a backlash in response to harsh words from the US side that has been pushing for a unilateral denuclearisation”.

Both Pence and Trump’s hawkish National Security Advisor John Bolton had raised the spectre of Libyan leader Moammar Khadafi, who gave up atomic weapons only to die years later at the hands of US-backed rebels.

Experts warned that cancelling the meeting could have knock-on effects, especially among allies already rattled by Trump’s unpredictability.

“In a contest of who can be the most erratic leader, President Trump beats Kim Jong Un hands-down,” Joel Wit, founder of the respected 38 North website which monitors North Korea, wrote on Twitter.

“His unsteady hand has left everyone scratching their heads, including our ROK (South Korean) allies.”

But others said Trump’s willingness to walk away could extract further concessions from Pyongyang. “North Korea will have to propose more detailed plans for denuclearisation if it wants to talk in the future,” Go Myong-hyun, an analyst at Asan Institute of Policy Studies, told AFP. —AFP ■

Cuban authorities find second black box of crashed plane

HAVANA — Cuban authorities found the second black box containing flight data of the Boeing 737-200 plane that crashed near the Havana international airport on 18 May, a civil aviation official told state TV on Thursday.

Armando Daniel Lopez, president of Cuba’s Institute of Civil Aviation and Aeronautics (ICAA), confirmed that the black box was identified on Thursday in the disaster area, almost a

week after the accident.

The first black box, the voice recorder, was retrieved several days ago.

Lopez said the discovery of the second black box was made possible thanks to experts’ analyses of videos shot around the crash site, recollections of witnesses and nearby residents, as well as an investigation into the local topography.

According to the official, American and Mexican spe-

cialists working to support the investigation also helped identify the data recorder.

The ill-fated passenger plane belonged to the Mexican company Damojh and was on lease to Cuba’s Cubana de Aviacion airlines.

The plane was carrying 113 people on board. Altogether 111 people died in the incident, including 100 Cubans, five foreigners and all the six crew members from Mexico. —Xinhua ■



Rescuers work at the site where an airplane of Cuban airline “Cubana de Aviacion” crashed, in Havana, Cuba, on 18 May 2018. At least three people have been found alive, but in critical condition, after a Boeing 737 passenger plane crashed near Havana on Friday, according to state newspaper Granma. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Two killed in fresh Nicaragua clashes after talks collapse

LEON (NICARAGUA)—At least two people were killed and 50 wounded as clashes flared in Nicaragua after peace talks between the government and opposition collapsed, the Red Cross and victims' relatives said Thursday.

Since protests began on 18 April, 76 people have been killed and more than 800 wounded, according to a preliminary report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, submitted before Wednesday's clashes. Initially triggered by now-aborted reforms to the near-bankrupt social security system, the unrest broadened into a rejection by many Nicaraguans of Ortega his wife, Rosario Murillo, seen as autocratic.

The latest clashes broke out late Wednesday between opposition demonstrators and pro-government groups, with the worst occurring in Leon,

northwest of the capital Managua. A 31-year-old man, Manuel Chevez, was shot dead when government-linked groups tried to evict students and residents from a barricade on the main road to Leon, the man's aunt Justa Ramirez told AFP. A second man, identified as Luis Diaz and belonging to the pro-government group, was allegedly struck by a home-made mortar bomb, local Red Cross director Marcio Ocon told AFP. During the clashes, which lasted about five hours, 54 people were wounded by a mixture of gunfire, rubber bullets and blunt instruments, according to the Red Cross.

Rejection of early elections

Chevez's aunt said he had been shot by a rifle. "He was shot with an AK, because it is a shot from an AK that he has on his fore-



A Nicaraguan university student opposed to President Daniel Ortega fires a hand-held mortar in a neighbourhood in Masaya, a city that was a cradle of the Sandinista movement but is now a hotbed of anti-government resistance. **PHOTO:AFP**

head," she said. Clashes also occurred in other Nicaraguan cities. The unrest came after the week-long church-mediated talks between the government and opposition forces to quell

a month of violence broke down late on Wednesday.

"Since there was no consensus today between the parties, we in the bishops' conference regrettably are shutting down the... na-

tional dialogue," church officials said after eight fruitless hours of mediation at a Managua seminary.

The biggest major stumbling block is the government's rejection of early

elections. "That would be dismantling constitutional order and the democratically elected government," Foreign Minister Denis Moncada said. On Thursday Moncada reaffirmed the government's readiness to dialogue, saying it is "essential to resolve and agree on the elimination of all the barriers" on the roads, to avoid "violence in all its forms and to guarantee the right to work."

The leader of the opposition Broad Front for Democracy, Violeta Granera, said the dialogue had given her "a level of hope" to find a solution to the crisis.

"Now what we have left is to not let ourselves be unfocused and to be bolder, more creative and stronger with the protests."

Ortega "wants time to win with impunity... It is already clear that his days in power are numbered," she said.—AFP ■

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Models, actresses, employees: the women speaking out against Weinstein

WASHINGTON—Dozens of actress, models and ex-employees have come out to accuse veteran producer Harvey Weinstein, 66, of harassment, abuse and rape dating as far back as the 1990s.

With Weinstein expected to surrender to authorities in New York on Friday to face possible criminal charges, here is a look at the list of his accusers:

The first complaints

The scandal unfurled with the testimonies of eight women published in The New York Times on 5 October last year. The women who spoke out were anonymous ex-employees of the director, known for his work on films including "The King's Speech," as well as actress Ashley Judd.

The newspaper also revealed other cases of harassment, including actress Rose McGowan and model Ambra Battilana Gutierrez, who reportedly received settlements from Weinstein following the incidents.

The New Yorker magazine carried out its own 10-month investigation, published 10 October, which featured accusations from

13 women — including three of rape from actresses Asia Argento and Lucia Evans, and another anonymous young woman.

Revelations from a string of superstars -- including Rosanna Arquette, Gwyneth Paltrow, Angelina Jolie, Cara Delevingne and Lea Seydoux -- prompted other less famous women to speak out, although the focus remained on the celebrities.

Asia Argento

Argento, the Italian actress who has said she was raped by Weinstein at the Cannes film festival, made an emotional speech at this year's edition, the first since the scandal about his behavior erupted.

"This festival was his hunting ground," the 42-year-old star told the festival's award ceremony, where she presented the best actress prize.

Argento says she was 21 when she was attacked by Weinstein in his hotel room in 1997.

"He was seated among you... But things have changed. We are not going to allow you to get away with it," she added.

Rose McGowan

McGowan, who accuses Weinstein of raping her at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah, also in 1997, is one of the most prominent advocates in the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment.

In a public speech around the time the scandal broke, McGowan decried what she called a pervasive culture of sexual misconduct in Hollywood, and urged women to fight back.

"I have been silenced for 20 years. I have been slut-shamed. I have been harassed. I have been maligned, and you know what? I'm just like you," said McGowan, 44.

She hit the headlines again for criticizing Meryl Streep in a since-deleted tweet over plans for actresses to wear black to January's Golden Globes in a silent protest against sexual assault.

"YOUR SILENCE is THE problem. You'll accept a fake award breathlessly & affect (sic) no real change. I despise your hypocrisy," McGowan tweeted. Streep denied McGowan's claims



Model Ambra Battilana Gutierrez -- shown here in New York -- was one of Weinstein's first accusers. **PHOTO: AFP**

that the 68-year-old triple Oscar-winner had turned a blind eye to Weinstein's behavior.

Ashley Judd

Judd, one of the first wom-

en to publicly accuse Weinstein, started legal proceedings against him this month on the grounds that he defamed her after she rejected his advances.—AFP ■

Danny Boyle to direct new Bond film out in October 2019

LONDON—Oscar-winning filmmaker Danny Boyle will direct the next James Bond film, with actor Daniel Craig returning for the fifth time as the legendary British spy, the movies' producers announced Friday.

The 25th as yet untitled film in the storied 007 franchise will begin production later this year and hit cinemas in Britain first, on 25 October 2019, EON Productions and Metro Goldwyn Mayer Studios (MGM) said in a statement.

"We are delighted to announce that the exceptionally talented Danny Boyle will be directing Daniel Craig in his fifth outing as James Bond in the 25th instalment of the franchise," said producers Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli.

Production will start at Britain's Pinewood Studios in December with Universal Pictures the international distributor, they added.

Boyle, 61, who won an Academy Award in 2009 for "Slumdog Millionaire", will partner again with screenwriter John Hodge on the new Bond film.

The pair worked together on two "Trainspotting" movies, in 1996 and 2017, and "The Beach", starring Leonardo di Caprio.

Boyle, who also directed 2015's "Steve Jobs" and "28 Days Later" in 2002, had previously said he was working on "a great idea" for a James Bond script but was unsure if it would be made.

The film is expected to be Craig's last time playing the spy, having previously starred in "Casino Royale", "Quantum of Solace", "Skyfall" and "Spectre".



This will be the fifth time Craig plays James Bond. **PHOTO: AFP**

"The unparalleled combination of Danny's innovative filmmaking and Daniel's embodiment of 007 ensured we simply had to be partners in the next chapter of this iconic series," said Universal Pictures Chair Donna Langley. _ AFP ■

Pak imposes temporary ban on screening of B'wood, H'wood films during Eid

KARACHI—Pakistan has imposed a temporary ban on the exhibition and screening of Indian and other foreign language films during Eid in response to demands by the domestic film industry which faces stiff competition from Bollywood and Hollywood films during the holiday season.

According to a notification issued by the ministry of information and broadcasting, the exhibition and screening of Indian and foreign films will be banned from two days before the Eid to until two weeks after the holidays.

An official in the ministry said the step had been taken on the requests by the Pakistani film exhibitors, distributors and production houses.

Under this ban no cinema across Pakistan will be allowed to show Indian movies during the Eid holidays which usually run for four days and bring in big business for the new Pakistani, Bollywood and Hollywood films.

Another official from the

Pakistan Film Exhibitors' Association confirmed they had received the notification.

"The notification says that the temporary ban is being imposed in order to promote local movies on the festivals, a time when usual than larger audience is attracted towards cinemas," he said.

He said the notification was also applicable for the Eid-ul-Adha holidays which will fall around late August or September.

Pakistani film producers and artists have been complaining for the last two years that their new films face stiff competition from the Indian and Hollywood movies and due to the limited number of screens in the country they are not able to do good business and in some cases even recover their invested money in the films.

This Eid also a number of new Pakistani films are due for release but it was not clear which Indian films are slated for release during the holidays in India and elsewhere. — PTI ■



in
Picture

A teacher registers enrolment of school children at the Basic Education Primary School 11 in Thaketa Township. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR (NEWS ON PAGE-3)**

Serbian street artists make football the beautiful game

BELGRADE — Graffiti or street artists in Belgrade are playing out a football rivalry on the city's walls in a development far from the image of ultranationalism and violent Balkan fans.

Fan groups attached to Partizan Belgrade go by the nickname 'the Gravediggers', and include the graffiti artist Derox, who is also part of 'the Grobarski (gravediggers) Trash Romanizam' (GTR) art group.

When AFP meets him Derox has been working without break repainting 35 highly impressive mural paintings with the acronym GTR.

They had been vandalised during an overnight operation likely conducted by fans of bitter city rival Red Star.

The two giants of Yugoslav and Serbian football were founded at the end of World War II.

Some people believe Red Star draw support from the middle classes and Partizan traditionally from the working classes.

GTR art group co-founder, 31-year old Ivan Lovric, is not so sure about the traditional divisions but says Partizan is also the club supported by the intellectual elite.

Derox, 33-year-old Milan Milosavljevic, is finishing the portrait of surrealist Franco-Yugoslav painter Ljuba Popovic.

"I love Partizan not only for the football," he says, insisting

GTR is an "artistic movement linked to football".

He says what he does is a poke in the eye for those to whom "people who watch football are described as idiots".

And "there is the word ART in the name: pARTizan", he says.

Orwell, Morrissey, Strummer

On his drying mural Ljuba Popovic claims that he has been "supporting Partizan since 1942".

The club was founded three years later in fact. Other GTR works feature the British writer George Orwell and musicians Morrissey, Joe Strummer and Eddy Grant. "Eddy Grant is really a Partizan supporter," says Lovric who is studying English literature. He recalls a song, where the reggae singer offers

to put on an "invisible hat" to "visit Belgrade": "Relax and I'll take you to where it's at." As for Strummer, continues Lovric, before becoming the frontman of the Clash he was a gravedigger. Morrissey was chosen because GTR liked his lyrics contained in a Smiths song: "To die by your side is such an heavenly way to die".

What about Orwell? Lovric is convinced that "he had everything needed to be a Partizan fan". Also he contributed to the American Trotskyists magazine "Partisan", he says.

'Our way is art'

Launching GTR in 2012 "we did not have any doctrine or plan. We just wanted to do something for the love of our club," says Ivan Sarajcic, a bearded 47-year old IT programmer.—AFP ■



Graffiti artists from the Grobarski Trash Romanizam (GTR) group depict famous Serbian poet and Partizan soccer club fan Dusko Radovic on a Blegrade wall. **PHOTO: AFP**

Best Mom Ever Award given to writers in honour of Mothers' Day

Ocean Supercenter honoured winners of the manuscript contest in honor of "Best Mom" on Thursday. Over 150 manuscripts were submitted to the contest.

Daw Myint Myint, a teacher from Hlinethaya Township, won the best award for her manuscript depicting the real life of a teacher, mother of six, struggling

for livelihood of her family while teaching school children in a village in outskirts of Nay Pyi Taw.

Other two awards were given away at the ceremony.

Ocean Supercenter presented Ks1.5 million and a shopping card worth of Ks5000 worth to the winner of the Best Mom Award.— GNLM ■



Lucasfilm planning 'Star Wars' spin-off on Boba Fett: reports

LOS ANGELES — "Star Wars" fan favorite Boba Fett is to get his own spin-off movie in Lucasfilm's epic space franchise, US entertainment media reported on Thursday. "Logan" and "Cop Land" director James Mangold has been tapped to write and helm the standalone movie, according to the Hollywood Reporter, following spin-offs "Rogue One" (2016) and "Solo," which hits theaters this weekend.

Boba Fett, who has developed something of a cult following, has been played by various actors, starting with Jeremy Bulloch, who also appeared in several James Bond films in the 1970s and 80s. The bounty hunter's first film was "The Empire Strikes Back" (1980), although he has subsequently been worked digitally into the original movie, "Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope" (1977). Fett was seen careening into the deadly Great Pit of Carkoon — home to the many-tentacled, sharp-toothed "sarlacc" monster on the desert planet of Tatooine — in "Return of the Jedi" (1983). He then appeared in George Lucas's much-maligned prequel

trilogy, and his story is picked up in the animated television series "Star Wars: The Clone Wars." He turns up, apparently having survived his scrape with death on Tatooine, in much of the "Star Wars Legends" fan fiction which is no longer considered canon. "Some sources close to the project stress that the Boba Fett movie is in development, and not yet greenlit or dated. As they have before, things could always change," Entertainment Weekly said. Josh Trank ("Fantastic Four") was developing a Boba Fett spinoff in 2015, but dropped out, citing the enormous pressures of being involved with the franchise.

Disney-owned production company Lucasfilm reportedly has several other "Star Wars" projects in the pipeline, including an origin story on Luke Skywalker's mentor Obi-Wan Kenobi, with Stephen Daldry ("Billy Elliot," "The Crown") in talks to direct. The studio has not made any official announcement on release dates for the Boba Fett movie or the other projects and didn't respond to a request for comment.—AFP ■

Myanmar to play friendly with China today

The Myanmar national football team will play a friendly football match against China in Nanjing, China today. The Myanmar team has been training for the match since 23 May. Twenty of Myanmar's star players, including Si Thu Aung, Maung Maung Lwin, David Htan and Aee Soe, participated in the training sections under the supervision of Myanmar's new head coach Antoine Hey and assistant coach U Soe Myat Min.

The team left Yangon for

Nanjing, China on 24 May and are ready for today's match, said an official from Myanmar Football Federation. This is the second international friendly match for Myanmar in the same month. Myanmar played a friendly match with Leeds United at Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay on 11 May. China's national team manager Marcello Lippi will head the team, which includes well-known players Zheng Zhi, Wu Lei and Yu Dabao.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



Myanmar national football squad seen during training. PHOTO: MFF

Lyon blow Wolfsburg away in extra time to retain Champions League title

KIEV — A stunning burst of goals in extra time allowed Lyon to come from behind and beat Wolfsburg 4-1 as the French side made history by winning a third straight women's Champions League title on Thursday.

Amandine Henry, Eugenie Le Sommer and Ada Hegerberg all scored in a crazy first period of extra time to stun Wolfsburg, and substitute Camille Abily later made sure of the victory.

The German champions had taken a 93rd-minute lead courtesy of their Danish star Pernille Harder, only for influential midfielder Alexandra Popp to be sent off almost immediately after.

Lyon are the first side ever to lift the women's trophy three years running, and also set a new record by winning the tournament for the fifth time overall.

All of those titles have come since 2011, and the dominant side in the European game overtake Frankfurt's record of four titles.

It has already been a glorious first season at the helm for coach Reynald Pedros, with Lyon having won a 12th consecutive French league crown — they can still make it a treble with the French Cup final to come against Paris Saint-Germain. The extra-time drama came after a tense 90 minutes in the



Lyon players celebrate after Ada Hegerberg scored their third goal against Wolfsburg. PHOTO: AFP

third final confrontation between these two sides in six seasons.

In 2013, Wolfsburg triumphed 1-0 in London for their first of back-to-back Champions League titles. Lyon gained their revenge in 2016, emerging victorious in a penalty shoot-out. This encounter was watched by a crowd of more than 14,000 in the leafy setting of Kiev's Valeriy Lobanovskyi Dynamo Stadium,

just 48 hours before Real Madrid and Liverpool clash in the men's final across the Ukrainian capital.

Lyon have almost become the women's equivalent of Real, with the Spanish side also going for a third successive Champions League crown on Saturday.

Yet after needing penalties to beat the same opponents two years ago, and against PSG

last year, it looked like Lyon might be taken all the way once again.

They had enjoyed the better of the chances in normal time, but then fell behind as the game opened up completely in extra time.

Harder's low strike from outside the box found the net via a deflection off Lyon skipper Wendie Renard.—AFP ■

U-21 MNL 2nd round matches start today

THE second round of Week 14 football matches of the MPT Myanmar National league (U-21) 2018 will start today in Yangon with two contests.

The league's defending champion Shan United will play against Southern Myanmar FC at Salin Stadium at 3:30 pm, while Hantharwady United FC will play against Sagaing United FC at South Dagon Stadium at the same time.

On 27 May at 3:30 pm, Yangon United FC will play against GFA FC at Salin Stadium, while ISPE (A), a top place sitter with 34 points earned, will play Magwe FC at South Dagon Stadium.

On 28 May at 3:30 pm, Yadanabon FC will face off with Myawady FC at Salin Stadium while Ayeyawady United FC will play MFF Youth FC at South Dagon Stadium.

Rakhine United will face Zwegapin United at Salin Stadium on 29 May at 3:30pm.

The second round matches will be played until 31 August at Padonmar, Salin and South Dagon Stadiums in Yangon.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■