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Pyithu Hluttaw is being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY

Pyithu Hluttaw holds 16th-day meeting

Motion on death penalty for rape of minors voted down, kept on record

By Aye Aye Thant

THE second Pyithu Hluttaw's eighth regular session held its 16th-day meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Motion on death penalty for rape of minors voted down, kept on record

At the meeting, a motion tabled by Daw Khin Saw Wai of Yathedaung constituency urging the union government to enact an effective special law to prevent the rape of minors and to include the death penalty in the law was then discussed by

lawmakers.

Daw Myint Myint Soe @ Daw May Soe of Botahtaung constituency said that Myanmar is a member country of the United Nations and had pledged to uphold human rights and basic freedom.

It also had unconditionally accepted the fact that no crime should have the death penalty, as agreed by many member countries of the UN. Furthermore, there is no evidence to show that the death penalty deters or reduces crimes.

The biggest weakness of the death penalty is that there

There is a death penalty in law in Myanmar, but it is no longer imposed.

U Soe Aung, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

is absolutely no chance for the person accused of the crime to take a legal recourse.

Death penalty is contrary to

a democratic system

Research conducted also shows that crime rates in countries with the death penalty are higher than countries where there is (no death penalty and) prison sentence for life without amnesty, at the most. Death penalty is contrary to a democratic system, establishment of peace and the rule of law, which our country is undertaking as preliminary steps. Among the countries where there are death penalties, most are extremist countries, where human rights are violated or where there is no peace. **SEE PAGE-2**

Amyotha Hluttaw debates Farmers' Rights Protection and Benefit Enhancement Bill

By Aung Ye Thwin

AT the 16th-day meeting of the eighth regular session of the second Amyotha Hluttaw yesterday, the assembly held a question session, after which the MPs discussed a bill and read three reports.

Mon State factory workers receive compensation after downsizing

U Hla Myint, alias U Hla Myint Than, of Mon State constituency (11) asked if there were plans to help find employment for the 476 workers who were laid off with three months' pay. The workers were laid off when Shwe Thanlwin Highway Co. Ltd handed over its factory and land in Kyaikto Township, Mon State, to the Mon State government.

Union Minister for Industry U Khin Maung Cho replied that the workers were given five months' pay in accordance with the 3 June 2015 notification from the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, and 174 of the workers have collected their compensation, as of April 2018. He said, however, that there are no plans regarding employment for the laid off workers, but the Mon State government is discussing future employment and social security for the workers with representatives of companies interested in establishing factories in the area. **SEE PAGE-2**

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Pyithu Hluttaw holds 16th-day meeting

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The motion was also discussed by Daw Khin Hnin Thit of Padaung constituency, U Kyaw Swe Win of Kawhmu constituency and Dr. Daw Khin Nyo of Dedaye constituency.

The motion was also discussed by union-level officials. In his discussion, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung said child rape is unacceptable at any cost in our society.

The Hluttaw representatives also had discussed that taking a life (death penalty) is not related directly to reducing or eliminating this crime. Other methods must be adopted so that people in our society live according to ethics.

"There is a death penalty in law in Myanmar, but it is no longer imposed. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission has requested to consider widely and in depth enacting a special law with the death penalty to prevent the rape of minors," said the deputy minister.

The motion tabled by the Hluttaw representative was timely. It is also in line with what the government is doing. The government is drawing up a bill for a special law on children's rights. On the rape of minors,

enacting a law with penalties that could be an effective deterrent should be discussed and debated by all. A bill for a law on preventing violence against women is being drawn up and submitted for consideration. These two bills are what the motion is proposing, and if the Hluttaw representatives work on these two bills, together with the people, appropriate action would have been taken. As such, the motion should be kept on record, explained the deputy minister.

The motion was also discussed by Supreme Court Judge U Myo Tint, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Thu and Deputy Attorney General U Win Myint.

Later, the opinion of the Hluttaw representative who tabled the motion was obtained where she tendered the motion to be approved.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat then took the decision of the Hluttaw on the motion through a vote. As there were 141 for, 227 against and four who abstained, the motion was announced to be kept on record.

Starred questions

Replying to the first question posed by Daw Nan Moe of Mongton constituency on the plan to construct houses for



Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi. PHOTO: MNA

teachers in Mongton Township's Mansap Village middle school, Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi said the school had one principal, six middle school teachers, four primary school teachers and three office staff. Of those 11 assigned from afar, seven were staying in the school, while four were living in the village. The ministry should do something about the living conditions and toilet facilities that are found lacking, but there is not enough funding for this in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. As the teachers and staff are facing some difficulties, the ministry will review whether some repair works through maintenance cost, allocated for the 2018-2019 fiscal year, can be utilised for this matter. The ministry will include



Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung. PHOTO: MNA

this matter in its construction work for the 2019-2020 fiscal year, according to the rules and regulations, said the union minister.

U Paik Ko of Pakokku constituency next asked if there was a plan to open a day course in the Law Department of Pakokku University. Union Minister Dr. Myo Thein Gyi replied that there weren't enough qualified teachers to conduct such a course in Pakokku University, and this will be considered only when there are sufficient qualified teachers, as per the comment of the National Education Policy Commission.

On the question by U Ye Lwin of Ahlon constituency on the plan to combine some high schools in Ahlone Township because there were not enough

students, Union Minister Dr. Myo Thein Gyi explained that arrangements are being made to close some schools, according to rules and regulations, reassign the students to the nearest schools and reassign the teaching and non-teaching staff to schools in Ahlone Township or nearby townships.

Questions raised by U Maung Myint of Mingin constituency, U Tin Nu @ U Tin Nu Aung of Manaung constituency and U Sai Sai Mai of Mongkai constituency were also answered by Union Minister Dr. Myo Thein Gyi.

Government's guarantees, Pledges and undertaking's Vetting Committee report

After the question-and-answer session, the report of the government's guarantees, pledges and undertaking vetting committee was read by committee member Brig-Gen Kyaw San Lin.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat requested the Hluttaw representatives who wanted to discuss the report to enrol their names.

Next, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced the receipt and follow-up of a bill amending the television and broadcasting law, sent back by the Amyotha Hluttaw without amendments. ■

Amyotha Hluttaw: Farmers' Rights Protection and Benefit Enhancement Bill

FROM PAGE-1

New laws will register all private educational institutions

U Tun Tun Oo of Mandalay-Region constituency (2) asked if there were plans to collect tax from private non-formal and informal educational institutions, such as accountancy, IT, business, or leadership training centres, which are exempt from the Private School Registration Law and the National Education Law.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win replied that once the Technology and Vocational Education and Training Law and the Private School Law are in place, then all educational institutions will be legally registered and will pay their due taxes. He added the Ministry of Education has no formal administration regarding these institutions.

Next, Speaker Mahn Win

Khaing Than announced that the Pyithu Hluttaw has sent back with amendments the 2017 Bill to amend the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land Management Law, sent with approval by the Amyotha Hluttaw. He called for MPs wishing to discuss the bill to register their names.

MPs discuss bill amending Protection of the Farmers' Rights and Enhancement of their Benefits Law

U Hla San of Magway Region constituency (1) suggested changing the word "former worker" to "currently working" with regard to farmers conducting agricultural or livestock breeding businesses mentioned in the bill. He suggested adding a section that allows reforming as necessary the head organisation, formed by the union government according to Article 4 - (A), (B), and (C). He also suggested amending a section to read as



Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win. PHOTO: MNA

"allowing farmers" agricultural and livestock breeding businesses to freely produce, package, and transport their products throughout their respective states and regions, Nay Pyi Taw council and to foreign markets.

U Aung Myo of Sagaing Region constituency (2) said that the law is weakly implemented

and part of this is due to shortcomings in Section 3 of the Law concerning the formation of the Head Organisation for Protection of the Farmers' Rights and Enhancement of their Benefits. In particular, he suggested changing the number of times an organisation meets from once a year to once every four months.

He also suggested forming necessary working committees and sub-agencies for township, district, state, and regional administration for farmers. The bill was further discussed by five MPs.

Assembly reads three reports

Next, Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee member Daw Ohn Kyi and Dr. Myat Nyanna Soe read the committee's report on the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University Bill, sent by the Pyithu Hluttaw with amendments, and the

committee's reports on the 2017 Land Confiscation Bill, respectively. The speaker called on interested MPs to enrol their names for discussion.

Next, U Aung Win, member of the Committee for Guarantees, Pledges and Undertaking Vetting Government, read the committee's report on the motions and questions submitted during the seventh regular session of the second Amyotha Hluttaw.

The report states that one motion was put as a promise by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, 61 of the 106 asterisk-marked questions were given assurances, and 112 of the 184 non-asterisk-marked questions were given assurances.

The speaker then called for interested MPs to enrol their names for discussions.

The Amyotha Hluttaw continues today. ■

NDMC Vice Chairman attends Mon State natural disaster management committee coord meeting

NATIONAL Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) Vice Chairman Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye addressed the Mon State natural disaster management committee coordination meeting held in the Mon State government office meeting hall yesterday.

He said Myanmar is a country where natural disasters occur every year, and it was conducting preventive works to withstand them. Myanmar is also among the countries that are not ready to face and overcome natural disasters, said the Union Minister.

As advance preventive works, nine motorboats were deployed in Bilin and Kyaukto townships of Mon State, where there were natural disasters every year. At the moment, floods were occurring in Mawlamyine town and three motor-

boats were brought along during this trip. The Union Government and state government will split and conduct long-term and short-term rehabilitation works. On the matter of a landslide incident in Kyaukthanlan Pagoda, NDMC will form a reconstruction committee with experts to provide the necessary advice and the departments attending the meeting are to discuss and suggest department-wise damages, losses and requirements.

Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan, state ministers and officials presented the damages and losses in Mon State owing to heavy rains, and discussed the status of opening of temporary camps for the affected people and the requirements in detail, as well as the follow-up arrangements.

Next, the union minister handed over to the chief minister and officials three motorboats



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye meets with people affected by the floods at the temporary camps in Mon State yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

for rescue, relief and preventive works, 40,000 water purification tablet packages, and over Ks15.5 million as food allowances for 7,407 people affected by the floods.

The union minister and the delegation then went to No. 11 Basic Education High School, Shwezedi monastery, Basic Education Primary School (Hline) and Thaddhamma cetana monastery, where temporary camps

for affected persons were opened to encourage people, and provide cash support for one week of food and soaps. The elderly were provided additional cash support.

From there, the union minister and the delegation went to the Department of Social Welfare's vocational training school and met volunteer organizations, local elders and departmental staff. At the meeting, civil

society organizations discussed their works, their participation in preventive, responsive and rehabilitation works, and the union minister, directors-general and officials explained and discussed them. Owing to heavy rains in Mon State that began on 16 June, there was flooding, resulting in damages and losses in Mawlamyine, Chaungzon, Kyaukmaraw, Mudon and Ye towns.— Myanmar News Agency ■

UN Special Envoy visits Maungtaw District

MS. Christine Schraner Burgener, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Myanmar, led a delegation to Maungtaw District on 17 June accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They were welcomed by Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin and Rakhine State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col. Phone Tint.

The UN Special Envoy first met with officials from INGOs and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at the OCHA office.

Next, the UN Special Envoy and delegation met with Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and state ministers at the State Hluttaw building and discussed the current affairs and ongoing processes in Rakhine State.

Next, the UN Special Envoy along with the Deputy Minister for Construction and State Minister Col. Phone Tint traveled first to the IDP camp in Myebon Town and then to the IDP camp in Thakkepyin Village in Sittway and met with the families temporarily living there.

Yesterday, The UN Special Envoy, deputy minister, and state



UNSG's Special Envoy Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener visits IDP camp in Thakkepyin Village in Maungtaw. **PHOTO: KHIN MAUNG WIN**

minister travelled to Taung Pyo Letwe Village and viewed the bridge joining the borders of Myanmar and Bangladesh, then visited the reception centre. They then visited and interviewed the people residing on the boundary line. Afterwards, at Kyein Chaung village hall, the deputy minister explained about the progress of rebuilding houses destroyed during the 2016-2017 terrorist attacks and the UN Special Envoy then visited the completed houses. They then visited Hla Phoe Kaung transit centre from the sky with helicopters.

Next, at the Maungtaw Dis-

trict General Administration Office, the UN Special Envoy met with the remaining family members of Muslims, Hindus, and Mro ethnic people who had been killed and gave words of encouragement. The UN Special Envoy then traveled to Pan Taw Pyin Village and met with families who remained behind during the terrorist attacks who are now residing in houses built by the Yangon Region Government. The UN Special Envoy and entourage then returned to Sittway in the evening and flew back to Yangon.— Aung Thu, Nay Win Tun ■

Kayah State Government organizes budget literacy and planning workshop

THE workshop demonstrates the Kayah State government's commitment to strengthen democratic governance and equip local civil society organizations with technical knowledge on budget planning.

Loikaw, 18 June 2018 – The Kayah State Government, with the support of The Asia Foundation, organized its first ever Budget Literacy and Planning Workshop for civil society organizations on 14th and 15th of June at Kayah Resort in Loikaw.

The workshop, organized with the objective of increasing budget transparency and equipping civil society organizations with technical knowledge on the budget planning process, was attended by 50 participants including government officials, local social aid groups and charity association, women organizations, members of parliament from the Kayah State Democratic Party and civil society organizations from across the Kayah State.

The workshop focussed on the state and region budget



Kayah State Chief Minister, U L Phaung Sho, speaking at the workshop. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

planning process and cycle, tax revenue and expenditure, good practices on public finance management, and the role of civil society organizations is increasing in budget transparency and accountability. The government announced that the second Budget Literacy and Planning Workshop will take place in July 2018, while a state-level Budget Transparency Forum for officials from the Kayah State Hluttaw, technical experts and civil society organizations will be held later this year.—GNLM ■

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Aquaculture production survey slated to end in April 2019

By May Thet Hnin

THE aquaculture production survey, conducted jointly by the Yangon Region Fisheries Department and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), in 16 townships is slated to end by the end of April 2019.

This survey is being conducted under the project name 'Improvement of Fishery and Aquaculture Production' in Mingaladon, Hlegu, Taikkyi, Insein, Hmawby, Dagon Myothit (East), Htantabin, Thanlyin, Kyauktan, Kayan, Thongwa, Twantay, Kungyangon, Kawhmu and other townships. The survey was planned in the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

"The survey will reveal the data of fish varieties found in various townships, determine their self-sufficiency, fishing type, scarcity of particular fish varieties, endangered species and labour force, said U Hla Htay, Deputy Director of the Yangon Region Fisheries Department.

Earlier, the Fisheries Department had published

An artificial pond is used for fish farming. **PHOTO: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION (FAO)**

a biennial statistical yearbook. However, the book is believed to be unreliable, FAO and international experts said. The book shows more volume than the existing aquaculture resources, and it seems unconnected with real data. This being so, this survey is carried out to get actual data, said U Aung Kyaw Htay, a national consultant.

Previously, the Fisheries Department conducted the

survey using the conventional paper work. Now, they are using an eGovernment system that links with the data server at the Yangon Region Fisheries Department. Data on offshore and inshore fishing, public property inland waters, fishing ponds enterprises, fisheries resources from fish farming lakes and labour force are now being collected throughout the year.

"We will compare the statis-

tics book's production with the data from the electronic survey. The current activity will be considered as a pilot project for the 'Improvement of Fishery and Aquaculture Production', and we will proceed to Rakhine, Taninthayi and Ayeyawady coastal regions and other places across the country," U Aung Kyaw Htay maintained.

The public will get open access to the data later. ■

Illegal liquor, beer worth Ks127 million seized in Namsang Township

ILLICIT liquor worth Ks127 million was seized from a 12-wheel truck at 3 a.m. on 16 June in Namsang Township, Loilen District, in southern Shan State.

The patrol unit that conducted the surprise check found foreign-branded liquor and Thailand-made beer and wine in the truck. While a combined team of police from the Namsang police station and military personnel were conducting an inspection at the gates, a patrol unit searched

a white Nissan Diesel truck, driven by Than Htike from Nyuangshwe Town, along with Myat Min Thu and Tin San Oo on board, and found the illegal goods that included bottles of Black Label in cartons, Johnnie Walker that was at least 18 years old, Thailand-made Diablo beer and SPY.

The three men and the owner of the goods, Nan Kham Aung from Langkho Township, were charged at Namsang police station. —Thura Aung (IPRD) ■

360Pintale advertising agency teams up with Thai firm for digital advertising service

By Nyein Nyein

THAILAND'S leading digital advertising agency 360 Innovative entered Myanmar's market through a partnership agreement with 360Pintale, which is operating under the Mandalay advertising group, to deliver digital advertising solutions to clients, said U Kyaw Zay Ya, managing director of 360Pintale.

"Our digital usage has been increasing for the last three years. We have come to realise the need for a digital market. However, our technical know-how and resources are limited. This is why we teamed up with well experienced agency 360 Innovative, which has already got clients in this industry," maintained U Kyaw Zay Ya.

Myanmar's digital consumption is still lower than Thailand, he pointed out.

"People are increasingly using mobiles in Myanmar. So, the digital business in Myanmar will

increase a lot. However, Myanmar's digital spenders are out of touch with the digital scope. We will introduce to the local digital spenders a wide range of digital platforms beyond Facebook. We want to give an opportunity to Myanmar's brands to experience another level of service provided by us," said Ying Amekong, vice president, business development at 360 Innovative.

360Pintale is a full service advertising agency with PR service and digital advertising specialist, located in Yangon, providing strategy and consultancy, digital marketing, creative and design, media and measurement, social media and monitoring, public relations, production house and search, and analytics to local brands and clients. 360 Innovative has been preferred by a multitude of Thai and global brands to establish their products and services in the Myanmar market. ■

Passenger express train on Mawlamyine-Ye railroad derailed

A passenger express train bound for Ye was derailed between mileposts 178/22 and 178/23 of the Mawlamyine-Ye railroad on the morning of 17 June.

Due to the derailment of No. 175 Up express train, some railroad sections were

damaged, with some wheels dislocated, forcing locomotive DD921 to tilt 45 degrees.

But no casualties were reported.

Staff members of Myanmar Railways were busy repairing the damaged railroads.—Tin Htut-(Mawlamyine)/MDN ■



Mangoes vendors wait for customers. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Sein Ta Lone export to Singapore suspended owing to trademark infringement

THE export of Myanmar's Sein Ta Lone (diamond solitaire mango) to Singapore is suspended owing to trademark infringement since early June, said U Kyaw Soe Naing from the Myanmar Mango Market and Technology Development Association (MMMTDA).

Suppliers and exporters of Myanmar's Sein Ta Lone mangoes send them to Singapore only after passing the quality control process. However, some distributor companies replace

them with inferior fruits in the Singapore market.

The exported mangoes are labelled and have assured quality, but some unscrupulous distributors are making unauthorised use of the registered trademark. They replaced the quality mangoes with inferior ones, prompting Myanmar traders to stop their exports, U Kyaw Soe Naing said.

Five tons of Sein Ta Lone are exported daily to Singapore during the mango season every

year. A ton of Sein Ta Lone fetches Ks1.5 million. Currently, the MMMTDA is negotiating with a distributor company, which allegedly has breached the copyright.

If these discussions turn out negative, there are plans to sue the company.

Myanmar's mango exports to the Singapore market are mainly conducted by a company, which is listed as a member of the MMMTDA. — Htet Aung (AMIA) ■

KBZ Bank announces key updates to domestic remittances services

KBZ Bank, Myanmar's largest privately-owned bank, announced updates to its domestic remittances as it continues to upgrade and digitize its services. The bank has focused on improving domestic remittances services for customers, including digitizing services and opening different channels to offer customers more ways to transfer money domestically, creating a more accessible remittance ecosystem.

KBZ Bank announced that it will increase remittance minimum charges from 200 MMK to 500 MMK for over-the-counter transactions. The commission rate will stay the same, with only minimum charges increasing.

"Domestic remittance fees have not changed in the last 7 years. We've updated them now to ensure the bank remains competitive for the long term as current rates are not sustainable," said U Paing Minn, Head of Domestic Remittance for KBZ Bank.

U Paing Minn highlighted what is most important to the bank, identifying one of their priorities as having to "constantly innovate to increase financial accessibility in Myanmar. We continue to provide customers with a range of banking services to improve their quality of life, including quick, easy and convenient domestic remittance solutions. This will allow us to align with international standards," he added.

Effective 1 July 2018, iBanking transaction fees would follow the following rates. Own account transfers are free, the rates below are for internal transfer to other accounts.—GNLM ■

iBanking Transaction Per Day	iBanking Transaction Fee
Up to 200 million MMK (Corporate)	0.0125% of transfer amount
Above 200 million MMK (Corporate)	0.025% of transfer amount
Maximum 30 million MMK (Retail) *no maximum limit for over-the-counter	0.025% of transfer amount (min 500 MMK)

Mung beans, pigeon peas trading increases

By May Thet Hnin

THE pulses market has gradually recovered, and 5,000 tons of mung beans and 3,000 tons of pigeon peas are traded per week, according to Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association (MPBSSMA).

"The demand from India is also one of the reasons for the increased trading. A large number of sellers under the freight on board contract cannot hike the price," said U Min Ko Oo, secretary of MPBSSMA.

With the increasing demand, the price of mung beans soared from Ks380,000 to Ks480,000 per ton. Similarly, the

price of pigeon peas increased from Ks350,000 to Ks505,000 per ton.

Prior to India's pulses import policy changes, a ton of mung beans was valued around Ks900,000, and pigeon peas fetched around Ks800,000 per ton, said U Min Ko Oo.

In early May, India's government officially allowed the import quota of 150,000 tons each of mung beans and green grams, and 200,000 tons of pigeon peas. The trading has been going up since the end of May, and the price has also somewhat increased.

Currently, there is a demand from India, Dubai and

Nepal, and 300,000 ton of mung beans and nearly 100,000 tons of pigeon peas are in stock.

Myanmar accounts for 70 per cent of India's mung bean imports and does not need to compete against other importer countries to India.

Nevertheless, India buys only 30 per cent of pigeon peas from Myanmar, making its market uncertain. The commerce ministry has already requested growers not to choose pigeon peas in the coming cultivation season. Various pulses, including green grams, which are exported to other foreign markets, are also fetching a good price in the market. ■



Myanmar pulses are kept on display for sale in a shop at a market. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

Department of Cooperative, Agriterra of Netherlands sign MoU

THE Department of Cooperative and Agriterra agriculture cooperative of the Netherlands signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the Myanmar cooperative sector development project in Grand Hotel Wientjes, the Netherlands, on 12 June.

Present at the signing ceremony were Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr. Aung Thu, Department of Agriculture Director-General Dr. Ye Tint Tun, Yezin Agricultural University Rector Dr. Myo Kywe, Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department Director-General Dr. Ye Tun Win, Department of Cooperative Director-General U Aung Phyu from the Myanmar side, and Dairy Development Friesland Campina Director Mr. Atze Schaap, LTO Noord Chairperson Ms. Trienke Elshof, ABN AMRO Director of agricultural bank Mr. Pierre Berntsen, Ministry of Agriculture's former agriculture ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Geert Westenbrink, Organic



Director-General U Aung Phyu and Agriterra Managing Director Dr. Kees Blokland sign the MoU on Cooperative Development Plan Myanmar in the Netherlands on 12 June. **PHOTO: 3MDG**

Cooperative Group Chairman Mr. Anton Van Vilsteren and members of Friesland Campina and livestock breeding cooperative Mr. Vert and Mr. Adrie Vollerling from the Netherlands side.

At the ceremony, Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu delivered an opening speech and Agriterra Managing Director

Dr. Kees Blokland gave a welcoming speech.

Later, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Department of Cooperative Director-General U Aung Phyu and Agriterra Managing Director Dr. Kees Blokland signed the MoU on the Myanmar cooperative sector development project. —Myanmar News Agency ■

New clinic brings better healthcare for Myitkyina prisoners

THE Three Millennium Development Goal Fund (3MDG) handed over the first new health clinic to the Ministry of Home Affairs at Myitkyina Prison, in Kachin State, on 18 June 2018.

The event was attended by the Director-General of the Public Health Department, operating under the Ministry of Health and Sports, the director of the Prison Department in Kachin State, the director of Kachin State Public Health and the head of programme representing the 3MDG. At the event, the director-general of the Public Health Department thanked the 3MDG for the contribution of health clinics in four prisons in Myanmar.

This clinic is the first of the four, the others of which are being built in Lashio Prison in Shan State, Insein Prison in Yangon Region and Mandalay Prison in Mandalay Region. The total cost of the four facilities is US\$1.2 million.

The facilities will provide basic healthcare services, with a focus on providing treatment for tuberculosis, a major health problem in crowded areas.

Prisoners are overcrowded



Officials cut ribbon to open the first new health clinic at the handover ceremony in Myitkyina Prison, Kachin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

in Myanmar's prisons, and they have only a limited access to healthcare services. Therefore, they are highly susceptible to communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV, hepatitis and cholera.

In Myanmar prisons, overcrowding is the result of high levels of drug use and drug trade, with nearly half of Myanmar's 65,000-70,000 prisoners serving sentences related to drug offences. Since 2014, the 3MDG has been supporting the National TB programme for active case finding in 43 prisons, including Myitkyina Prison and 18 labour

camps. The 3MDG supports by providing monetary assistance, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Asian Harm Reduction Network, to health services in two prisons in Bhamo, Chin State and in a prison in Kalay, Sagaing Region.

Once the 3MDG fund is utilised, the new fund will be identified as Access to Health Fund, which will focus on improving equity in healthcare. The new multi-donor trust fund for health will begin in 2019, with four donors from Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. —GNLM ■

Union Supreme Court sits to pass judgment, hear cases

CHIEF Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo, Supreme Court judges U Mya Thein and U Aung Zaw Thein of the Special Appellate Bench sat at Union Supreme Court room number 1 yesterday

morning and passed judgment on five (Certiorari) civil cases and heard one (Certiorari) criminal case and four (Certiorari) civil cases. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Good-quality seeds refinery to come up in Bogale this fiscal year

THE Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) is planning to operate a good-quality seeds refinery in Bogale Township, Ayeyawady Region, this monsoon, said U Thaung Win, vice chairman of MRF.

"There are many good-quality seed producers in Bogale Township. Also, many organisations are ready to support these producers. However, the producers are facing difficulties owing to the lack of a seeds refinery in Bogale Township, and they have to go to other regions to find one. Therefore, we have discussed operating a good-quality seeds refinery in Bogale Township. The factory has been planned to be set up at Aung Bawga rice mill in Thar Paung village, with a machine power that can run 1.5 tons per hour, he added.

It will be convenient for local farmers if they have their own seed refineries in other states and regions. Moreover, the MRF will try to increase investments and assist in technical require-

ments. "Although the demand for bean and paddy seeds has increased by five per cent, bean and paddy production has declined because of the quality of the seeds. We are always worrying about the quality of our production," said U Moe Kyaw, a local paddy cultivator in Bogale Township.

The price of paddy seeds is between Ks15,000 and Ks30,000 per basket, depending on their quality. Local farmers have to use two baskets of paddy seeds for one acre of farmland. Private and government departments can support the high demand of the seeds sector by selling high-quality paddy seeds.

Annually, the Ayeyawady Region has 3.5 million acres of monsoon and 1.7 million acres of summer paddy cultivation. In both cultivation seasons, local farmers require more than five million baskets of paddy seeds, according to the Ayeyawady Region Agricultural Department. —Zay Lin Thu (AMIA) ■

Aung Mingalar Bus Terminal gets first ever healthcare facility

THE Ministry of Health and Sports opened its very first healthcare facility in Aung Mingalar Bus Terminal in Yangon yesterday.

At the opening ceremony, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe delivered an address. Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein and Dr. May Win Myint, Central Executive Committee Member and the Chairperson of the NLD Women's Central Working Committee spoke, congratulatory words.

The health facility was

formally opened by the union minister, the chief minister, an NLD CEC member and donor U Hla Moe Hlaing. "It benefits not only travellers but also bus operators, who no longer need to go to outside clinics. I think it will be more convenient if there's an additional one here," said Daw Ohnmar Thant who took a passenger bus run by the Nay Pyi Taw Bus Line.

Similar clinics should be opened in Dagon-Ayar Bus Terminal, in order to offer healthcare services to passengers. —Than Htike/MDN ■

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Implementation of infrastructure projects through PPP is effective

TODAY, countries throughout the world are facing complicated challenges in various sectors, which cannot be overcome single-handedly. Countries having similar cultures, historical backgrounds and ideologies must unite to confront these challenges.

This is the best way to convert global challenges into regional opportunities for inclusive sustainable development.

Over the past 14 years, we have witnessed substantial achievements in the Sub-Mekong region through our cooperative efforts to attain sustainable development, narrow the development gap and complement ASEAN community building.

Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) agreed last weekend to increase the effectiveness of their roles in the cooperation mechanism to narrow the gap between CLMV and other ASEAN countries.

We should also take into consideration the private-public-partnership scheme, as one of the more effective methods for the implementation of our infrastructure projects.

CLMV countries are situated in a geographically important location and have the advantage of low labour costs. However, there are factors that prevent our businesses from integrating deeply into the Asian network of production, goods and services.

The constraints are, in particular, poor logistics infrastructure and inadequacies in the creation of a favourable investment environment. Therefore, we should focus on upgrading weak transport and logistics infrastructures in the Mekong Sub-region.

Weak infrastructure, high transport costs, and associated limited access to markets and services are among the main causes of poverty in the region.

Myanmar has placed the highest emphasis on infrastructure projects related to connectivity, as the sector is playing an important role in promoting trade and people-to-people links.

Myanmar will participate in the development of east-west economic corridors of the Greater Mekong region countries and by implementing the Cross Border Transport Agreement, the development of the country's social, economic and transport sectors will be substantial.

We also invite ASEAN business communities to invest in Myanmar's Thilawa Economic Zone and Dawei and Kyaukpau Deep Seaports, which will boost connectivity, and promote regional and international trade.

We should also take into consideration the private-public-partnership scheme, as one of the more effective methods for the implementation of our infrastructure projects.

The implementation of regional agreements such as the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit is crucial for greater economic integration and connectivity among CLMV countries.

We should all note that trade facilitation through construction or upgrading of logistics infrastructure is not enough to attract investments and industrial firms to our sub-region.

The governments of the Sub-Mekong region need to launch specific policy measures to attract investments and industries to the region. ■

Climate change raises the bar for disaster resilience

Disaster risk management has always been a high priority in Southeast Asia, but climate change is making the problem all the more urgent and challenging, writes NUS' Vinod Thomas.

SOUTHEAST Asia, already on the path of tropical storms originating from the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans, has seen a spike in climate disasters as global warming aggravates these hazards of nature. The dangers are compounded by the fact that the region also has a high population density, with large urban populations in low-lying cities, including the megacities, Jakarta and Manila.

Extreme weather has pushed intense storms and floods further inland because of rising seas levels, be it in Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam, and produced deadlier heatwaves like the recent ones in China and India—and the dry spells in 2014 and 2015 that threatened Singapore's reservoir levels.

Southeast Asia has built capabilities and infrastructure for disaster management over the years. But climate change has raised the bar for risk management much higher, leaving vast gaps in disaster risk management. My recent book calls attention to the urgency of increasing smart investments in climate mitigation and disaster resilience.

Resilience building has high payoffs. Most notably, early warning systems and more robust evacuations of populations living in the paths of typhoons have reduced death tolls over the years. Japan is on the frontier of building such systems: its Meteorological Agency recently updated its Evaluation Alert System, mapping the intensity of weather-related hazards and people's special needs.

While countries are improving their national emergency capabilities, central governments often defer to their local counterparts for the choice of the systems to adopt. Advances in ground-based networks of radars, but increasingly also on satellite data, are key to nearly continuous observation of global weather. As satellites provide



A trishaw carrying a passenger wades through a flood road after heavy rain in Yangon recently. PHOTO: MARK ANGELES

information for wide geographic areas, including oceans, improvements in forecasting have made warning systems more efficient.

The use of telephone-based capabilities for emergency warnings is expanding rapidly, owing in particular to the explosive development in mobile networks. For example, Australia's Emergency Alert enables states and territories to issue warnings to landline and mobile telephones linked to properties in areas identified as being at risk. It works across all telecommunication carrier networks.

Technologies that link sensor networks, large-scale data analysis and communications systems provide decision-makers with timely information to guide response. Siemens implemented a levee monitoring system in the Netherlands using sensors to monitor water

pressure, temperature and shifting weather patterns to identify areas that are at risk of being breached and trigger alarms. IBM provides a digital command centre that integrates real-time information on storm conditions, emergency response assets, and areas at risk.

Companies can help to make infrastructure more

With rising sea levels and temperatures, previous norms of the safe distance to live from coastline must be revised.

resilient, improving the speed of recovery after disasters strike. Redundant systems for critical infrastructure and waterproof or diesel-powered pumping systems can reduce the chance of water and power system failures. System intelligence is another form of hardening; embedding sensors and controls into power lines and water treatment plants can allow cit-

ies to assess hazardous conditions, take preventative actions and target repair efforts.

Disaster readiness also involves zoning regulations to restrict new development in hazard-prone areas and building codes to protect businesses, homes and neighborhoods. These are an essential part of minimising the kind of disruption to supply chains and

information networks that we saw during the massive floods in Sri Lanka; Chennai, India, and Thailand in the past decade. With rising sea levels and temperatures, previous norms of the safe distance to live from coastline must be revised.

With the increased frequency of floods and storms, governments and external financiers need to facilitate credit for rebuilding lives and livelihood, especially for the poor and vulnerable. We have also seen high payoffs to investing in education, information sharing and capacity development in dealing with these calamities. The weak handling by the authorities of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the costliest disaster in the US, has had lessons for coordination across government units during Hurricane Harvey, the deadliest flood in the US in decades.

The higher bar also means that climate mitigation through switching to low-pollution, low-carbon technologies is a must. A common threat to achieving the Paris targets for climate mitigation is the prospect that coal would become the region's largest energy source by 2040. Failure to move away from fossil fuels, especially coal, could very well lead to their failure to meet the commitments on cutting emissions. The way forward will be to switch far more rapidly to wind, solar and other renewables in national energy mixes and to cut costly fossil fuel subsidies as India and Indonesia have started to do.

Disaster risk management is always a high priority in Southeast Asia. Climate change is making the problem all the more challenging, calling for urgent action on climate mitigation and smart steps in disaster abatement. ■

Vinod Thomas is Visiting professor, National University of Singapore; former World Bank senior vice president; and author of Climate Change and Natural Disasters.

COMPANIES LAW TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN 2019 REPORT ON MYANMAR

A report to be issued later this year on Myanmar by the global research and consultancy firm Oxford Business Group (OBG) will navigate readers through the country's long-awaited Companies Law, which came into force in December, while also considering its implications for investors.

Key issues analysed in The Report: Myanmar 2019 include the landmark legislative changes that allow foreign firms to now hold up to 35% of shares in a domestic company - a move that opens the door for international players to do significantly more business in the country.

OBG's report will also consider the decision to ease trading rules on the Yangon Stock Exchange by allowing investors from abroad to deal shares.

Other aspects of the legislation examined include new rules that make it easier for operators to change the status of their firm from foreign to local entity and vice versa.

The Report: Myanmar 2019 will also look in detail at the modifications to the law governing company administration, which have reduced the number of shareholders and directors required to set up a company from two to one of each, thereby allowing investors to make a domestic company a wholly-owned subsidiary.

Kelvin Chia Yangon has signed a sixth memorandum of understanding (MoU) with OBG for its forthcoming publication. Under the MoU, the firm's representatives will help OBG to produce the Law Chapter of The Report: Myanmar 2019.

Cheah Swee Gim, director, Kelvin Chia Yangon, said that Myanmar continues to strengthen its legal infrastructure through the enactment of new laws and regulations. Many of such new laws are intended to attract or boost foreign investment in Myanmar, such as the recently enacted Companies Law and the Condominium Law. —GNLM/OBG

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 18th June, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is vigorous over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weak to moderate elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 19th JUNE, 2018: Rain will be isolated in Magway Region, scattered in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Shan and Chin States, fairly widespread in Naypyitaw, Bago Region, Kachin and Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Taninthayi Region and Mon State and isolated heavy falls in Ayeyarwady Region, Chin, Rakhine and Kayah States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough sea are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (9 - 12) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama and off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (4 - 7) feet in off and along Rakhine Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of increase of rain in Taninthayi Region, Kayah and Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19th JUNE, 2018: Isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19th JUNE, 2018: One or two rain. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19th JUNE, 2018: Isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Life insurance payment made to families of six deceased, victims of Maesot car accident

A vehicle carrying 51 Myanmar workers who were working at a computer parts factory of Sukhonavason Co. Ltd. in Cha-choengsao, Thailand, under an MoU agreement with Golden Royal Mandalay Co. Ltd. fell into a ravine just after passing Maesot on 9 April, resulting in the death of six female workers.

Following the joint efforts of the Myanmar Embassy in Thailand and Golden Royal Mandalay Co. Ltd., a life insurance payment under the Thai law was obtained and the insurance payment was handed over to the families of the deceased workers at a ceremony held at the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population meeting hall, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning.

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population, officials from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, representatives of Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation, officials from Golden Royal Mandalay Co. Ltd. and the families of the deceased workers.

At the ceremony, the Union Minister said a total of 700,000 baht—400,000 baht under the Thai travel law and 300,000 baht under car insurance—were pro-



Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe hands over life insurance payment to a family member of the deceased workers. **PHOTO: MNA**

vided to each worker as life insurance payment. It is equal to Ks29.24 million per worker, which was then presented to the family members of the deceased workers.

The Union Minister comforted the family members of the deceased after the insurance payment was made.

On 12 May, the families of the six deceased workers and 12 workers who were injured in the accident were provided

a total of Ks18.205 million and 19,500 baht that includes Ks5.1 million from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population; Ks2.4 million from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement; Ks4.905 million and 19,500 baht from the Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation and Ks5.8 million from Golden Royal Mandalay Co. Ltd. at a ceremony in Yangon. — Myanmar News Agency ■

“Youth and danger of drug” public talk held in Mayangon

A PUBLIC talk titled “Youth and danger of drug” was held at Great Light Private High School in Mayangon, Yangon Region, yesterday.

At the public talk, Mayangon Township administrator U Saw Nyi Nyi Htwe delivered an opening remark. Yangon West District Anti-Drug Squad 42 head Police Major Thin Aung, Township Law Officer U Moe Wei Phy, township anti-drug association secretary U Htin Kyaw Moe and Daw Khin Moe Thu of township women affairs association gave talk on danger of drug, discussed and answered to the questions raised by the attendees. The public talk was attended by depart-



Public talk titled “Youth and danger of drug” held in Mayangon Township, Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

mental officials, officials from civil service organisations, township writers’ association

members, students, invited guests and interested persons. —Zaw Gyi ■

Killer mushroom leaves six migrant workers dead in Muse

TOXIC mushrooms killed six Myanmar migrant workers in Yunnan, China, recently according to the Muse District Information and Public Relations Department.

A group of seven men working as farm labourers at a chilli farm in Yunnan, China, were poisoned after eating wild mushrooms found near the farm on 11 June.

They were admitted to the hospital, but a group of seven men were taken to the Muse Hospital on their own volition on 13 June while five men re-

mained in Yunnan.

Another patient was taken to Muse Hospital the next day.

It is reported that one man died on 16 June, one died on the way home in Kyaungkong in Ayeyawady Region, three on 17 June, and one on 18 June.

The last one at the hospital is in critical condition.

The migrant workers are from Ngaphe from Magway Region, Kyaungkong in Ayeyawady region, Ohbo and Myaychar villagers in Ahtet Minhla Township.—Muse District IPRD ■

Floodwaters wipe out farmland, paddy in Maei Township



Floods in Maei submerge rice fields and destroys paddies stored in granaries. **PHOTO: MAUNG MAUNG HTAY (IPRD)**

SOME villages in Maei Township, Rakhine State were inundated with rain and a few reservoirs broke after the combination of heavy rains and strong winds, damaged farmland and tons of paddy.

The floodwaters destroyed over 200,000 baskets of paddy

which was owned by 180 farmers from four villages and was stored in granaries. Around 566 acres of farmland that belong to 61 farmers were submerged by the floodwaters after several small reservoirs in Giphyu Taung village-tract broke.—Maung Maung Htay (IPRD) ■

Over 4,600 tons of teak, hard wood seized in April

FOREST departments in states and regions had captured 4,624.96 tons of smuggled teak, hard wood and other wood in April of fiscal year 2018-2019.

The captured amount include 992.19 tons of teak, 1,391.58 tons of hard wood, 2,241.18 tons of other wood and 513.05 tons of

charcoals.

In addition to this, 210 vehicles, a bulldozer, 28 power tillers and tractors, 73 motor tricycles, 17 motor boats and 70 engines used in the smuggling were also captured, according to local authorities. —Than Oo (Laymyetna) ■

Afghan peace marchers arrive in Kabul as Taliban end ceasefire

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN — Dozens of peace protesters arrived in Kabul on Monday after walking hundreds of kilometres across war-battered Afghanistan, as the Taliban ended an unprecedented ceasefire and resumed attacks in parts of the country.

Exhausted after their 700-kilometre (430-mile) trek, most of it during the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, the marchers walked double file through the Afghan capital shouting “We want peace!” and “Stop fighting!”

“We want our people to stay united for peace and get rid of this misery for the next generation,” Mohammad Naikzad, one of the marchers, told Tolo News.

“I am calling on both sides — the government and the Taliban — for God’s sake... find a way for peace and reconciliation.”

Fellow peace marcher Karwan urged the Taliban and the government to work together to “bring lasting security in this country”.

“Enough blood has been shed. So many people have been martyred in this ongoing conflict,” he told Tolo News.

The Taliban refused to extend their three-day ceasefire beyond Sunday night despite



Afghan peace activists shout slogans demanding an end to fighting as they arrive in Kabul. PHOTO: AFP

pressure from ordinary Afghans, the government and the international community. Taliban fighters attacked security forces in numerous districts of eastern and southern Afghanistan, officials told AFP, but there were no details on casualties.

Defence ministry spokesman Mohammad Radmanesh told AFP there had been “very few” reports of fighting since the government on Saturday extended its own ceasefire with the Tal-

iban for another 10 days.

“We hope the Taliban accept the Afghan nation’s call for peace,” Radmanesh added.

War-weary

The peace march, believed to be the first of its kind in Afghanistan, emerged from a sit-in protest and hunger strike in Lashkar Gah, the capital of the southern province of Helmand which is a Taliban stronghold.

That demonstration, which

began spontaneously after a car bomb attack in the city on March 23, triggered similar movements by war-weary Afghans nationwide.

But when the Taliban and security forces failed to heed their demands to stop fighting, some protesters decided to take their message directly to the country’s top leaders.

Initially ridiculed for their plan to walk from Helmand to Kabul, the marchers now enjoy

strong public support.

They are calling for an extended ceasefire, peace talks and a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan — which is also a key demand of the Taliban. The Taliban announced Sunday they would not extend their ceasefire with Afghan police and troops despite describing the truce as “successful” and a demonstration that the militants were united.

“The mujahedeen across the country are ordered to continue their operations against the foreign invaders and their domestic stooges as usual,” the group said in a statement. The first formal nationwide ceasefire since the 2001 US-led invasion had sparked extraordinary scenes of Taliban fighters, security forces and civilians happily celebrating the Eid al-Fitr holiday together.

Some people took to social media to express their disappointment and anger at the Taliban’s refusal to extend the truce.

“Once again, they have shown that they love shedding the blood of innocent Afghans,” Madena Momad wrote on Facebook. Another user wrote: “The Taliban have no respect for the norms and lives of Afghan people.”—AFP ■

Young Iraqis use innovation to make a living in oil-rich south

BASRA, IRAQ — From a roving cafe to scrap metal sculptures, young Iraqis unable to tap into the country’s oil wealth are having to find creative ways to make a living.

While their parents generally went straight into public sector jobs after graduation, the job market for Iraqi youths has become starkly different in the post-Saddam Hussein era.

In the decade which followed the US invasion and the dictator’s ouster in 2003, authorities continued to increase state hirings — with a heavy dose of nepotism.

But now, as 26-year-old Karar Alaa discovered, there are no more guarantees.

Three years ago, he was counting on his business degree leading to a public sector job in the southern port city of Basra.

But tired of waiting, he has turned entrepreneur.

After gathering up all of his savings and borrowing money from relatives, Alaa invested in a car and transformed it into a

coffee shop on wheels.

“It’s the first of its kind in Basra. I got the idea from a video shot in Europe and posted on Facebook,” he told AFP.

The “Coffee 2 Go” car has a giant plastic cup mounted on the roof, while an image of a cup of cappuccino and coffee beans is emblazoned on the body.

An initial investment of \$20,000 has led to daily earnings of around 150,000 dinars, or \$120, from cups of coffee made in a machine installed in the car boot.

Engineers driving taxis

Mashreq Jabbar earns similar sums from his little bookshop squeezed into a corridor of a Basra fashion mall.

“Renting a shop costs \$6,000 a month; I only pay \$2,500 for my hallway,” said the slim 26-year-old, as he tidied shelves of school books, romantic novels and poetry collections.

The geology graduate had also hoped to get a job as a public official, confident that his degree would make him employable in

the local oil industry.

But even though the sector accounts for 89 per cent of the state budget and 99 per cent of Iraq’s export revenues, it provides only one percent of jobs as the majority of posts are filled by foreigners.

The lack of opportunities is nationwide; from the capital Baghdad to second city Mosul in the north, and from the agricultural east to the western desert.

It is not uncommon to find engineers working as taxi drivers, or sandwich stalls manned by literature graduates in a country of avid readers.

Officially, 10.8 per cent of Iraqis are jobless, while youth unemployment is twice as high in a country where 60 per cent of the population are aged under 24.

A mushrooming number of private universities — with Baghdad boasting around 30 — has made the situation even worse among graduates.

‘Beautiful’ scrap sculptures



Iraqi Omar Abdallah operates at his workshop in Basra on 17 June, 2018. PHOTO: AFP

The private sector which emerged after Saddam’s rule has failed to fill the employment gap, with many young Iraqis holding out for the coveted public sector posts.

“The common view is that there’s no choice but to work in the public sector,” said Ahmed Abdel Hassan, an economics professor at the University of Basra.

“Young people who go to

work in the private sector say it’s a temporary move before getting a post in the public sector,” he said.

Even Basra’s entrepreneurs see the benefits, with Alaa noting the social security and pension perks, while Jabbar pointed to civil servants’ guaranteed salaries. Many of those holding out for a state job, however, are left unable to move out of their parents’ house.—AFP ■

Seoul says N Korea sanctions may be eased before full denuclearization

SEOUL—South Korea said on Monday that sanctions against North Korea could be eased once it takes “substantive steps towards denuclearization”, seemingly setting the bar lower than Washington for such a move.

Last week’s Singapore summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un produced only a vague statement in which Kim “reaffirmed his firm and unwavering commitment to complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula”.

Amid fears the summit would weaken the international coalition against the North’s nuclear programme, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stressed after the meeting that sanctions would remain in place until North



Kang meets Pompeo in Seoul last week: she has suggested sanctions on North Korea could be eased before full denuclearization. **PHOTO: AFP**

Korea’s complete denuclearization.

But his South Korean counterpart suggested on Monday

they could be eased sooner.

“Our stance is that the sanctions must remain in place until North Korea takes meaningful,

substantive steps towards denuclearisation,” Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha told reporters.

Seoul and Washington shared the same “big picture” view and would continue close consultations, she added.

The comments come just days after China’s foreign ministry suggested that the UN Security Council could consider easing the economic punishment of its Cold War-era ally.

Any reduction in tensions on its doorstep is welcome for China, North Korea’s closest ally, which accounts for around 90 per cent of Pyongyang’s trade.

The same goes for the South’s dovish President Moon Jae-in, who supports engagement with North Korea and held his own summit with Kim in April.

Until recently Trump had pursued a “maximum pressure” campaign — with both China and South Korea on board — of tough rhetoric and tightened sanctions against Pyongyang.

But analysts say the Singapore summit has made it hard for the Trump administration to return to that policy even if its current diplomacy with North Korea proves to be a failure.

“The symbolism of the meeting ensures that the maximum pressure campaign has peaked,” said Scott Snyder, senior fellow for Korea Studies at the US Council on Foreign Relations, in a commentary.

“In practice, China and South Korea will push for relaxation of economic pressure on North Korea,” he added.—AFP■

Philippine military starts fresh offensive against two rebel factions, killing dozens

MANILA —A total of 22 rebel fighters have been killed as Philippine military started fresh offensive against militant groups in the country’s southern provinces, a military spokesman said on Monday.

Five members of the Maute Group were killed following an airstrike of their lair in Lanao del Sur on Sunday, and 17 men from Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) were killed in Maguindanao recently, during fresh offensive against the two rebel factions in two southern provinces.

Col Romeo Brawner, spokesman of the military’s Joint Task Force Ranao, said bomber planes and helicopter gunships hit the encampment in a village of Lanao

del Sur province where 40 Maute men were earlier sighted.

Brawner said the terrorist were led by senior Maute leader Owayda benito Marohomsar, alias Abu Dar, one of the potential candidates as ISIS emir in Southeast Asia, possible successor of Isnilon Hapilon.

Hapilon was among the nearly 1,000 terrorists who died in the five-month long siege of Marawi City last year. “Among the 10 leaders who planned (the Marawi siege), Abu Dar is the only one remaining. The nine others were already killed,” said Brawner. Meanwhile, in its adjacent province of Maguindanao, also in Mindanao Island, military was pursuing BIFF remainders, as government forces launched

operations about two weeks ago. The operation has so far resulted in the death of about 17 BIFF men and destruction of the group’s bomb factory.

Sadly, a four-month pregnant woman died and a young female relative was injured in an explosion in a town in Maguindanao on Saturday, when they were tilling their rice land. The site is four km away from an area where soldiers were pursuing BIFF members.

Lt Col Harold Cabunoc, commander of the local infantry battalion, said further investigations are ongoing to determine if the ordnance that killed the two civilians, came from the military or from the enemy, and soldiers will be punished if they were indeed at fault.—AFP■

Suzuki, parts suppliers to expand training bases in India

NEW DELHI—Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, the largest passenger vehicle maker in the South Asian country, is working with its parts suppliers to expand their training facilities to over 400 by 2020 to enhance quality of supplied auto components.

Each facility, dubbed “dojo” or a place of training, replicates shop-floor working conditions and trains new employees for work at manufacturing plants, the subsidiary of Japan’s Suzuki Motor Corp said.

“To meet the ever-evolving customer expectations, ensuring quality at the vendor end is critical,” said AK Tomer, executive director (corporate planning) of Maruti Suzuki. “To help achieve this, Maruti Suzuki has institutionalized the “dojo” concept at our partners.”

cept at our partners.”

Over 90 training centres are currently operational at the facilities of tier-1 partners, which can also be used to improve skills of existing workforce.

“Our suppliers in India cater to about 80 per cent of the company’s component requirements, making it important for us to help them manufacture quality products for us,” a company official told NNA.

Maruti Suzuki has reported its highest-ever annual domestic sales of 1,643,467 vehicles in the year to last March, seizing a 50 per cent market share in the passenger car segment in India, according to the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, an industry body.—Kyodo News■

Gov’t report takes aim at US trade policy after tariffs imposed

TOKYO — Japan’s annual trade report expressed concern on Monday about protectionist practices to correct economic imbalances, in a thinly veiled criticism of trade policy under US President Donald Trump.

The report warned against the negative impact of taking retaliatory measures against one country’s policy, adding that Japan will seek to resolve trade issues based on international rules, particularly those of the

World Trade Organization.

Trump’s “America First” trade policy has drawn criticism from his country’s major trading partners. The United States, citing the need to defend national security, has imposed higher tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from countries including longtime ally Japan.

Tokyo’s lobbying of Washington to exempt it from the increased tariffs has been so far unsuccessful.

“It should be noted that the negative impact will spread globally from turning to restrictive trade policy to correct economic imbalances and taking one retaliatory measure after another,” the report by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said.

“In a certain developed country, a swing back to (steps based on) result-oriented criteria has been emerging,” the report said.—Kyodo News■



A model stands next to the Concept Future S, a prototype vehicle made by Maruti Suzuki India Ltd., displayed in Greater Noida, India on 9 February, 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Three dead, over 200 injured as M6.1 quake hits Osaka area

OSAKA — A strong earthquake with a magnitude of 6.1 hit Osaka and other parts of western Japan on Monday morning, leaving at least three people dead and more than 200 injured, disrupting rush-hour traffic and cutting off power, water and gas in the area.

The 7:58 am quake occurred at a depth of about 13 kilometres in the northern part of Osaka Prefecture, where it registered lower 6 on the Japanese seismic intensity scale of 7, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

The inland quake did not trigger a tsunami and no nuclear power plants in the vicinity reported abnormalities, but dozens of fires were reported in Osaka, Hyogo, Kyoto and Mie prefectures, according to local authorities.

In a quake with an intensity of lower 6, it is difficult to remain standing and unsecured furniture may move or topple over, according to the agency.

While the quake's magnitude was relatively low, its intensity was high due to its shallow epicenter.

It was the highest seismic intensity registered in the western Japan prefecture since the agency started full-fledged observations in 1923. The agency revised the quake's magnitude and depth from the initially an-

nounced M5.9 and 10 km.

Roughly 400 evacuation centers were set up in Osaka Prefecture, with some 850 people taking shelter, according to the prefectural government.

Rina Miyake, a 9-year-old girl, died on her way to school after a wall surrounding a swimming pool collapsed in Takatsuki, while Minoru Yasui, an 80-year-old resident of Osaka's Higashiyodogawa Ward, was also killed when a wall collapsed.

Motochika Goto, 85, was crushed by a bookcase and died from his injuries in Ibaraki in the Osaka suburbs, according to local police. "The government has united to respond (to the disaster) under the policy to put top priority on people's lives," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said as the government set up an emergency response team.

The weather agency warned that another strong quake could jolt the Osaka region within a week but dismissed concerns that Monday's temblor could imminently trigger a megaquake that is projected to occur in the future off western Japan and cause massive tsunami.

Shinji Toda, earthquake geology professor at Tohoku University, said the Uemachi fault in Osaka Prefecture could be in-

involved in the quake.

"The fault has not moved in over 10,000 years and has attracted attention as a dangerous fault, which has prompted surveys and research," said Toda.

Many commuters in the morning rush hour were left stranded at stations and on streets as the quake disrupted operations of shinkansen bullet trains and other railway networks in western and central Japan. "I saw the ceiling and the floor undulating, and I could barely stand. I was very scared," said 64-year-old Katsufumi Abe, who was at JR Osaka Station on his way to Kyoto.

Kansai and Kobe airports in the region temporarily closed but resumed operation after confirming there were no problems. Shinkansen services also partially resumed in the afternoon. Osaka Gas Co said it suspended gas supply to 108,000 households in Osaka Prefecture following the quake, while more than 170,000 homes in Osaka and neighboring Hyogo Prefecture suffered a blackout, Kansai Electric Power Co said. No abnormalities were reported at the Takahama, Mihama and Oi nuclear plants in central Japan, according to Kansai Electric.

An elevator operator said there were at least

70 cases of people being temporarily trapped inside elevators in Osaka Prefecture and nearby areas, while the police said a water pipe on a road in Takatsuki burst and flooded the area.

Public services were also suspended due to the quake. Court sessions scheduled for the day were all cancelled in Osaka's district, high and summary courts, while over a thousand schools in the affected areas were also closed.

The quake damaged important buildings including Taian, a tea house in Oyamazaki, Kyoto Prefecture, which is said to have been designed by tea master Sen no Rikyu in the 16th century. The building, which is designated as a national treasure, sustained a crack in a wall.

In 1995, a deadly quake with a magnitude of 7.3 and a reading of 7 on the Japanese seismic intensity scale killed 6,434 people. Monday's temblor was the latest in a string of quakes over the last few days. A magnitude 4.6 quake struck southern Gunma, north of Tokyo, on Sunday, and a magnitude 4.5 temblor struck Chiba, near Tokyo, on Saturday.—Kyodo News ■

Cambodian prince flown to Bangkok hospital after car crash

PHNOM PENH (Cambodia) — A Cambodian prince hurt in a car crash that killed his wife was flown to Bangkok for treatment Monday and is expected to recover, a member of his political party said.

Prince Norodom Ranariddh, a former prime minister and half-brother of the current king Norodom Sihamoni, suffered "some broken ribs" and leg injuries, Yim Savy, the secretary general of the Funcinpec party, told AFP.

"He was sent to Thailand as a precaution", Savy said, adding that the 74-year-old was in good condition and "speaking normally".

Bangkok has some of the best medical facilities in Southeast Asia and Cambodians who can afford it often travel there for treat-

ment. Ranariddh, the head of the royalist Funcinpec party, was riding with his wife Ouk Phalla in a campaign convoy in southwest Cambodia on Sunday when a taxi going in the other direction hit their vehicle head-on.

Phalla, who found fame in Cambodia as a classical dancer before marrying Ranariddh, died in a local hospital while Ranariddh was airlifted to the capital Phnom Penh. At least seven people were injured, police said.

Funcinpec is contesting national elections set for 29 July despite international fears that the poll will be neither free nor fair after the main opposition group, the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), was banned late last year.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (1086 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (1086 S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ANDA RAYA VOY.NO. (1165)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ANDA RAYA VOY.NO. (1165) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
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Students of a public elementary school in Osaka's Ikeda city evacuate to the school yard after a strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.9 hit western Japan on 18 June, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS



Kavinsky, one of several DJs associated with the “French Touch” sound, will be among the performers at a free concert at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Thursday. **PHOTO: AFP**

Macron to host dance music concert at Elysee Palace

PARIS — Hundreds of electronic music fans will be treated to a rare concert in the opulent courtyard of the presidential Elysee Palace on Thursday, part of France’s Day of Music festival.

More than 1,500 free tickets were quickly snapped up on a first come, first served basis by signing up on the Elysee website.

The office of President Emmanuel Macron has not confirmed if he and his wife Brigitte will make an appearance during the four-hour show at his official

residence.

But the first couple did appear during a surprise Elysee performance for the music day last year by the orchestra of France’s Republican Guard.

Although Macron is not the first president to hold concerts at the presidency, his predecessors including Jacques Chirac and Francois Mitterrand made them invitation-only.

This will also be the first electronic music show, featuring two artists known for exporting the

“French Touch” sound: the DJs Kavinsky and Pedro Winter, who performs as Busy P.

Kavinsky achieved wide recognition with “Nightcall”, a hit on the soundtrack to the 2011 film “Drive”. Winter, the longtime former manager of Daft Punk, is also the founder of the Ed Banger label, whose artists have included house music acts Justice and Sebastian.

The will perform alongside younger artists Chloe, Cezaire and Kiddy Smile.—AFP ■

Nicole Kidman wants to stay ‘healthy and vibrant’ for her kids

LONDON — Hollywood star Nicole Kidman says she works hard to stay fit and energetic so that she can take care of her kids. The “Big Little Lies” actor, who has grown-up children Isabella and Connor with former spouse Tom Cruise and Sunday, nine, and Faith, seven, with husband Keith Urban, says her younger kids encourage her to make an effort with her appearance, reported

Contactmusic.

“You have an almost 10-year-old and a seven year old — I mean, that’s hard truth right there. They’ll say, ‘You’re 50?’ But it’s interesting because particularly my little one will say, ‘Please don’t wear your workout stuff to school this morning. Please blowdry your hair. Please wear some make-up. I did show

up one morning looking like a wreck I suppose... and my daughter was mortified. “I want to stay healthy and vibrant, I want to be able

to take care of them... That’s a big part of it when you have children when you’re older,” Kidman said.—PTI ■



Hollywood star Nicole Kidman. **PHOTO: PTI**

‘Incredibles 2’ makes heroic N America box office debut



“Incredibles 2” star Holly Hunter’s character Helen/Elastigirl is the focus of the Disney/Pixar film, which is on course to shatter the record for the debut of an animated film. **PHOTO: AFP**

LOS ANGELES — “Incredibles 2,” the long-awaited return of a quirky animated superhero family from Disney-Pixar, reigned supreme at the North American box office, raking in a record \$180 million in its debut, industry estimates showed Sunday.

It was the highest ever opening for an animated film in the US and Canada, easily besting the \$135 million debut of its Disney-Pixar stablemate, “Finding Dory” (2016).

The film tells the story of the Parr family — matriarch Helen (Holly Hunter) is called upon to help bring the world’s hiding superheroes back into the open, as husband Bob (Craig T. Nelson) navigates the day-to-day work of being a homemaker.

Their children Violet (Sarah Vowell) and Dash (Huck Milner) are back again, along with baby Jack-Jack, whose devastating

super powers are about to be unleashed.

In second place was female heist flick “Ocean’s 8,” which followed up on a big opening by earning \$19.6 million in its second week, according to Exhibitor Relations.

With an all-star cast led by Sandra Bullock and supported by Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Helena Bonham Carter, Mindy Kaling and Rihanna, the Warner Bros. sequel was Hollywood’s latest experiment — after “Ghostbusters” — in replacing an all-male cast with female stars.

The film stars Bullock as Debbie Ocean, sister of Danny Ocean (originally played by George Clooney), as she assembles a gang of talented women to plan a seemingly impossible diamond heist from the Met Gala in New York.

Adult comedy “Tag” opened

in third place at \$14.6 million. It tells the story of childhood pals (led by Jon Hamm and Jeremy Renner) who keep up a game of cross-country tag for decades, sometimes playing at the oddest of moments.

Fourth place went to “Solo: A Star Wars Story,” starring Alden Ehrenreich as a young version of the swashbuckling space pilot first played by Harrison Ford.

The Disney film took in \$9.1 million, and nearly \$200 million overall in North America.

Fifth place went to R-rated superhero flick “Deadpool 2” at \$8.8 million.

Rounding out the top 10 were:

“Hereditary” (\$7.0 million)

“Superfly” (\$6.3 million)

“Avengers: Infinity War” (\$5.3 million)

“Adrift” (\$2.1 million)

“Book Club” (\$1.85 million)—AFP ■

Landmark study reveals trust in banking system but Myanmar people need modern financial knowledge

VISA, the world's leader in digital payments, today launched the landmark study Financial Education for Sustainable Growth, a comprehensive report examining the perceptions, attitudes and behaviors Myanmar people have towards personal finance (the "Study").

The Study revealed people are optimistic about Myanmar's near-term economic direction, job opportunities and financial security. However, the majority of people said they lack the

knowledge and skills to manage modern personal finances, with only 36 percent saying that banking products and services are easy to understand.

Arturo Planell, Country Manager of Visa Myanmar said the Study presents an opportunity for the financial industry to innovate and reconnect with consumers as the majority now see banks as safe, trustworthy and transparent.

"I'm proud to launch this landmark Study which demon-

strates the people of Myanmar are very optimistic about the future state of the country. However, there is a clear gap in financial knowledge so now is the time for the industry to come together and support consumers with the necessary skills and information to manage their personal finances.

"People need to understand the opportunities that modern banking and electronic payments can provide to help them build financial security. I'm con-

fident providing people in Myanmar with financial knowledge will improve lives and grow the national economy."

Three in five people surveyed said that they expect their financial situation to be better a year from now than it is today. A further 69 per cent agreed that the next generation would be better off financially than the current generation.

Today there are high levels of understanding of traditional financial tools, such as remittanc-

es, gold and land investments, but there is real need for more knowledge around topics such as bank accounts, electronic payments or insurance — half of urban consumers are not yet aware of credit cards or insurance.

The Study shows that 38 percent of urban adults have a bank account and another 49 per cent wish to open a bank account, but only 16 per cent consider themselves to "know quite a bit about it." —GNLM

Old stone statues found in Kyauktaw

OLD stone statues were found near Mae Taung Village-tract by a man who was travelling to Mae Taung Tharsi Village on 15 June.

U Aung Thein Htun, 41, was travelling in his mini truck on the Mae Taung Village-tract road, when his mini truck broke down. In the meantime, he went to fetch some water from a creek to the west of the roadside and found three statues.

One statue, which was 27 inches high, was shaped in the form of a god. Another statue of 18 inches was in ruins.

The third statue was a flat stone with round-shaped stones on it and the letter Z on it.

All the statues were dug out from the creek with the help



Photo Shows Old Stone Statues found by a traveller. **PHOTO: POLICE FORCE**

of villagers.

The officials concerned

will take the necessary steps.

— Police Force ■

Artist buried for three days under busy Australian road

SYDNEY — An artist has emerged from three days entombed in a steel box under a busy Australian road in a performance billed as a tribute to victims of totalitarian violence.

Mike Parr, 73, fasted during his time underground, with oxygen pumped into the 1.7-metre (5.5-foot) by 2.2-metre container to keep him alive as traffic drove on overhead.

He had bedding, water, a waste bucket, a sketchpad and pencils for the stunt in Hobart, part of Tasmania state's annual Dark Mofo festival, which celebrates darkness through large-scale public art, food, film and music. "The anxiety of the artist's disappearance is the point

of the piece," organizers said.

It was also an attempt to highlight "the shadow cast by the genocidal violence of 19th century British colonialism in Australia", they added. Parr, who had been buried with only a small light, clambered out of his prison on a ladder late Sunday after heavy machinery carefully removed the asphalt that had sealed him in. He exited without saying a word or acknowledging a crowd that had gathered in the rain. He is expected to detail his experience in a public forum on Tuesday. "He is an endurance performance artist and he's been doing this for many years, so his body is quite used to doing this," Dark Mofo curator Jarrod

Rawlins told reporters.

While some welcomed the feat as thought-provoking, others were left baffled.

"People work a lifetime underground. This goose spends three days in a box doing frig all, calls it art and it makes the news," an unimpressed Rodney Gibbison said on Facebook.

James Hank de Ridder added: "If I could only get the last five minutes of my life back after watching this absolutely pointless exercise." Parr is no stranger to controversial performances, having once used an axe to hack off his prosthetic arm, which he had filled with minced meat and blood, in front of a shocked audience.—AFP ■

Python selfie puts Indian forest ranger in tight spot

CALCUTTA (India) — An India forestry ranger found himself in a bind after a python briefly strangled him while he posed for pictures with the giant snake.

Wildlife officer Sanjay Dutta was called in Sunday by frantic villagers in West Bengal after they saw the 40-kilogramme (88-pound) python swallowing a goat alive.

Instead of placing it safely inside a bag, the ranger wrapped it around his neck and posed for pictures with stunned villagers.

But panic spread as the huge snake wound itself around Dutta's neck, forcing him to struggle to free himself from its vice-like grip.

He escaped unscathed, but a little red-faced.

The Indian rock python is a non-venomous species, but it can quickly kill its prey by

constricting blood flow and can grow up to 10 metres (33 feet) long.

West Bengal's forest department has launched an official inquiry into the ranger's conduct and flouting of safety protocols.

But Dutta said he only wanted to save the reptile from the villagers who were readying to club it to death with sticks.

"My first instinct was to rescue the snake. I carried it on my shoulders and held its mouth firmly," Dutta told AFP.

"I was not scared for even a moment (when the python tightened its grip) because had I panicked, it could have been fatal."

Dutta said he did not have a bag to carry the snake, which he transported to a safe location in his car and released into the wild.—AFP ■



Forest ranger Sanjay Dutta wrapped the 40-kilogramme python around his neck and posed for pictures with stunned villagers. **PHOTO: AFP**



Athletes from the two Koreas marched together at the Winter Olympics this year. **PHOTO:AFP**

Koreas to form joint teams at Asian Games

SEOUL — North and South Korea agreed on Monday to form unified teams for some sports at the upcoming Asian Games — a move which highlights the rapprochement on the peninsula that began with the Winter Olympics.

At their historic summit in April, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in had agreed to joint participation in “international sports events such as the 2018 Asian Games”.

Officials from the two Koreas met at the border truce village of Panmunjom on Monday and reached several agreements aimed at strengthening sporting ties.

“The South and the North agreed to march together at the

opening and closing ceremonies of the 2018 Asian Games... and to form joint teams for certain sports,” said a joint Seoul-Pyongyang statement released by the South’s sports ministry.

The games will be held in the Indonesian capital Jakarta and in Palembang from 18 August to 2 September.

The athletes from the Koreas will march under a neutral Korean peninsula flag and under the “Korea” name, the statement said.

They will also hold a friendly basketball match — proposed by Kim, a fan of the sport, at his summit with Moon — in Pyongyang on 4 July and another in Seoul in the autumn.

“The South and the North will continue to form unified

teams for other international sporting events... while holding joint training to strengthen inter-Korea cooperation and exchanges,” said the statement.

The two Koreas formed their first-ever unified Olympic team — a joint women’s ice hockey squad — for February’s games in the South Korean resort of Pyeongchang. The idea for a joint team initially sparked a backlash in the South on the grounds that Seoul was depriving its own athletes of the chance to compete. Ultimately, the sight of North and South Korean players wearing the same jerseys drew emotive responses from spectators and the squad quickly became an Olympic favourite despite being thrashed in all its matches.—AFP ■

Portugal ‘stronger than Morocco’, says Andre Silva

MOSCOW — Portugal striker Andre Silva believes the European champions are well equipped to beat Morocco ahead of their upcoming World Cup group stage clash in Moscow.

“I think we are stronger than Morocco if we compare the two teams, but I’m not saying the game will be easy for us,” Silva told reporters at Portugal’s team base on Monday.

“We cannot underestimate them and must have respect for any opponent. Any game at the World Cup is difficult.”

Silva came on as a late substitute in Portugal’s 3-3 draw

against Spain in their opening game in Group B, while a late own goal condemned Morocco to a heartbreaking 1-0 defeat by Iran.

“They lost their first game but it happens and now they will focus on winning and will try their best,” the AC Milan forward said.

“They’re used to playing against European teams and will do their all to get this victory.”

He added: “There are no favourites. Morocco have excellent players and the result of their game against Iran could have been different.”

Cristiano Ronaldo has tipped the 22-year-old Silva, who moved to Milan from Porto last year, as his long-term successor in the Portugal team.

“As I’ve said it’s a big honour to play with him, he’s the best footballer in the world,” said Silva, who has scored an impressive 12 goals in 24 international appearances.

“I’m very happy to be on the same team with him. “When he needs me to do something I’m always where he needs me to be. And when I need him he’s always by my side. We always try to work together and in combination.”—AFP ■

German media sound alarm after shock World Cup defeat

BERLIN — Germany’s media reacted with concern and worry to the World Cup holder’s shock 1-0 defeat against Mexico on Sunday. Hirving Lozano hit the winning goal after 35 minutes in Moscow when the German defence was caught napping.

This was the first time Germany have lost an opening game at a World Cup finals since going down 2-1 to Algeria when Spain hosted the 1982 tournament.

Top-selling German daily Bild declared on their website: “Embarrassing performance against Mexico: this crash caus-

es us World Cup worry”.

Munich-based newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung agreed with “There are reasons to worry” over a picture of the dejected German team, who need to beat Sweden and South Korea to be sure of going through.

The Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper went for “Fiesta Mexicana: False start for Germany”.

Magazine Sports Bild commented “There were no world champions to be seen on the pitch” in a damning verdict on the below-par performance. —AFP ■



Germany’s media reacted with concern and worry to the World Cup holder’s shock 1-0 defeat against Mexico on Sunday. **PHOTO: AFP**

FIFA WORLD CUP RUSSIA 2018		
18:30 MST (19.6.2018)		
Colombia		Japan
21:30 MST (19.6.2018)		
Poland		Senegal
00:30 MST (20.6.2018)		
Russia		Egypt
World Cup 2018 Results		
Sweden	1 - 0	Korea Republic
Belgium	3 - 0	Panama