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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. V, No. 68, 11th Waxing of First Waso 1380 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Saturday, 23 June 2018



Union Minister U Thaung Tun, centre, Chairman of the Myanmar Investment Commission, talks to chambers of commerce from the United States, Australia, Britain and Europe in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Chairman says MIC will be 'transparent', take 'proactive approach', and promote 'responsible investment'

MIC Chairman meets four foreign chambers of commerce

CHAIRMAN of the Myanmar Investment Commission Union Minister U Thaung Tun said that the MIC, under new management, will be “transparent”, take “proactive approach” and promote “responsible investment”.

Speaking at a meeting organised by the American Chamber of Commerce, the Australian Chamber of Commerce, the British Chamber of Commerce, and

the European Chamber of Commerce at the Melia Hotel in Yangon yesterday, the MIC Chairman stressed that, with the launching of a number of significant steps, Myanmar is now open for business. He pledged that MIC will be “more efficient and investor-friendly”.

He underscored investment opportunities in Myanmar and urged foreign Chambers of Commerce to take advantage

of the changes and invest in the country.

“Now is the perfect time to bring your investment to Myanmar”, he said.

The representatives of the foreign chambers also shared their perspectives as well as challenges that would need to be addressed. They also confirmed their desire to support Myanmar’s economic development and promote partnership with Myanmar.—Myanmar News Agency ■

YBS Airport Shuttle commences in Yangon

The YBS airport shuttle bus line that will stop at 13 bus stops between Yangon International Airport and Yangon Central Railway Station began operations yesterday morning.

The bus line commenced after negotiations were completed between the Omini Focus Company and the Yangon Region Transport Authority at the beginning of May.

“Today the route from the Airport to Sule was available to the public after the results of the test runs were made public yesterday. In addition, today people can use the shuttle service for free; however the designated fare is 500 kyats. Now there are 35 buses that are operating and later up to 50 buses will be traveling this route” said driver U Aung Ko Ko.

“The bus line will also be handy for airport staff and personnel as an alternative option for commuting to and from work. Passengers getting on the bus between the two terminus points will have to wait at the bus stop that is most convenient for them.

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Officials provide boats, food, cash during Mon State flood

Interview by Shin Min,
Hmay Kyu Zin
PHOTO: KYAW YE SWE

Heavy rains poured down in Mawlamyine without interruption starting from the evening of 16 June until the morning of 17 June, causing water flowing into the wards to rapidly rise to five-and-a-half feet or six feet. Residents had to be moved to higher ground and given shelter.

The following are interviews with relevant authorities about relief, aid and recovery.

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye

Heavy rain fell all over Mon State, not only in Mawlamyine. It happened in the five townships of Mawlamyine, Mudon, Thanbyuzayat, Ye and Paung. As water suddenly flowed into the wards, up to 42 relief camps had to be opened. The camps are holding 8,263 persons from the five townships. When I learnt of the overnight rains first thing in the morning, I went there immediately.

Normally, flooding and inundation doesn't happen much in Mon State. Of course it does happen, but it was never up to this level before. As climate change is affecting Myanmar and the world, there heavy rains, floods and inundation have occurred, but this is happening in many places so it can be said that there isn't a place in the world where there can't be any natural disasters. That is why we are concerned and worried about this.

Are we prepared and ready? We were worried. That is why we contacted (Mon State) before dawn. Hluttaw representatives also contacted us. As the Hluttaw was in session, Hluttaw representatives were also in Nay Pyi Taw and they contacted us. We decided to go there immediately. The downpour had slackened, but the water rose up to five or six feet and people were in camps, so we went straight to the camps. As the rain slackened, the water level started to drop, but the time coincided with high tide, so the tide pushed back the water, making the water level remain high. If the rain was not a continuous downpour, it wouldn't be this bad, but the heavy and long downpour caused the water level to rise to five or six feet.

From past incidents, we learnt that when there is flooding and inundation, people need



Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye, centre, left, hands over cash to Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan for flood affected residents of Mon State.



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye.



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



U Myint Zaw, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Construction.

to be evacuated from their homes to safe places and this requires boats. So we deployed boats to Bilin and Kyaikto area, where most of the flooding and inundation occurred. But when there was flooding and inundation in Mawlamyine, we knew that we wouldn't have enough boats. As soon as I knew of the heavy rains, I arranged to send three boats from Yangon. Because of this, the boats were in Mawlamyine just after we were there. That was timely.

Another thing is feeding the people in the camp. We can't give them money or even rice and food as they wouldn't be able to buy or cook the food. But civil society organisations were strong in Mawlamyine. There were many donors in the wards too. Donors and civil society organisations (CSOs) teamed up and prepared food for the people. As the water subsided, some in the camps returned to their homes. When we were in camps on the morning of 17 June, some had already left for their homes. When we went back to the camps again on 18 June, more had left. Donors and CSOs were cooking food for the remaining people as well as providing cash assistance.

For those who returned to their homes, we provided one week's ration of rice. This is at the assistance rate set by our

ministry. The rate was Ks2,100 per person, and we multiplied this by the number of affected people, coming up with over Ks15.5 million. We handed over this amount immediately to the state government.

Our social welfare, relief and resettlement personnel also helped, but their number is only a few. We need a lot. But we appreciate the fact that CSOs pitched in and helped. Lessons learnt on having stronger connections with them. In the past we coordinated and worked with them, but the connection and contact was not strong.

For those who returned to their homes, we provided one week's ration of rice.

We need to strengthen this. By the evening of 18 June, most of the camps were closed. Only about two remain. Why were most camps closed? It is because the water receded. But the water wouldn't have receded if the rain continued. If the rain continued, the area would have remained flooded and inundated. Why is this? This is happening all over

the country. First, the rain wasn't this heavy. But more than that, the drains were blocked. In some places, due to cost cutting in construction, some home don't have drains.

I explained this when I met with the Chief Minister and the public. Let us do things properly and systematically. Drains should remain as drains and do their functions. Trash shouldn't be thrown indiscriminately, blocking the drains. All need to participate in this and do it properly. This is one part.

Another part is about the pagoda. The platform is most important here. The platform was extended in 2013-2014. Landslides occurred where the platform was extended. Why was there landslide? Because when we look down the platform, we saw a lot of trash underneath. The trash includes plastics that loosened the earth's compactness. The ground became weak and unstable. When there is heavy rain, the ground sinks and slides away. Another thing is construction of religious structures. When the structures were constructed, the strength of the ground was weakened (with the structure's weight bearing down more heavily while the land is weakened with trash). We learnt a lot from what had happened in Mawlamyine. The government, the people and

CSOs need to work together so that this sort of thing does not happen again.

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

The water rose rapidly. But once the rain stopped, we conducted clearing up works, which resulted in the water subsiding quickly. Once the water subsided, people returned to their homes and start restoring it to a normal situation. Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement himself went and provided assistance on behalf of the ministry. Experts and technicians from Ministry of Construction assessed the situation and were providing necessary supports and expertise for the landslide at Kyaikthanlan Pagoda. They were there speedily as per the instructions and guidelines of National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) Chairman Vice President U Henry Van Thio. Ks100 million had been donated to Mon State Chief Minister as initial donation to conduct repair works. This was also according to the instructions and guidelines of the NDMC Chairman.

U Myint Zaw, Deputy Director General, Department of Buildings, Ministry of Construction

The Minister for Construction instructed us to inspect the landslide at Kyaikthanlan Pagoda and our team from Nay Pyi Taw reached Mawlamyine at noon on 18 June and assessed the damages. There were many cracks on the pagoda platform. The pagoda trustee immediately poured cement into the cracks and the platform was covered with plastic sheets so that water could no longer seep underneath. It will take time to make a complete repair. A retaining wall will have to be constructed. Drains need to be constructed so that water flow is good. Not only the Ministry of Construction, but NGOs like Myanmar Engineering Council, Myanmar Engineering Society, Myanmar earthquake committee and geologists will be invited to do the works properly.

The state government had also formed a state level committee for this and the Union Minister had also informed the President Office about this. At the Union-level committee, Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin is the chairman and I'm the secretary. ■

336 gem lots to be sold through open tender

By Mawsi (MNA)

A total of 336 gem lots with a basic price of 500 euros and above for each lot will be sold through an open tender system on the fourth day of the Myanmar Gems Emporium.

At the emporium, 336 gem lots and 6,795 jade lots were displayed. The gem lots have a basic price of 500 euros per lot. Finished jade lots have a basic price of 1,000 euros and raw jade lots have a basic price of 4,000 euros. There are 14 jade lots with a basic price of one million euros and above, and there is one jade lot with a basic price of 15 million euros.

On the third day of the 55th Myanmar Gems Emporium, gem merchants inspected the gem lots with a basic price of 500 euros per lot displayed on the upper floor of the Mani Yadana Jade Hall in the morning and submitted their tenders into the tender boxes. Similarly, gem merchants inspected the raw jade lots with a basic price of 4,000 euros and above and finished jade lots with a basic price of 1,000 euros and

above displayed on the upper floor of Mani Yadana Jade Hall. Officials responsible provided the necessary assistance.

Raw jade lots with a basic price of 4,000 euros and above and finished jade lots with a basic price of 1,000 euros and above will be sold under an open tender system from 24 to 29 June. On 24 June, jade lot numbers 1 to 1,150; on 25 June, jade lot numbers 1,151 to 2,300; on 26 June, jade lot numbers 2,301 to 3,450; on 27 June, jade lot numbers 3,451 to 4,600; on 28 June, jade lot numbers 4,601 to 5,750 and on 29 June, jade lot numbers 5,751 to 6,795 will be sold.

The 55th Myanmar Gems Emporium organised by the Myanmar Gem Emporium Central Committee will be held until 29 June at Mani Yadana Jade Hall, Nay Pyi Taw.

Gem merchants from China, Thailand, Canada, Australia and the United States visited the emporium, with most of them being from China. Over 1,200 local gem merchants and over 3,000 foreign gem merchants are attending the emporium. ■



Merchants inspect a large jade stone on the third day of the 55th Myanmar Gems Emporium. **PHOTO: MNA**



Police officers, local authorities and social organisations clear debris in Phakant Township, Kachin State on Friday. **PHOTO: MNA**

At least six dead in landslide in Phakant Township

Six people in Phakant Township were killed Friday in landslides after heavy rains inundated the ground and caused a creek to overflow its banks.

The landslides occurred near Pantin Bridge, Maw-wan Ward, beside No. 1 Main road. The landslides hit the staff quarters on the circular road beside the road to MyoU Pagoda, at the back of staff quarters of the Township Development

Affairs Committee and in Mawgalon, Sutaung and Phapyin villages.

Police officers, local authorities and social organisations rushed to the scenes and cleared the debris.

The downpours were compounded by flash flooding caused by burgeoning Uru Creek, which also inundated wards in Phakant.—Township IPRD ■

YBS Airport Shuttle starts in Yangon

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Although there are only 36 seats, there is no maximum limit of people allowed on the buses. A round-trip journey takes only about 90 minutes in the morning”, said Omni Focus Managing Director U Tun Tauk Win.

The Airport Shuttle bus line aims to be convenient for foreign travelers and other people who want to go to downtown Yangon

from the airport.

The buses will make stops at Yangon International Airport, 8 Mile, Nawade, Kaba-Aye Pagoda, Lanni, Hanmithit, Shwegondine, Bahan 3rd Street, Kyauktaing, Yauklan and Sule.

Stops on the return journey will include Sule, Yangon Railway Station, Zoological Gardens, Bahan 3rd Street, Shwegondine, Lanni, Kaba-Aye Pagoda, Nawade, 8

Mile and the airport.

Test runs were made by the bus crew so they can familiarise themselves with the new bus route. Test runs went from 5 am until 12 pm yesterday, and the length of a whole route is about two and a half hours.

For information passengers can call the Omini Focus Control Centre at 094212 22622, 094212 22822 and 094212 22922.—MDN ■



Commuters board the airport shuttle bus at Yangon International Airport yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com
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YBS 32 to operate new route between Maritime University and Htaukkyant

A bus from YBS 32 line is parked in the terminal. **PHOTO: LUDU MAIKSWE BUS LINE**

LUDUMAIKSWE Public Bus Line said its YBS 32 will operate a new route between Myanmar Maritime University in Thanlyin Township and Htaukkyant in Mingaladon Township for the convenience of commuters.

YBS 32 will begin operations on the new route from 26 June, with a fleet of 50 new buses. It will operate on the following route: Myanmar Maritime University-Myoma Market-Thakayta roundabout-Kyauktaing-Thuwunna junction-Zawana junction-Nandawon market-Pinya-436-North Okkalapa roundabout-Chaukgway-Aungmingala highway bus terminal-Palemyothit-Nwekway-Htaukkyant.

The company has arranged for 25 buses to depart from the maritime university and an additional 25 buses to depart from the Htaukkyant side on a daily basis.

The first bus will leave each gate at 5 a.m. and the last bus for the day at 8 p.m.

The bus fare has been set at Ks200 and Ks300 depending on the distance covered by the passenger. Monks, nuns, pregnant women, primary and middle school students and people with disabilities are entitled to travel for free on YBS 32 route.

The opening ceremony of the new YBS 32 route will take place at the Myanmar Maritime University on 26 June.—Kyaw Hsan Myint (IPRD)■

Shopping mall in Hpa-an expected to create more job opportunities

PLANS are underway to construct a new shopping mall in Hpa-an, the capital city in Kayin State, which is expected to create more employment opportunities for residents, said U Than Naing, Kayin State Minister for Planning, Finance and Development Affairs.

In his speech at the tender opening ceremony on Thursday, U Than Naing said

the new shopping mall will be built on the former highway bus terminal site and will be the first-of-its-kind in Kayin State. Thanks to the new mall, the state will generate more revenue than ever before. Among 10 competitors, UHM Co. won the tender for the project.

U Tun Aung Shwe, manager of the company which won

the tender, said the company's proposal was designed to allow local sellers to run their retail businesses on the ground floor. Shopping centres, cinemas, a playground and a car park will also be included in the mall project. The proposal also focuses on the sale of Kayin traditional foods and other delicacies.

He added that the com-

pany would invest roughly Ks11 billion in the project. Ks5 million will first be paid to the government in the initial stage of the project. Upon completion, 20 per cent of the project will be transferred to the government.

The company has requested a 60-year lease of the projected land, he added.—Nay Myo Lwin (IPRD) ■

Labourers unload the hardwood seized by police in Htigyaing Township, Sagaing Region. **PHOTO: MDN**

Over four tons of hardwood timber seized in Katha District

POLICE seized 4.615 tons of hardwood timber in Htigyaing Township, Katha District, Sagaing Region, on 22 June, and arrested four people in connection with the illegal transport of Tanmalan, a rare species of hardwood.

Acting on a tip-off, a combined team comprising members of the township forest department and the police force stopped a suspected six-wheel vehicle driven by

Kyaw Myo Win, with three others inside, at 5.30 a.m. on that day. Police found 112 pieces of hardwood timber weighing 4.615 tons inside the vehicle.

Police have charged four people, including driver Kyaw Myo Win, Maw Win, Soe Moe Zaw and Myint Myint San, according to Section 6 (a) of the Public Property Protection Act, said U Soe Min Aung, head of the township Forestry Department.—Lu Aung (Katha)■

India-Myanmar border trade exceeds \$30 mln this FY

DURING the current 2018-2019 fiscal year, bilateral border trade between Myanmar and India totalled US\$31.086 million, an increase by \$15.8 million against the same period last year, the commerce ministry reported on Friday.

Myanmar's exports to India from cross-borders between 1 April and mid-June this year

were larger than its imports.

The country exported a wide variety of domestic products amounting to \$27.23 million and imported commodities worth only \$3.857 million. The two countries are carrying out border trade primarily through the Tamu and Reed cross-border trade camps. A major part of bilateral imports and exports are

delivered through marine routes.

Myanmar usually imports medicines, oil cakes, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials.

Local products consisting of areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves and other fruits and vegetables, fishery and forest products, as well as human hair

are normally exported to neighbouring India.

Myanmar mainly conducts border trade with four countries—China, India, Thailand and Bangladesh—through 16 land border gates. Over the first 76 days of this FY, the total border trade hit \$1.607 billion, including \$1.031 billion in exports and \$576.572 million in imports.

In the current FY, Myanmar saw investments worth \$1.352 million from India. India's investment in Myanmar in the 2017-2018 FY was \$10.993 million through three investment projects, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).—
Khine Khant ■



Workers spread paddy to dry under the sun at a field in Nay Pyi Taw: PHOTO: AFP

Agro exports continue to decline in current FY

The export of agricultural products in the present 2018-2019 fiscal year decreased to US\$614.128 million, compared to the same period in the 2017-2018 FY, when Myanmar fetched \$743.787 million according to the latest report of the commerce ministry.

Between 1 April and 15 June, the country saw no exports of agro products from the public sector. Only private companies were able to export the same products to overseas countries, the value of which decreased by

nearly \$130 million against last year.

As an agriculture commodity-producing country, Myanmar annually exports a wide variety of agro products, including rice, beans and pulses, garlic and other kitchen crops, melons, mangoes, avocados, cucumbers and other marketable fruits, fibers, rubber and other raw materials.

During the same period, the country exported animal products worth \$54.785 million, marine products worth \$134.426

million, forest products worth \$141.199 million and mineral products worth more than \$281.407 million.

The value of exports of manufactured goods was estimated at \$1.694 billion and that of miscellaneous items at \$304 million.

The government is making continuous efforts to boost the country's agro exports, striving to help farmers solve farming-related problems, such as high costs of input and production.—Shwe Khine ■

MIC issues four investment permits, four endorsements

The Myanmar Investment Commission issued four investment permits and four endorsements in relation to the investment proposals yesterday.

The decision came at the 8/2018 meeting of the com-

mission in Yangon. During the meeting, the commission reviewed investment proposals consistent with the Myanmar Investment Law.

U Thaung Tun, Chairman and Vice Chairman of MIC and eight members of

MIC attended the meeting. The submission of proposals and endorsement applications from investors and post-permit activities of MIC-permitted companies were discussed in the meeting. — Myanmar News Agency

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့တိုင်း: **"Sunday Special"** အချက်ပို (၈)
မျက်နှာပေါင်သော The Global New Light of Myanmar
နေ့စဉ်ထုတ် သတင်းစာကို အောက်ပါမြို့များတွင် ဖတ်ရှုနိုင်ပါပြီ

"Sunday Special"
အချက်ပို (၈) မျက်နှာ
ပေါင်သော

မနက်ဖြန်တော်
မြန်မာ့ရေးရာနည်းဌာန၊ ရုံးအမှတ် (၇) နေပြည်တော်၊
သတင်းနှင့်စာနယ်ဇင်းလုပ်ငန်း (ရုံးချုပ်)၊
စီမံခန့်ခွဲရေးဌာန၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၆၇၄၁၂၁၀၈

မနက်ဖြန်တော်
နေပြည်တော်သတင်းစာတိုက် (တပ်ကုန်း)
လေယာဉ်နိမ့်မြို့နယ်၊ ဓနုလင်းလမ်း၊ နေပြည်တော်၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၆၇၂၆၁၄၈၊ ၀၆၇၂၆၁၂၉

ရန်ကုန်
The Global New Light of
Myanmar သတင်းစာတိုက်၊ အမှတ် ၁၅၀၊
ဦးထင်ကြီးဘုရားလမ်း၊ ဝဟန်းမြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၁၁၆၀၅၅၂၊ ၀၉၉၇၄၄၂၄၁၁၄

မန္တလေး
လမ်း (၂၁ x ၂၁) ကြား၊ (၈၂ x ၈၂) လမ်းကြား၊ ပုလဲဓနု
ရောင်ရမ်း၊ မန္တလေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၂၃၂၇၂၉၊ ၀၂၃၂၇၅၁

မတောင်ကြီး
ရုံးကြီးလမ်း၊ သစ်တောရပ်ကွက်၊ တောင်ကြီးမြို့၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၈၁၂၁၁၆၄၊ ၀၉၅၂၁၄၅၇

မကွေး
နတ်မောက်လမ်း၊ တပ်မ (၈၈) တပ်နယ်ချေးအနီး၊
မကွေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၆၃၂၇၇၁၂

ကျိုင်းတုံ
မြို့နယ် (၃-၈)၊ အမှတ် (၁) လမ်းသွယ်၊ မြို့နယ်လမ်း၊
ကျိုင်းတုံမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၈၄၂၂၇၉၂

ကလေး
အောင်လေးရပ်ကွက်၊ မြို့နယ်အားကစားကွင်းအနီး၊
ကလေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၇၃၂၂၁၃၃

မြန်ကြီး
အမှတ် (၄၁)၊ ရေရပ်ကွက်၊ အောင်ဆန်းလမ်း၊
မြန်ကြီးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၇၄၂၂၄၆၂

စစ်တွေ
ရေကန်လမ်းနှင့် တက္ကသိုလ်ရိပ်သာလမ်း၊
မီးစက်ကြီးအနီး၊ မနန်းကျည်မြိုင်ရပ်ကွက်၊ စစ်တွေမြို့၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၄၃၂၃၀၆၈

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Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung delivers the address at World Transport Convention-2018 (WTC-2018) in Beijing, China. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung attends WTC-2018

At the invitation of the People's Republic of China's Ministry of Transport and China Highway & Transportation Society, Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung attended the World Transport Convention-2018 (WTC-2018) held at China National Convention Centre, Beijing, in the People's Republic of China, from 19 to 21 June.

Union Minister U Thant

Sin Maung attended and delivered the opening speech at the opening ceremony of WTC-2018 held in the morning on 19 June. On the morning of 20 June, the Union Minister attended the Belt and Road International Transport Symposia (BRITS), gave a speech titled "Belt and Road Initiative and Myanmar" and replied to questions raised by the attendees.

The WTC-2018 was at-

tended by transport ministers from Asia, Africa and Europe including the People's Republic of China and representatives of transport-related associations totalling over 400. Alongside the convention, transport sector-wise group discussions were held under 13 sub-titles. The Union Minister returned to Yangon on the evening of 21 June.—Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar, Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrols along boundary line

Security personnel from the Myanmar Border Police and Border Guards from Bangladesh conducted coordinated patrols along the respective sides of the land border and along the Naf River, it is learnt.

The security forces conducted coordinated patrolling along the land border from border posts 44 to 45 and 34 to 36 on 13 June, from border posts 45 to 46 on 14 June, from border posts 36 to 38 on 18 June, from border posts 46 to 47 and border posts 38 to 39

on 20 June and from border posts 47 to 48 on 21 June.

In addition to this, security forces conducted coordinated patrols along the Naf River on 20 June.

Coordinated patrols along the land border were conducted 14 times in February, seven times in March, 16 times in May and 10 times in June, totalling 47 times, while coordinated patrols along the Naf River were conducted five times.—Myanmar News Agency

Taxi driver sentenced to death for rape and murder of FDA staff

A taxi driver convicted of raping and murdering a staff of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the Ministry of Health was given death sentence yesterday.

Myo Zaw Oo, also known as Sedona, was arrested and charged under the Myanmar Penal Code for the rape and murder of Ma Shwe Yee Win, 26, a deputy supervisor of the

FDA, in January. He was arrested three days after her body was found. "The culprit was found guilty of the rape and murder of Ma Shwe Yee Win and the court handed down the death sentence according to the law," U Tun Tun Oo, the spokesperson of Yangon Eastern District court, told journalists after the court session.—GNLM

Murder committed in Yedashe Township

When U Kusala (a) U Waing, 70 years, Vassa 27 years, brother-in-law of U Kyaw Myint, of Lathakwet Tawya monastery, South Zalingetgyi Village-tract, Lewe Township, has a drink together with his brother-in-law at the latter's house in Sethwar Village, Thagara, Yedashe Township at 7.30 pm on 21 June, Kyaw Htay, 40 years, son of U Kyaw Myint arrived at the house and exchanged words with the monk. When they were in a quarrel, Kyaw Htay stabbed the monk with a knife he took. The monk died of his stab wounds to his left chest.

Action is being taken



Kyaw Htay, 40 years.

against Kyaw Htay according to the law by Thagara Region Police Station.—Ko Naing Win

Veterinary students go on field trip to Natogyi Township

Students of the University of Veterinary Science are visiting the villages of Natogyi Township from 22 to 26 June, as part of a college field trip.

Over 260 fifth-year students led by 24 faculty members of the university arrived at Natogyi yesterday for the five-day field visit.

Divided into 12 groups, the students will visit 12 villages namely Nyaungpin, Khwatlan, Zidaw, Latpan, Khansitgon, Daukbo, Phalangon, Aungpangon, Watluu, Pechat, Tawzauk and Myawady and will vaccinate cattle, provide medical care, educate the villagers on animal health and collect data on the socio economy of the areas.



Head of Natogyi Township Veterinary Department Daw Khin Khin Win welcomes the students from University of Veterinary Science. **PHOTO: MNA**

The team was led by Prof Dr. Aung Aung of the university. Head of Natogyi Township Veterinary Department Daw Khin Khin Win welcomed the

students, expressing her gratitude over the help offered by the students to the farming sector in the township.—Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)

Dy Minister inspects road, bridge works in Rakhine State

DEPUTY MINISTER for Construction U Kyaw Lin accompanied by officials went along An-Padekyaw-Maei road on 20 June to inspect roads and bridges damaged by recent heavy rain.

The Deputy Minister and party inspected the strength of the concrete bridge at the entrance of Padekyaw village and the waterway beneath it, damage to the box culvert at mile post 21/7 near Padekyaw village and construction of a temporary 90 ft. long Bailey bridge, and damage to the Taungup-Maei at mile post 31/5.

He remarked on making preparation against various possibilities and went on

to inspect damages to road and bridges along the Taungup-Thandwe-Ngapali road.

On 21 June, the Deputy Minister and party inspected the upgrading of the Thandwe-Gwa-Ngathaingchaung road conducted with the World Bank's assistance.

The Deputy Minister also inspected construction of retaining walls and construction of a box culvert on the road.

During his tour of inspection, the deputy minister commented on conducting the works properly and with good will as the works are being conducted under the assistance of the World Bank. — Aung Thuya ■



Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin inspects landslide caused by recent torrential rain in Rakhine State. **PHOTO: HAN LIN NAING**

NPT - YGN airplane's windshield cracks mid-air

FMI ATR-72 airplane XY-AMH on flight ND-(104), which departed from Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon at 8.20 a.m. on 21 June, reported a crack in the windshield 20 minutes after departure.

When the plane reached an altitude of 16,000 ft., a crack, allegedly due to air pressure, was noticed on the right windshield but the plane landed safely in Yangon at 9:05 am, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs. The airplane, carrying 22 passengers, four crew and two security personnel. — Myanmar News Agency ■

International Day of Yoga (IDY) to be observed in Yangon



Women practice Yoga in Yangon. **FILE PHOTO: HANDED OUT BY THE INDIA EMBASSY IN YANGON**

The 4th International Day of Yoga (IDY) will be observed on 23 June 2018 in Yangon with a mass Yoga demonstration at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium. Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe will be the chief guest at the event.

Members of the diplomatic corps, civil societies, senior commanders representing the Tatmadaw will also be present on the occasion and participate in the demonstration.

Activities connected to the International Day of Yoga have been underway this entire week in different cities and towns of Myanmar.

The Embassy of India is privileged to be part of a number of these celebrations and help in bringing to an ever growing number of people this ancient Indian science of health and wellbeing that can show humanity a path of peace and co-existence in times of conflict.—MDN ■

Haul of drug seized in Mohnyin Township

Heroin worth K 240 million was seized along with stimulant tablets and one percussion lock firearm in a farmhouse at the foot of Mt Hsinkhaung near Nantmon Village, Mohnyin Township, Kachin State on the morning of 22 June.

Police officers led by Police Inspector Aung San Win of Kachin State Anti-Crime Squad together with their counterparts from Lonton Police Station, acting on information, searched the farmhouse of U Pwa Maung aged 56, of Nantmon Village at the foot of Mt. Hsinkhaung and found 165 soap cases each containing 11 grams of heroin weighing 1815 grams, 200 blue packets each

containing 190 stimulant tablets and one percussion lock firearm along with his wife Daw Khin Htay aged 55 who was at the hut.

Upon interrogation, it is known that the drugs were possessed by Daw Cho Cho Win, daughter of U Pwa Maung and

Daw Khin Htay, who was on the run.

The seized drugs are believed to be worth of K 240 million. Action is being taken against the three according to the law by Lonton Police Station.—Win Naing (Kachin Myay) ■



Free motorcycle helmets distributed in Myittha

Motorcycle helmets were distributed free of charge at Myittha-Minsu junction, Myittha Township, Mandalay Region, yesterday morning, while informative discussions and talks on traffic rules were held.

Mandalay Region Hlutaw representative U Min Aung, township administrator U Aung Moe, township police major Thet Soe, township departmental officials, heads of wards and youth volunteers handed out the helmets to 200 motorcyclists who were riding without them and had them wear them immediately after holding discussions and talks about traffic rules.



A police officer helps a motorcycle driver fix his helmet.

The talks and discussions were held to reduce motorcycle accidents in Myittha Township and after the talks and discus-

sions this week, effective action will be taken against traffic rule violators, said township police major Thet Soe. ■MDN

Encourage production of finished jade, gem products in order to crack foreign markets

OVER 4,000 local and international gem merchants gathered at the 55th Myanma Gems Emporium, which kicked off three days ago.

The sales under the open tender system attracted local gem merchants, especially buyers and sellers, under one roof. Over 500 companies and licensed traders exhibited jade lots and pearls produced by pearl farms in Taninthayi Region at the emporium.

The emporium brought benefits to over 1,200 local traders and over 3,000 foreign traders to inspect about 6,000 jade and gem lots in one venue.

This kind of event is held in Myanmar at the time when the mining season closes. The event has attracted an increasing number of traders year on year.

Another benefit of the sales is that full tax set over the sales directly goes into the state coffers and the seller received the remaining sales amount at one point.

In normal sales outside, there are limitations to declaring the sale price and paying tax.

Myanmar's pearls produced from pearl farms in Taninthayi Region have found a strong market in Hong Kong, and annual pearl sales have been held six times.

But emporiums in Myanmar only display upgraded raw gems and jade stones because of the lack of technological know-how, which is needed to finish gem products in the country.

There is still no strong local market for finished jade and gem products. We need modern technology to produce marketable products to enter foreign markets.

markets.

To produce marketable finished products, we need to cooperate with those who have the technology and can find foreign markets. Effective support is the sine qua non for the development of the finished products.

Myanmar, which has over 1,200 registered local gem merchants, both buyers and sellers, needs more emporiums in order to fulfill the technological requirements of manufacturing finished gem products because there are plenty of raw jade and jewelry products available, according to the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association.

Compulsory deposits paid to reserve jade lots and gemstones at gems emporium in Nay Pyi Taw has doubled to 10 per cent from 5 per cent previously, in attempts to prevent cancellations for purchases by buyers and to help sellers seal a deal following the rules and regulations in order to support the local merchants and to avoid broken deals.

The efforts for producing finished products at home would create job opportunities and business opportunities for our people. Only when we get a strong market for our finished products, can we also reduce illegal trading of the precious stones and gems. ■

Random thoughts while travelling abroad

By Su Thet Hmu (Mayangon)

I made a visit to India on business recently. I took two transits on the way to India via the Kolkata and New Delhi airports. With the increasing number of airlines in India, travelling has become much more popular and there has been a huge increase in the number of domestic airlines and passengers in India using air flight as the main mode of transportation.

Services

The airlines served typical fresh Indian meals to passengers during the flights. I loved the services of the airlines, especially the food, which is like homemade meals. The food was tasty and fresh. The passengers on our flight were people of many nationalities. It is a brilliant idea to serve them with typical Indian food. I wish many airlines in our country would offer these kinds of services to the passengers, whether it is a long trip or a short one. I had to change my Boeing flight, which can hold nine passengers on the way to New Delhi from Kolkata. My seat-back entertainment system has a touch screen with visual technology. There is an option to turn it on and off with the touch screen. With a wide variety of entertainment including music, film and route maps at my fingertips throughout the flight, the passengers can enjoy a variety of films and television programme.

During my visit in India, I was able to visit

the Taj Mahal, an ivory-white marble mausoleum on the south bank of the Yamuna River in the city of Agra. It took me four hours to go there by car. From there, I had to take a three-wheeled vehicle in order to reach the entrance of the Taj Mahal. All I needed to do is to show my passport and give 500 Rupees as an entrance fee.

Local Business booms

On my way back to my hotel, I felt like walking along the souvenir shops. I took notice of the compound of the Taj Mahal, into which motorcars and many three-wheeled vehicles are not allowed. I believe this is a wise for the welfare of the local residents who want to earn a living. Looking around the shops, I thought of doing similar business in my own country. Myanmar is a country endowed with natural beauty, cultural heritage and archaeology sites which can attract the attention of globe-trotters.

Imagination

As I was travelling in a foreign country, I felt homesick. I want my country to be more developed in tourism which is known as a "smokeless industry", unlike



manu- facturing industries that create smog and pollution. Tourism is an important sector that can have an impact on development of country's economy. The main benefits of tourism are income generation and creation of jobs for the local people. For many regions and countries, it is their most important source of income.

Shortly after I arrived back in Myanmar, I learnt about the Meiktila Lake and the authority concerned which has been making an attempt to upgrade the lake as a tourist attraction in Myanmar. A large number of local and foreign visitors alike visit the lake aiming to enjoy the beauty of nature and take sightseeing tours.

Booming Ecotourism

Myanmar is a country endowed with nature and diversity of animal species. More than half of the country is still covered with forests. The land area of Myanmar has a variety of natural resources, plants and animals. The richness of biodiversity makes Myanmar ideal for ecotourism. Myanmar has a rapidly expanding protected area system. Wildlife sanctuaries are lands preserved and protected from human activity that may disturb the wildlife. The natural forests of Myanmar provide substantial opportunities for ecotourism development.

Smokeless Industry

Tourism, regarded as the smokeless industry, can contribute directly towards our national economic development by attracting

foreign money, creating job opportunities and providing cash directly or indirectly to all walks of life. Attraction, accessibility, accommodation and administration are the distinctive characteristics of healthy tourism. For development of Myanmar tourism industry, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is closely cooperating with related ministries, international tour agencies, development partners and private tour operators.

Endeavours of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

As for the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, arrangements have been made to attract visitors from foreign countries such as Japan, South Korea and China. Plans are under way to boost the tourism sector in many places including Taninthayi Region, Sagaing Region and Chin State. According to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, it was learnt that the number of tourists entering Myanmar declined in 2017, but there has been an increase of 2 per cent by tourists from China, Japan and South Korea.

In Myanmar, tourism is one of the most important sectors where the country has vast potential and comparative advantages. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has made major commitments to develop the tourism sector in the future, by integrating tourism in national development plans.

As for the authority concerned and tourism stakeholders, cooperation is of paramount importance to ensure that tourism generates economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of the region, improves working conditions and access to the industry. Moreover, the strategic integrated plans should focus on minimising negative economic, environmental and social impacts. ■

အပြည်ပြည်ဆိုင်ရာ မူးယစ်ဆေးဝါးအလွဲသုံးမှုနှင့် တရားမဝင်ရောင်းဝယ်မှု တိုက်ဖျက်ရေးနေ့

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Listen FIRST Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe

“ဦးစွာနားထောင်ပါ”

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 22nd June, 2018)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 23rd JUNE, 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing Region, scattered in Mandalay Region, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Magway and Taninthayi regions and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Nay Pyi Taw, isolated heavy falls in Yangon and Ayeyawady regions, Kachin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h. Sea will be slight to moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (7 - 10) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama and off and along Rakhine Coasts and about (4 - 7) feet in off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Rakhine Coastal areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd JUNE, 2018: Some rain or thundershowers which may be heavy at times. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd JUNE, 2018: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23rd JUNE, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon Region, scattered in Mandalay Region.

Meteorology and Hydrology Department

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

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

New York puts its rats on ice

NEW YORK — A snout and two little black eyes pop out from the hole, too late: A foot already covers them and the hole will be quickly filled with dry ice.

This new weapon in the hands of the New York City Health Department pest control team spells certain death for the rat.

Rick Simeone's team is at work in Sara D. Roosevelt Park on the Lower East Side, one of Manhattan's oldest districts.

The day before, they spent more than three hours locating all the entrances to the burrows, 67 in all. That means there could be more than 250 "rattus norvegicus," the scientific name for common brown rats, living there.

Burrow by burrow, the team drops into each hole several small pellets resembling ice cubes but which are actually dry ice, carbon dioxide in solid form.

The surrounding air temperature ensures that the carbon dioxide reverts to gaseous form and asphyxiates the rats, which are usually asleep at this time of the day.

Normally, 90 to 100 per cent of the rodents are exterminated.

"It's a method that's very effective in mostly green spaces, parks," says Simeone, director of pest control for the New York City Health Department.

"You always hear that rats are winning the battle. But this turns it around."

Rats have made their home



Rick Simeone, director of pest control for New York City's health department, says dry ice is giving the city an edge in the rat race. **PHOTO: AFP**

in New York since the middle of the 18th Century and are responsible for the transmission of numerous diseases.

A 2014 study published by a PhD candidate at Columbia University estimated about two million rats in the US financial capital, which has a human population of more than 8.5 million.

The rats are most often seen scurrying in the street or in the subway. A celebrated video posted on YouTube in 2015 showed a rat dragging a slice of pizza on the subway stairs.

They live an average of only six or seven months in the port city, but a female can give birth

to as many as 100 baby rats each year.

Shutting the pantry door

In 2012, John Stellberger became the first to use dry ice against rats in the United States, based on an idea from one of his employees.

The head of EHS Pest Control company, Stellberger recalls that he spoke of the idea with sanitation officials in Boston, who conducted a brief trial in 2016.

That pilot was suspended after several months pending an approval by the US Environmental Protection Agency,

which came in June 2017.

At the beginning of this year after several months of tests, New York officially adopted the dry ice technique, joining Boston, Chicago and Washington.

Dry ice is only used in open spaces including parks and green areas, Simeone explained, because it would be too complicated to identify rat tunnels in the streets or residential areas where concrete is everywhere.

Aside from its effectiveness, dry ice presents no risk to wildlife in parks and public gardens, unlike rodenticide which had previously been the only weapon deployed against rats.—AFP ■

WORLD BRIEFS

South Korea, DPRK agree to hold reunion of separated families from 20 August to 26 August

SEOUL — South Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Friday agreed to hold the reunion of Korean families separated across the inter-Korean border in the 20-26 August period at the DPRK's scenic resort of Mount Kumgang.

The agreement came after delegations from the two sides held Red-Cross talks at a hotel in Mount Kumgang to discuss humanitarian issues.—Xinhua ■

Four of family die as car rams into stationary truck in South India

NEW DELHI—Four members of a family have been killed after their car rammed into a parked truck in southern Indian state of Telangana Friday, police said.

The accident occurred on a busy highway near Katnapally in the state's Peddapalle district, some 180 km from capital Hyderabad.

"The car hit the stationary truck from behind at high speed this morning. A couple and their two children died on the spot," a police official said.

The family was returning to Peddapalle town from Hyderabad when the accident happened, the official said.—Xinhua ■

France eases rules on wine stocks to mitigate weather risks

PARIS — French vineyards will be allowed under new rules to hold back more of their production each year to protect them in case harvests are damaged by extreme weather including storms and drought.

The move comes after a series of fierce hailstorms battered fields across France in May, the latest in a series of weather-related losses that many growers attribute to climate change.

The National Institute of Origin and Quality (INAO), which sets the rules governing

France's prestigious wine appellations, said Thursday that producers of red and white wines would now be able to stock 20 per cent of their annual output, for a total of 50 per cent over a three-year period.

Previously they were allowed to keep just 10 per cent of their stock.

"This decision will reinforce the resilience of vineyards against recurrent weather hazards, by playing a role similar to crop insurance," the INAO and the top government official for the Gironde department,

which includes Bordeaux, said Thursday.

The storage rules were originally rolled out across France starting in 2013 to ensure vineyards would have reserves in case quality or quantity suffered for a particular vintage. Dessert wines and champagne were not included in the programme.

But the INAO said the new rules would now be tested for producers of three sweet wine appellations: Sauternes, Barsac and Monbazillac — the latter a popular pairing with foie gras.

An increase in early frosts

and summer droughts have taken a toll on winegrowers as well as food producers in France and elsewhere in Europe in recent years, often causing price spikes for consumers.

Europe's wine production dropped to levels unseen since World War II last year as extreme weather battered top producers Italy, France, Spain and Germany, the main farmers' union said last October.

A spring cold snap in the Bordeaux region last year, for example, slashed the 2017 harvest by 40 per cent.—AFP ■

Man detained at London underground station after claiming to have bomb

LONDON—A man claiming to have a bomb at London's Charing Cross underground station has been arrested, the British Transport Police (BTP) said Friday morning.

Police officers were called to the tube station this morning. Both the underground and mainline stations were evacuated as a precaution and a cordon was put in place while officers dealt with the incident, the BTP said. A 38-year-old man was detained by officers and has been taken to a place of safety.—Xinhua ■

Saudi Arabia gears up to end women driving ban

JEDDAH (SAUDI ARABIA) — Saudi Arabia will allow women to drive from Sunday, ending the world's only ban on female motorists, a historic reform marred by what rights groups call an expanding crackdown on activists.

Overtuning the decades-long ban, a glaring symbol of repression against women, is part of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's much-trumpeted reform drive to modernise the conservative petrostate.

Potentially thousands of female drivers are set to take the wheel on Sunday, a long-awaited rite of passage for women in the kingdom that many say could usher in a new era of social mobility.

"It is a very important step and essential for women's free mobility," Hana al-Khamri, author of the forthcoming book "Female Journalists in Gender Apartheid Saudi Arabia", told AFP.

"Women in Saudi Arabia live under patriarchal structures. Allowing them to sit behind the wheel will help challenge social and gender norms that hinder mobility, autonomy and independence."

For many women the move should prove transformative, freeing them from their dependence on private chauffeurs or male relatives and resulting in big family savings.

"It's a relief," Najah al-Otaibi, a senior analyst at pro-Saudi think-tank Arabia Foundation, told AFP.



Potentially thousands of female drivers are set to take the wheel on Sunday. **PHOTO: AFP**

"Saudi women feel a sense of justice. They have long been denied a basic human right which has kept them confined and dependent on men, making it impossible to exercise a normal life."

Coffee and ice cream

The kingdom earlier this month began issuing its first driving licences to women in decades, with some swapping their foreign permits for Saudi ones after undergoing a practical test.

Some three million women in Saudi Arabia could receive licences and actively begin driving by 2020, according to consultancy firm PricewaterhouseCoopers.

A handful of female driving schools have cropped up in cities like Riyadh and Jeddah, training women to drive cars and also Harley Davidson motorbikes — scenes that were unimaginable

even a year ago.

Many Saudi women have ebulliently declared plans on social media to drive their mothers for coffee or ice cream as soon as the ban ends on Sunday, a mundane experience elsewhere in the world but a dazzling novelty in the desert kingdom.

For decades, hardliners cited austere Islamic interpretations to justify the driving ban, with some asserting that women lack the intelligence to drive and that lifting the prohibition would promote promiscuity.

The decision to lift the ban was catalysed in large measure by what experts characterise as economic pain in the kingdom owing to a protracted oil slump.

The move is expected to boost women's employment, and according to a Bloomberg estimate, add \$90 billion to economic output by 2030.

Many women fear they are still easy prey for conservatives in a nation where male "guardians" — their fathers, husbands or other relatives — can exercise arbitrary authority to make decisions on their behalf.

The government has preemptively addressed concerns of abuse by outlawing sexual harassment, with a prison term of up to five years and a maximum penalty of 300,000 riyals (\$80,000).

'Not a criminal or traitor'

Prince Mohammed, appointed heir to the most powerful throne in the Middle East a year ago this month, has also lifted a ban on cinemas and mixed-gender concerts, following his public vow to return the kingdom to moderate Islam.

But much of the initial optimism over his reforms appears to have been dented by a sweeping crackdown on women activists who long opposed the driving ban.

Authorities have said that nine of 17 arrested people remain in prison, accused of undermining the kingdom's security and aiding enemies of the state.

The detainees include three generations of activists, among them 28-year-old Loujain al-Hathloul, also held in 2014 for more than 70 days for attempting to drive from neighbouring United Arab Emirates to Saudi Arabia, and Aziza al-Yousef, a retired professor at Riyadh's King Saud University.

State-backed newspapers have published front-page pictures of some of the activists, the word "traitor" stamped across them in red.

Human Rights Watch this week said the kingdom has arrested two more women activists — Nouf Abdelaziz and Mayaa al-Zahrani, in what it denounced as an "unrelenting crackdown".

"I am not a provoker, not a vandaliser, not a terrorist, a criminal or a traitor," Abdelaziz said in a letter before her arrest, which was cited by HRW.

"I have never been (anything) but a good citizen who loves her country and wishes for it nothing but the best."

Both women are being held incommunicado, HRW said.

Saudi authorities did not respond to requests for comment.

Even some of the prince's ardent supporters have labelled the crackdown a "mistake".

It has been seen as a calculated move both to placate clerics incensed by his modernisation drive and also to send a clear signal to activists that he alone is the arbiter of change.

But many Saudi women nevertheless credit decades of fearless activism for the end of the driving ban. "These activists should be credited for this historical change, not jailed," Khamri, who is currently based in Sweden, said. "It is sad that these women who have been fighting for the right to drive won't be there to witness this historic moment." —AFP ■

Greece 'turning a page' as eurozone declares crisis over

ATHENS — The Greek government on Friday said the country was "turning a page" after eurozone ministers declared its crisis over as they granted Athens debt relief under a bailout exit strategy.

The eurozone ministers' agreement comes nearly a decade after Athens stunned the world with out-of-control spending, sparking three bailouts and a near collapse of the euro single currency.

"Greece is turning a page, its debt is now viable," government spokesman Dimitris Tzanakopoulos said. "I think the Greek people can smile, they can breathe again."

"This is a historic decision,"

Tzanakopoulos told state TV ERT.

Following the eurozone ministers' hard-fought agreement declared earlier Friday, Greece is slated to leave its third financial rescue since 2010 on August 20.

"The Greek crisis ends here tonight," said EU Economic Affairs Commissioner Pierre Moscovici, after marathon talks in Luxembourg.

The deal was expected to be an easy one, but last-minute resistance by Germany — 's long bailout nemesis and biggest creditor — dragged the talks on for six hours.

The ministers agreed to extend maturities by 10 years

on major parts of its total debt obligations, a mountain that has reached 180 per cent of the economy — almost double the country's annual economic output.

- No illusions -

They also agreed to disburse 15 billion euros (\$17.5 billion) to ease Greece's exit from its rescue programme.

This would leave Greece with a hefty 24 billion euro safety cushion, officials said.

"The Greek government is happy with the agreement," Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said after the talks.

But "to make this worthwhile we have to make sure that the Greek people must quickly see concrete results... they need

to feel the change in their own pockets," he added.

Optimism is tempered by Greece's remaining fiscal obligations, which will demand serious discipline, observers say.

"This is a very tight programme."

A surplus of 3.5 per cent to 2022 and 2.2 per cent (on average) to 2060 is not easy at all," Kostas Boukas, asset management director at Beta Securities, told Athens 9,84 radio.

"We'll have to see if the pledges will be kept, especially as they depend on international developments as well," he said.

Under pressure from its creditors Greece has already agreed to slash pensions again

in 2019, and reduce the tax-free income threshold for millions of people in 2020.

Further cuts will be made to maintain the 3.5-per cent surplus, if necessary.

"It would be a terrible mistake to cultivate illusions that the end of the bailout means a return to normality," said pro-opposition daily Ta Nea.

"What follows is tough oversight which no other country has experienced in a post-bailout period," the daily said.

The European Commission has already specified that Greece will remain under fiscal supervision until it repays 75 per cent of its loans. —AFP ■

‘I really don’t care’: Melania Trump jacket stuns on migrant visit

WASHINGTON — Melania Trump surprised the world by visiting child migrants on the US-Mexico border Thursday — but it was her choice of clothing for the trip that stunned the internet: a jacket emblazoned with the words “I really don’t care, do you?”

A tone-deaf sartorial decision — or a hidden message from the first lady? And if so, to whom?

The images of Melania Trump sporting the olive green khaki jacket as she boarded a flight to Texas — which immediately went viral — surfaced as the White House struggles to calm international anger over the practice of splitting migrant children from their parents.

Asked about the military-style jacket with large white brush-style lettering — apparently sold for \$39 at



US First Lady Melania Trump departs Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland 21 June 2018 wearing a jacket emblazoned with the words “I really don’t care, do you?” following her surprise visit with child migrants on the US-Mexico border. **PHOTO: AFP**

Zara, according to the Daily Mail which first spotted the odd choice of outfit — the first lady’s spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham said “there was no hidden message.”

“It’s a jacket,” Grisham said. “After today’s important visit to Texas, I hope the media isn’t going to choose to focus on her wardrobe.”

“#SheCares #Its-

JustAJacket” Grisham tweeted later on, as speculation swirled online.

But the president’s take on the jacket told a decidedly different story: “I REALLY DON’T CARE,

DO U?’ written on the back of Melania’s jacket, refers to the Fake News Media,” Donald Trump tweeted shortly after his wife’s return.

“Melania has learned how dishonest they are, and she truly no longer cares!”

When she arrived in McAllen, Texas the first lady had changed out of the controversial garment into a cream button-up safari-style jacket.

But upon returning to the White House she sported the jacket once more, despite stifling heat and humidity in the Washington region.

Melania Trump’s unannounced trip to a youth shelter for migrants and a Border Patrol processing center came one day after President Donald Trump made a sudden decision to

end the practice of splitting immigrant families that has left more than 2,300 minors separated from their parents or guardians.

Images and recordings of distressed children held in enclosures akin to cages have sparked global fury.

The first lady herself called for political compromise to end the stripping of children from their parents — the result of the Trump administration’s “zero tolerance” policy against illegal border crossings, in effect since May.

It was not the first time Melania Trump raised eyebrows for her fashion choices when out in the field: last year she wore needle-thin high stiletto heels to observe the devastation wrought by Hurricane Harvey.—AFP ■

East Timor’s new prime minister sworn in

JAKARTA — East Timor President Francisco Guterres on Friday swore in former guerrilla commander Jose Maria de Vasconcelos, who previously was president from 2012-2017, as the country’s new prime minister.

Congratulating Vasconcelos, Guterres stressed that the new prime

minister’s swearing-in “is proof of the robust functioning of our institutions and our democracy (and) we therefore have every reason to be pleased.”

He called for a “constructive relationship” between the government and the opposition “because the success of the national development does not only

depend on the government, but also on the constructive participation of the opposition, state institutions and people in general.” The new Cabinet will be announced in the near future after it is formed. Vasconcelos has already submitted a proposed Cabinet to Guterres, but the latter rejected some members who have been

suspected of or are undergoing legal proceedings relating to corruption.

Vasconcelos was the only candidate nominated for the prime ministership. His candidacy was proposed by the Alliance for Change and Progress, or AMP, a coalition of independence hero Xanana Gusmao’s center-left

National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction, or CNRT, and two smaller parties. The AMP won the general election in May, the country’s second in less than a year, and secured 34 seats, or enough to control the 65-seat unicameral parliament.

Its main rival, Fretilin, won the July 2017 election

by a narrow margin, forcing it to join with the smaller Democratic Party to form a government. With only 30 seats in the parliament, however, the minority government twice failed to pass a budget, prompting the president to dissolve parliament in January and call a new election.—Kyodo News ■

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Environment the loser in Gabon capital's rush for growth

LIBREVILLE — "It's an environmental disaster," said Magloir-Desire MOUNGANGA as he strode across the soggy, spongy soil where mangroves have been ripped up for development near the Gabonese capital Libreville, threatening its fragile ecosystem.

"Here the mangrove trees have been completely razed, you can even see the marks left by the bulldozer," said MOUNGANGA, an expert from Gabon's National Agency for National Parks. The path in the district of Angondje Nton leads to a section of large homes owned by the wealthy. The svelte buildings rise on muddy terrain where mangroves once flourished. Bit by bit, the tough, bushy little trees are being ripped away as Libreville pursues its relentless and almost unbri-dled expansion.

But, say experts, their destruction is de-



A ranger sits on a boat where mangroves once flourished, before cleared away for the rapid expansion of Gabon's capital Libreville. PHOTO: AFP

priving the coastal city of a vital ecological reserve and weakening its shield against disasters such as storm surges.

"Mangroves have the capacity to retain water and to combat coastal erosion with their (extensive) root systems, which

also act as nurseries for marine species," said Medard Obiang Ebanega, a geographer at Libreville's Omar Bongo University.

And by clearing away the mangroves and building their homes here, Gabon's rich are creating problems for themselves,

said MOUNGANGA.

'Not fit to be built on'

"The ground here is peaty. There's always water in it," he said, boots sinking into the boggy soil.

"Peat can prevent flooding, it's like a sponge — but when you cover

it with concrete, the water will rise... With global warming, these houses will inevitably be flooded," he said, referring to the danger of rising seas, driven higher by thermal expansion.

"This land is not fit to be built on. That's what people don't understand."

Gabon, an oil-rich, small equatorial African country of about 270,000 square kilometres (104,000 square miles), has won plaudits for some of its ecological work. The country has 13 national parks constituting 11 per cent of its land area, as well as 20 protected marine zones — a strong achievement by the standards of central Africa. Its territory accounts for around half of all the mangroves in the extensive Gulf of Guinea region, most of which are on the outskirts of Libreville — and, in theory, are shielded from urban spread.

"This is the only capital in the whole Atlantic basin to be almost entirely surrounded by protected areas accorded high ecological value," said Mathieu Ducrocq, an expert with the ANPN.

But the protection is very far from complete.

'Law not applied'

In many cases, Gabonese law gives precedence to those already using the land, which means that plots exchange hands by mutual agreement and the National Agency of Urban Planning simply records the transaction, said survey engineer Pierre Bongolo, a former government advisor. "There are a few pieces of legislation (on urban planning) but they're not applied. For example, the law provides for studies on the environmental impact (of new buildings), but these aren't being done," he said.—AFP ■

Suspected substandard walls found at 15 schools in quake-hit Osaka

OSAKA — A local education board said Friday inspections have found 15 elementary and junior high schools in quake-hit Osaka had concrete block walls that may not meet safety requirements.

The board inspected 59 city-run schools in Takatsuki, where a 9-year-old girl was crushed to death when a school wall collapsed during a magnitude-6.1 earthquake on Monday. Concrete walls at 11 schools were found to have been built in a similar manner, according to the Takatsuki education board.

The substandard walls at 15 schools — nine elementary schools and six junior high schools — are expected to be removed within two to three weeks, the education board said.

The inspections were conducted on Tuesday at 41 elementary schools and 18 junior high schools.

School authorities

were warned three years ago about the substandard concrete wall that collapsed onto Rina Miyake, the local education board said.

Disaster prevention adviser Ryoichi Yoshida informed the girl's school and the local education board in 2015 about the danger of the wall made from concrete blocks piled up high around the swimming pool of Juei Elementary School.

The victim was on her way to school when the quake rocked western Japan. The education board told a press conference that following the warning, it checked the wall in February 2016. After visually assessing the structure and hitting it with a stick, board staff judged it to be safe. But the board also said the two officials who inspected the wall did not have any architectural qualifications.—Kyodo News ■

Invitation for Bids

Date	22 June 2018
Loan No and Title	3477-MYA; Irrigated Agriculture Inclusive Development Project (IAIDP)
Contract No and Title	IAIDP/Package 01; Rehabilitation of the Chaung Magyi Irrigation System
Death Line for Submission of Bids	7 August 2018 / 10:00 AM (Myanmar Standard Time)

1. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of IAIDP. Part of this financing will be used for payments under the contract indicated above. Bidding is open to Bidders from eligible source countries of the ADB.
2. The **Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department (IWUMD)**, "the Employer" invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for the **Rehabilitation of the Chaung Magyi Irrigation System** ("the Works"). The Works mainly include site investigations; remodeling of two main canals, distributary canals and minor canals; lining of canals; raising & strengthening of canal embankments; construction of drop and check-drop structures, head regulators, check structures, cross drainage culverts, reinforced concrete bridges, pipe outlets; replacement of flumes; rehab of bridges; & dismantle existing structures .
3. **International competitive bidding (ICB)** will be conducted in accordance with ADB's [Single-Stage: Two-Envelope](#) bidding procedure and is open to all Bidders from eligible countries as described in the Bidding Document (BD). Bidder/s must satisfy evaluation & qualification criteria in section 3 of the BD, including the following:
Participation in at least two contracts that have been successfully or substantially completed within the last five years and that are similar to the proposed works, where the value of the Bidder's participation exceed US\$ 4m (four million). The similarity of the Bidder's participation shall be based on the physical size, nature of works, complexity, methods, technology or other characteristics as described in Section 6, Employer's Requirements. (*For the complete eligibility and qualification requirements, Bidders must refer to BD*) .
4. For further information and to obtain a soft copy of the Bidding Document free of charge, bidders should submit their requests to any two of the following Contacts persons:
 - 1 U Tint Lwin, Director of Procurement- IWUMD, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI), Building No. 43, (IWUMD), Naypyitaw, Myanmar, Telephone: Facsimile number: 095-67-410102, 410509, E-mail address: tlwin4.irr@gmail.com
 - 2 U Khin Zaw, Project Director ,IAIDP, Telephone: 09 2201984, E mail: ukhinzaw1984@gmail.com
 - 3 U Maung Zaw, Project Manager, PMU, Telephone: 09 5143953, E mail: maungzawkpg@gmail.com
 - 4 U Saw Win, National Procurement Specialist, Telephone: 09 256504116, E mail: sawwin2912@gmail.com.
5. A Pre-Bid Meeting will take place on 17 July 2018, 10:00AM (Myanmar time), at Conference Room of Deputy Director-General (Lower Myanmar), Bldg No.15, IWUMD Compound, MOALI, Naypyitaw, Myanmar
6. Site visits will be allowed during the period 9 to 13 July 2018 (when IWUMD staff may be present at the site), but any other time may be accepted. If a Bidder plans to visit the Site, an access permit shall be secured from the Employer. To secure a permit, the Bidder should send a request to U Khin Zaw < Project Director (No.2 above) with contact address indicated above together with the following: (a) Copy of passport of Bidder's representative, (b) his/her position in the company, and (c) planned date & time of site visit.
The Bidder should send the request for an access permit together with the abovementioned documents, at least one week before the proposed site visit. Maximum of three representatives from each Bidder will be allowed to visit the site.
7. For those attending the Pre-Bid Meeting, the bidder or its authorized representative should have his/her memory stick or USB for the soft copy of the Bidding Document. No liability will be accepted for any potential bidder's non-receipt or loss of the document.
8. Bids should be delivered / submitted to: U Tint Lwin, Director of Procurement at the address given above in Paragraph 4(1), **on or before the deadline of 7 August 2018, 10:00 AM (Myanmar local time)**, together with a Bid Security as described in the BD. Bids will be **opened immediately** after bid submission deadline (at same address) in presence of Bidders' representatives choosing to attend. Late bids will be rejected.
9. When comparing Bids, ADB's Domestic Preference Scheme will not be applied in accordance with the provisions stipulated in the Bidding Document.
10. If interested bidders can see and search in ADB website and IWUMD website.

ABC to air 'Roseanne' spinoff sans controversial star

LOS ANGELES—The US television network ABC announced Thursday it would launch a spinoff of the "Roseanne" series without its embattled star, who was dropped earlier this month after unleashing a racist rant.

Many of the cast's original actors would perform their roles in the new 10-episode series tentatively titled "The Conners," slated to premiere this fall, the network said in a statement.

Roseanne Barr — 65 and a vocal Trump supporter who has tweeted far-right and conspiracy theorist views — would have no financial or creative involvement in the show, the network said.

"Roseanne" was one of the few depictions of working-class life on US television, and also of Trump supporters, who have



Roseanne Barr will have no creative or financial involvement in a new spinoff of the hit sitcom "Roseanne". PHOTO: AFP

been largely ignored by Hollywood.

The sitcom was the most watched series of the year on

major American TV networks before its sudden cancellation.

Nonetheless, the network axed "Roseanne" after its lead

actress Roseanne Barr used Twitter to liken Valerie Jarrett, an African American former White House aide, to an ape.

Barr apologized for her racist tweet but ABC condemned it as "abhorrent" and "inconsistent with our values" in announcing the cancellation of her show.

But the network approved the new spinoff, saying "The Conners" stories demonstrate that families can always find common ground through conversation, laughter and love."

The new sitcom would begin "after a sudden turn of events" that would force the family "to face the daily struggles of life... in a way they never have before," ABC said.

"The spinoff will continue to portray contemporary issues that are as relevant today as they were 30 years ago," the

network said.

In a joint statement, cast members including John Goodman and Laurie Metcalf said "we have received a tremendous amount of support from fans of our show, and it's clear that these characters not only have a place in our hearts, but in the hearts and homes of our audience."

We all came back last season because we wanted to tell stories about the challenges facing a working-class family today," the cast members said.

"We are so happy to have the opportunity to return with the cast and crew to continue to share those stories through love and laughter."

"Roseanne" had been off the air for 21 years before its reboot, which premiered with almost 22 million viewers, according to ABC. —AFP ■

Suspect arrested in killing of rapper XXXTentacion

MIAMI — A Florida man with a criminal history has been arrested over the shooting death of rapper XXXTentacion, with more suspects being sought, authorities said Thursday.

Dedrick Williams, 22, was pulled over Wednesday evening in Pompano Beach north of Miami and arrested on a warrant for first-degree murder, the Broward County Sheriff's Department said.

The warrant said Williams shot XXXTentacion on Monday outside a motorcycle store. Williams has not yet entered a plea to the allegations.

"Detectives are seeking additional suspects. The investigation continues," the department said on Twitter.

The sheriff's department said that they were treating the killing of the chart-topping rapper, whose bag was snatched from his car, as part of a robbery.

Williams has been repeatedly arrested and had been on probation through 2021 over car theft, according to law enforcement records.

Facebook and Instagram pages linked to Williams

showed a deep interest in tattoos and money, with the suspect often fanning himself with spread stacks of dollars. Pictures from 2014 showed the inside of a gun store.

"Don't piss me off u will never know wats next," he wrote on Facebook shortly before his arrest.

It was not immediately clear if Williams had previous contact with XXXTentacion, 20, whose real name was Jahseh Ofrey. XXXTentacion led a violent life himself with multiple arrests. He had been awaiting trial for beating his former girlfriend while she was pregnant, an episode which led to calls to shun his music.

But despite the domestic violence charges and a lack of traditional publicity, XXXTentacion debuted at number one this year on the US chart with his second album, entitled "?."

Rappers including Kendrick Lamar hailed XXXTentacion as a unique talent, with his dark, lo-fi hip-hop full of raw expressions of his depression and suicidal tendencies.—AFP ■

'Gomorra' writer hits back after Salvini threat to lift protection

ROME —Italian journalist Roberto Saviano, who lives under armed guard since publishing his mafia best-seller "Gomorra" in 2006, lashed out Friday at the country's new far-right interior minister for threatening to lift his police protection.

Matteo Salvini of the anti-immigration League party on Thursday said there was a need for the relevant authorities "to evaluate whether there is still a risk" to Saviano's life from figures in the criminal underworld who made death threats against him over the book.

"It seems to me that he spends a lot of time abroad," Salvini told a radio station, adding it was necessary to examine "how the Italian people's money is being spent".

His remarks drew a blunt response from Saviano, who has been very critical of Salvini's populist party and its anti-immigrant policies.

"Idiot," he said in a video posted on his Facebook page, saying he was "happy to be one of his enemies".



Italian journalist Roberto Saviano has been very critical of the far-right League party and its anti-immigrant policies. PHOTO: AFP

The 38-year-old writer on Friday also denounced the "foul" atmosphere in Italy since the new populist government took office on 31 May, warning that anyone could be targeted in an interview with the *Corriere Della Sera* newspaper.

"If Matteo Salvini wants to vent his worst impulses against me and the immigrants, anyone who thinks they are safe is wrong. Yesterday it was the immigrants, today it's me and tomorrow, it'll be you," he said.

Salvini's latest controversial remarks followed hot on the heels of another earlier crisis sparked by his refusal to offer safe harbour to a boat carrying 630 migrants who had been rescued off the coast of Libya.

"We have an interior minister who, rather than protecting citizens, wants to put them in danger," said Pier Luigi Bersani, one of the leaders of the leftwing Democratic and Progressive Movement (MDP). —AFP ■

Sex, gender and social change: Cambodian blogger tackles taboos

PHNOM PENH— Sex toys, infidelity and penis size are generally hush hush topics in conservative Cambodia, but not on a taboo-busting video blog called “A Dose of Cath” that unabashedly wrestles with the risqué, drawing both applause and abuse in the patriarchal country.

Hosted on Facebook, the show by a 23-year-old Cambodian woman tackles the finer points of sex education, women’s health and gender imbalances in a country where the #MeToo movement has barely registered.

A recent episode on a well-known 19th-century Cambodian poem that used to be taught in schools and advises women not to laugh too loudly gained nearly 350,000 views.

The videos feature Catherine Harry, the pen name of the self-described feminist who featured in Forbes’ 2018 “30 under 30” list of outstanding leaders and entrepreneurs in Asia.

Having ditched her birth name more than 10 years ago,



Cambodia’s Catherine Harry records a video for her blog, which delves into issues such as sex toys, infidelity and penis size. **PHOTO: AFP**

Cath is following in the footsteps of other Cambodian writers and media personalities turning to blogs and social media to make a name for themselves.

But few have waded so deeply into the sensitive social issues that Cath confronts in short no-frills monologues filmed in her Phnom Penh apartment.

“What I expect to get from what I’m doing, from my videos, is to start a conversation, because the topics that I talk about, people don’t really talk about,” she told

AFP. Those include premarital sex, whether to watch porn in a relationship, cervical cancer and sexual assault.

Statistics point to an urgent need for such conversations in a kingdom where one in five Cambodian men surveyed as part of a 2014 UN study admitted to having committed rape. Cath has shared her own #MeToo experiences to help spur debate, but said those who speak out in Cambodia face victim-blaming or even violence.

“If a woman talks about her experiences of sexual assault or sexual harassment, she will be rejected by society, by her family, her friends,” she said.

And while 65 per cent of all businesses in Cambodia are run by women, the country’s major political and financial institutions are still male-dominated.

Hun Sen, the long-serving prime minister who has been in power for over three decades, has tried to court the youth through his own Facebook page and graduation speeches.—AFP ■

US designer Spade mourned at hometown funeral

CHICAGO— Friends and loved ones said goodbye Thursday to American fashion designer Kate Spade at a funeral in Kansas City, Missouri, birthplace of the 55-year-old who committed suicide two weeks ago.

Spade was one of the biggest names in American fashion, known especially for her sleek handbags.

An additional tragedy befell the family hours before the late-afternoon service, as Spade’s “heartbroken” 89-year-old father died at his home in the Midwestern US city.

The family said Earl Bronsahan had been in failing health.

Mourners gathered at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Redemptorist Church on a rainy, dark afternoon, but The Kansas City Star reported that some of Spade’s school friends carried signature handbags of the designer whose use of bright colors and prints proved a hit with career women. “She was incredibly kind and had a very memorable laugh,” a friend, Margie Morrison, told The Star.

Before getting into fashion



Kate Spade was no longer directly associated with management of the company bearing her name, one of whose boutiques is pictured in New York. **PHOTO: AFP**

design, Spade worked as a journalist, including a stint as accessories editor at Mademoiselle magazine. She launched her Kate Spade label in 1993 with husband Andy Spade.

More than a decade ago, Spade sold her business and later launched the luxury line Frances Valentine.

Spade’s body was found 5 June in her New York apartment. “She was actively seeking help for depression and anxiety over the last five years, seeing a doctor on a regular basis and taking medication for both depression and anxiety,” her husband Andy Spade said in a statement carried by The New

York Times earlier this month.

Spade’s father died Wednesday night surrounded by family, according to a statement the family released to The Star.

“He had been in failing health of late and was heartbroken over the recent death of his beloved daughter,” the family said.—AFP ■

Paramount working on third ‘Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles’ film

LOS ANGELES—Paramount is developing third “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles” movie.

The studio has started the work on the project, two years after “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows” disappointed at the box office.

Andrew Dodge has been roped in to write the script.

Michael Bay, Andrew Form, and Brad Fuller are producing the film through their Platinum Dunes production company.

According to Variety, the studio is aiming to reboot the franchise with the third “Ninja Turtles” project.

The films are based on the comic by Kevin Eastman and Kevin Laird about wisecracking turtle superheroes named after the Renaissance artistes Michelangelo, Raphael, Leonardo and Donatello, using ninja skills acquired from a radioactive New York City rat.

The previous two movies starred Pete Ploszek as Leonardo, Alan Ritchson as Raphael, Noel Fisher as Michelangelo and Jeremy Howard as Donatello.—PTI ■

Brazil edge towards World Cup knockouts after Costa Rica late show

SAINT PETERSBURG — Philippe Coutinho and Neymar broke down dogged Costa Rica in injury time on Friday, sealing a 2-0 win for Brazil that propels the five-time champions towards the World Cup last 16.

The Central Americans looked likely to hold on for a hard-earned draw, particularly after Neymar had a penalty award chalked off by referee Bjorn Kuipers after he consulted the Video Assistant Referee.

But Coutinho and Neymar finally broke through, scoring in the 91st and 97th minutes to put Tite's side on the brink of the knockout stages.

At the final whistle, Neymar sat down on the grass and wept, with the emotion of victory hitting home after the tense Group E contest at the Saint Petersburg Stadium.

Neymar started despite limping out of training on Tuesday with a hurt ankle, which the Brazilian FA said was sustained as a result of snapping Swiss defenders.

After a ponderous start, Brazil enjoyed a gradual crescendo during the first period but their dominance in possession was



Neymar celebrates his goal against Costa Rica in Saint Petersburg. PHOTO: AFP

not reflected in chances created.

Neymar faced the most devoted of markers in Costa Rica's Cristian Gamboa, the Brazilian spending most of the half hopping over scything tackles or dodging past a barging shoulder.

It was a compelling battle. One sumptuous Neymar flick sent the ball flying over Gamboa's head and later he made an excellent run onto Coutin-

ho's pass, only to squander the chance with a heavy touch.

Marcelo, Coutinho and Neymar, however, hardly make for the most conscientious combination out wide and when Johan Venegas ran clear down the right, his pullback should have been converted by Celso Borges, who skewed past the post.

Brazil might have had a penalty when Oscar Duarte blocked

Paulinho at a corner and Costa Rica rode their luck again after the break, as Neymar, Gabriel Jesus and Coutinho all went close.

Jesus's header crashed against the crossbar and after some excellent work by Paulinho, Coutinho's follow-up hit the ever-present Gamboa on the line.

Neymar fired over from Paulinho's cutback and Coutinho shot straight at Keylor Navas

after, again, Paulinho had teed it up.

With 20 minutes left, Gamboa made his first mistake and Neymar should have capitalised. A sloppy touch allowed the striker to cut inside from the left but his bending finish curved around the outside of the post.

There was more drama to come. With just over 10 minutes left, Neymar's turn prompted Giancarlo Gonzalez to lose his footing and put his arm across the Brazilian's chest.

Neymar arched back as if losing his balance before falling to the ground. Kuipers pointed to the spot but after reviewing the video replay, reversed his decision.

Frustration brewed but Costa Rica's resistance was finally ended in the 91st minute.

Marcelo's deep cross was kept alive by Roberto Firmino and a loose touch by Jesus dribbled perfectly into Coutinho's path. Six yards out, he sidefooted home.

Costa Rica conceded again right at the death. Substitute Douglas Costa squared for Neymar to finally find the net. —AFP ■

Week 17 MNL matches begin today

WEEK 17 matches of the MPT Myanmar National League will start today, including a much-anticipated match between defending champions Shan United and championship contender Yangon United. The match will decide who sits in first place in the league standings.

Today's matches also include Zwegapin United vs Yadanabon FC, which will be

played at Thuwunna Stadium at 4pm. The match will be broadcast live on MRTV.

The Shan United vs Yangon United match will be played at 3:30pm at Taunggyi Stadium and will be live-streamed on the My Sports Facebook page.

Other big matchups: Ayeyawady United will play against Magwe FC today at Pa Thein Stadium at 3:30 pm, and the

match will be live-streamed on MNL's Facebook Page.

After today's big matches, other MNL teams will play. On 24 June, GFA will meet Rakhine United at Thuwunna Stadium, while Sagaing United will play Myawady FC at Monywa Stadium. Southern Myanmar will face Hantharwady at Mawlamyaing Stadium.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

World Cup fans soak up history in Russia's Volgograd

VOLGOGRAD — Iceland and Nigeria fans soaked up the "awe-inspiring" history of Volgograd on Friday as they explored the World Cup city that was annihilated during World War II.

Nazi Germany's advance into Russia began exactly 77 years ago, on 22 June, 1941, and was halted in the city, then known as Stalingrad, in February 1943.

The Battle of Stalingrad is

among the bloodiest in history.

It raged for almost six months and when it was over the city was in ruins and around two million Nazi and Soviet soldiers and civilians had lost their lives.

"It's real history," Iceland fan Heidar Gudjonsson told AFP as he walked up the 200 steps to the "Mamayev Kurgan" monument to the battle – a giant sculpture of a woman with sword raised. "It's shocking and this

monument is something else, it's extremely dramatic. It's awe-inspiring and it really has an influence on you," added Gudjonsson.

The memorial complex to the battle is set on a hill overlooking the new 45,500-seat Volgograd Arena and includes the towering 85-metre statue known as "The Motherland Calls", and a hall where an eternal flame to the city's fallen burns. —AFP ■



**FIFA WORLD CUP
RUSSIA 2018**

18:30 MST (23.6.2018)		
Belgium		Tunisia
21:30 MST (23.6.2018)		
Korea Republic		Mexico
00:30 MST (24.6.2018)		
Germany		Sweden

World Cup 2018 Results

Argentina	0 - 3	Croatia
Brazil	2 - 0	Costa Rica
Nigeria	2 - 0	Iceland