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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives outgoing Italian Ambassador

Speaker U T Khun Myat receives outgoing Italian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Pier Glorgio Aliberti. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received outgoing Italian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Pier Glorgio Aliberti, who has completed his tour of duty in Myanmar, in the guest hall of the Pyithu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon. During the meeting, they discussed matters relating to enhancing friendly relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Italy, the democratic transition in Myanmar, assisting in the peace process, and development and technical cooperation in the preservation of Myanmar's cultural heritage.

The meeting was attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw office.—Myanmar News Agency ■

UPDJC Secretariat holds 21st meeting

THE Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee's (UPDJC) secretaries held a meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday to discuss several issues, including setting the date for holding the third session of the Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong.

The issues discussed at the meeting held at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre also included holding meetings of the UPDJC work committees, deciding the number of observers to be invited to the Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong, inviting ethnic armed organisations which have not signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, coordination for the conference and holding the 15th meeting of the UPDJC.

The meeting was attended by members of the Secretariat of the UPDJC Lt-Gen U Khin Zaw Oo (Retd), U Aung Soe, Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo, U Zaw Htay, U Hla Maung Shwe, Pado Saw Tar Doh Hmu, U Myo Win, U Sai Ngin, Saw Mra Yazar Lin, Khun Myint Tun, U Myint Soe, U Naing Ngan Lin, Sai Kyaw Nyunt, Min Kyaw Zeyar Oo and Tar Hla Pe. — Myo Myint/Myanmar News Agency ■

833 jade lots fetch over 74 m euros at Gems Emporium

THE sixth day of the 55th Myanma Gems Emporium fetched 74.122 million euros from the sale of 833 jade lots yesterday.

A total of 1,078 uncut jade lots at a floor price of 4,000 euros and above, and 72 finished jade lots at a floor price of 1,000 euros and above were put on sale through the open tender system yesterday.

Over 4,000 merchants at home and abroad attended the sale. There are over 60 shops selling finished products, including jade, gem and amber products. "We have got a good price for our products, because we can sell them directly to merchants," said U Maung Maung San, a member of the central executive committee of the Myanmar Gems Entrepreneurs Association.

"Most foreign merchants are interested in rubies and sapphires and bargained for those worth tens of thousands US dollars," he said. "It shows the development of the gems market here." Myanmar needs modern technology to produce finished products, he added.

Over 350 kinds of jade, gem and amber products made by trainees from the Gems Training School in Nay Pyi Taw were also put on sale at the 55th Gems Emporium.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker visits People's Republic of China

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than poses for the photo before his departure for the People's Republic of China at the Yangon International Airport. **PHOTO: MNA**

A DELEGATION led by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than left for China on the morning of yesterday on a friendly visit at the invitation of Mr. Li Zhanshu, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China. They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Minister Counsellor Ms. Li Xiaoyan of the Embassy of China to Myanmar and other officials.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than was accompanied by Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee secretary Dr. Myat Nyanna Soe, Myanmar-China Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association members U Kin Shein and U Wai Sein Aung, Joint Committee on Inter-Parliamentary assembly member U Khun Thein Pe, Health, Sports and Culture Committee member Naw Sa Mu Htoo, Local and Overseas Labour Affairs Committee member Daw San San Myint and officials from the Amyotha Hluttaw office.

The delegation led by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than is visiting China from 25 to 29 June. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Supreme Court sits to pass judgment on special criminal appeal cases, hear special civil appeal cases

THE Union Supreme Court convened at Union Supreme Court room number 1, along with Chief Justice of the Union Supreme Court U Htun Htun Oo and Union Supreme Court judges, passed judgments on five special civil appeal cases, and heard six special civil appeal cases yesterday morning.—Myanmar News Agency ■

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Heads of Service Organizations appointed

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

	Name	Appointment
(1)	U Myint Soe Deputy Director-General Correctional Department Ministry of Home Affairs	Director-General Correctional Department Ministry of Home Affairs
(2)	U Myat Thu Deputy Director-General Department of Fire Services Ministry of Home Affairs	Director-General Department of Fire Services Ministry of Home Affairs

Tobacco use increasing in Myanmar at alarming rate

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe has warned yesterday that tobacco use is increasing in Myanmar at an alarming rate.

He made the comment in his speech at the Myanmar National Conference on Tobacco Control and Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) titled "Uniting for Saving Lives and Saving Money," jointly organised by the Ministry of Health and Sports and International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) held at Grand Amara Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe delivers the speech at the Myanmar National Conference on Tobacco Control and Prevention of NCDs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

According to research data, 44 per cent of men in Myanmar consumed tobacco, while quid with tobacco is consumed by 62 per cent of men.

"This is an alarming and dangerous stage," he said. As per research conducted in schools, 13.6 per cent of young students (between the age of 13 and 16) were consuming tobacco and quid. Some 26 per cent of male students and 4 per cent of female students are doing the same, he said.

Nowadays, tobacco free movements are being held in universities and basic education schools. The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) was approved by 192 countries, including Myanmar in 2003, and Myanmar was the 11th country to ratify it.

The union minister said the conference was important to discuss effective ways to control the consumption of tobacco and to openly talk about NCDs.

The related ministries from the country, the Hluttaw health-related committee chairmen, social organisations, as well as technicians and experts from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), will share their experiences at the conference, he said.

The work of preventing NCDs and tobacco control couldn't be conducted solely by the Ministry of Health and Sports. The day's conference will discuss the requirement of the combined forces and systematic cooperation by the related ministries, especially the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Planning and Finance, civil service organisations on the ground and the state/region governments, said the union minister.

"If the NCDs caused by tobacco consumption are long-term illnesses, it is costly both mentally and financially for the patients and their families, as well as an additional burden on the government's funds," said the Union Minister.

"Treatments for these illnesses are being provided free in people's hospitals. If emphasis is not put on the illness, the state's health expenditures will rise sharply in the coming 10 to 15 years, affecting the country's economy," he added.

Next, World Health Organisation (WHO) country office representative Dr. Stephen Paul Jost spoke about the works conducted by WHO on tobacco control and NCDs, while the Union Group Myanmar Office Director Mr. Nick Southern spoke about tobacco control in Myanmar, followed by the Union Asia Pacific/ Singapore Deputy Regional Director Dr. Tar Singh Bam.

The conference will continue today with symposiums, panel discussions and plenary sessions. — Myanmar News Agency

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking message by Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe

TODAY, being the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, ceremonies commemorating the international day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking will be celebrated across the nations in the world.

Since the time when the United Nations General Assembly designated 26 June as the international day against drug abuse in 1987 regional prevention teams that have been fighting against narcotic and psychotropic drugs will observe their 31st anniversary celebration today.

With a view for the whole populace to be able to participate in the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, starting from the year 1998, there have been annual competitions for short story, article, poem, song, photograph, computerized poster, freelance slogan writing and contests for painting, cartoon, poster and computerized painting for primary, middle and high school students. Counternarcotics agencies will present prizes to the winners during today's ceremonies.

The Central counter-narcotics committee formed regional teams that comprise NGOs, civil society groups, religious organizations and entrepreneurs at various levels, including the Nay Pyi Taw Council, region, state, district, township, ward and village officials. Prizes will be presented to 107 prize winners out of above 3,500 public and student competitors that participated in the 21st competition held this year.

All over the world, drug problems have been handled in various ways based on the background of the respective governments, cultural development, availability of resources, location and geographical situation.

However, the problem is becoming bigger and more complex with the emergence of new drugs devastating the public's health, education and basic businesses while cross border crimes and terrorist activities are threatening regional stability and peace as well as rule of law.

According to World Drug report 2017 over 190,000 die before reaching a mature age due to drug usage and there is a rise in occurrence of drug related diseases such as HIV, hepatitis and TB.

Myanmar is facing the drug problem due to its geographical location while also facing opium cultivation problem and production of heroin and psychotropic drugs in remote inaccessible areas where development is lagging behind.

Successive governments were handling the drug problem by signing three drug related conventions as member country and were enacting laws, forming anti-drug organisations and drawing up plans in accordance to the conventions.

Under the national poverty reduction policy (strategy) the government is providing development assistance by constructing roads and bridges. The government also enhanced education, health, reclaimed farming land, promoted water projects and power plants and TV transmission stations and promoted the construction of new religious edifices in opium planting areas.

It is also arranging and supporting fish breeding suitable for the region and replacement crops for opium.

Treatment for drug addicts was also provided and 26 drug treatment clinics and 47 sub-clinics were opened and operated. 51 Methadone clinics were established in high drug use townships providing replacement therapy.

Arrangements are being made to conduct community-based one stop service works to drug addicts as well as medical service to the general public. At the same time efforts to reduce occurrence of HIV, hepatitis B and C through shared usage of syringes are also being conducted.

Physical and mental rehabilitation of drug addicts and follow up care works for rehabilitated drug addicts to re-enter the society is being conducted through volunteer drug supervision teams formed by the rehabilitation department.

Early prevention is an effective tool against reducing drug usage, youth, students and the publicare being educated directly of the danger of drugs through the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information using various methods.

As prevention is more effective than any treatment methods, preventive works through sharing of information and experience by rehabilitated drug users, information sessions targeted specifically for youths and vulnerable groups through news media, social media and face-to-face meeting programs need to be utilised.

The leading role of state/region governments in reducing the danger of drug is a vital requirement and state/region governments are to take up the leadership role and conduct it with the cooperative force of the public as well as civil society organizations.

The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control had also drawn up and enacted a new national drug control policy that is in accord with the suggestions of 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS).

The new national drug control policy involves various sectors such as reduction of opium growing, manufacturing, and transport, providing alternative development programs, reducing drug usage and follow up problems, increasing international cooperation, research works and human rights oriented approaches that will reduce the drug problem and support the social development of the people.

At the same time, the Myanmar 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law was reviewed and an amendment to the law was enacted in February 2018 in support of the policy.

In accord with this year's motto, "Listen First" the International Day Against Drug-Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, we hereby call on our people to listen to the concerns and needs of our youth and simultaneously support their development and health by reducing drug abuse.■

(Unofficial Translation)

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko accepts donations for Bogyoke Aung San biopic

CHAIRMAN of the Bogyoke Aung San's Biopic Development Committee Thura U Aung Ko, also the Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture, accepted donations for the biopic in a ceremony yesterday.

The list of donors include Daw Hla Kyi alias Daw Yi Yi Myint from Kyal Sin Nan Taw Gems & Jewellery Co. Ltd., who donated Ks5 million; Saya U Hla Tun, Thiha Thudamma Theingi Daw San San Wai and their son Maung Min Hlaing Phyo from Shan Pyo Mel Medicine family business, who donated Ks5 million; and U Thein Zaw and Daw Thin Thin Lin from Thein Than Jewellery Emporium, who donated Ks2.5 million.

The Bogyoke Aung San's Biopic Development Committee received a total of Ks1.2497 billion (approx. US$899,784) in donations for the biopic.

The committee received Ks847.2 million from the Bogyoke Aung San Biopic Realisation Group, Ks276 million from the first donation programme, Ks114 million from the second donation programme, and Ks12.5 million from yesterday's donation programme. —MNA ■

Union Minister for Border Affairs receives US Ambassador to Myanmar

Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung meets with US Ambassador Mr. Scot Marciel in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Border Affairs Lt. Gen Ye Aung received US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Scot Marciel at 11.30 a.m. on 25 June at the hall of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged views and cordially discussed matters relating to the implementation of human resources development for the national races in the border areas, the progress made by the state government for the development of internal peace and reconciliation, providing necessary supplies for the displaced people in northern Myanmar, the repatriation process of the displaced people in Rakhine State, the stability and development of Rakhine State, and the USAID to provide US $50 million as a five-year project in the south eastern part of Myanmar. — Myanmar News Agency ■

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in Picture

A trishaw driver enters a flooded side street near Baho Road in Sanchaung, Yangon yesterday. Heavy rain yesterday resulted in scattered instances of flooding across the country. More rain has been forecasted for today. **PHOTO: MARK ANGELES**

RTAD arrests fake vehicle inspection sticker makers via social network

By May Thet Hnin

THE Road Transport Administration Department (RTAD) has arrested fake vehicle inspection sticker makers via a Facebook page, said U Hlan Kyin Man, Director of the RTAD.

RTAD found an advertisement on one Nyi Lay Nyo's account on Facebook on 19 June about providing vehicle inspection stickers. The RTAD arrested the offender, identified as Soe Thiha Tun alias Maung Lay, in cooperation with the Myanmar police force and the Yangon Region police.

The police arrested the offender by pretending to be a client.

In a continued search for other offenders, the police found Zwe Thet Paing alias Sai Wunna who is reported to have contact with fake vehicle inspection sticker makers, on 23 June in Nay Pyi Taw.

The police also found other related equipment , which the offenders were using to make fake vehicle inspection stickers and one illegal vehicle, he added.

"I really felt sorry for them (offenders) because they are just over 20 years old. But we have to take legal action because they acted in defiance of the rule of law," he added.

The police have already arrested 10 offenders out of 11 during the first week of June. However, one person has escaped.

The RTAD is monitoring the Facebook page closely, and the director of RTAD has urged the public to cooperate with them.

They have also announced to arrest those holding fake licences, as soon as possible, at the RTAD office.

The RTAD has issued licenses for over 500,000 vehicles, over330,000 motorbikes and 770,000 drivers, as of April 2018. ■

Most Thai pilgrims visit Botahtaung Pagoda in rainy season

MOST Thai pilgrims visit the Botahtaung Kyaik-de-att Pagoda in Botahtaung Township, Yangon, in the rainy season, which is not as crowded as in the peak season, falling between October and January.

The Botahtaung Pagoda hosted 22,000 tourists in January, 20,200 in February, 21,595 in March, 13,267 in April and 22,857 in May.

In the high season, nearly 1,000 tourists visit the pagoda each day. Entry fees to the pagoda site is Ks6,000 per person with bottled drinking water and snow towels provided free. There is no camera tax, either.

Last year, the pagoda trustees collected over Ks1 billion from tourists, said U Kyaw Naing Tun, an official from the Botahtaung Pagoda board of trustees.

In June, over 5,000 tourists visited the pagoda and donated more than Ks300 million.

This year, the number of people visiting the Botahtaung Pagoda has significantly increased compared to the same period last year. For instance, the pagoda hosted 22,000 tourists, in May of this year, while there were only 12,000 tourists last May. Some tourist pilgrims from China, Viet Nam, Cambodia, South Korea and Europe also visited the Botahtaung Pagoda. — Than Htet ■

Trade Mark Ads
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Bridge under construction in Bamauk to benefit locals

A BAILEY bridge crossing a creek is being built on a self-reliant basis in Bamauk Township, Sagaing Region.

Construction of the 140 ft long and 13 ft wide bridge began early this June. The bridge has four reinforced columns, two on its each side and two under the bridge.

Each side of the bridge is equipped with 20 iron posts and it is slated for completion in late June. "We encountered some difficulties since the bridge is being constructed on a self-reliant basis. But we have already overcome these difficulties," said U Win Bo, Villager Administrator from Anautgon Village.

Upon completion of the bridge, local people from some villages in Bamauk Township will be able to enjoy better road transportation.—076/Myanmar Digital News ■

The construction site of bailey bridge in Bamauk Township, Sagaing Region. **PHOTO: 076/MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS**

A farmer harvests sugarcanes in a village near Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE**

Sugar re-export earns revenue, creates job opportunities

AFTER lifting a temporary ban on sugar re-exports from 1 June, Muse merchants are resuming sugar re-export, earning revenue and creating job opportunities, according to the Agriculture and Market Information Agency.

A ton of imported sugar is worth US$480, while Myanmar merchants re-export it for $600. The re-exported sugar is not intended to be consumed in the domestic market, as it can harm domestic sugar producers. The import list needs to tally with the volume of re-export, and authorised companies need to strictly adhere to the prescribed rules and regulations, as they will be inspected over whether they abide by the set rules. If the companies are found selling sugar imported under the re-export system in the domestic market, they will have to face legal action.

The commerce ministry allowed Myanmar merchants to re-export sugar in the 2015-2016 fiscal year with an aim to attain hard currency, enhance trade and create job opportunities.

Myanmar's merchants import sugar mostly from Thailand and India, and also from Brazil, Qatar and UAE, and then it is re-exported to China through the Sino-Myanmar checkpoint, as Myanmar sugar millers are unable to produce quality sugar that meets the export criteria for the lack of advanced refining machinery.

Over 700,000 tons of sugar were exported in the 2015-2016 FY, valued at $394 million. During the 2016-2017 FY, 2 million tons of sugar worth $1.12 billion were exported. Starting from 22 September 2017, sugar re-export was suspended. – Ko Khant ■

Sagaing Region plans to eliminate illegal fishing methods

IN a bid to prevent fish resources from extinction in the Sagaing Region, the district and township fisheries departments will draw up projects to eliminate illegal fishing methods, such as electrocution, under the supervision of the Sagaing Region Fisheries Department (SRFD).

"The existing laws and laws amended to be adaptable with the current age are being reviewed to comply with international standardisation. Additionally, fishery statistics are being developed in accordance with the set index of the related ministries. The SRFD has a plan to draw up projects, in line with the policies of the department and in cooperation with local and foreign organisations, to enhance the fishery industry", said an official from the SRFD.

From 1 January to the end of May this year, the Sagaing Region earned a revenue of Ks886.76 million from fishery enterprises, such as natural pond and lake tax, tender procedure, tax on fishing tools and a licence for hatchery. In the last 2017-2018 fiscal year, it received Ks1.26 billion from the collection of taxes on fishery and related enterprises, according to the statistics of the SRFD.

Fishermen who use the method of electrocution in the Ayeyawady dolphin conservation area are subject to be taken action against. One Ayeyawady dolphin died of electrocution in 2014, said a staff involved in the Ayeyawady dolphin conservation project.

In the first five months of 2018, Shwebo and Ingyin hatcheries of SRFD produced 500,000 fish larvae, 200,000 of which were sold, and the remaining added into lakes and creeks in the Sagaing Region. –Myo Win Tun (Monywa) ■

Tachilek gate sees $20 million trade in over two months

THE border trade at the Tachilek gate between Myanmar and Thailand from 1 April to 15 June, during the six-month interim period prior to the next 2018-2019 fiscal year, was worth US$20.2 million, according to the commerce ministry.

In the past two-and-a-half months, exports fetched $2.6 million, while imports were valued at $17.6 million.

Myanmar is conducting trade with Thailand through the Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Htee Khee, Maw Taung and Maese border gates.

Myanmar exports coffee, tissue-culture bananas, pineapples, manganese dioxide, rubber latex, onions, oranges, avocados, watermelons, herbs and other products, while cement, auto parts, construction materials, steel and related materials, paint, zinc, other industrial and consumer goods are imported.

The Thailand-Myanmar border trade in the past two-and-a-half months amounted to $296 million, with the Myawady gate performing the largest trade. – Ko Khant ■

Tourists are seen near the Tachilek border gate. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Union Minister U Ohn Win receives WWF Country Director

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win received Country Director at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Dr. A. Christy Williams and delegation at 10 a.m. at the ministry's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They discussed matters related to collecting data with regard to wild animals, installing radio collars on wild elephants, education programmes and providing devices for anti-hunting programmes, arrangement for setting up the Myanmar Wildlife College, prescribing new laws to conserve biodiversity and safeguarding wildlife areas, cooperation schemes, paving ways to develop Dawei Special Economic Zone without harming the environment, cooperation in promoting wildlife tourism, and arrangements to present the process of Myanmar Wildlife Conservation at the London Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference, which will be held in October 2018. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn WIn and World Wide Fund for Nature Country Director Dr. A. Christy Williams at a meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

in Picture

Secretaries from the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) hold the meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA (NEWS ON PAGE-1)**

Founder of Buddhist education centre awarded peace prize

SAYADAW Bhaddanta Sobhita, the founder of the International Buddhist Education Centre in Sagaing, has been awarded the Stockholm World Peace Prizes 2018 by the United Nations.

The global peace organizations and peace groups in Sweden will present the World Peace Prizes 2018 to him at the World Peace Conference to be held in Stockholm, Sweden, from 29 June to 2 July for his efforts for peace and education and human beings at home and abroad.

The event is to be organised by the United Nations, Universal Peace Federation and world peace organisations in Sweden.

The prize is awarded to those who help and participate in international peace issues. —Tin Maung (Mandalay Sub-printing House) ■

Loikaw commemorates Day Against Drug Abuse, Trafficking

TALKS in commemoration of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking were held in conjunction with a prize-distribution ceremony at B.E.H.S (Demawhso) in Demawhso Township, Loikaw District, Kayah State on 25 June morning.

U Nyan Hlaing, the Township administrator made a speech on the occasion and Police Major Aung Min, the Township MPF commander clarified the capital punishments for drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

Next, the Township Administrator and departmental officials presented prizes to winners who stood first, second and third in the B.E.M.S level painting competitions. Pamphlets to mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking were distributed to those present who viewed round the documentary photos on national development being displayed there. —Township IPRD/MDN ■

Shwe Than Lwin Media, NHK Japan launch Dream Vision Co. Ltd.

JAPAN AND MYANMAR have collaborated over the political and socio-economic sectors and Dream Vision Co. Ltd. (DVC) will give people in Myanmar a chance to watch and learn about Japan's news, culture, and the world, said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein.

The chief minister addressed this in his opening speech at the DVC launch event yesterday at Meliá Hotel in Yangon. DVC is a collaboration between Shwe Than Lwin Media Co. Ltd. and NHK, with permission from the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), and will produce high quality television programmes for Myanmar National TV (MNTV).

Next, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Maruyama Ichiro read a message from Mr. Izumi, Special Advisor to the Japanese Prime Minister, expressing his gratitude to supporters from both Japan and Myanmar. He said Japan will do all it can to support Myanmar's development in accordance with its agreement to provide US$8 billion over a five-year period beginning 2016. The special advisor said there have been improvements in the private sector and the media is important for establishing a democratic Myanmar. He said Japan began helping with Myanmar's news broadcasting in the 1980s and expressed his belief that DVC will strengthen cultural understanding between the two countries.

The Japanese shareholders in DVC, CJF Chairman Mr. Lijima, JICT Chairman Mr. Takashima, and JIB Chairman and CEO Mr. Shimizu, also spoke during the opening ceremony. They said DVC will help spark innovation among Myanmar's viewers.

NHK first collaborated with Shwe Than Lwin Media six years ago with broadcasts on Skynet, and DVC will follow suit and pave the way for development, said the Japanese shareholders.

"DVC will televise interesting content; so do stay tuned for edutainment, entertainment, and infotainment," said DVC Managing Director Daw Nan Mauk Long Seng.

The Japanese Ambassador then said Myanmar's political and economic sectors are at an important point in their developmental transition and will have a prosperous future once they pass that stage. He said Japan has a lot to thank Myanmar for and believed that promoting people-to-people relations will strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries. He said they will help Myanmar's already good-quality programmes enter the global stage, which will be beneficial to the Japanese who are eager to visit Myanmar. —Win Win Maw, Nandar Win ■

Japanese Ambassador Mr. Maruyama Ichiro addresses the DVC launching event. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

in Picture

833 jade lots fetch over 74 m euros at gems emporium

Officials check jade stones as they visit the 55th Myanmar Gems Emporium in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

(NEWS ON PAGE-1)

Nay Pyi Taw to host International Day of Cooperatives trade fair

A trade fair to mark the International Day of Cooperatives, which falls on 7 July, will be held at the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation's Office No. (16) in Nay Pyi Taw from 7 to 9 July. The trade fair will begin at 9am and close at 6 pm on all three days. A myriad of regional products from across Myanmar will be exhibited and sold at cut-price and the public is invited to come attend the trade fair. –Myanmar News Agency ■

Ministry of Information co-hosts basic infrastructure development workshop

THE Ministry of Information and Sandhi Governance Institute co-hosted a workshop on basic infrastructure development with public-private partnership (PPP) at Park Royal Hotel in Yangon yesterday morning.

Sandhi Governance Institute Director U Khine Win delivered the opening speech and said there was currently no PPP policy framework or laws. The international agencies remarked that Myanmar's ministries are ill-equipped to implement PPP strategies.

"There is no systematic framework for PPP. Therefore, I hope during this workshop we can discuss and form ideas relating to PPP rules and regulations, laws, and policy frameworks. The support of the respective ministry will be provided and possible PPP centres such as the ones in the Philippines will be established," said U Khine Win.

He maintained that if the union government puts in place this framework and implements it, then the PPP projects will become more effective. As an example he said the Philippines managed to carry out 35 billion PPP projects in five to six years. U Khine Win then said private investments can significantly raise a country's GDP, create jobs, and after roads, transport and electrification have been upgraded, investments will keep coming in.

Next, Professor Andre Palacios, a PPP expert from the Philippines, explained the basics steps for a PPP.

This was followed by U Khine Win explaining the necessities for basic infrastructure in Myanmar, issues that need to be terminated, and development opportunities. He then replied to questions posed by participants.

Present at the workshop were the Yangon Region Government, Regional Hluttaw MPs, and ministry officials.

This workshop is the second-of-its-kind to be held and the first workshop was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 24 May.

Sandhi Governance Institute Director U Khine Win addresses the workshop on basic infrastructure development with public-private partnership in Yangon. **PHOTO: ZAW YE HTUT**

PPP is the process of privatising (or transferring) an enterprise or industry from the public sector to the private sector. This will include electricity production and distribution, water distribution, road and bridge construction, and other large-scale basic infrastructure industries that were all handled by the government in the previous administration. –Yimi Thant ■

UK murder suspect won't be extradited to Myanmar

Victim's brother: 'We will not let him think he has gotten away with murder'

By Mark Angeles

THE Scottish man who is the prime suspect in the 2016 killing in Yangon of Gary Ferguson, a fellow teacher, will not be extradited from the UK to stand trial in Myanmar on human rights grounds, a decision that has distressed the family of the slain man but strengthened their resolve to seek justice.

The UK's Home Office recently denied a request from Myanmar to extradite fugitive murder suspect Harris Binotti, who is believed to be in Scotland, in part because Myanmar still has the death penalty on its books and because there is no extradition treaty between the UK and Myanmar, a British official told Martin Ferguson, Gary's brother.

But Gary Ferguson said he and his family have not given up and plan to explore legal options to have the murder suspect brought to trial in the UK.

"We will not let him think he has gotten away with murder", Gary Ferguson said in a text message to The Global New Light of Myanmar yesterday. "We will go through every channel to make sure he gets the maximum prison sentence in the UK. We are now exploring legal avenues to proceed with this battle."

Last year, Myanmar requested that Binotti be extradited back to Yangon to stand trial. Binotti, 27, is still on Interpol's Red Notice list for being wanted on suspicion of murder after he fled to his native Scotland on 5 November, 2016 with his girlfriend Elsy Devolder. Gary Ferguson's badly beaten body was found in Binotti's downtown Yangon apartment, authorities said. Binotti and Devolder were seen in Glasgow, Scotland in 2017.

Gary Ferguson, of Northern Ireland, worked in Yangon as an English teacher and lived in downtown Yangon with his wife, Supatchaya Sichompor, and their young son. He was 47.

Martin Ferguson said the latest news continues the anguish for him and his family, but doesn't diminish their quest to convict Gary's killer.

"We won't stop until Binotti is behind bars", the family said in a statement. Last year, the human rights organisation Amnesty International advised the British government to deny the request for extradition of Binotti to Myanmar in part because Myanmar still has the death penalty. No one has been executed in Myanmar since 1987. Martin Ferguson said yesterday that he and his family will "never give up." "We hope that the Myanmar authorities will cooperate as fully as they can so that this is over as quickly as possible and so our families can get our lives back together as best we can," he said. ■

Listening to youth can contribute to their safety and health

TODAY is the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. Building on the success of last year, the theme for this year's International Day is "Listen First—Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe."

It is an initiative to increase support for the prevention of drug use that is based on science and is thus an effective investment in the well-being of children and youth, their families and their communities.

Research suggests that early-to-late adolescence is a critical risk period for the initiation of substance use. By breaking the chain of social, neurobiological and psychological factors and inequalities that can increase susceptibility to drug use disorders, we can help young people stay healthy and safe.

Illicit drug trafficking linked with organized crimes can cause detrimental effects to a country's economic stability and has posed a threat to peace and stability, security and sovereignty.

> By listening to the needs of children and young people, prevention can contribute to their safety, health and well-being, and enable them realise their potential.

The issue becomes worse despite great strides in the fight against narcotic drugs by successive governments.

The international community continues to face many problems that stand in the way of achieving a world without drug abuse.

There is the opioid crisis and other urgent drug use problems, compounded by gaps in health and social services that leave far too many people without the help they need; illicit drug cultivation and trafficking; related crime and violence; and linkages with development challenges, conflict and terrorism.

Due to its geographical location, Myanmar is facing a drug problem, an opium cultivation problem and the production of heroin and psychotropic drugs.

Successive governments were handling the drug problem by signing three drug-related conventions as a member country and were enacting laws, forming anti-drug organizations and drawing up plans, in accordance with the conventions.

Myanmar is collaborating with regional countries, countries along the Mekong River, countries affiliated with BIMSTEC and countries, which have signed drug control treaties and with international organizations such as the United Nations for anti-drug campaigns.

Myanmar's new national drug control policy involves various sectors such as the reduction in opium cultivation, manufacturing, and transport, providing alternative development programmes, reducing drug usage and follow-up problems, increasing international cooperation, research works and human rights-oriented approaches that will reduce the drug problem and support the social development of the people.

When talking about the lives and future of the next generation, prevention is truly better than cure.

The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information are jointly conducting educative programmes on the dangers of drugs using various methods targeting youths, students and the public.

By listening to the needs of children and young people, prevention can contribute to their safety, health and well-being, and enable them realize their potential. ■

New companies law aims for positive change in economy

By Maung Di Kar

LOOKING ahead, Myanmar Companies Law takes effect in accordance with the Myanmar Companies Law section 1(b) on 1 August 2018, according to Notification 48/2018 of the Office of the President, Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 21 June 2018. Not long ago, on 6 December 2017, the new Companies Law has been signed and approved by the President .

Since its first official inception and up to the date of approval, the Ministry of Planning and Finance has taken eight months in working out step-by-step procedures in its preparation.

It is indeed a wonder to know that on the same day of 1 August 2018, a digital electronic registry system is to be launched simultaneously for undertaking company inventory by the "Myanmar Companies Online – MyCO" for the smooth running of the companies.

Solid and firm opportunities

The new law would sweep clean the old and outdated stipulations and people involved in business would be sailing smooth in establishing their companies. In the previous company act, two share holders are required to form a company, and now only one person could run his or her own show, paving the way for a wider and open space for more small businesses and individual companies with a firm and sound standing.

As proof of the "Purpose of Business" is exempted and waived, all legal businesses could be registered easily. The old stipulation required two separate documents on company rules, but the new law necessitates only "Company Structural Basic Rules", making the registration much simple.

The company can bring together any type of shares for the business, while the old restriwction of "Earmarked Investment Amount" has been rescinded. Therefore, the company is not required to show up at the registration office or at the law courts.

More cash of investment in the pipeline for nationals

One salient point seen is that the foreigners are allowed to invest 35 per cent of share in Myanmar companies, according to the new law, paving the way for more foreign partnerships for Myanmar nationals. In other words, it could be termed as that of Myanmar nationals getting more investment, access to reaching out to markets and acquiring more technical knowhow. At the same time, foreigners may have more opportunities in engaging in Myanmar economy, opening the window for better changes in Myanmar economic landscape.

The law has spelled a privilege by declaring "Small Company" to an organization that has less than 30 employees and with less than Ks50 million. Moreover, the companies are exempted from submitting yearly audited financial statements and annual general meeting records. It is a way of offloading the burden of heavy expenditures for small companies. Further, the necessary and customary visits to relevant offices and courts have been abolished.

Law protects the investors

In the past, some of the companies were in a mess and chaos as there is no specific or particular responsibilities attached to the directors of the company. The new law stipulates clear and specific responsibilities for directors leading to good corporate governance. In addition, the status of small share holders is also protected by the new law.

For orderly and systematic compliance of Companies Law, the company registration officers are entrusted with proper management authority. Depending on the weaknesses on the part of the companies, the company registration officer has been honored with the rights to impose fines on the faulty company.

> At this juncture, the existing companies must be aware of the fact that compliance to the new law brings about many favourable conditions to the forefront, while breaching of the prescribed procedures may result in a negative impact.

If and when necessary, the company registration officers have been invested with powers to investigate the company and take legal action against the faulty one.

At this juncture, the existing companies must be aware of the fact that compliance to the new law brings about many favourable conditions to the forefront, while breaching of the prescribed procedures may result in a negative impact.

> The digital electronic registration system will start on 1 August, resulting in the ability to perform registration work from home, office, or on a smartphone, removing the burden of having to rush to the registration office. Other tasks such as paying registration fees or service charges, settling fines, sending reports and returns, or exchanging correspondence could be done online.

Strengthening transparency

The digital electronic registration system will start on 1 August, resulting in the ability to perform registration work from home, office, or on a smartphone, removing the burden of having to rush to the registration office. Other tasks such as paying registration fees or service charges, settling fines, sending reports and returns, or exchanging correspondence could be done online. Necessary intimations, directives, and reminders would be issued by the relevant office. The information and data would be accessible and available on "MyCO" platform, raising the transparency level of the companies. Breach of rules and weaknesses of the companies are bound to come up on the web portal, and therefore, proper compliance of rules is vital in maintaining the dignity of the company.

Services without fees

During the period of 1 August 2018 to 31 January 2019, all the formerly registered companies are necessary to re-register in accordance with the new law. Registration is offered free of charge "online".

A new registration number for the company will be issued, and that number would be the same with the "Tax Identification Number – TIN".

Regrettably and inevitably, those companies that fail to re-register will be nullified. Perhaps, some may consider the re-registration scheme to be troublesome and upsetting, but it is an opportunity for former companies to get the same privilege free of charge as the new companies, just by re-registering with the office. In other words, former companies are offered the same benefits as the new companies.

The Directorate of Investment and Company Administration has embraced many criticisms for taking eight months in the preparation of the new law. In fact, similar tasks have taken one year and eight months in Hong Kong, more than one year in Malaysia and one year and three months in Singapore. Myanmar has taken lesser time compared to other countries.

Wishing better changes

Foreign investors, businessmen and economists have been eagerly and interestingly awaiting a critical section of legislation that could have tangible, transformative and marked changes on the Myanmar economy.

The writer of this article would like to convey the message that despite the fact the registration is to be carried out through electronic registry system, the government officials of the Investment and Company Administration located in capital cities of states and regions are ready to render with necessary help and assistance to those who are not familiar or skillful with the digital electronic registry. ■

Translated by UMT (HK)

Drug Use Prevention and Role of Civil Society Organizations

By Dr. Aung (AHEAD)

DRUG use is a big problem in Myanmar and all over the world. Easy access to drugs is one of the major factors for using drugs among adolescents. Our President, in his first speech, mentioned that drug is priority issue and will control it effectively. In doing so, non-government organizations, civil society organizations (CSO) and community could play an important role and need their participation.

In scope of drug control, it has many sectors such as supply reduction, demand reduction, harm reduction, treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-drug users. All these sectors are equally important and CSOs could play a great role in all these sectors.

As "prevention is better than cure", for every dollar spent on prevention, at least ten can be saved in future health, social and crime costs related to drug use, according to UNODC. The primary objective of drug prevention is to help people, particularly but not exclusively young people, to avoid or delay initiation into the use of drugs, or, if they have started already, to avoid developing disorders or dependence.

There are a range of use patterns in the population, such as resolute non-users, vulnerable non-users, initial users, regular users but do not yet meet diagnostic criteria for dependence, that require different interventions to be effective. Prevention interventions are based on theoretical models of social and behavioral science and they are evaluated scientifically.

UNODC developed "International Standards on Drug Use Prevention" which summarize the currently available scientific evidence, describing interventions and policies that have been found to result in positive prevention outcomes and their characteristics.

The following are the some examples of characteristics associated with no or negative prevention outcomes and we need to avoid them to save our resources.

- Utilizing non-interactive methods, such as lecturing, as a primary delivery strategy
- Based on unstructured dialogue sessions
- Providing information on specific substances, including fear arousal
- Addressing only ethical/moral decision making or values

In International Standards on Drug Use Prevention, it also mentioned the interventions that result in positive prevention outcomes. We need to implement these evidence-based interventions adapting to the local context and to evaluate their effectiveness. Drug use, or not use, is a behavior. Knowledge is necessary but not sufficient to be a positive behavior. When prevention, it is necessary to address all the factors that promote a positive behavior in addiction to knowledge about drugs.

CSOs are encouraged to participate to address all these needs to protect our children, our future, from the dangers of drugs. ■

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

Migrants who 'invade' US have no right to due process, says Trump

US President Donal Trump. **PHOTO:AFP**

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump on Sunday said migrants who "invade" the US should be deprived of legal due process, reinforcing his hardline stand despite an about-face on family separations that has seen more than 500 children reunited with relatives.

Trying to stanch the flow of tens of thousands of migrants from Central America and Mexico arriving at the southern border every month, Trump in early May had ordered that all adults crossing illegally would be arrested, and their children held separately as a result.

After images of children in chain-link enclosures sparked domestic and global outrage, the president ended the separation practice but has continued his hardline talk on immigration.

He sees the issue as crucial ahead of midterm congressional elections in November.

"We cannot allow all of these people to invade our Country," Trump said Sunday on Twitter.

"When somebody comes in, we must immediately, with no Judges or Court Cases, bring them back from where they came," said Trump, suggesting they be handled without the due legal process guaranteed for "any person" by the US Constitution. Nearly all of the arriving families have officially requested asylum. "Our system is a mockery to good immigration policy and Law and Order," said Trump, who has repeatedly tried to link immigrants with crime.

His remarks came after the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released its first official data since Trump ended the family separations on Wednesday.

It said 522 children separated as part of "zero tolerance" have been reunited with their families, but another 2,053 separated minors remained in the care of the US Department of Health and Human Services as of Wednesday.

"The United States government knows the location of all children in its custody and is working to reunite them with their families," DHS said in a statement.

On Sunday, US Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis said the military is preparing camps for migrants at two bases, describing it as "providing shelter for people without shelter."

The military is providing "logistic support" for DHS, a "quite appropriate" function for it to do, Mattis said.

'A great sadness'

Fleeing from impoverished Central America, the arrivals say they are seeking a better life and also a refuge from criminal gangs terrorizing their region, which has one of the world's highest murder rates.

Central American migrants deported from the US without their children have spoken of their anguish at seeing families split under the "zero tolerance" approach.

Ever Sierra, deported after trying to enter the US, told AFP he planned to try again in a few days. He arrived back in Honduras with his eight-month-old daughter's shoes hanging from his backpack. She was being held in a detention center in McAllen, Texas, along with her mother.

Benjamin Raymundo, a 33-year-old deported back to Guatemala, told AFP he left his home country in April with his son Roberto, aged five, but the pair were separated when immigration officers in California stopped them.

The boy was eventually placed in a relative's custody.

"It's a great sadness for me, as if I'll never see my son again," Raymondo lamented.

Trump's former deputy national security advisor, Tom Bossert, said the past week had provided "terrible optics" for the administration, and "almost from the outset we didn't have the capacity to detain these parents and children, together or separately."

Speaking on ABC's "This Week," Bossert predicted that Trump's executive order ending the family separations will not stand up in court because a judge had ruled in 2015 that even detaining parents and children together is "inhumane."

Poisoned politics

US lawmakers on Sunday spoke of the need for a longer-term solution. But in a poisoned political climate, they have failed to advance either of two Republican immigration bills in the House of Representatives, which the Republicans control along with the Senate.

A hardline proposal was defeated last week, as expected, and a vote on a "compromise" bill between the party's hard-right and moderate factions has been pushed back, with signs it could not pass.

Trump and other hardline Republicans accuse opposition Democrats of being soft on crime and immigration.

On Saturday, former Republican presidential hopeful Mike Huckabee posted a picture on Twitter of MS-13 gang members and joked that the heavily tattooed Latinos were the "campaign committee" for top Democrat Nancy Pelosi.

Trump frequently brings up the Hispanic gang when he talks of immigration.—AFP ■

Russia's top brass blasts NATO's tank biathlon as competition with 'anti-Russian context'

MOSCOW — NATO's tank biathlon competition has a clear anti-Russian context, Russia's Army Combat Training Directorate Chief Major-General Roman Binyukov said on Monday.

NATO member states reject invitations to take part in the tank biathlon of the International Army Games, the Russian general said.

"They do not come to our competition and do not invite the Russian team to their contest. However, the international success of our tank biathlon has forced our NATO colleagues to hold a similar competition at one of the Bundeswehr training ranges," the Russian Defence Ministry quoted Binyukov as saying.

"Compared to the Russian competition, the conditions of the NATO contest have nothing to do with competitiveness and the sports spirt. At the same time, the anti-Russian context is felt: even during the accomplishment of gunnery tasks, NATO crews practice firing against old Soviet hardware rather than against targets," the Russian general said.

According to Binyukov, during the tank biathlon at the International Army Games, "the armor is used at maximal regimes and the victory is achieved by the quickness of making decisions, the speed and the accuracy of fire."

"This is also achieved through annual improvements by Russian designers of the T-72B3M tank used by tank crewmen from Russia," the general said.

Ukrainian tanks

Ukrainian tank crews were among the eight teams that took part in the NATO tank warfare competitions, the Russian general said.

According to Binyukov, "one of the Ukrainian tankmen who commented for journalists on the Ukrainian team's poor performance in the NATO competition, admitted that the team's last place could be explained by the low quality of the manufacture and the unsatisfactory combat capabilities of Ukrainian tanks, and also by the unsatisfactory level of the tank crews' training.". — Tass ■

Ukrainian tank crews were among the eight teams that took part in the NATO tank warfare competitions, the Russian general said. **PHOTO: AFP**

Erdogan secures sweeping new powers as rival accepts vote defeat

RIYADH — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday celebrated winning five more years in office with sweeping new powers after a decisive election victory, as his main rival accepted the outcome despite bitter complaints over the conduct of the campaign.

A night of triumph for Erdogan saw the man who has dominated Turkey for the last 15 years declared winner of Sunday's presidential poll without needing a second round and lead his ruling party-led alliance to an overall majority in parliament.

Erdogan, whose victory was wider than predicted by many analysts, vowed to "rapidly" implement the new presidential system agreed in an April 2017 referendum that opponents fear will give him autocratic powers and could keep him in office for another decade.

The new system creates a vertical of power with Erdogan at the top, giving him the power to appoint cabinet ministers and dispensing with the office of prime minister.

The president, 64, declared victory in Istanbul before returning to Ankara to deliver a triumphant speech at 3:00 am to tens of thousands of supporters from the balcony of the headquarters of his Justice and Development Party (AKP).

"Turkey has given a lesson in democracy to the entire world," he added, pointing to a turnout of 88 per cent.

'One-man regime'

His main rival Muharrem Ince of the Republican People's Party (CHP), who had challenged Erdogan with an energetic campaign, broke an uncharacteristic overnight silence to declare on Monday he accepted the results.

"I accept these election results," Ince said, adding Erdogan should "represent 80 million" and be "president for us all".

But Ince, who had faced limited airtime on television in the campaign and a near boycott by state media, said the run-up to the election had been unfair.

"This election was unjust until the results were announced," he told a news conference at CHP headquarters after ordering out crews from state-run TRT over their campaign coverage.

Ince vowed to "continue our fight until Turkey is a Turkey for everyone", expressing alarm over the powers Erdogan assumes under the new system which he described as "a one-man regime."

'Biggest injustice'

According to results published by the state news agency Anadolu, Erdogan won 52.5 per cent of the vote, with Ince trailing with 30.7 per cent.

Final results are due to be published by the Supreme Election Board (YSK) later this week but its chairman Sadi Guven declared Erdogan the winner.

If confirmed, the results will mean Erdogan, who enjoys sky-high support in parts of the Anatolian heart of the country, improved on his 51.8 per cent score in 2014. The pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party candidate Selahattin Demirtas came third with 8.4 per cent, a position all the more remarkable given he has been jailed on charges of links to Kurdish militants since November 2016.

This handout picture released on 25 June, 2018 shows Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and his wife Emine Erdogan greeting supporters gathered above a balcony at the headquarters of the AK Party in Ankara on 24 June, 2018 as they celebrate Erdogan winning five more years in office with sweeping new powers after a decisive election victory. **PHOTO: AFP**

Nationalist politician Meral Aksener, tipped for a breakthrough after founding her new Iyi (Good) Party, suffered a disappointing night coming fourth with 7.3 per cent.

With Turkey holding parliamentary and presidential elections on the same day for the first time, Erdogan was also able to enjoy an overall majority in parliament with the help of his allies from the right-wing Nationalist Movement Party (MHP).

The AKP won 293 seats in the 600 MP chamber but the MHP did far better than expected, winning 50 seats and giving their alliance a clear majority, according to results published by Anadolu.

The HDP easily broke through the 10 per cent minimum vote threshold to pick up 67 seats, sparking wild celebrations in its Kurdish-majority stronghold of Diyarbakir.

In a tweet, Demirtas hailed a "great victory" despite suffering "the biggest injustice of the campaign".

'Great authority'

Congratulations for Erdogan flooded in from Turkey's partners in the Islamic world and allies who also have tetchy relations with the West, such as Russian President Vladimir Putin who praised Erdogan's "great political authority".

Others congratulating Erdogan included Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir but there was no word yet from big EU states or Washington. The European Union and United States were keeping a close eye on the poll and trans-Atlantic security body the OSCE was due to deliver its verdict on the election later Monday.

Erdogan has transformed Turkey first as prime minister from 2003 to 2014 and then as president, allowing Islam a greater role in public life and giving the country a much more assertive profile on the international stage.

But critics accuse him of ruling with an iron grip, especially after the July 2016 failed coup which was followed by a state of emergency that has seen tens of thousands of people arrested. He has a new five-year mandate and, although the president in Turkey can serve only two terms, this will count as Erdogan's first term under the new constitution. Consequently, he could now stay in power until 2028. The outcome relieved investors who had feared a prolonged period of uncertainty if the election went to a second round, with the Turkish lira gaining three percent against the dollar.—AFP ■

32 Fulani civilians killed in Mali attack: local group

BAMAKO — At least 32 civilians were killed and 10 are missing following an attack in central Mali, believed to have been carried out by traditional hunters, local officials said Sunday, as the government said 16 bodies had been found.

Armed Dozo hunters, linked to the Dogon ethnic group, were suspected of ambushing the isolated village of Koumaga in the Mopti region on Saturday, killing dozens of Fulani herders, including children.

"They surrounded the village, separated the Fulani people from the others and killed at least 32 civilians in cold blood," said Abdoul Aziz Diallo, president of the local Tabital Pulaaku association, adding that 10 others were missing.

Later he said that attackers had returned to the same village on Sunday night after the army had left, in a fresh assault claiming four new victims.

The ministry of defence said it could not confirm the latest attack.

Violence has increased over the past three years in central Mali between nomadic Fulani herders and Bambara and Dogon farmers, sparked by accusations of Fulani grazing cattle on Dogon land and disputes over access to land and water.

"The men were dressed in Dozo clothing but we wonder if they were all Dozo hunters," said an elected official from the region, speaking on condition of anonymity.

A statement by the government said "a violent clash" took place between communities despite patrols on 23 June.

"A deployment of Malian army forces despatched to the scene discovered 16 bodies and significant damage," it added.

Central Mali is a vast area where the state is nearly absent and jihadists, blamed for exacerbating the dispute, roam with little constraint.

The Bambara and Dogon ethnic groups accuse the pastoralists of colluding with jihadists.

The armed forces are facing increasing accusations of arbitrary arrests and extra-judicial killings in their fight against the insurgents.

"What is happening is very serious. We must avoid confusion. Just because we are Fulani does not mean we are terrorists," said Diallo.

Late Sunday, he said 10 Fulani were also abducted during the day from a nearby area. No independent source was available to confirm the information.—AFP ■

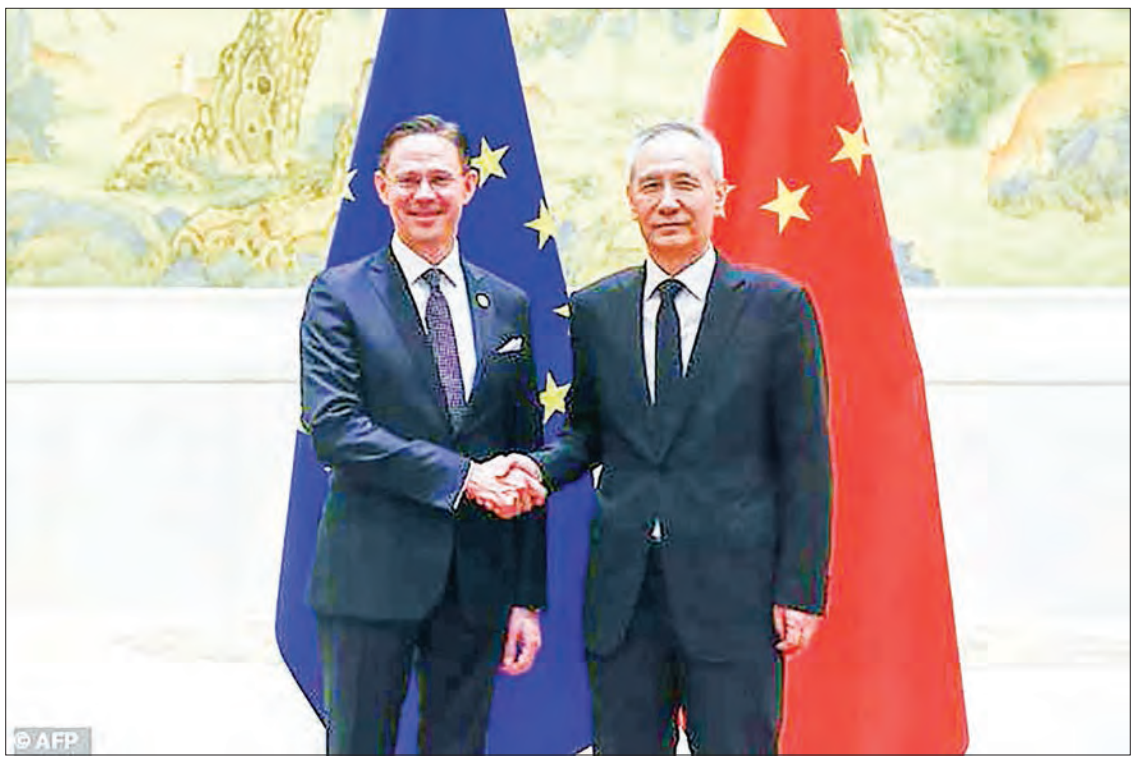
EU, China vow to uphold global trade order despite divisions

BEIJING — The European Union and China pledged on Monday to uphold a rules-based international trade system, making an oblique criticism of growing protectionism in Washington despite their own disagreements.

The two sides held high-level economic meetings in Beijing as both face rising trade tensions with the United States. Brussels and Beijing recently announced new tariffs on US goods in retaliation for moves by the Trump administration.

"Both sides agreed to resolutely oppose unilateralism and protectionism and prevent such practices from impacting the world economy and even dragging the world economy into recession," said Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, responsible for shepherding the world's second largest economy.

Liu had led China's three rounds of trade talks with the US, negotiations that have broken down over the Trump administration's pledge to move forward with tariffs despite an agreement in May to put the duties on hold.



European Commission Vice President Jyrki Katainen (L) shakes hands with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He before their meeting. **PHOTO: AFP**

"Unilateralism and trade protectionism is on the rise and tensions have appeared in the economic relations between major economies," Liu told an audience of European and Chinese officials. European Commission Vice President Jyrki Katainen echoed Liu's words, describing the World Trade Organization "as the centre of the rules-based international trading system".

Even as the two sides seek common ground on combating the US moves, there are deep divisions between them. EU companies and officials harbour concerns about Beijing's policies that are shared by their counterparts in Washington.

"We need more than just talk, we need to demonstrate adherence to international trading rules," said Katainen, proposing reforms to develop new rules for a "global level playing field" in key areas such as "industrial subsidies".

Beijing's industrial policies such as the "Made in China 2025" project, which is designed to transform China from a maker of sports shoes and denims into high-tech goods, is a major concern in Washington and stands at the heart of proposed new US tariffs on China. "The two sides committed to defend the multilateral trading system that is centred on the WTO and based on rules," said Liu, acknowledging the need to maintain fair market access. Katainen called on Liu to go further in removing market access barriers for companies and preventing overcapacity in high-tech sectors "covered by the Made in China 2025 strategy". He demanded that all industries enjoy equal treatment.—AFP ■

Malaysian PM revives age-old water row with Singapore

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said on Monday he wants to renegotiate a "ridiculous" water supply agreement with Singapore, the latest sign of fraying ties between the neighbours since last month's shock election.

The 92-year-old returned for a second time as premier after his opposition alliance scored an unexpected victory at the polls, toppling a long-ruling coalition that Mahathir himself once headed. During his first stint in charge of the country from 1981-2003, Malaysia had famously stormy ties with Singapore — and Mahathir has wasted no time in taking aim at the tiny city-state again.

In his latest salvo, he said it was "manifestly ridiculous" that Kuala Lumpur sells water for three Malaysian cents (less than one US cent) per thousand gallons to its resource-poor neighbour. "That was okay way back in the 1990s or 1930s. But now what can you buy with three sen (cents)? Nothing," he told Singapore broadcaster Channel NewsAsia in an interview. Asked about plans to renegotiate the long-standing water supply agreement, he said: "We are studying the case properly and we'll make a presentation."

The Singapore government did not immediately respond to requests to comment.

A large amount of Singapore's water comes from Malaysia's southern state of Johor. Under a 1962 agreement, Singapore can draw upto 250 million gallons of water per day from the Johor River. The neighbours have had a difficult relationship since Singapore was expelled from the Malaysian Federation in 1965 over ethnic issues after a short-lived, stormy union. Relations in subsequent decades were punctuated by occasional bickering, on many occasions over the water supply issue, but were largely warm under the last Malaysian government, led by scandal-mired Najib Razak.—AFP ■

US defence secretary to visit China for talks on N Korea

BEIJING/WASHINGTON — US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis is scheduled to visit China for three days from Tuesday before traveling to South Korea and Japan, the Chinese and US governments said.

Mattis is expected to talk with Chinese military officials including Defense Minister Wei Fenghe about recent developments on the Korean Peninsula and Beijing's militarization of the South China Sea.

The US defence chief's first visit to China since taking office in January 2017 comes a week after the United States and South Korea decided to suspend their major joint military drills in August as their ties with North Korea have improved following historic summits.

"It is a common interest for (the United States and China) to develop relations between their military forces in a stable manner," the Chinese Defence Ministry said, announcing Mattis's China visit.

Last week, Washington and Seoul agreed to suspend their major joint military exercise held every August. Pyongyang has denounced it as a rehearsal for invasion.

US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis. **PHOTO: AFP**

China has proposed a "double suspension" approach, which seeks a halt to Pyongyang's nuclear and missile activities in exchange for Washington and Seoul suspending their joint military drills. The other topic likely on the agenda at the talks is the South China Sea, home to some of the world's busiest sea lanes, and where China and several Southeast Asian countries have overlapping territorial claims.

China has rapidly built artificial islands with military infrastructure in the waters in recent years. The United States, in moves apparently intended to challenge Beijing's claims and activities in the waters, has carried out "freedom of navigation" operations there involving its warships.

Mattis said earlier this month that Beijing's development of weapons systems in the contested waters is "intimidation and coercion," while China contends that US actions in the sea have hurt its sovereignty and security interests.—Kyodo News ■

Koreas mark war anniversary in mood of detente, North drops anti-US rhetoric

SEOUL — The two Koreas on Monday marked their war anniversary in a mood of detente, with Pyongyang dropping its customary anti-US rhetoric and Seoul saying talks have begun on moving the North's artillery back from the tense border. Pyongyang's tightly controlled official media are normally packed with anti-American invective on 25 June, when the North launched a mass invasion of the South in 1950.

But this year proved to be a marked exception in the wake of the historic Singapore summit.

In the South, Prime Minister Lee Nak-yon said discussions were taking place about relocating Pyongyang's long-range artillery away from their border. North Korea is estimated to have around 1,000 artillery pieces along the frontier, threatening much of the South's capital Seoul only 50 kilometres

Less than a year ago, Pyongyang hosted this rally in support of North Korea's stance against the US. **PHOTO: AFP**

(30 miles) away. The North has long accused the US of provoking the 1950-53 Korean War as part of a plan for global domination and blames it for the division of the peninsula, agreed between Moscow and Washington in the closing days of World War II. A US-led 16-country United Nations force supported the South in the conflict while China backed the North. "Every year on this day, our army and people row the boat of memories, full of creed and determination to defend the nation," read a report in the North's state-run Rodong Sinmun.

"What surprised the world even more was... our people's solidarity to annihilate the enemy," it added — without identifying the enemy by name in any of its coverage. In stark contrast, all six pages of the newspaper last year were filled with colourful criticisms of the "US imperialists", blaming Americans for "a holocaust in which they massacred countless Koreans in the most brutal and barbarous way". This year's anniversary comes less than two weeks after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump shook hands at the unprecedented summit in Singapore. More virulent forms of anti-US propaganda have been disappearing from the streets of Pyongyang, while images of missile launches and military formations on a prominent site outside the city train station have been replaced with visuals of industry and agriculture.

Analysts say the rare omission of the US in North Korean media coverage of the anniversary may be part of the regime's efforts to maintain the current diplomatic momentum.

"It's remarkable," said Peter Ward, a North Korea researcher at Seoul National University.

"On this day of all days it's nowhere to be found." "North Korean anti-Americanism may have popular roots (nourished by decades of agitprop), but what we see is what the state wants us to," he added. Across the border at a war anniversary ceremony in Seoul, Prime Minister Lee acknowledged that the conflict began "due to North Korea's invasion".

But Lee noted the diplomatic rapprochement on the peninsula, with two inter-Korean summits preceding the meeting in Singapore — after which Trump announced the suspension of joint military exercises with the South, the US's security ally.

In Singapore Kim and Trump signed a joint statement in which Pyongyang committed to "work toward complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula".

But critics have said the encounter between the two mercurial leaders was more style than substance, producing a document short on details about the key issue of the North's atomic weapons.—AFP ■

Japan to aid development of Indonesia's remote islands

JAKARTA— Japan said Monday it will provide 2.5 billion yen ($23 million) in grant aid to Indonesia for the development of fishery facilities on remote islands, at a time when China's clout in the region is increasing.

The signing of a document on the aid was witnessed by Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono and his Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi in Jakarta, who discussed issues ranging from economic cooperation and maritime security to anti-terrorism measures.

The assistance, which is part of Tokyo's efforts to promote its "free and open Indo-Pacific strategy," will be used to build ports and fishery facilities by January 2020 on Indonesia's six outer islands, according to a Japanese official.

The islands include Natuna on the southern edge of the South China Sea, where Chinese and other foreign fishing vessels continue to operate illegally. The six islands do not have sufficient cooling

Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono (L) and his Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi shake hands before their talks in Jakarta on 25 June, 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

and freezing facilities for sea produce and the aid is designed to improve their infrastructure and economic activity, according to Japan's Foreign Ministry. "We will increase our maritime cooperation. This is very meaningful for the strategies of both countries," Kono said in a joint press statement with Retno. With the two countries marking the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties this year, Kono also said Tokyo will help Jakarta develop infrastructure and improve its business environment.

Not just aiming to draw more Japanese investment to Indonesia, he said the two countries are trying to expand the level of people-to-people exchanges to 1 million from both sides by promoting tourism further. Another major topic for the two foreign ministers was North Korea, whose leader Kim Jong Un committed "to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula" when he met US President Donald Trump in Singapore on 12 June. "We reaffirmed our commitment to the strict implementation of the UN Security Council's resolutions and to press North Korea for complete verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges," Kono said.

"Indonesia and Japan are not just strategic partners. We are also two important strategic countries in the region," Retno said. "Our partnership contributes not only to the prosperity to the people of Indonesia and Japan, but also to regional peace, stability and prosperity."

Ahead of holding talks with her, Kono, who visited Indonesia as part of a weeklong South Asian tour, met with Indonesian President Joko Widodo.—Kyodo News ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC MERGUI VOY.NO. (1817/1818)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC MERGUI VOY.NO. (1817/1818) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (SPORE) PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MONTOK VOY.NO. (06)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MONTOK VOY.NO. (06) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-4 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MERIDIAN SHIPPING AGENCIES PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

Rekha, Ranbir mesmerise audience with spellbinding performances at IIFA

BANGKOK—Veteran actor Rekha, in a rare public performance, and Ranbir Kapoor brought the curtains down at the IIFA Awards 2018 as they enthralled audiences with their riveting dance moves.

This year's award ceremony, hosted by director Karan Johar and actor Riteish Deshmukh and held at Bangkok's famed Siam Niramit theatre, was a glittery affair with stars like Varun Dhawan, Kriti Sanon, Konkona Sen Sharma, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Arjun Kapoor, Ayushmann Khurrana, Dia Mirza, Bobby Deol and others gracing the green carpet.

Rekha, at 63, dressed in light pink anarkali, proved that age is just a number for her as she mesmerised the audiences with her performance on vintage tracks such as "Salaam-e-Ishq" from "Muqaddar Ka Sikanda", "Dil Cheez Kya Hai" from "Umrao Jaan" and "Pyaar Kiya To Darna Kya" from "Mughal-e-Azam".

At the end of her 20-minute-long performance, the audience gave a big shout out to the star as well as a well-deserved standing ovation that left her overwhelmed with joy.

The younger lot of Bollywood, that included Ranbir, Varun, Arjun, Kartik, Kriti and Nushrat, descended on the stage to pay their tributes to the veteran star.

Sridevi Kapoor's widower Boney Kapoor collected the honour on her behalf at the Indian Film Academy's (IIFA) annual awards ceremony. **PHOTO: AFP**

Ranbir, who is awaiting the release of his next "Sanju", was the penultimate performer at the awards and the actor arrived in style to the tunes of his rock songs "Sadda Haq" and "Bulleya".

During his pulsating performance, he grooved on popular tracks of his own films including "Badtameez Dil", "Besharam", "Balam Pichkari" and others.

Ranbir's performance was preceded by that of Shraddha Kapoor, Kriti and Arjun.

Shraddha performed on a medley of tracks such as "Lagti Lahore Diya", "Naah Naah Goriye" and "Bom Diggy Diggy", while Kriti and Arjun danced together on songs like "Raabta", "Tune Maari Seetiyan" and "Hawa Hawa".

Varun was another star of the evening as he looked like a Jedi from Star Wars while dancing on "Badlapur" track "Jee Karda" with a prop sword that could be easily mistaken for a lightsaber.

He later turned the heat on, showing off his spectacular dancing skills on the tracks "Sau Tarah Ke" from "Dishoom", "Ha Toh Sahi" from "Judwaa 2" and "Tamma Tamma" from "Badrinath Ki Dulhaniya".

His energetic act came to an end with "Tan Tana Tan" where he engaged in a dance-off with his exact duplicate on a screen.

Bobby Deol, who is coming fresh from the success of "Race 3", took the audiences back to late nineties and early 2000s as he danced on hit songs from his films such as "Gupt", "Barsaat" and "Soldier". He was later joined by Iulia Vantur and the two then danced on "Race 3" songs - "Selfish" and "Party Chale On".

"Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety" star Kartik Aaryan was the first performer at the ceremony and he grooved on the songs of his film during his act.

Vidya Balan-starrer "Tumhari Sulu" bagged the top prize of the evening as well as the best director while Irrfan Khan won the best actor for "Hindi Medium". Sridevi was posthumously adjudged the best female actor for her performance in "Mom" at the 19th edition of the IIFA Awards.—PTI ■

'Ant-Man and the Wasp': Marvel's first superheroine movie

PASEDENA — They made history and $1 billion with the first titular superhero of color in "Black Panther" — now Marvel's creatives and stars are repeating the trick for gender equality.

"Ant-Man and the Wasp," the sequel to 2015's "Ant-Man," is the 20th release in a decade from the Marvel Cinematic Universe series of comic book movies, and the first to feature a woman in the title. "We always knew that the next one was going to be 'Ant-Man and the Wasp,'" Kevin Feige, the president of Disney-owned Marvel Studios, told AFP at a global press day for the movie in Pasadena, southern California on Sunday.

"It's finally time to see her suit up and be the hero that she said earlier she wanted to be."

The 2015 movie featured Evangeline Lilly's Hope van Dyne as a wannabe superhero and she returns here leaner, meaner and ready to step up on an equal footing with Paul Rudd's Ant-Man.

Lilly told AFP the plan was to introduce the Wasp's origin story in Marvel's 2016 release "Captain America: Civil War" along with Ant-Man and the other Avengers.

Featuring Evangeline Lilly (left) and Paul Rudd (right) "Ant-man and the Wasp" is the sequel to 2015's "Ant-Man" and the first Marvel Cinematic Universe movie to feature a woman in the title. **PHOTO: AFP**

"I got a call saying, 'We've decided not to put you in Civil War' and there was this moment, I could tell, where the feeling in the room was like, 'I'm sorry - don't be offended,'" she said.

"I was like, 'Are they going to give me a movie? Is that what they're saying?' And they said, 'We really want to dedicate a film to introducing this female superhero and we don't want her just to be a side note."

'Crazy fun'

The surprise of double-billing came later, when Marvel sent her a screen capture with the Wasp in the title.

The premise behind "Ant-Man" is refreshingly simple: Scott Lang, a petty criminal with lot of heart, can get very big or quantum-level small via a suit that manipulates his subatomic particles.

"Ant-Man and the Wasp" — directed, like the first movie, by Peyton Reed — sees Lang languishing under house arrest in San Francisco after being caught as his superhero alter-ego fighting some of the other Avengers in "Civil War."

As he struggles to rebalance his home life with his responsibilities as Ant-Man, he's confronted by Van Dyne and her father, the brilliant quantum physicist Hank Pym, with an urgent new mission.

The original was admired by critics but is one of the least successful MCU releases at box offices worldwide.

That actually means very little when the competition is other Marvel movies — it still went on to a global gross of more than $500 million.

"Ant-Man and the Wasp" is expected to open domestically around $75 million over the weekend of 6 July — a considerable improvement on the $57 million the first film took.

The early social media reaction from preview screenings has been almost universally glowing.

"'Ant-Man and The Wasp' is crazy fun. Very self-contained, but brimming with energy, and full of cool and creative surprises," tweeted CinemaBlend critic Eric Eisenberg.

"Super funny, and the entire cast is wonderful. I had a blast!"

Eye-popping

Rudd ("Anchorman," "Forgetting Sarah Marshall") and Lilly ("The Hobbit: Battle of the Five Armies," "Lost") are joined by an illustrious support cast, including Oscar winner Michael Douglas and nominees Michelle Pfeiffer and Laurence Fishburne.

Michael Pena ("The Martian," "Chips") returns to provide much of the comic relief alongside Walton Goggins ("Vice Principals") and Bobby Cannavale ("I, Tonya").—AFP ■

Banksy needles France with migrant mural blitz in Paris

Anonymous street artist Banksy's artwork of a girl painting over a swastika cross was reportedly first found on World Refugee Day, on 20 June, 2018, in northern Paris, near a former centre of initial reception (CPA) for refugees. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARIS — The mysterious British street artist Banksy appears to have taken aim at the French government's crackdown on migrants in a series of new murals in Paris.

The world's best known graffiti painter apparently "blitzed" the French capital over the last few days, leaving as many as six works on walls across the city.

None of the works were signed — as has been Banksy's wont in recent years — but experts told AFP that they look genuine.

The most political takes issue with France's tough anti-migrant policy, with nearly 40 makeshift camps razed in Paris in the last three years and President Emmanuel Macron determined that the city does not become a magnet for refugees.

In the mural a young black girl sprays a pink wallpaper pattern over a swastika on a wall next to her sleeping bag and teddy bear in an attempt to make her patch of pavement more cosy.

The image is on a wall in northern Paris next to an official refugee shelter which was controversially closed in March despite protests from the city's Socialist mayor Anne Hidalgo.

Since then around 2,000 migrants, including children and teenagers, have been sleeping rough along canals and under motorway bridges.

Migrants were still sleeping next to the mural on Sunday.

Experts said the image echoes the artist's 2009 painting "Go Flock Yourself".

Artist defends migrants

Banksy, who has not yet confirmed the works are his on Instagram, has been a long-time supporter of the refugee cause.

However, he has often travelled to make powerful political points with his art about everything from Brexit to the fate of the Palestinians.

In 2015, he painted a mural on the edge of the Calais "jungle" camp built by migrants trying to get to Britain, which has since been razed by the authorities.

"The Son of a Migrant from Syria" depicted Apple co-founder Steve Jobs — who was of Syrian descent — carrying a knapsack and an Apple computer.

He sprayed another, his take on Gericault's "The Raft of the Medusa", on the wall of a house in the northern French port — a reference to the shipwrecked hopes of migrants trying to cross the English Channel.

Art historian and street art expert Paul Ardenne told AFP that the Paris murals were very much in Banksy's style.

"The colour, the line, the subject and the way he has adapted the images from photos ... all point to them being Banksy's style during the 2000s. There is a very particular signature. If (the mural of the girl) is not by Banksy, it is a very good copy," he said.

Napoleon in a headscarf

Another of the new works touches on the equally sensitive subject of the ban on the niqab in France. It shows Napoleon in a full red Islamic headscarf on the back of his rearing horse as he crosses the Alps to invade Italy in 1800.

The pastiche of David's canvass, one of the most iconic in French 19th-century art, appeared on a wall in a ethnically-mixed district of northern Paris.

And a third image near the Sorbonne university on the Left Bank — which was rocked by a student uprising 50 years ago — appeared to be a dig at the death of French revolutionary spirit.

One of Banksy's trademark rats sits under the legend "May 1968" wearing a Minnie Mouse bow. The Disneyland Paris theme park just outside the French capital is now one of its biggest employers.

A fourth mural nearby took capitalism to task. A businessman in a suit offers a dog a bone having first sawn the animal's leg off.

Ardenne said it does not matter if the murals are by Banksy, but they do "show that the Banksy effect, and its ability to manipulate the media, works," he argued.

"We will look at them far more now thinking they are by Banksy rather than if it had been by any old artist," he added.

Banksy apparent visit to Paris comes as another street art star who has also become an art world darling unveiled his latest creation in the French capital.

KAWS, aka American Brian Donnelly, made a 10-metre (33-feet) high statue of the French fashion legend Christian Dior with 70,000 flowers as the centrepiece of his erstwhile label's Paris men's fashion week show on Saturday.—AFP ■

Australia failing to protect Great Barrier Reef

This file photo taken on 22 September, 2014 shows fish swimming through the coral of the Great Barrier Reef, along the central coast of Queensland. **PHOTO: AFP**

SYDNEY — Australia is breaching commitments to protect the embattled Great Barrier Reef from the effects of land clearing, environmental groups claimed Monday and called on the UN to probe the alleged failures.

Canberra has pledged to step up efforts to protect the reef as it reels from mass coral bleaching and coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish, which have proliferated due to pollution and agricultural runoff.

But the groups said the federal government had failed to stop a key threat to the World Heritage-list area — the impending bulldozing of large swathes of land in reef catchments.

Experts have warned that deforestation increases runoff into the reef, reducing water quality and the light needed for coral growth, while fuelling outbreaks of crown-of-thorns starfish.

In a letter to the United Nations, the Wilderness Society, WWF-Australia, the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Australian Marine Conservation Society called for an urgent investigation as the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's annual meeting starts in Bahrain.

"Allowing this clearing to go ahead is not consistent with the promises the Australian government has made to the international community to protect and restore the Great Barrier Reef," Australian Conservation Foundation chief Kelly O'Shanassy said in a statement.

The conservationists said some 36,600 hectares (90,000 acres) of old-growth forest — about half the size of Bahrain — was earmarked to be cut down in reef catchments under permits issued by the former Queensland state government, but that Canberra had the power to stop them from going ahead.

Environment Minister Josh Frydenberg refuted the allegations and said the responsibility for planning and approval of land clearing lay with states.

He added that Canberra had won "significant praise" from the UN for a Aus$2.0 billion (US$1.5 billion) "Reef 2050" plan to protect the reef.

"On top of this investment the... government has also invested an additional Aus$500 million, representing the single largest investment in reef protection and restoration in Australia's history," Frydenberg said in a statement to AFP. The bulk of the new Aus$500 million funding — just over Aus$200 million — announced in April was earmarked to improve water quality by changing farming practices and adopting new technologies and land management. UNESCO's World Heritage Committee last year decided not to place the reef on its list of sites "in danger" despite concern over the mass bleaching, citing Canberra's conservation plans.

The Great Barrier Reef is one of Australia's best known natural wonders and stretches more than 2,300 kilometres (1,400 miles) along the northeastern coast.—AFP ■

Spain and Portugal target last 16 as Russia ride momentum

Spain forward Diego Costa has three goals at the World Cup in Russia. **PHOTO: AFP**

MOSCOW — "Both teams have something to win and also to lose, neither has more to win than the other," said Portugal boss Fernando Santos.

Ronaldo, who looks a favourite to win a sixth world player of the year award, will be desperate to top the goalscoring charts in Russia.

The Real Madrid superstar has slipped behind Harry Kane in the race for the Golden Boot after the England player grabbed a hat-trick against Panama to take his tally to five. In Group A, Russia will bid for a third straight win after a stunning start to the tournament for a side initially written off as no-hopers. Stanislav Cherchesov said he would stick with the same line-up that beat Egypt 3-1 as Russia lock horns with Uruguay in Samara, with first place in the group on the line.

"We don't choose our opponent in the last 16. We're not doing the calculations, we've never done them," said Cherchesov. "And in any case we don't have the choice, they play after us. We know both teams, the football gods will decide."

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo is looking to fire his side into the World Cup last 16. **PHOTO: AFP**

Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal and 2010 winners Spain can lock down spots in the World Cup last 16 on Monday, as hosts Russia ride a wave of national euphoria into their clash with Uruguay. Spain crashed out in spectacular fashion in the group stage four years ago in Brazil but are on course to reach the knockout phase in Russia despite sacking their coach on the eve of the tournament. They require a point against Morocco in Kaliningrad to secure qualification, and new coach Fernando Hierro promised they would not underestimate a North African side playing for pride.

"We can't afford to relax... We need to be awake with our eyes open and be aware that Morocco aren't going to give anything away," warned Hierro, who replaced Julen Lopetegui a day before the tournament started. Portugal meet former coach Carlos Queiroz and Iran in their final Group B game in Saransk. Ronaldo's side will advance with a draw, but a win for Iran would see the European champions or Spain suffer a shock exit.

'Extremely painful'

Colombia coach Jose Pekerman dedicated his side's crucial 3-0 win over Poland on Sunday to midfielder Carlos Sanchez after reports the midfielder received death threats for his red card against Japan.

Sanchez has had "a very hard time" dealing with the fallout from his early sending-off in the 2-1 defeat to Japan in Colombia's opening game, Pekerman said. He said he spoke for the whole squad when he dedicated Colombia's win over Poland to the 32-year-old player.

"This victory is dedicated to Carlos Sanchez, because he's had a very hard time in the past days. I want, and we want, to share it with him," he said. Pekerman added: "We received certain information, but I can't confirm anything. The player was deeply affected by this matter. "It went beyond football. It's a game that we play with a lot of hard work and dedication, but these things should not be taken lightly."

It evoked memories of the chilling murder of Colombia player Andres Escobar, who was killed after his own goal led to defeat to the United States in the 1994 World Cup and Colombia's elimination from the tournament.

Carlos Sanchez was sent off against Japan. **PHOTO: AFP**

Robert Lewandowski's Poland were unceremoniously dumped out following defeat to Colombia, who can guarantee a place in the last 16 by beating Senegal in their concluding game in Group H. The west Africans and Japan are both in control of their destiny following a 2-2 draw in Yekaterinburg that left both nations on four points.

Harry Kane clings on to the match ball after his hat-trick in the rout of Panama. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kane streaks ahead

England striker Kane surged ahead of Ronaldo and Romelu Lukaku in the race for the World Cup Golden Boot after hitting a hat-trick in a 6-1 demolition of Panama on Sunday. The Tottenham star scored twice from the penalty spot before deflecting in a Ruben Loftus-Cheek drive with his heel to make it five goals from two games as England sealed safe passage to the last 16. Gareth Southgate's side lead Belgium at the top of Group G by virtue of having received one less yellow card going into their showdown in Kaliningrad on June 28. Mohamed Salah is likely to start Egypt's final match against Saudi Arabia on Monday in a fixture between two eliminated sides in Volgograd. But Egypt's 45-year-old goalkeeper Essam El Hadary may have to wait to come off the bench to set a record as the oldest player ever to appear at a World Cup. He would smash the age record set by Faryd Mondragon in Brazil four years ago.—AFP ■

FIFA WORLD CUP
RUSSIA 2018

20:30 MST(26.6.2018)

Australia — Peru

20:30 MST (26.6.2018)

Denmark — France

00:30 MST (27.6.2018)

Nigeria — Argentina

00:30 MST (27.6.2018)

Iceland — Croatia

World Cup 2018 Results

Uruguay	3 - 0	Russia
Saudi Arabia	2 - 1	Egypt