

NATIONAL

UPDJC Vice Chairman receives New Mon State Party's Vice Chairman

PAGE-3

NATIONAL

Nay Pyi Taw opens Glaze Art Exhibition

PAGE-6



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UPDJC meeting passes 14 points on major sectors



Representatives of the Government, the Hluttaw and the Tatmadaw, who are the members of UPDJC, representatives of ethnic armed organisations, political parties and officials taking part at the UPDJC meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) held a meeting at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

UPDJC Vice Chairs Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe, Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong and U Thu Wai delivered the opening addresses.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe said the third session was held as a means of making collective efforts in building a Union based on democracy and federalism, and where the cause of democracy, equality and self-determination is fully guaranteed in accordance with the results of the political dialogue. At the dialogue, discussions were held under the Panglong spirit based on liberty, equality and justice in view of the non-disintegration of the Union,

non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty, which is the initial goal. The Union Minister said the participation of all relevant stakeholders at the meeting is an encouraging sign. The participants, including over 700 representatives, 29 invited persons, 104 observers, 27 members of the action group together with members of the support group made ardent efforts in holding sector-wise group meetings. The current meeting will discuss the issues that will be presented by the relevant sectors to the UPDJC. There are some issues where agreements have been reached among the relevant sectors and others where few parts still remain unsolved. More agreements may come out through compromises in the vital sectors. Talks on those issues should be made in detail through mutual under-

standing. Dialogue is actually about making a compromise. Keeping in mind the aspiration of the people, mutual coordination should be made on the remaining issues in support of the peace process.

Vice Chair Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong said, "This conference has made follow-up conferences a possibility. We are so fortunate that the peace conference can be continued. But sadly, the past 70 years had not seen even a single conference like this one."

"So, we must grab this opportunity without fail. It is a beneficial conference as it serves as an important step towards the continuation of the peace process."

Vice Chair U Thu Wai expressed his happiness in seeing the delegates at the Union Peace Conference, taking part in the relevant group discussions and

collective sessions with heart and soul until an agreement was reached. He said, "The discussions have further promoted democratic ideologies. In my view, the conference is a success. The peace process is gaining step-by-step success under the leadership of the UPDJC. Prospects are bright for the peace process to gain more success in the future also."

Then the UPDJC meeting approved the discussions on political, economic, social, security, land and environmental issues and the final day programme of the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong (Third Session).

UPDJC Vice Chairs U Thu Wai and Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong and Chair of the Peace Commission Dr Tin Myo Win delivered the concluding addresses.

During his address, Dr Tin

Myo Win said the meeting passed 14 basic principles. The accords can be signed as the second part of the Union accord.

The meeting passed 14 points in connection with four major sectors—four points in political, one point in economic, seven points in social, two points in land and environmental issues.

The 14 points will be signed as the second part of the Union accord on the final day (today) of the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong (Third Session).

Present at the meeting were representatives of the Government, the Hluttaw and the Tatmadaw, who are the members of UPDJC, representatives of ethnic armed organisations, political parties and officials. In the evening, UPDJC members met the press. —Thura Zaw, Myo Myint (MNA) ■

Union Accord will have 51 agreed points

By Ye Khaung Nyunt
Photo: Phoe Khwar

Representatives of the Government, Hluttaw, Tatmadaw, the ethnic armed organizations and political parties have agreed on the 14 points in connection with the four major sectors — political, economic, social, land and environmental sectors — the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) presented to the Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong (Third Session) to be signed as the second part of the Union Accord, according to a press meet.

After the conclusion of the final day session of the Union Peace Conference: 21st Century Panglong (Third Session), secretaries of the UPDJC U Hla Maung Shwe, U Zaw Htay, Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong and Sai Kyaw Nyunt met the press at Myanmar International Convention Centre II at 8.10 pm.

Despite some terminological changes in the political sector and some disagreements, finally an accord was reached on the 14 points in connection with the four major sectors — political, economic, social, land and environmental issues. Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong said, “We have to use the term ‘the Union based on democracy and federalism’, and we needed an adjective for it.



Secretaries of the UPDJC U Hla Maung Shwe, U Zaw Htay, Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong and Sai Kyaw Nyunt meet the press. **PHOTO: MNA**

Tatmadaw representatives proposed ‘Republic of the Union of Myanmar’. We, after coordinating with ethnic armed groups, used the term ‘Republic of the Union of Myanmar’ as stated in the NCA. The matter was settled.” The statement released by the conference says that the conference will be held for three times — one in 2018 and the other two in 2019. But a consensus was reached for another conference in 2020.

“If we can produce basic principles at the first three conferences, we do not need to hold another one in 2020. But if an agreement cannot be reached, a proposal on the basic principles

will be presented at the 2020 conference,” said Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong.

Equality and non-secession from Union, which are the basic principles of federalism, will be reviewed as a topic for the next conference. U Hla Maung Shwe said, “The important thing is to build trust in the peace process. The government will make preparations after the conference ends the next day.

Relevant groups will review the issue, followed by collective discussions. The work of making amendments on the political framework and assessments will be carried out in early September.

Definitely, we are preparing to hold a conference before the end this year.”

U Zaw Htay said, “We will not let any disturbances to any part of the political dialogue. We all know that we must build trust. We can find the answer to a political dialogue through compromises. We believe the coming conference will produce better results.”

Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong said, “We of the secretariat of the UPDJC will exercise patience in finding the answer on the technical part. We are also trying to find the answer through a meeting among the leaders.”

The participation of all the

seven ethnic armed groups from northern Myanmar is a good initiation for all-inclusiveness. A meeting will be held with the seven groups soon, it is learnt.

As regards the participation of non-signatories, U Zaw Htay said, “The participation of non-signatories has made the conference significant. They met with others, including the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services. In the past, the three northern groups, AA, TNLA and MNDAA were not asked to sign the NCA. But now, we have told them to sign it. The statement issued by Wa group also urged them to do so. They had brought with them a lot of food for thought. We will meet with the seven groups a few days after the conclusion of the conference. We are happy with the results.”

The final day of the conference will witness the signing of 14-points — four points of the political sector, one point of the economic sector, seven points of the social sector and two points of the land and environment sector — as the second part of the Union Accord. The Second Session of the Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong agreed 37 points on the four sectors and the present conference will sign another 14 points. So, the Union Accord will have 51 agreed points. ■

UPC-21st Century Panglong attendees visit Nay Pyi Taw

ATTENDEES of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong Third Session visited the Jade Museum, National Museum and Defence Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During their visit to the Jade Museum, they observed precious jades, gems, pearls, silver wares and other natural resources on the uppermost floor of the museum, and officials explained the artifacts to them.

Later, they went on to the National Museum and observed the booths on fossils, arts and crafts, Myanmar culture, Myanma history, ethnic culture, Buddha statue, Myanma Martyrs and ASEAN and took photographs.

Next, the representatives visited the Defence Services Museum and observed former military gears and instruments,



Attendees of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong Third Session visiting the Jade Museum, the National Museum and Defence Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

utensils of the nationalists during the colonial period, utensils of Bogoyoke Aung San, historical treaties during the independence struggle, local peace performance of successive governments, Tatmadaw military

booths (Army, Navy and Air), foreign military vehicles and military aircrafts.

Over 200 of the meeting's attendees participated in the visits.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Only working in unison can benefit all

If you wish for the country to be developed and prosperous, all of the country's resources – financial, natural and human – have to be used together for the equal development of all races.

If the Bamar does what they want, if the Kachin does what they want, if the Shan, Kachin and Chin do not cooperate, there will be no benefits for anyone. Only when you try working in unison will you know its benefits.

(Excerpt from the speech made by Bogyoke Aung San at the Panglong Dinner on February 11, 1947)



UPDJC vice chairman receives New Mon State Party's vice chairman

VICE CHAIRMAN of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe received a delegation led by Vice Chairman of the New Mon State Party (NMSP) Nai Han Tha at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed regional development and matters relating to sustainable livelihood for family members of armed combatants.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Minister from the Office of the State Counsellor U Khin Maung Tin, Director General U Zaw Htay, Gener-



Vice Chairman of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe holds talk with NMSP officials. **PHOTO: MNA**

al Secretary of the NMSP Nai Aung Min, Central Committee members of the NMSP Nai

Win Hla and Nai Banya Leir, NMSP Executive Committee member Nai Aung Ma Ngay

and other responsible officials.— Thura Zaw, Myo Myint (MNA) ■

UPDJC Secretariat holds meeting in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) Secretariat held a meeting at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Present at the meeting were members of the UPDJC Secretariat U Khin Zaw Oo, U Zaw Htay, U Myint Soe, U Naing Ngan Lin, U Hla Maung Shwe, U Aung

Soe, Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo, U Myo Win, Sai La, Khun Myint Tun, Saw Mra Yar Zar Lin, Sai Kyaw Nyunt, Min Kyaw Zeyya Oo, Tar Hla Pe, Naing Aung Ma Ngay and other officials.

The meeting focused on clarification of sector-wise proposals on political, economic, social, security, land and environmental

issues, Statement of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong (Third Session) and the UPDJC agendas, the last day programme of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong (Third Session) along with a selection of the people who will support the agreement.—Thura Zaw, Myo Myint (MNA) ■



Officials taking part in the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee Secretariat meeting. **PHOTO: MNA**

Yangon Region Chief Minister urges tightening of security ahead of 71st Martyrs' Day

YANGON Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein requested tighter security measures ahead of the 71st Martyrs' Day celebration.

He said this to the respective committees at the working meeting of the 71st Martyrs' Day celebration at the Arzani Beikman (Martyrs' Mausoleum) management office on 14 July.

"The Chief Minister wanted to toughen up security measures for the Mausoleum, the buildings and the temporary shelter. He also asked for trainings to be conducted over security and safety measures.

On 17 July, authorities will inspect the preparations and rehearsals again, and so, respective committees are required to be prepared, he maintained.

"The security will be tightened for wreaths, bouquets and flower arrangements, which the leaders will be holding. Five leaders of the State will attend the event to commemorate the fallen martyrs.

Therefore, it is urged that the respective committee members systematically carry out the rehearsals," said the Yangon Region Chief Minister.

Additionally, the chief minister asked the respective committees to contact the Yangon Region government through the secretaries of the Yangon City Development Committee and/or Yangon Region when an emergency happens. He asked that preparations and other tasks be completed by 17 July. — Nyein Nyein ■

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ACTING CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe,
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR**Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORSZaw Min,
zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com
Win Ko Ko Aung,
kowink2aung@gmail.com**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com**TRANSLATORS**Khaing Thanda Lwin,
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**May Thet Hnin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAMTun Zaw ,
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01) 8604529,
Fax — (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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Sesame growers face financial loss due to poor harvest

SESAME growers in Magway Region said they are likely to face a pecuniary loss due to a poor harvest this season.

A sesame grower, who resides in Makangyi Village in Magway Township, said, "Heavy rain this planting season has led to an increase in operating costs, resulting in a decline in production. Last year, an acre of sesame produced between 15 and 17 baskets. The numbers are expected to decrease to 10-12 baskets this year."

But, residents said growers are expected to enjoy the financial benefits, as prices are high in the market due to low production. For the time being, a basket of white sesame is sold at Ks48,000 in the Magway market, while black sesame is worth Ks50,000 and red



Sesame being harvested in a field. PHOTO: ZEYATU (MAGWAY)

sesame Ks45,000 per basket.

U Thaung Htay, another farmer from the same village, said that growers are now faced with increasing operating costs, a scarcity of farm

workers and climate change.

They spent a lot of money on production costs because heavy rain damaged crops and they had to restart the cultivation.

There are over 50 acres of crop plantations, including over 20 acres of sesame plantations, in Magway Region, according to the region's agriculture department.—Zeyatu (Magway) ■

New-design concrete wall to protect banks against erosion

THE Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River System (Mandalay Region) said it has built retaining walls in Amarapura and Ngazun townships in Mandalay Region using a new design for the first time.

The department carried out 19 projects to sustainably protect river banks against erosion along the Ayeyawady River in Mandalay Region with the use of the region's budget for the 2017-2018 financial year. It used a new design that is quite different from the traditional method of constructing a gravel-filled wall. The builder used many six-inch-thick concrete blocks to build the new walls.

U Toe Aung Lynn, director of the department, said such kind of retaining walls will be built in suitable areas over the following financial years based on the fruitful result of this project. The new method is appropriate for the areas beside the Dohtawady River and some



A new-design retaining wall in Amarapura Township, Mandalay. PHOTO: KHINE HSAT WAI

villages along the Ayeyawady River.

The foundation is crucial in building a strong retaining wall. Without a strong foundation, the walls will be insecure. Each concrete block has two holes, which help plants get water to grow naturally, he added.

Two-thirds of Phayegyun Village had experienced river

bank erosion before the new concrete retaining walls were built. The region's Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River System has already submitted a proposal to carry out river bank protection projects with an estimated cost of Ks5 billion across 15 sites in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.—Khine Hsat Wai ■

Yangon Gallery launches online art sale

THE Yangon Gallery has launched its online art sale for art lovers and collectors in anticipation of increasing the sale of art online during the monsoon period between July and September.

The new programme allows customers to easily buy artwork of renowned artists online. The Yangon Gallery will post all the selected works on its Facebook page.

Starting from the first week of July 2018, a collection of 31 Myanmar artists will be posted daily on Facebook page under the headline: The Yangon Gallery's Monsoon Special-Online Art Sale. The condition of the paintings will be as seen on the Facebook page, but no frames will be provided, according to the event organiser.

For those outside of Yangon, the gallery may help them arrange delivery through a third party service provider. Delivery fees will be added to the customer's bill. For further information, one can contact the gallery by calling 0973827777.—GNLM ■



Shwe Kyun Myaw Hotel in Inle, Nyaungshwe Township, Shan State. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

Manufacturing sector attracts FDIs worth \$ 275 million in three months

THE manufacturing sector absorbed foreign direct investments (FDIs) worth US\$275.6 million through 19 projects in the past three months, according to statistics provided by the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

Between 1 April and 30 June, FDIs worth \$394.87 million, including increased investments, were brought into the country. MIC has allowed 26 enterprises to invest in the country.

The agriculture sector attracted one foreign investment with a capital of \$5.6 million. The real estate sector also received investments worth \$2.8 million. Similarly, the hotels and tourism

sector attained FDI of \$9.26 million from one project. Over \$88.9 million FDIs were pumped into other services.

Japan tops the list with the largest investment of \$85 million, followed by China and the United States.

Also, Hong Kong, India, South Korea, Singapore, Viet Nam and the United States made investments over the past three months.

The MIC targets FDIs worth \$3 billion during the six-month interim period from April to September, prior to the next 2018-2019 fiscal year. The manufacturing and real estate development sectors are likely to maintain the top position in

attracting FDIs during the six-month interim period.

According to the new Myanmar Investment Law, region and state investment committees are authorised to grant endorsements of an investment proposal with a capital of not more than \$5 million (Ks6,000 million), with an aim to facilitate the verification process of investment projects.

At present, 60 per cent of foreign investments are in Yangon Region. Mandalay attracts 30 per cent of investments. Other regions and states attain only a small portion of investments, according to the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration. —GNLM ■

Imports outdo exports in bilateral trade with Viet Nam in two months

MYANMAR'S overseas trade with Viet Nam, a Southeast Asian country, reached US\$123 million in the current financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce's monthly trade report.

Myanmar's annual imports from Viet Nam always outperform its exports. During the first two weeks of this FY, the imports were valued at \$102.56 million, whereas exports amounted to \$21.23 million.

Myanmar imports raw materials, food, auto parts and accessories, computer parts, construction materials, steel, plastics, pharmaceuticals and other chemical products from Viet Nam. The country exports minerals, and agricultural, forest and marine products to the ASEAN member state.

Viet Nam's trade and investment with Myanmar has annually increased since the 2011-12 FY. The bilateral trade

reached a record high of \$714.8 million in the last 2017-2018 FY, with exports worth \$127.5 million and imports worth \$587.3 million.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, Viet Nam's investments in Myanmar last FY were \$20.806 million. This year, Myanmar received new Vietnamese investment worth \$6.245 million from two projects. —Khine Khant ■

Maize price plunges along Sittaung River Basin during harvest time

MAIZE growers in Toungoo, Htantabin and Ottwin townships along Sittaung River Basin are losing out due to the low price when there is a glut in supply.

"I have 40 acres of maize plantations. Some of our seed packets get wet in the rain. Input costs total over Ks10 million, including the cost of cultivation, general cost and labour wages.

Even the transportation fees cost Ks80,000. Therefore, we are affected by the drop in price, said U Win, a grower from Pauktaw Village of Shansugyi village tract in Toungoo Township.

The locally-produced maize is sent to Sittaungjetty at the market price, he continued.

"We purchase a corn cob at Ks80, and the prices vary depending on the size of the maize.

There is an excessive supply in other regions during harvest time. So, the market here has turned cool, said Daw Ei Tin, a maize depot owner at Sittaungjetty in Toungoo Town.

Five or six vessels loaded with 80,000 corn cobs approach Sittaungjetty daily, depending on demand. —Ko Lwin (Swa) ■

Nearly 700,000 tourists in first six months

TOURISTS arriving with visas as of June 2018 were up by over 13,430, compared with similar period last year, according to the figures recently released by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

Myanmar hosted a total of 682,100 tourists from January to June, whereas last year, tourist arrivals were registered at 668,661 during the same period.

However, some tourists entering Myanmar with border pass are down by 50,700.

The tourists entered the country through three international airports in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw and through Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung and Hteekhee checkpoints.

Additionally, package tours, caravan tours, yacht

tours, riverine tours, along Ayeyawady River and Chindwin River, and cruise tours and chartered flight tours need permission from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, linked with local tour agencies.

Tourists arriving from the US, Europe, Middle East, Africa and Oceania fell this year compared with the same period last year. Nevertheless, more tourists from China, Thailand, Malaysia and India visited Myanmar this year.

Passport holders from 100 countries and Taiwan are eligible to apply for an eVisa for tourism purposes and businessmen from 52 countries and Taiwan can apply for an eVisa Business.

For more details, one can visit www.evisa.moip.gov.mm. —GNLM ■

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Nay Pyi Taw opens Glaze Art Exhibition

A museum serves as a place where the past, the present and the future meet and which showcases the historical traditions and accomplishments of a race, said a union-level official in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Speaking at the Myanmar Traditional Glaze Art Exhibition at the National Museum (Nay Pyi Taw), Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko highlighted the importance of museums for the national cause, at a time when conservation of traditions and culture has become vital for the nation.

“Developed countries have designated museums as a must-visit place for youths to increase their patriotism and nationalistic fervour through historical knowledge,” said the union minister, who also elaborated on the development of museums



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko observes displays at the Myanmar Traditional Glaze Art Exhibition at the National Museum in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

through the successive periods of world history.

“Even though museums may have different goals, the common objective is to enrich the knowl-

edge of visitors,” he noted.

The union minister suggested using innovative ideas in arranging displays, as people visit museums as recreation cen-

tres, aside from educational or research purposes.

“Apart from having historical, archaeological, artistic and cultural views and knowledge,

curators and their staff need to ensure visitor satisfaction,” he pointed out.

The exhibition, marking the third anniversary of the museum, which displays historical and cultural heritage, musical instruments of the ethnic races, paintings of successive eras, traditional costumes, symbols and cultural artifacts of ASEAN countries, child education programmes and royal costumes and artifacts, including the Sihasana Throne, with the help of audio visuals. It was opened on 15 July 2015.

Accompanied by historians, museum committee members ICOM-Myanmar members, and the staff of his ministry, Thura U Aung Ko visited the exhibition, which opens daily from 9.30am to 4.30pm except on Mondays and public holidays until 14 August.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Deputy Ministers inspect implementation process in Maungtaw

A group of deputy ministers for Recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State arrived in Maungtaw yesterday morning. The group was led by the Implementing Committee Secretary and Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Than Htut, the Joint-Secretary and Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung and Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin.

The group went to Kyein Chaung Taung in Maungtaw and inspected work on construction of housing projects, where they asked the progress of the construction project to be completed at a specific time. Then they continued to inspect the plots of land where 60 housing projects donated by Japan in Maungtaw would be built. After inspecting the Nga Khu Ya Reception Centre, they proceeded to the construction



Officials inspect modular houses at Hla Phoe Khaung Transit Centre. **PHOTO: MIN THIT (MNA) AND KO MIN**

of Longdon-Nga Khu Ya repairing road being repaired, and met with the office staff where they coordinated to fulfill their requirements. They went to the Hla Phoe Khaung Transit Centre and inspected the construction of housing projects, Modular Houses donated by China and opening

of the camp medical clinic. They inspected the Hla Phoe Khaung-Shwe Zar road and processed to the Myoma Monastery in Maungtaw, where they donated 120 bags of rice, 600 viss of pea, 150 viss of cooking oil and 30 viss of salt to the students at the monastery.—Min Thit (MNA) and Ko Min ■

Free helmets distributed to Maungtaw motorcyclists

TRAFFIC police distributed free-of-charge helmets to motorcyclists in Maungtaw yesterday, during a traffic rule enforcement campaign at a town located near the border with Bangladesh in northern Rakhine State.

“Occasionally, we conduct awareness campaigns for public safety and enforcement of traffic rules,” said a police officer from Maungtaw.

“For the first time, we are distributing helmets to motorcyclists riding without wearing any protective headgear. Wearing helmets is important, as they can protect people, es-

pecially from any head injury and thus, save their lives in an accident. Motorcycle riders are prone to accidents,” he added.

“Thanks a lot for giving us helmets free of charge. We, the rural people, need helmets, as motorcycles are the only mode of transportation for us for business or any other purpose. In Maungtaw, police always warn us to wear protective headgear for our own safety,” said a villager from Maungtaw Township. Yesterday alone, police gave away 100 helmets in the township, which has 3,000 motorcycle riders.—Min Thit (MNA), Ko Min ■



Traffic police contribute helmets to motorcyclists in Maungtaw in Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MIN MIN**

Communal Waso robe-offering ceremony to be held at Jotikayone Pali Tetkatho Monastery in Pyay

THE communal Waso-robe offering ceremony will be held at 4:00 pm on 28 July (Saturday), 1st Waning of Second Waso, 1380 ME at the Jotikayone Pali Tetkatho Monastery in Pyay Town, Bago Region.

Over 300 members of Sangha led by State Ovadacariya Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Dhaja, Head of Nayaka Sayadaw Baddanta Konala Joti Maha Htae Myat,

will be offered with Waso robes during the ceremony. The donation for Waso robe-offering can be contacted with the executives of Pariyati Sasana Nokgaha organization by calling 09-420703374, 09-5312630 and 09-423656441.—017 ■

U Ohn Maung, leaving family for the country

By Than Htike
PHOTO: THAN SOE

"MY mother was 24 when my father passed away. My two elder brothers were 7 and 5, and I was 2. We lived in Ba Gyi U Poe Hla's house at 28/A Inya Road. My father would take my brother and me on a ride in his car around our yard before going to work. My mother told me he did the same on the day of his assassination," said Prof. U Min Myat (ret'd), the youngest son of martyred leader U Ohn Maung, about his father.

"The martyred leaders risked their lives for peace and independence. The 21st Century Panglong being held now is similar to Bogyoke (General) Aung San's Panglong Conference for national unity. He went to the hilly regions and plains, but I think he had some difficulties in Kachin State. My father used to serve as Myitkyina's Commissioner so he was close to the Samar Duwar Khun Sin War Naung. One day, Minister U Kyaw Nyein and Bo Letya came to our house and told my father he was to go to Kachin State on Bogyoke's order. I used to have gastral pains at night and my father would carry me around and cradle me to sleep. I was ill that day, too, and Bogyoke knew this, so he told my father that they would arrange a flight for him back home if anything crops up. My father left the next day, and I was told I cried that night.

"On arriving in Myitkyina, my father met with Samar Duwar Khun Sin War Naung and delivered Bogyoke's message. He came back with my father to Yangon and stayed at our house for ten days before meeting with Bogyoke. My father received a sword and a spear as a gift when he moved from Myitkyina to Yangon. When Bogyoke Aung San arrived in Kachin State, things went well and you could say we achieved the ethnic solidarity to sign the Panglong Agreement.

"Martyrs' Day was first celebrated in President Mahn Win Maung's administration at the old mausoleum. Daw Khin Kyi (widowed wife of Bogyoke Aung San) would bring her children there, too. She and her family would be at the front with the other remain-



ing families of martyred leaders around them. President Mahn Win Maung would start from Daw Khin Kyi and offer condolences to each family. We met the president at 7:30am and laid the flower wreaths at 8am. I would feel elated to see all remaining family members laying their respective flower wreaths at the same time," he said. U Ohn Maung had three sons who are still alive. The eldest, U Tin Maung Thein, is 79 years old, the second, U Ko Ko Hla, 77, and the youngest, U Min Myat, 73. U Ohn Maung's wife Daw Thein Kywe is the last surviving widow among other martyred leader widows. She is now at the grand age of 95, and her sons are taking take care of her wellbeing.

U Ohn Maung was 34 years old when he passed away and Bogyoke was 32. As their ages were not that different, they would discuss national affairs openly with each other.

Daw Thein Kywe, the widow, said, "He moved to Yangon from Myitkyina after he was appointed as Secretary of Transport. He lived his whole life in that house in Inya Road. On that day of the assassination, he told me he was expecting guests at noon, and that I was to start entertaining them while he was at the meeting with Bogyoke. He told me he would come back early after his presentation.

"The meeting with Bogyoke was at 10am so he drove off around 9am. At about 10:30am, a lawyer friend of my brother in Barr Street (now Maha Bandula Garden Street) came and informed us that there was shooting at the Secretariat and

the people at the meeting were wounded too. When I arrived at the hospital, I found out that he was among those who were shot, but they didn't let me enter the emergency room. I cried and cried, there were so many people there. My friends took me back home. "Back at my home, there were already people coming to ask the news. The news of the assassination had spread quickly. I am the third out of four sisters. My eldest sister tried to help me upstairs since I was unable to talk. I cried all day and night. It was the saddest event in our family's history."



U Ohn Maung was born in Minbu to Mr. H.W. Tretwayne and Daw Shwe Myint on Sunday, 2 February 1913. He was their second son. He attended Yangon University and served as a quartermaster in the University's Training Corps. In 1934, he completed his Bachelor of Arts course, and in 1937, he came out first among three persons taking the Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination. He served as a deputy commissioner in Mandalay in 1939 and went to Myitkyina in 1947. Next, he became the Secretary of Transport.

U Min Myat said, "I feel energized after seeing the changes in the Martyrs' Day celebrations last year. I feel ethnic and national solidarity are becoming more important. The 21st Century Panglong is interesting. The word arzarni (martyr) doesn't have a set definition. It's meaning changes depending on the situation, time and day, and the nature of the incident. A martyr like Bogyoke Aung San is uncommon. He was a Thakhin since his student days, educated, courageous, determined and skilled in unification.

"That's why, the remaining leaders and ethnic leaders all respect him. We looked up to him since childhood, too. I want to tell the young generation that the past had a great leader in Bogyoke Aung San. Reform and learn from history. Every nationality should be involved in the 21st Century Panglong. Everyone must work to ensure the freedom, our martyred leaders sacrificed themselves for, is everlasting. Don't forget what has happened in history. Everyone has the responsibility to make sure history doesn't repeat. Whatever your role may be in the peace process,



U Ohn Maung
(2 February 1913 -
19 July 1947)

- * U Ohn Maung was born in Minbu to Mr. H.W. Tretwayne and Daw Shwe Myint on Sunday, 2 February 1913. He was their second son.
- * He attended Yangon University and served as a quartermaster in the University's Training Corps.
- * In 1934, he completed his Bachelor of Arts course, and in 1937, he came out first among three persons taking the Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination.
- * He served as a deputy commissioner in Mandalay in 1939.
- * He was appointed as commissioner of Myitkyina in 1947, before becoming the Secretary of Transport in the pre-independence government.
- * He was assassinated at 10:37 am on 19 July 1947.
- * U Ohn Maung's wife Daw Thein Kywe is the last surviving widow among other martyred leader widows. She is now at the grand age of 95.
- * He had three sons who are still alive. The eldest, U Tin Maung Thein, is 79 years old, the second, U Ko Ko Hla, 77, and the youngest, U Min Myat, 73.



Prof. U Min Myat (ret'd).

Towards the light of peace

“AS we are in the same boat, we need to help one another. As we are on the same path towards the same aim, it should be noted that the (Myanmar) saying ‘a different verse for a different school and a different verse for a different village’ would create numerous questions and answers that would take us far away from our aimed destination” said the State Counsellor at the opening of the Third Session of the 21st Century Panglong Conference as a reminder for all the forces to march towards the goal of peace in unity.

The State Counsellor went on to say, “After everything is agreed upon, if new things pop up here and there, it would destroy trust and we can reach a stage where all will go whatever direction they want to go. Peace is achieved not through pressure but only through understanding and trust. Darkness is removed by light and not by darkness. Those who had not signed the NCA and who had not participated in the creation of peace light are invited to participate in it with goodwill toward the Union. All are always being welcomed.” It is a great pleasure for us all to hear the words of the State Counsellor heartily welcoming those who had not yet signed the NCA towards the light of peace.”

At the opening ceremony of the meeting, the State Counsellor comprehensively touched upon the NCA in all seriousness. NCA is the foremost door and the initial step towards peace. It is the main portal of the political dialogue. It is a focal point or a level ground rare to find among the stakeholders. The door is opened for all-inclusiveness in the NCA which is a crucial part of the peace process. The State leaders are always extending a warm welcome to all.

NCA is the result of the dialogue among the Government, the Hluttaw and the Tatmadaw, based on the proposals of the ethnic armed groups. It emerges as an internationally-acknowledged solid agreement of the whole nation. The peace process that originates from the NCA is supportive of reducing the armed conflicts to a certain degree. The country has witnessed a political dialogue it had never seen in the past successive periods. One significant achievement is the reaching of political agreements as a part of the Union Accord.

Thanks to the results produced by the NCA, the ethnic races are enjoying the fruits of peace more and more amidst the armed conflicts. So, we invite all the groups and individuals who have not signed the NCA yet to come towards the light of peace in a peaceful atmosphere. ■

Recapturing the memories of 1947 Martyrs’ Day

By Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja
Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

EVERY year on 19 July, the entire Myanmar nation mourns for their fallen leaders who were brutally assassinated. Seven decades and a year have elapsed since that tragic event. Though Myanmar’s independence was regained without any armed conflict on 4 January 1948, this brutal assassination of its leaders, just a year preceding it, has tainted Myanmar history with blood and loss of its leaders.

Seven decades and a year is a long period in terms of history, during which good and bad events could have taken place. Surely, they did so in Myanmar history. For someone like, the writer of this article, who is now approaching his late octogenarian stage, his memories of the 1947 Martyrs’ Day unfold today.

It was in 1947 that the writer was preparing for the Matriculation examination to be held in March 1948. Brother Director Rev Clementine of St. Peters’ English High School, Mandalay, was in high expectations for all of his 26 pupils to pass the Matric examination with flying colours. Just two weeks before that tragedy took place, the writer and his uncle were planning to come down to Yangon to see the Yangon University with all its affiliating Faculties-Medicine, Engineering, Education, etc. It was the writer’s first visit to Yangon.

Then, all of a sudden, the sad news of the ‘assassination’ was on the radio. So, we took the earliest UBA flight to Yangon. Rather than visiting Yangon University, we went straight to the Jubilee Hall in downtown Yangon, where all the fallen leaders lay in state and were receiving tributes from home and abroad.

They were laid in glass coffins. Bogoyoke Aung San’s body was full of bullet holes that instantly killed him. We learnt that among the fallen leaders, some died on the spot, some died on the way to the hospital, and some passed away after some minutes in the hospital. We visited the Jubilee Hall almost every day to mourn.

The writer and his uncle chanted Paritta, especially Metta Sutta, calling upon the fallen leaders to take share in our good religious’ deeds and praying that they would be liberated from such kind of tragedies in their following existences and that Myanmar’s independence would be peacefully regained.

The writer had seen Bogoyoke Aung San twice — first, when he came to Mandalay and gave a political talk to the public, second, in a newspaper report on his “Public Address on



the Shwedagon Pagoda Platform”.

One other martyr that the writer knew very well was Sayagyi U Razak, the principal of Mandalay National School. Not only the school was close by, Sayagyi U Razak and his family were also our immediate neighbours. Though the writer never attended his school, all activities at Sayagyi’s school had an impact upon his boyhood days. Besides, Sayagyi, his mother, brothers and sisters were Buddhists and good friends of the writer’s mother, brother and sisters.

On the day Sayagyi U Razak was about to depart to Yangon, as he was appointed the Education Minister in Bogoyoke Aung San’s Cabinet, he came to our house to say goodbye. He asked the writer to become his P.A. (Personal Assistant). The writer’s mother agreed if the writer wished to be, but he turned it down as he wanted to be free before sitting for the Matriculation exam. So Sayagyi took his pupil Ko Htwe, who is sadly now lying near his master U Razak’s tomb.

When the writer was at Mandalay University College, he learned about U Ba Win, Bogoyoke Aung San’s elder brother, who had served at Mandalay Agricultural College before World War II. Like his younger brother, Bogoyoke Aung San, U Ba Win was a patriot, upright and outspoken, appreciating English liberal education but against the English colonial rule.

The writer learnt about Deedoke U Ba Cho as the most senior in age and experienced in politics, Myanmar literature and culture. He was the doyen in Bogoyoke Aung San’s Cabinet.

The writer appreciated his articles on Myanmar puppets and other performing arts, published in his *Deedoke Journal*.

Thakhin Mya was a school master in Myoma High School, Yangon. His pupils remarked that he was a good teacher in Maths, English, Burmese and History.

Regarding Mahn Ba Khaing, the writer used to study from his daughter who was a Maths professor at the Institute of Education. He was a successful small and medium businessman with a brokerage centre in his native town, trading in fruits and vegetables and other garden produce.

As for Mongpon Sawbwa Sao San Tun, the writer learned much from his two sons, who were my students in Modern History and Political Science class.

They were outstanding students in the writer’s class — very bright in English and Political Science. They helped the writer in compiling data on the biography of their father.

The writer did have some knowledge of the biography of ICS U Ohn Maung and U Razak’s personal assistant Ko Htwe.

The writer’s memories of the Martyrs’ Day did not end then and there. When he was appointed as the Director General of Fine and Performing Arts Department, Ministry of Culture, he was assigned to the duty of the annual Martyrs’ Day observance and all appertaining duties of the Martyrs’ Mausoleum. For nearly eight years, the writer successfully took the charge of the annual observance of the Martyrs’ Day. Besides, he received the State

Guests and newly-appointed ambassadors who came to lay their wreaths and gave homage to our fallen leaders at the Martyrs’ Mausoleum, including several dignitaries and luminaries.

The writer has mixed feelings — happiness and joy to have served his country successfully and have met international figures and leaders, sorrowful and mourning because some of these dignitaries have fallen from power, some assassinated and some passed away. But recently, the writer was overjoyed, because while he was in Malaysia, he heard that Mahathir Mohamed had won a resounding victory in the general election and became the prime minister of Malaysia, after some years of retirement.

His success gives the writer, who is just three years his junior, a wish to receive him again on the roof of the biggest monument in Bagan, where the writer briefed him on the history of the monument and the prime minister listened with interest and jokes, and making his lively, long visit a memorable one.

During General Ne Win’s time, at one of the parliamentary meetings, a proposal was made to compile an official biography of Bogoyoke Aung San, which was unanimously supported and approved.

The big task was given to the Department of Myanmar Historical Research, of which the writer was the Director General. The writer and his colleagues began that monumental work, going to libraries, field researches and personal interviews, tapping home and foreign resources, and then began compiling the biography. Although the first manuscript had been completed, many unexpected circumstances cropped up, causing unnecessary delay in publication. A couple of years ago, the typed files were excavated from the heaps of unpublished work at the office of Myanmar Historical Commission. Though some of the compilers are dead, retired or gone abroad, a group, including the writer, is still at the commission.

An official compilation on the Biography of Bogoyoke Aung San is now in the hands of his daughter, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Counsellor and the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs. It will come out, when it is ready. We have also learnt from the media that a film on the life of Bogoyoke Aung San has started to make a good progress. ■

To hoist flag of Myanmar half-mast and to sound siren on 71st Martyrs’ Day

THE President’s Office has issued an instruction to government departments and institutions, which in turn have to convey the instruction down to the lower levels of government organizations. The instruction stated that the flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar be hoisted half-mast throughout the whole country, on Thursday, 19 July (71st Martyrs’ Day), Myanma Radio and Television to transmit the sound of wailing siren at 10:37 am, the time Bogoyoke Aung San and his colleagues were assassinated, and all vehicles on the roads to stop for a moment and honk their horns.— Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 15th July, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over the Northwest Bay of Bengal still persists. Monsoon is strong to vigorous over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 16th JULY, 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, fairly widespread in Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States, isolated heavy falls in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasional squalls with rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35-40)m.p.h. Wave height will be about (9 - 14)feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuations of increase of rain in Kayin and Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16th JULY, 2018: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16th JULY, 2018: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR Mandalay AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16th JULY, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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) Own 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

Gaza truce mostly holds after heavy Israel strikes, Hamas rocket fire

GAZA CITY — A ceasefire announced by Hamas largely held Sunday after the most severe exchange of fire between Israel and Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip since a 2014 war, easing fears of a wider conflict for now.

Hamas, the Islamist movement that runs the blockaded Gaza Strip, said late Saturday a ceasefire had been reached with the help of Egypt and others, though Israel declined to comment.

The United Nations' Middle East envoy Nickolay Mladenov was in Gaza and "working with all concerned parties to de-escalate the situation," a UN official said on condition of anonymity.

Despite a few lower-level exchanges of fire overnight, relative calm returned to the Gaza Strip.

In one incident on Sunday, an Israeli aircraft fired at what it said was militants launching balloons carrying firebombs over the Gaza border fence. It was not yet clear if there were casualties.

Saturday saw dozens of Israeli air strikes, killing two Palestinians, while some 200 rockets and mortars were fired from the enclave at Israel.

Four Israelis were wounded when a rocket hit a house in the city of Sderot near the Gaza Strip, authorities said.

The two Palestinians killed were aged 15 and 16, caught in an Israeli strike on a building in the west of Gaza City, the enclave's health ministry said.

Twenty-five people were wounded across Gaza, the ministry said.

Hamas said it fired at Israel in defence in response to air



Palestinian youths walk through the wreckage of a building in Gaza City on July 15, 2018, the day after it was hit by Israeli air strikes. **PHOTO: AFP**

strikes, which came after a soldier was wounded by a grenade along the Gaza border.

Fawzi Barhoum, Hamas spokesman, said "the protection and the defence of our people is a national duty and a strategic choice."

Israel blamed Hamas for the escalation, pointing to months of protests and clashes along the border that its military argues the Islamist movement is seeking to use as cover for attacks.

There have also been hundreds of fires at Israeli farms caused by kites and balloons carrying firebombs from Gaza, leading to political pressure on the government and military to take action against Hamas.

'Hardest blow'

Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu said that Hamas had been hit with "the hardest blow" since a 2014 war and that "we will increase the strength of our attacks as necessary."

At the start of a cabinet meeting on Sunday, he denied what he said were reports that "Israel has agreed to a ceasefire that would allow the continuation of terrorism by incendiary kites and balloons".

"This is incorrect," he said. "We are not prepared to accept any attacks against us and we will respond appropriately."

Thick plumes of smoke had risen over parts of the Gaza Strip on Saturday as Israel hit dozens of targets it said belonged to militants, including a high-rise building allegedly used by Hamas as a training facility with a tunnel underneath.

The army said the strikes targeted Hamas military facilities, including a battalion headquarters, training facilities and weapons storage areas.

In Israel, air raid sirens on Saturday sent people rushing to shelters in areas surrounding the Gaza Strip as rockets and mortars were fired from the Palestinian enclave at nearby communities.

Israel said its air defences intercepted around 30 of the some 200 rockets and mortars fired. Tensions have been building between Hamas and Israel for months over mass protests and clashes along the border fence. The two sides have already fought three wars since 2008.

The protests have called for Palestinian refugees to return to their former homes now in-

side Israel.

Since the protests and clashes broke out along the border on March 30, at least 141 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire.

The majority of those killed were involved in protests and clashes but others were seeking to breach or damage the border fence.

No Israelis have been killed.

The arson balloons and kites from Gaza have caused 750 fires and burned 2,600 hectares, leading to hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage, according to Israel's fire service.

On July 9, Israel closed its only goods crossing with the Gaza Strip in response to the fires.

Hamas called the move a "crime against humanity," with Gaza already suffering from deep poverty and worsening humanitarian conditions.

Border protests

Border protests peaked on May 14, when the United States moved its Israel embassy to the disputed city of Jerusalem, but have continued at a lower level since then. On Friday, Israeli troops shot and killed two Palestinians, including a teenager, and wounded hundreds of others in border clashes.

An Israeli soldier was also moderately wounded when a grenade was thrown at him from the northern Gaza Strip, the military said. Israel says its use of live fire is necessary to defend its borders and stop infiltrations. Palestinians and rights groups say unarmed protesters are being shot while posing no real threat. —AFP ■

Sea mine explosion kills 5 Yemeni fishermen

ADEN (YEMEN) — At least five Yemeni fishermen were killed Saturday when an explosion of a sea mine laid by Houthi rebels hit their boat in the coast near the western port city of Hodeidah, a security official told Xinhua.

"A Houthi-laid sea mine exploded, killing five fishermen while eight others survived the incident," local security source said on condition of anonymity.

The explosion destroyed a small boat carrying the fishermen in Hodeidah's coast, the security source said.

"The fishermen apparently entered an area in the sea filled with different kinds of naval mines laid by the Houthi militias," the source added.

In June, Yemen's Foreign Minister Khaled Yamani declared in a press conference that it will take at least eight

years to clear about one million landmines planted by Houthi rebels across the country.

The minister said that the Houthis also laid hundreds of improvised sea mines, threatening the international shipping routes in the Red Sea and the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

Landmines and explosives laid by the Iranian-backed Houthis killed more than 1,500 people and injured about 3,000 in

Yemen between 2014 and 2016, according to government reports.

The Yemeni government and the Saudi Arabia-led coalition have urged the international community to take action against the militias that disturb maritime traffic in the Red Sea by planting naval mines.

The impoverished Arab country has been locked into a civil war since the Irani-

an-backed Shiite Houthi rebels overran much of the country militarily and seized all northern provinces, including capital Sanaa, in 2014.

Saudi Arabia leads an Arab military coalition that intervened in Yemen in 2015 to support the government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi after Iran-backed Houthi rebels forced him into exile. —Xinhua ■

US, North Korea hold talks on return of remains of American troops

WASHINGTON/SEOUL—The United States and North Korea held talks Sunday on the return of the remains of American troops who died in the 1950-53 Korean War, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported.

The general-level meeting at the inter-Korean border village of Panmunjeom began around 10 a.m. and lasted about two hours, Yonhap said.

Maj. Gen. Michael Minihan, chief of staff for the US-led United Nations Command, led the US side, while the North's delegation included a two-star general, according to Yonhap, quoting sources close to the talks. Further details were not immediately available.

While no details of what was discussed were immediately available, the two sides were expected to focus on how and when to repatriate the remains, according to US officials.

US and South Korean media have said North Korea is

expected to hand over about 200 sets of remains. In preparation for the handover, in late June US forces in South Korea send around 100 wooden coffins for transporting the remains to Panmunjeom.

The meeting came after US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, in their historic summit last month, committed to recovering more American remains, including "the immediate repatriation of those already identified."

Washington regards the repatriation of the remains as a test of Pyongyang's willingness to implement the agreement the two leaders reached in the June 12 encounter in Singapore, the first-ever summit between the two countries.

In a joint statement he signed with Trump, Kim also committed to "complete" denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.—Kyodo News ■



US President Donald Trump (L) and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**



German Chancellor Angela Merkel and US President Donald Trump make a statement to the press after a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the NATO summit. **PHOTO: AFP**

Trump's trip to Europe: top five highlights

LONDON — Here are five highlights from US President Donald Trump's trip to Europe, as he prepares to meet his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Helsinki on Monday:

- Sticking it to the Germans -

Trump started his trip Wednesday by blasting Germany for falling well short of its NATO spending commitments, while preparing to increase its reliance on Russian gas imports.

He tore into Berlin for paying billions of dollars to Russia while the United States spends billions on defending Germany.

"Germany is a captive of Russia because it is getting so much of its energy from Russia," he said, taking aim at the proposed Nord Stream II gas pipeline.

After meeting German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Trump changed his tune and claimed he had very good relations with her.

But on Thursday he was tweeting that Germany's stance was "Not acceptable!"

And on Friday, he described the pipeline as a "horrible mistake" that would give Russia power over Germany.

NATO spending spat

At the NATO summit in Brussels, Trump slammed allies for failing to meet their defence spending commitments, demanding that they meet their two percent of GDP pledge "immediately" instead of by 2024 as previously agreed.

Apart from the United States, only three of the 29 NATO

countries hit the two-percent target in 2017: Britain, Greece and Estonia.

He then stunned allies by telling them to eventually double the figure to four percent.

Trump claimed NATO leaders agreed to a big boost in defence spending.

But French President Emmanuel Macron disputed Trump's claims, saying that the joint statement the leaders had signed went no further than what had previously been agreed -- reaching two percent by 2024 -- apart from setting out how some countries plan to get there.

"We have left NATO with more money, more unity, more spirit than NATO probably has ever had," he claimed Friday.—AFP ■

News Analysis: US experts hold low expectations for Trump-Putin meeting

WASHINGTON — US experts expected little concrete outcome from the summit between US President Donald Trump and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin amid ongoing disputes which had deeply damaged ties.

At the talks scheduled for Monday at the Finland's capital of Helsinki, key issues likely to have "a prominent place" included the 2016 US presidential election meddling, nuclear arms control, Ukraine and Syria, Stephen Sestanovich, a senior fellow at the US think tank Council on Foreign Relations, observed.

The two sides so far have made little progress in reaching any agreement on the

above-mentioned topics, noted Sestanovich, an expert on Russian and Eurasian studies.

The alleged meddling of the elections was "an issue that Trump will be compelled to raise, given the public mood in the United States," said Dmitri Trenin, director of the foreign policy-focused think tank Carnegie Moscow Center.

The US Justice Department indicted 12 Russian military officers on Friday for their alleged hacking in the 2016 US elections, fueling more confrontational atmosphere on the issue. Russia's foreign ministry later denied the accusations, calling it an act to undermine Trump's effort to

mend ties. "Real agreement is unlikely and politically risky for Trump," noted Sestanovich, adding that the two sides may just "look for new positioning."

Arms control has been seen as "an easy win" at the summit, as both Trump and Putin have acknowledged that the arms race between Washington and Moscow required their attention.

Experts saw the extension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) as a relatively easy step.

The New START entered into force in February 2011 and is set to expire in 2021. Under the terms of the treaty, both Washington and Moscow are re-

quired to further cut strategic offensive weapons. The United States claimed to have met its obligations, which Russia said it could not confirm.

Putin and Trump should agree to start in-depth consultations to solve the problem, suggested Trenin. Stabilizing Syria could also be an issue on which the two sides may agree, wrote Aaron David Miller and Richard Sokolsky, US experts on international relations, in a commentary.

Trump did not expect much from the talks, as he told reporters on Friday in a joint press conference with British Prime Minister Theresa May during his visit to Britain. However "you may

come out with something very exceptional," the president said.

Trump saw his meeting with Putin as "another chance to demonstrate that he can deal with difficult foreigners so much better than Barack Obama," Trenin observed. The richest fruits of the Helsinki meeting could be its follow-up.

"Should the presidents agree on holding full-fledged summits in their own capitals next time, this would set the two bureaucracies in motion," said Trenin. Without concrete progress on any of these issues, nevertheless, this summit may just be a "bogus photo op", Sestanovich commented.—Xinhua ■

Czech churches cry foul over Communist tax plan

PRAGUE — Czech churches are up in arms against Communist Party plans to tax billions in compensation being paid by the state in return for assets, mostly land, seized by the Communists during their Cold War rule.

Under a 2012 law and deals with the state, 17 religious denominations — Christian and Jewish — are entitled to recover assets worth up to 75 billion koruna (2.9 billion euros, \$3.4 billion) seized by the atheist Communist regime after World War II.

These include the UNESCO-listed Baroque church of Zelena Hora and Kromeriz castle, a former bishops' residence in the east.

Works of art and almost 40,000 hectares (nearly 100,000 acres) of land dotted with vineyards and forests must also be returned.

Additionally, churches are due to receive financial compensation worth 59 billion koruna over 30 years for seized assets that cannot be returned in kind.

Arguing these sums are "excessive", the Communist Party wants to slap a 19-percent tax on the compensation from 2019.

Their bill is likely to pass given the leverage the Communists have with the new minority government of billionaire



Czech churches are up in arms against Communist party plans to tax the compensation the state is paying them in return for assets seized during the Communists Cold War rule. **PHOTO: AFP**

populist Prime Minister Andrej Babis, who relied on their backing to win a confidence vote on Thursday.

"It boggles the imagination," priest Stanislav Pribyl, secretary general of the Czech Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference, told AFP.

"How can you impose a tax on this (compensation)? We are the creditor and the state is the debtor here!" he added.

'Ruined lives'

With more than a million believers, the Catholic

church is the single largest denomination and is slated to receive up to 80 percent of the compensation package.

Believers however are a minority in the Czech Republic, an EU and NATO member state of 10.6 million people, where 8.6 million people identified as non-believers or left the religion column empty in the 2011 census.

Imposed by the Soviet Union, the Communist Party ruled Czechoslovakia from 1948 until the Velvet Revolution toppled the regime in 1989, four years before the country split

into the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Under communism, the Catholic church and others suffered severe persecution, including the confiscation of property and the imprisonment, torture and killing of priests.

"The Communists have never cut themselves off from their past, they caused economic damage, ruined lives and people's health," said Pribyl.

"If these people now want to slap a tax on the compensation, which is a partial remedy for all that injustice, it's a scandal,"

he added.

But Communist lawmaker Vladimir Konicek, the mastermind behind the tax bill, argues that churches stand to receive double compensation in some cases.

Konicek points to churches filing lawsuits over buildings and land which he insists are already covered by the state's cash compensation package.

"What is scandalous is the amount. In the end, they may get the payment and, if the court says yes, the assets too. So they'll get it twice," he said.

'Irrelevant'

With several hardline Stalinists in its ranks, the staunchly pro-Russian and anti-NATO Communist Party has gained a role in government, albeit an unofficial one, for the first time since the collapse of communism by backing the Babis minority coalition.

Both Babis's populist ANO movement and its left-wing Social Democrats coalition partners have no problem with the tax. "We agree with this in the long run," said Babis, a farm, chemicals and media tycoon and a pre-1989 Communist, who is facing an EU subsidy probe.

He is also accused of serving as a Communist secret police agent before 1989.

Babis has denied any wrongdoing.

Claiming that the compensation offered to churches is "54 billion koruna higher than it should be", Babis, who was finance minister between 2014-17, also insists that "it must be taxed".

Pribyl, however, claims that the level of compensation was approved by an international audit.

"I can't imagine any changes to the law or the deals with the state," he told AFP, slamming the Communist plan as "irrelevant".—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC MERGUI VOY. NO. (1819/1820)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC MERGUI VOY. NO. (1819/1820) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-7-2018 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
(S'PORE) PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ANDAMAN STAR VOY. NO. (1802 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ANDAMAN STAR VOY. NO. (1802 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-7-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of 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 BLPL SHIPPING LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 19th JULY 2018 (Martyr's Day), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

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Elderly account for 70 per cent of victims of torrential rains in west Japan

TOKYO — People aged 60 or over accounted for 70 percent of the victims of torrential rains that triggered massive flooding and landslides in western Japan, Kyodo News tallies showed Sunday.

Of 169 identified fatalities from Japan's worst weather disaster in decades, those aged 60 or older totaled 118 as of Sunday evening since the downpours began on 5 July, while six victims were under 10 years of age.

The 118 people include 11 in their 90s, 33 in their 80s, 43 in their 70s and 31 in their 60s. Some of these people were living alone and found it difficult to evacuate on their own to their flooded homes' roofs to avoid drowning. Others may have not been able to obtain emergency information swiftly.

The death toll from the floods and landslides caused by the torrential rains has risen to 217, ac-



Photo taken from a drone shows a flooded area in Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture, on 8 July 2018, following torrential rains that hit a wide area of western Japan. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

cording to the National Police Agency. Kyodo News tallies show over 20 people are still missing.

About 5,200 people continue taking shelter in evacuation centers in

16 prefectures as of noon Sunday, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency.

The Japanese government plans to provide special fiscal aid for recov-

ery efforts in the regions ravaged by the disaster, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Sunday.

While rescuers continued to search for the missing in Hiroshima,

Okayama, Ehime, Osaka and Nara prefectures, Abe said rebuilding work in the afflicted regions will be subject to special subsidization by the central government under the

Law Concerning Special Fiscal Aid for Coping with Disasters.

"We will help everyone get back to a normal life as we encourage (municipalities) to speed up their disaster recovery without fiscal concerns," Abe told a meeting of the government's disaster response headquarters.

The special aid will cover infrastructure reconstruction and support for businesses and farmers among other recovery efforts.

In recent years, such special aid has been provided for recovery work after the earthquake in Kumamoto Prefecture in 2016 and the rain-caused disaster in southwestern regions in 2017.

Rescuers, recovery crews and relief volunteers continued to face sweltering heat as the temperature topped 30 C across a wide area of Japan on Sunday. —Kyodo News ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(12/ 2018)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats.
- | Sr.No | Tender No | Description | Remark |
|-------|------------------|--|--------|
| (1) | DMP/L-047(18-19) | Welding Electrodes (5) Groups | Ks |
| (2) | DMP/L-048(18-19) | Magna Dewax PT-2066 Parafin Solvent & Demulsifier (2) Items | Ks |
| (3) | DMP/L-049(18-19) | Steel Wire Ropes (2) Items | Ks |
| (4) | DMP/L-050(18-19) | PAC-R (50) MT | Ks |
| (5) | DMP/L-051(18-19) | Spares for D-375 Pump Ex Card Well and GEFCO Drilling Rig (12) Items | Ks |
| (6) | DMP/L-052(18-19) | Chrome Lignite (XP-20) (200) Tons | Ks |
| (7) | DMP/L-053(18-19) | Assorted Kinds of Engineering Workshop Tools (7) Groups | Ks |
| (8) | DMP/L-054(18-19) | Spares for FLC 504 Derrick Shaker Unit (7) Items | Ks |
| (9) | DMP/L-055(18-19) | Spares for Komatsu Dozer (D 155A-1) (19) Items | Ks |
| (10) | DMP/L-056(18-19) | Spares for Komatsu Dozer (D 85 ESS-2) (37) Items | Ks |
| (11) | DMP/L-057(18-19) | Spares for Zoom Lion Crane (54) Items | Ks |
| (12) | DMP/L-058(18-19) | Spares for C-18 Marine Engine Ex MTBN-5 River Craft (24) Items | Ks |
2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qtty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moe.gov.mm) as from 16 July 2018. Tender forms will not be sold.
3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed** envelopes on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **14:00 pm on 15 August 2018.**
4. Tender Closing Date & Time- **15-8-2018, 14:00 pm**

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 19th (Thursday)
July 2018 “ MARTYRS’ DAY” under the
Negotiable Instrument Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar

ProjectsAsia Limited (Myanmar Branch)
Notice of Closure of Myanmar Branch

It is hereby notified that in pursuance of Head Office’s Board of Directors’ Resolution dated 20th June, 2018 the above Myanmar Branch has been closed down with effect from 30th June, 2018 since the existence of Myanmar Branch was no more required in the republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Notice to Creditors

The creditors of the above-named Myanmar Branch are required to send their names, addresses and the particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their attorneys, if any, to the undersigned Liquidator in person or by their attorneys to come in and prove their debts or claims on or before 30th September, 2018 or in default thereof they will be excluded from the settlement of such debts or claims.

Daw Thauang Mya Wai
LL.B, DA, DCA
Liquidator
Room (2D), Rose Condominium,
No. 182/194, 1st Floor, Botahtaung Pagoda Road,
Pazundaung Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar

Trade Mark : 09251022355

South Africa after Mandela — high hopes dashed?

JOHANNESBURG — Celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of Nelson Mandela's birth have focused attention on South Africa's progress since the euphoric 1994 elections that marked the end of apartheid.

The country's emergence from decades of white-minority rule was greeted with optimism around the world, but over the last 24 years South Africa has struggled to live up to Mandela's vision.

Race and inequality

A World Bank report earlier this year declared that South Africa was the most unequal society in the world — a damning indictment of the legacy of apartheid and the failure to tackle its aftermath. "Inequality has increased since the end of apartheid in 1994," the report said.

"Race still affects the ability to find a job, as well as the wages received once employed."

The report, which revealed three million more South Africans had slipped into poverty between 2011 and 2015, triggering vows of renewed action from President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Racism remains a constant theme of life, with racist comments on social media and in everyday life regularly sparking outrage and furious public debate.

The spatial segregation of apartheid has also changed little as many black people live in former townships such as Soweto while many white people live in middle-class suburbs.

An annual survey found that in 2000, 72 per cent of people thought race relations were improving, but only 45 per cent felt the same in 2014.

Economic pain

Unemployment has cast a long shadow both during and after apartheid. In 1994, the unemployment rate was approximately 20 per cent, with hopes high that the country's re-engagement with the global economy would lead to growth that would transform the job market.

But the statistics tell a grim tale. Unemployment is now at 26.7 per cent, close to its post-apartheid record high set in 2017.

Many analysts say the real jobless rate is far higher, and that

youth unemployment is over 50 per cent. The figures point to a whole generation of "born-frees" — South Africans born after 1994 — disenchanted, desperate for work and excluded from the mainstream economy.

South Africa's GDP growth has been patchy and often slow, increasing from 3.2 per cent in 1994 to 5.6 per cent in 2006.

It crashed to minus 1.5 per cent in 2009, before recovering to 1.5 per cent this year.

Health and AIDS

South Africa has the biggest HIV/AIDS epidemic in the world, with 7.1 million people living with HIV and an adult prevalence rate of 18.9 per cent.

President Thabo Mbeki's "denialism" caused life expectancy to drop from 62 years in 1994 to 52 years in 2006 as he questioned the link between HIV and AIDS and resisted a public treatment programme. Harvard researchers estimated that 330,000 people died unnecessarily. South Africa changed course in 2008 and now has largest anti-retroviral therapy programme in the world, financed



A woman at Cape Town's Met horse race, one of the richest horse races in Africa PHOTO: AFP

largely from its own resources.

Life expectancy has returned to about 63 years.

Violent crime

South Africa suffers from high levels of violent crime ranging from murder and rape to car-jackings and muggings.

Last year 19,000 people were murdered in the country — 52 a day. Fear of crime is a constant in many people's lives, and South Africans often believe that the problem has increased since 1994, but the statistics are much disputed.

A 2016 study said that in 1994

— when the country appeared on the edge of civil war — there were about 74 murders a day, pointing to a sharp fall since then, especially as the population has increased by about 36 per cent.

However the murder rate has picked up since about 2013.

Whatever the risk, South Africans live with the ever-present fear of violent crime, and those who can afford it live behind electric fences and high walls, monitored by security cameras and protected by armed guards. —AFP ■



Lotte Hotel Yangon to hold first Wedding Show on 21, 22 July

LOTTE HOTEL will hold its First Wedding Show on 21 and 22 July, offering a convenient and relaxing way for couples to arrange their wedding by selecting one of the specially — prepared Lotte Wedding Special Packages.

With the aim of helping guests arrange their most memorable lifetime experience, the wedding show will feature presentations of the most innovative ideas: there will be set-ups, creative displays and floral designs,

as well as designers' fashion show with live entertainment.

"With this event, a grand experience in itself, we are sure to inspire guests with an abundance of creative ideas and inspiration for planning a very memorable wedding," said the statement issued by the hotel.

Lotte Hotel Yangon has collaborated with leading wedding planners Signature Wedding and Event Planning to deliver this impressive and elegant show. — GNLM ■

China's 'Dallas Buyers Club' is surprise box-office hit

SHANGHAI — The screen portrayal of a cancer sufferer whose illegal import of foreign medicines into China spurred national policy changes has become a box-office smash as audiences flock to a rare Chinese film on a hot-button issue.

"Dying to Survive" is based on Lu Yong, who was arrested in 2013 after illegally importing a generic cancer drug in a case that sparked public debate about high medical costs.

It is being compared to "Dallas Buyers Club", the critically acclaimed 2013 US film about smuggled HIV treatments, and praised as a breath of fresh air in China's heavily censored cinema landscape.

The public debate eventually saw Lu's case dismissed and his experience is credited with prompting government steps to make cancer medicines more accessible and affordable.

Starring popular comic actor and director Xu Zheng as a character modelled after Lu, the movie uses touches of black comedy to lighten the heavy subject matter and is on course to become one

of China's highest-grossing films. Released 5 July, it surpassed even the first-week box office take of "Wolf Warrior 2", a commando adventure that last year capitalised on rising patriotism to become China's highest-grossing movie ever and the first non-Hollywood title in the 100 all-time top-earners worldwide.

Three years to live

Lu, now 50, was told in 2002 he had three years left after being diagnosed with chronic myelogenous leukaemia (CML).

Doctors said Glivec, manufactured by Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis, could stabilise his condition until he was able to get a potentially life-saving bone-marrow transplant.

But Glivec — Novartis' brand name for the drug Imatinib — cost a prohibitive 24,000 yuan (\$3,600) per bottle in China then.

An Indian generic version cost only 2,000 yuan, however, so Lu began ordering it from abroad, increasing the volume over the years as other patients sought his help.

The Indian drug was barred under Chinese rules and Lu was

eventually arrested. But in a rare case of Communist authorities bending to popular opinion, prosecutors in central Hunan province dropped Lu's case after thousands of Chinese leukaemia patients signed an open letter urging his release.

Lu, who says he never sought to profit from the scheme, was never charged. Since then, the government has relaxed policies on cancer drug imports and allowed reimbursement for Glivec prescriptions under national health insurance.

"I know the pressure of being tortured by disease, so I never thought to make one cent," Lu said in comments on his personal blog. "Since the movie's release, it's become a sensation.

To be able to push healthcare reform is an excellent thing," Lu, still awaiting his bone-marrow transplant, is now a businessman who owns a handglove factory in eastern China.

As of Friday, the film had earned 2.04 billion yuan (\$300 million). "Wolf Warrior 2" earned a total 5.67 billion yuan in a 12-week cinema run. —AFP ■

Silicon Valley eyes Africa as new tech frontier

SAN FRANCISCO—With its colourful hammocks and table tennis table, a new tech hub in the Lagos metropolis wouldn't look out of place among the start-ups on the other side of the world in Silicon Valley.

But the NG-Hub office is in the suburb of Yaba—the heart of Nigeria's burgeoning tech scene that is attracting interest from global giants keen to tap into an emerging market of young, connected Africans.

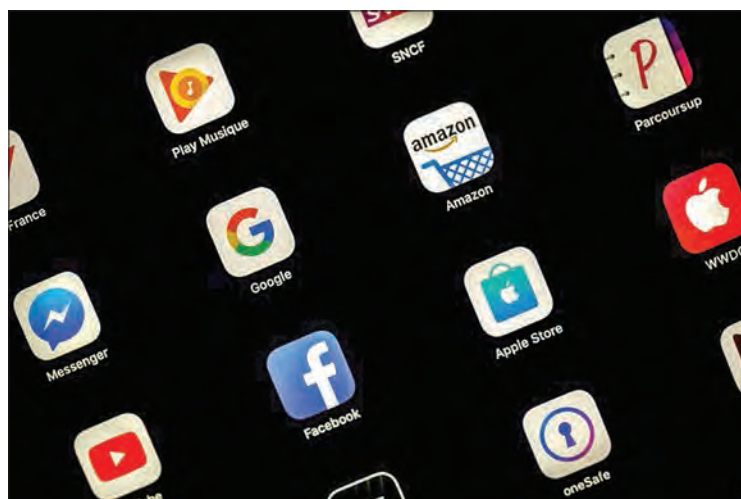
In May, both Google and Facebook launched initiatives nearby.

This week, Nigeria's Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo was in California to court US tech investors for what he said could herald a "fourth industrial revolution" back home.

But it isn't just Nigeria that is piquing the interest of tech giants.

Last month, Google said it would open Africa's first artificial intelligence lab in Ghana's capital, Accra. Demographics are a key factor behind the drive: Africa's population is estimated to be 1.2 billion, 60 percent of them under 24. By 2050, the UN estimates the population will double to 2.4 billion.

"There's a clear opportunity for companies like Facebook and Google to really go in and put a pole in the sand," said Daniel Ives, a technology researcher at



Facebook and Google have both launched initiatives in Lagos.
PHOTO: AFP

GBH Insights in New York.

"If you look at Netflix, Amazon, Facebook, Apple, where is a lot of that growth coming from? It's international," he told AFP.

Facebook is operating from the NG-Hub as it doesn't yet have a permanent office in Nigeria.

The company's Africa head of public policy, Ebele Okobi, said at the opening of the premises that the goal was to cultivate the nascent technology community.

The social network has pledged to train 50,000 people across the country to "give them the digital skills they need to succeed", she added.

In exchange, Facebook, which currently has some 26 million users in Nigeria, gets more users and access to a massive market to test new products and

strategies.

"We are invested in the ecosystem. Just the fact that they are engaging... that in of itself is a goal," she added.

Cyber colonialism?

Many African governments have given the tech titans an enthusiastic welcome.

In California, Osinbajo said the Nigerian government will "actively support" Google's "Next Billion Users" plan to "ensure greater digital access in Nigeria and around the world".

Few sectors in Africa inspire as much hope as technology, which has the potential to revolutionise everything from healthcare to farming.

Examples include Ubenwa, a Nigerian start-up that has been described as "Shazam for

babies", after the application that identifies music and films from snippets.

Ubenwa analyses a baby's cry using AI to diagnose birth asphyxia, a major cause of death in Africa when babies don't get enough oxygen and nutrients before, during or immediately after birth.

Detecting the problem early could save thousands of lives.

"Africans should be responsible to come up with the solutions," said Tewodros Abebe, a doctoral student studying language technology at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia.

"Unless we are involved, no one can understand the existing problems in our continent."

Abebe dismissed fears that what Facebook and Google are doing represents a form of so-called cyber colonialism.

"Working collaboratively I think is a good way of technology transfer for Africa," he said. "If they are only looking for business, that's colonisation."

'Epocalypse Now'

As Africa's technology sector grows, fuelled by growth in mobile phone use, so too does pressure on governments to protect its citizens' personal data.

Osinbajo told tech leaders Nigeria was keen to create the right environment for development, including for regulation.

But the debate over privacy is muted in many African countries, unlike in Europe, which recently passed tougher new data protection laws.

Facebook has also been at the centre of a storm for failing to protect user data in connection with claims of manipulation in the 2016 US presidential election and the Brexit referendum.

Global Justice Now, an anti-poverty group, fears tech companies are being given free rein to create a global surveillance state.

"We could find ourselves sleepwalking towards a world in which a handful of tech companies exercise monopoly control over whole swathes of the world economy, further exacerbating inequality between the global north and the global south," said the activist group in a May 2018 report titled "Epocalypse Now".

Renata Avila, from the World Wide Web Foundation in Geneva that campaigns for digital equality, said that has not come to fruition but there were pressing concerns. "The message is that Africa needs investment and it needs to develop these industries, so usually it's a pro-business narrative," said Avila, a digital rights researcher.

"But there is little oversight," she added, warning that without regulation, people were vulnerable to exploitation. —AFP ■

WHO recognises 'compulsive sexual behaviour' as mental disorder

GENEVA _ The World Health Organization has recognised "compulsive sexual behaviour" as a mental disorder, but said Saturday it remained unclear if it was an addiction on a par with gambling or drug abuse.

The contentious term "sex addiction" has been around for decades but experts disagree over whether the condition exists.

In the latest update of its catalogue of diseases and injuries around the world, the WHO takes a step towards legitimising the concept, by acknowledging "compulsive sexual behaviour disorder", or CSBD, as a mental illness.

But the UN health body stops short of lumping the condition together with addictive behaviours like substance abuse or gambling, insisting more research is needed before describing the disorder as an addiction.

"Conservatively speaking,

we don't feel that the evidence is there yet... that the process is equivalent to the process with alcohol or heroin," WHO expert Geoffrey Reed told AFP Saturday.

In the update of its International Classification of Diseases (ICD), published last month, WHO said CSBD was "characterised by persistent failure to control intense, repetitive sexual impulses or urges... that cause marked distress or impairment".

But it said the scientific debate was still ongoing as to "whether or not the compulsive sexual behaviour disorder constitutes the manifestation of a behavioural addiction".

Reed said it was important that the ICD register, which is widely used as a benchmark for diagnosis and health insurers, includes a concise definition of compulsive sexual behaviour disorder to ensure those affected can get help.

"There is a population of people who feel out of control with regards to their own sexual behaviour and who suffer because of that," he said pointing out that their sexual behaviour sometimes had "very severe consequences."

"This is a genuine clinical population of people who have a legitimate health condition and who can be provided services in a legitimate way," he said.

It remains unclear how many people suffer from the disorder, but Reed said the ICD listing would likely prompt more research into the condition and its prevalence, as well as into determining the most effective treatments.

"Maybe eventually we will say, yeah, it is an addiction, but that is just not where we are at this point," Reed said.

But even without the addiction label, he said he believed the new categorisation would be



The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognised "compulsive sexual behaviour" as a mental disorder, but is still to establish whether it has an addiction component as drug abuse does. **PHOTO: AFP**

"reassuring", since it lets people know they have "a genuine condition" and can seek treatment.

No excuse for rape

Claims of "sex addiction" have increasingly been in the headlines in step with the #MeToo movement, which has seen people around the world

coming forward with allegations sexual mistreatment.

The uprising has led to the downfall of powerful men across industries, including disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein, who has reportedly spent months in treatment for sex addiction. —AFP ■

France claim second World Cup title with thrilling 4-2 win over Croatia

MOSCOW — France won the 2018 World Cup after defeating Croatia 4-2 in the final played in the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow on Sunday thanks to an own goal from Mario Mandzukic, a penalty from Antoine Griezmann and second half strikes from Paul Pogba and Kylian Mbappe, while Ivan Perisic and Mandzukic scored for the Croatians.

Mandzukic was unlucky to flick a free kick from man of the match Griezmann into his own net after 18 minutes, although Perisic's 29th minute left foot shot gave Croatia hope before Griezmann scored a 38th minute penalty after the referee used the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) to determine Perisic had committed handball. France never looked completely in control against a brave Croatia side, but Mbappe was vital for the French on the break, helping set up Pogba for the third goal and then scoring the fourth from outside of the area. Mandzukic's fortunate goal gave Croatia late hope, but with Samuel Umtiti outstanding in defense France held on for their second World Cup title.—Xinhua



Antoine Griezmann (r front) of France vies with Marcelo Brozovic (l front) of Croatia during the 2018 FIFA World Cup final match between France and Croatia in Moscow, Russia on 15 July 2018. PHOTO: XINHUA

Yangon Academy U-13 advance to finals of youth football tournament in Thailand

REPRESENTING Myanmar, the Yangon Academy U-13 youth football team has made it to the finals of the Ayutthaya Asian Youth Football Festival 2018, which is being held in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya City in Thailand from 13 July. Yesterday, the Myanmar youth football team beat Thailand's youth club, Nara United Club, with an incredible 8-0 and successfully reached the finals of the tournament. All the Myanmar boys played energetically and dutifully to achieve the sweet success for their country.

The winning goals for Myanmar were scored by Kaung Khant Lwin, who scored 2 goals, while Kaung Zaya Lin, Maung Thaut, Han Myo Zin, Thet Paing Htut, Kaung Thant and Sanay Toe scored one goal each.

At the final match, Myanmar will play against PTT Academy on 16 July (today).—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

As World Cup ends, Russia's stadiums face uncertain future

SAMARA (RUSSIA) — Russian President Vladimir Putin knows the legacy of his World Cup will be judged partly by the fate of the stadiums after the tournament and he is determined they are put to good use.

Russia has spent at least \$4 billion (3.4 billion euros) on arena construction and refurbishments for the month-long showpiece.

Stunning venues rose from the ground in developed cities far from Moscow such as Nizhny Novogrod on the Volga River and in small and isolated places like Saransk. Putin's last TV phone-in show held a week before the tournament was unremarkable — until the moment he decided to underscore the importance of 12 stadium's fate.

Russia's dominant leader for most of the past two decades suddenly turned serious and even emotional. The regional bosses he was lecturing via video link froze



The ambitious stadium in Samara was meant to be topped by a glass dome but ran over budget and was finished in steel. PHOTO: AFP

behind their respective desks. "I want to address colleagues from the regions," Putin said.

"No matter what, you cannot allow these venues to turn into some sort of markets like those in the mid-1990s."

The idea of Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium becoming the go-

to destination for second-hand clothes might puzzle fans lucky enough to have tickets for Sunday's final between Croatia and France.

The 80,000-seat arena will be the focus of global attention and packed to the rafters.

But this will be Luzhniki on

its good day.

The venerable crucible of Soviet sport entered the era of Russia's independence in the 1990s looking scruffy and bleeding cash.

The country was mired in poverty and the only way to pay for Luzhniki's upkeep was by parcelling off space to fly-by-night merchants who set up stalls across its vast grounds.

It stood as the unsightly symbol of Russia's problems until being torn down in 2011 and lavishly rebuilt as the focus of the World Cup.

While Luzhniki's future as the national stadium is probably safe, it is the subsistence model that places such as Saransk and Samara are forced to consider as they inherit grand stadiums that will be home to teams that draw a few thousand fans.

Putin's promise

The stadiums that start to

resemble Luzhniki as it was in the 1990s will remind locals of the sums Putin splurged showing off how his Russia could stage the most complex event in the world.

Ones that help develop football and the neighbourhoods around them will be remembered as historic turning points.

A spin around the 11 host cities suggests that most of the 12 arenas are destined to struggle — at least at first.

Only six have teams playing in the Premier League that fans are willing to pay money to watch.

FC Mordovia Saransk have been promoted from third-tier status to the more respectable second division to help fill the stands.

The Black Sea resort of Sochi did not even have a team until being assigned one last month that usually played before a couple of hundred determined supporters in Saint Petersburg.—AFP ■