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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (fourth from left) poses for a photo together with Emeritus Senior Minister Mr. Goh Chok Tong (third from left) and responsible officials at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore yesterday. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

State Counsellor visits Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is in Singapore on a working goodwill visit at the invitation of Singaporean Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, visited the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) yesterday evening.

The State Counsellor and her entourage were welcomed at the School by Emeritus Senior Minister Mr. Goh Chok Tong and

responsible officials, and were given a brief summary of the School's history by Dean Prof. Danny Quah.

The State Counsellor and her entourage then observed classes in session at the School and took a documentary photo with the students.

The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy is an autonomous postgraduate school of the Na-

tional University of Singapore and was formally established in August 2004. According to the QS World University Rankings (2019), the LKYSPP is ranked at No. 1 in Asia. The School was named in honor of Singapore's first and longest-serving Prime Minister Mr. Lee Kuan Yew.

As of 2018, the LKYSPP has over 2,800 students from over 90 countries, and the School offers

master's degree programmes and PhD programmes, as well as educational exchange programmes linked with many universities around the world.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and her entourage were cordially entertained with a tea reception at the School by Emeritus Senior Minister Mr. Goh Chok Tong.

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Ni Din IDP camp in Kyauktaw closed

NI Din IDP Camp in Kyauktaw Township has been closed as all displaced people have been relocated to new houses near Ni Din Village.

Over 580 displaced people from 85 households were moved to new houses, according to the Rakhine State Government.

After closing four camps suggested in the interim report of the Advisory Board to the Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State, there are 18 IDP camps left in Rakhine State.

Taung Paw Camp in Myebon is underway to be closed and 100 families from the camp have been moved to new houses.

Budget has been allocated for construction of further 100 new houses, according to the Rakhine State government.

Negotiations are underway to close Thet Kal Pyin Camp, Gaung Dottha-1 and -2 camps in Sittway and Kyauk Ta Lone Camp in Kyaukpyu.

National IDP Camp Closure Strategy is being formulated together with UN and partners following the workshop on closures of IDP camps held in Nay Pyi Taw on 2 June 2018.— Myanmar News Agency ■

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Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's ninth regular session holds eleventh-day meeting

By Myo Myint, Han Lin Naing

THE eleventh-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's ninth regular session was held at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday morning.

At the meeting, members of union level organisations responded to the discussion of Hluttaw representatives on a joint public account committee report and the Hluttaw's approval was obtained, a report read and a motion tabled.

Union level organisations members respond to Hluttaw representatives' discussions

Union Auditor General and Deputy Ministers responded to the joint public accounts committee report 6/2018 on the committee's findings and comments on the status of construction work projects of the Basic Education Department and the Hluttaw representatives' discussions about the committee report.

Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun said the Basic Education Department was permitted Ks 131,593.635 million for 2,580 capital expenditure works and Department of Building, Ministry of Construction, was assigned to conduct the works. Department of Building conducted 33 construction works and 2,491 construction works were conducted through a tender system.

Ministry of Education had sent coordination letters for the timely completion of works assigned to Ministry of Construction up to the required quality in time in fiscal year 2017-2018. For



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

2018 April to September, Basic Education Department was permitted Ks 62,563.934 million for 4,810 capital expenditure works.

Due to increase in salary, there was a requirement for salary and the 4,810 works were returned as general excess fund. The returned works will be included in fiscal year 2018-2019 and if permitted, companies assessed and selected through tender by state/region governments will be assigned to conduct the works. For works that do not have fund included, it will be put in the additional list and submitted, said the Deputy Minister.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin explained that the ministry is no longer conducting building construction works on its own. The work is directly assigned to the state/region governments and the Union ministerial departments were also informed in writing about this. The Union ministerial departments were also assigning the construction

works to the state/region governments.

If small projects like constructing basic education schools, hospitals, small clinics and office buildings are not conducted and only architectural and structural drawings are drawn and budget requested, tender works can be quickly and easily conducted. Quality assurance is also required to be drawn up together. Funds for architectural designs and other designs, soil test and quality assurance are urged to be requested in advance one fiscal year by the ministries. If such matters are done in advance, tenders can be called in about two months and works can be started in three months, explained the Deputy Minister for Construction.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win said once the Union Budget Law is signed by the President, financial authorizations for departmental expenditures were issued in a

timely manner. It is necessary to prepare in advance so that works can be conducted quickly. For the works to be completed during the fiscal year, tender documents, formation of groups, assessments and calculations, calling of tender, evaluation and selection works need to be conducted using the time usefully. Construction works are conducted by calling tenders from outside contractors and quality assurance works are being assigned to state-owned construction department.

Project Appraisal & Progress Reporting Department, Ministry of Planning and Finance conduct field visit and submitted reports on its findings. The weaknesses found were in assigning and accepting works in a timely manner, lack of authorization down to the bottom level, unnecessary delays in all work processes, work agreements and payments systems, explained the Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance.

Union Auditor General U

Maw Than said 95 per cent of the works assigned by Ministry of Education to Ministry of Construction were conducted under a tender system and only 5 per cent is being conducted by Ministry of Construction. The latest date on which tenders agreements signed for tenders called by states and regions for fiscal year 2017-2018 was after the fiscal year on 14 May 2018. Therefore, there is a requirement to conduct the work processes for calling tender and signing agreements more quickly. As only 24.6 per cent of works assigned to Ministry of Construction by Basic Education Department, Ministry of Education, was completed, and more need to be done toward completing the works more quickly, according to set qualities and norms, explained the Union Auditor General.

Hluttaw then decided to approve and accept the report.

Reading of Joint Public Accounts Committee report and motion tabled to discuss it

Next a Joint Public Accounts Committee Report No. (7/2018) on the Office of the Union Auditor General audit report for fiscal year 2016-2017 was read by committee secretary U Khin Maung Than and committee member Daw Htu May tabled a motion for the Hluttaw to discuss it. Hluttaw decided to accept and discuss the motion.

An announcement was made for Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the motion to enroll their names.

The twelfth-day meeting of the ninth regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is scheduled to be held on 24 August, it is learnt. ■



PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Electricity and Energy Committee receives guests

PYITHU Hluttaw Electricity and Energy Development Committee Chairman U Kyi Moe Naing received a delegation from Myanmar Machinery Manufacturing Co., Ltd. in the meeting

room of Hluttaw Affairs Building (I-8), Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, the representatives from the company explained about using Ever Digital

Meter with Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) technology to reduce power wastes and discussed expanding the technology for electricity sector development. — Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi warmly greets Myanmar students at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

State Counsellor visits Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore

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Attending the reception with the State Counsellor were Union Ministers U Thaung Tun and U Kyaw Tin, Deputy Minister U Min Thu and officials. Accompanying the Singaporean Emer-

itus Senior Minister were Senior Minister of State at the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr. Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Ambassador of Singapore to Myanmar Ms. Vanessa Chan, and LKYSPP's

Dean Prof. Danny Quah.

In the evening, the State Counsellor attended a dinner at the residence of Singapore Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Office of President continues announcement of illegal drug arrests, seizures acting on tip-offs

THE Office of the President issued Press Release No. 11/2018 yesterday, publicly announcing the Ministry of Home Affairs' arrests and seizures in the fight against illicit drug trafficking up until 18 August 2018.

The ministry made the arrests, acting on information sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaints Department of the Office of the President, as of 18 August.

The full text of the press release will be reported in the 22 August issue of *The Global New Light of Myanmar* — GNLM ■

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

THE Union Supreme Court convened yesterday with Chief Justice of the Union Supreme Court U Htun Htun Oo and Union Supreme Court judges passing judgments on one (Certiorari) criminal

appeal case and four (Certiorari) civil appeal cases, along with hearing a (Certiorari) criminal appeal case and five (Certiorari) civil appeal cases.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Election Security Management Central Committee coord meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE 2018 Election Security Management Central Committee coordination meeting 1/2018 was held at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Home Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The coordination meeting was attended by Election Security Management Central Committee Chairman Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, committee members Deputy Ministers Rear Admiral Myint Nwe and U Soe Aung, Deputy Attorney General U Win Myint, Permanent Secretaries, Directors General, central committee secretary, Chief of Myanmar Police Force, state/region election security management committee chairmen state/region ministers for security and border affairs, state/region election security management committee secretaries heads of state/region police and officials.

At the meeting Central

Committee Chairman Union Minister for Home Affairs said by-election will be held for four Pyithu Hluttaw constituencies, one Amyotha Hluttaw constituency, and eight state/region Hluttaw constituencies in nine states and regions, contested by 65 candidates from 25 political parties.

For the by-election, security will be conducted by designating four security periods – pre-election period security, election campaign period security, by-election period security and post-by-election period security. Possibilities that could affect security need to be thought out to setup security arrangements and rehearsals and practices are to be conducted. Based on this, modifications to security are to be made and requirements are to be met. Officials providing security need to be overseen so that they systematically perform their work

according to laws and rules.

Security is important for the success of holding elections in states and regions. True news need to be issued in a timely manner. Emphasis should be placed toward coordination and cooperation among Union Election Commission and relevant organisations, said the Union Minister.

Next, heads of state/region

police who are state/region election security management secretaries explained about security arrangements prepared for by-election period security.

Afterwards, central committee secretary Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and meeting attendees explained about sector wise arrangements made for holding the 2018 by-election

successfully and peacefully, and coordinated on the requirements of security support materials and forces submitted by the state/region police forces.

The meeting then came to a close after Election Security Management Central Committee Chairman Union Minister for Home Affairs delivered a closing speech. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Election Security Management Central Committee Chairman Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe addresses the Central Committee coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

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

Yoma Strategic participates in national malaria elimination plan

By May Thet Hnin

YOMA Strategic Holdings will lead the private sector in joining in a national plan for malaria elimination.

Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance (APLMA), an affiliation of Asian and Pacific heads of government, and Yoma Strategic will jointly implement eliminating malaria in Myanmar by 2030 and have signed a partnership agreement for malaria elimination yesterday at Melia Hotel in Yangon.

Through public-private partnership in Myanmar, awareness campaigns of malaria will be conducted across the country. They will also conduct fundraising events for malaria elimination programme, led by the Ministry of Health and Sports, said CEO Mr. Melvyn Pun of Yoma Strategic.



A nurse giving an injection as part of a malaria vaccine trial at a clinic.
PHOTO: AFP

Yoma will hold educative talks concerning malaria disease. Awareness campaigns and fundraising events will be carried out through Wave Money, Pun Hlaing Siloam and Yoma's partner organizations, he continued.

Myanmar showed a significant improvement in ma-

laria control and elimination programme in the past decade. Outbreak of malaria has been remarkably declining and Myanmar is expected to end malaria outbreak within five or ten years. Private sector participation will accelerate the implementation of malaria elimination plan, said Mr. Ben-

jamin Rolfe, CEO of APLMA.

In 2017, malaria outbreak in Myanmar dropped by 82 per cent compared to that in 2012, and the malaria mortality rate declined by 92 per cent. "We are very pleased to see private participation in malaria elimination plan by 2030," said Prof. Thet Khaing Win, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

Myanmar has already laid down national plan strategy for malaria elimination by 2030, in cooperation with 26 local and foreign organizations.

Around 700,000 people yearly suffered from malaria in the past decade. In 2017, malaria outbreak was recorded in only 82,000 people. Malaria attacks yearly killed around 500 people in the past ten years. Mortality rate in 2017 was registered only at 31. ■

Gyobingauk Seed Cooperatives Association receives over Ks 70 million loan

A ceremony to provide loan for Gyobingauk Seed Cooperatives Association was held on 16 August at the house of local farmer U Myint Thein in Konmyint Village.

The loan was provided by the Cooperative Department from Gyobingauk Township, Thayawady District, Bago Region, and Township Co-operative Association Limited, with the aim of local member farmers to receive agriculture assistance and to produce good-quality crops.

The Cooperative Department provided Ks 70.2 million loan to Gyobingauk Seed Cooperatives Association.

At the ceremony, Daw Myint Myint Thwe of Township Co-operative Department explained about the terms and conditions of the loan, while U Kyaw Myint, chairman of Township Co-operative Association Limited explained about loans repayment and loan receiving steps for seed production.

Then, Daw Ni Ni Win from agricultural department

explained about how her department will support the local member farmers with cultivation method. U Myint Thein, chairman of Gyobingauk Seed Cooperatives Association urged members to abide by the loan terms and conditions. At the ceremony, U Kyaw Myint accepted the loan of Ks 70.2 million. The Township Co-operative Association Limited will provide about Ks 300,000 loan to each of the 49 members who owned 234 acres of farmland. — Zayyar Tun (Gyobingauk) ■

Man in Indaw charged for possession of opium powder



A 36-year-old man has been arrested on Sunday after police found a cache of some packages of opium powder from him, according to a police report. Acting on a tip-off, a combined force involving police and township administrative authorities, raided a house of Hnin Aung, in the east of Namakyaing Village, Name Village-tract, Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, at around 8 am on 19 August. Police found Ks3.32 million worth of white opium powder, weighing 33.2 grams, hid in his bedroom. Police are still investigating the case in an attempt to uncover those in connection with drugs smuggling.

Action is being taken against the suspect under Section 19 (a) of the existing Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances Law. — Ni Toe (Mohnyin) ■

Confiscated lands returned, compensation paid in Magway

According to U Win Maw Htay, Magway Region Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, after scrutinizing by investigation teams Magway authorities are paying proper compensation for land confiscated for various reasons that were used and are planning to give back lands that were unused.

"We are discussing with related authorities not only to give back the land but also to pay compensation for land which are used for projects. Recently, Ks. 2,565 million of land compensa-

tion have already been provided to the rightful owners," said the minister.

A total of 3,913.393 acres of land, including confiscated and other land, were already given back to land owners, during the term of the incumbent government. Out of that land, 1,528.3 acres of farmland were handed over to 250 local farmers, who were the original owners, he added.

Authorities are conducting land investigation for local farmers by forming a land investi-

gation team. The investigation team is formed with Hluttaw representatives, local farmers and elders, said U Win Maw Htay.

Authorities are facing many difficulties and challenges when they are giving back the land to local farmers.

However, they have conducted these matters in cooperation with related departments for the livelihood of the local farmers, said Dr. Aung Moe Nyo, Magway Region Chief Minister. — Zeyatu (Magway) ■

FMI share trading to be suspended for five days on YSX

THE share trading for First Myanmar Investment (FMI) Co., Ltd. on Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) will be suspended for five business days, including non-exchange transaction transfer (NETT), in order to conduct the issuance of one fully-paid bonus share for every twenty existing ordinary shares as “Bonus Shares” on the Record Day.

The FMI’s share trading will be suspended from 21st to 28th August, 2018. The trading for FMI share will resume on 29 August on a post issuance basis. The base price for FMI share will be announced on 28 August, 2018, according to a recent notice of YSX.

FMI’s notice of proposed dividend, recommended by the board of directors of the company, stated that shareholders of the company are entitled to the proposed dividend of Ks. 100 per ordinary share and the issuance of one fully paid bonus share for every twenty existing ordinary shares held as “Bonus Shares” for the financial year ending 31 March 2018.

FMI is an investment holding company that owns shares in companies engaged in a number of diverse businesses. Its core businesses are in the financial services, real estate and health-care sectors.

FMI also has investments



The Yangon Stock Exchange in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

in other companies, including companies engaged in the retail and tourism sectors and a company developing Thilawa Special

Economic Zone. According to trading data released by YSX, FMI share price hit its highest mark of Ks41,000 on 29 and 30

March 2016. At the closing time on 17 August 2018, FMI share price was worth Ks12,500. — GNLM ■

Sugar price up due new re-export licenses ban

FOLLOWING suspension of issuing new licences for sugar re-export on 17 August, sugar price is up by Ks100 per viss (3.6 lb.), said Ko Zaw Tun, a buyer.

Retail price of sugar was Ks975 per viss on 8 August. It fetched around Ks1,000 on 13 August and the price increased to Ks1,100 on 17 August and Ks1,150 on 18 August.

A temporary ban on new permits resulted in a slight increase of sugar price in local market, the price is not stable yet, said a buyer.

Sugar was purchased with dollars and imported into Myanmar, then sold with yuan and re-exported to China. This practice results in a net outflow of dollars that also depreciates the value of the kyat, overall.

New licences for sugar re-export is temporarily suspended due to soaring US dollar exchange rate. However, previously permitted licences are still valid to import.

A bag of 50-kilo sugar is worth 192 yuan in Muse border area. On 17 August, a bag of sugar was worth Ks41,788 when exchange rate of a Chinese yuan to kyat was Ks217.65. Prior to 17 August, sugar price was valued around Ks30,000 per bag.

Sugar will keep flowing into the local market from various foreign countries using old permits. It was only three months ago that a temporary ban on sugar re-exports was lifted.

Depending on Muse market, sugar prices might change in Yangon market. Currently, there is an increase of Ks100 but the sugar price has not been stable yet. But it currently fetches Ks650,000 per ton in the market, said Daw Nyo, a sugar depot owner from Bayint-naung market.

After lifting of sugar re-export ban in June, a ton of sugar was worth around Ks630,000 in Yangon market. And in the end of June, the price picked up a high of Ks700,000. But, it dropped to Ks590,000 in the second week of August. Myanmar’s merchants import sugar mostly from Thailand and India, and also from Brazil, Qatar and UAE, and then it is re-exported to China through the Sino-Myanmar checkpoint, as Myanmar sugar millers are unable to produce quality sugar that meets the export criteria for the lack of advanced refining machinery. The imported sugar is not allowed to be consumed domestically in order to protect local sugar millers. — Maung Se Aung/ Ko Khant ■

France-Myanmar trade increases by \$21 million this FY

EXTERNAL trade with France topped US\$109 million in the first half of the current six-month interim fiscal period, up by \$21 million from this time last year, when the bilateral trade was \$88 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce’s monthly statistical report.

Between April and June this year, the country’s exports of goods to France were valued at \$33 million while its imports exceeded \$76 million. Compared with the same time last year, this year saw a significant increase in value of My-

anmar’s exports by over \$18 million, whereas the imports from France slightly increased by \$27 million.

Myanmar exports textile products, clothing accessories, vegetables, certain roots and tubers, charcoal, pearls and wood to France. The country’s imports from the EU member state consist of machinery, mechanical appliances, plastic products, pharmaceutical products, glassware, paper and paperboard.

The ministry’s data show that Myanmar-France trade reached its peak of \$260 mil-

lion in the last financial year 2017-2018. The trade between the two countries was \$176 million in the 2016-2017 FY; \$110 million in the 2015-2016 FY, \$61 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$36 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$48 million in the 2012-2013 FY and \$81 million in the 2011-2012 FY.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, France’s investment in Myanmar was \$7.34 million in the last FY. The country has not seen any new investment from France this year.—Khine Khant ■

MRF to team up with WHH for rice seed development in Ayeyawady Region

MYANMAR Rice Federation (MRF) will cooperate with Germany-based Welthungerhilfe (WHH) organization to implement Rice Seed Sector Development (RSSD) Project in the Ayeyawady Delta, according to an announcement of MRF.

Both signed a partner agreement to carry out this RSSD project on 17 August at MRF office.

Dr. Myo Aung Kyaw, vice chair of MRF, U Nay Lin Zin,

joint secretary, and officials, Mr. Andreas Graf, WHH’s senior seed business advisor, and his team attended this signing event.

According to this agreement, WHH will provide seed refinery machines, warehouse management system, input, technique and management.

Agriculture sector attracts only less than 1 per cent of overall foreign direct investments flowing into Myanmar,

according to data of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

Foreign businesses have been allowed to invest up to 80 per cent in Myanmar’s agriculture sector, according to Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

From April to July this year, two foreign enterprises brought US\$10.6 million into the agriculture sector. — GNLM ■

Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung receives Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar



Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung meets with Japanese Ambassador Mr. Ichiro Maruyama. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung received Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar Mr. Ichiro Maruyama at the meeting hall of the Union Minister yesterday morning.

During the meeting, works conducted for human resources development of ethnic nationals in the border area, cooperation between Ministry of Border Af-

fairs and Japan's Nippon Foundation, JICA, BAJ, Cetana and TPA in Mon, Kayin, Shan and Rakhine states for road, bridge, education, health, basic infrastructure and social economic development works, status of all round development project conducted jointly by the Ministry of Border Affairs and Nippon Foundation in Mon and Kayin

states, status of education projects for peace and development, cooperation in regional development works, Government of Japan participating in Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) and Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong and future cooperation were cordially discussed and views exchanged.—MNA ■

48 dams, reservoirs overflow through spillways

THE water level in some dams and reservoirs in regions and states exceeded the full tank levels due to torrential rains and overflowed through their spillways. People have been urged not to worry about the overflowing water as it

goes through spillways into the rivers, said the Irrigation and Water Utilisation Management Department. Humon Dam from Lashio Township in Shan State has ceased overflowing from its spillway. Maha Nanda Lake from Shwebo Township,

and Kandaunt Dam from Pale Township in Sagaing Region and Yinshae Dam from Ngaphe Township in Magway Region are currently overflowing. A total of 48 dams and reservoirs are currently overflowing, said the department yesterday.—MNA ■

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee holds meeting

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee held a meeting on Forest Bill at the second floor meeting hall in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D yesterday afternoon. The two Hluttaws were in disagreement over the Forest Bill.

The meeting was attended by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Bill Committee Chairman U Tun Aung @ U Tun Tun Hein, Joint Bill Committee deputy chairmen, secretary, joint secre-

tary and committee members, Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee members, Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission members, officials from Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Office of the Union Attorney General and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office, it is learnt. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Bill Committee Chairman U Tun Tun Hein attends the meeting. PHOTO: MNA

Low-lying areas inundated as rivers swell in Hpa-an, Taninthayi

OVERFLOWING Thanlwin River waters have inundated low-lying areas, including some roads in Hpa-an yesterday, causing traffic chaos in some areas.

Over 8,000 people from 1500 households in low-lying areas have moved to 11 temporary shelters.

The overflow water also flooded in some villagers in the township.

People living near the river banks and low-lying areas in Hpa-an have been alerted to possible rising water as the water level of the Thanlwin River has reached above its danger level.

Flood condition of Thanlwin River

According to the Meteorology and Hydrology Department's 1:30 pm observation yesterday, the water level of the Thanlwin River has exceeded by about 5½ feet at Hpa-an above its danger

level.

It may rise about ½ foot during the next one day and may remain above its danger level.

Meanwhile, over 560 people from 107 households from low-lying areas and villages Taninthayi have been evacuated to safer places as the overflow waters from the Taninthayi River inundated the areas yesterday.

The Taninthayi River reached its danger level yesterday, the third rise in this rainy season.

Flood condition of Ayeyawady River

According to the weather bureau's 1:30 pm observations yesterday, the water levels of the Ayeyawady River at Hinthada and Zalun are observed as each about (1½) feet below their respective danger levels.

The water levels may reach their respective danger levels



Local people wade through the flood in a street in Hpa-an. PHOTO: HPA-AN IPRD

during the next (3) days, said the weather bureau.

A flood alert has been sounded Hinthada and Zalun townships as the water level of the Ayeyawady River is expect-

ed to go up.

Flood condition of Sittoung River

According to the weather bureau's 1:30 pm observation

yesterday, the water level of the Sittoung River has exceeded by about 2½ feet at Madauk above its danger level. It may remain above its danger level during the next (5) days.—GNLM ■

Union Minister U Win Khaing conduct consultation on China–Myanmar bilateral cooperation in electricity, energy sectors

THE Myanmar delegation led by U Win Khaing, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy who was in Beijing, Republic of China discussed with CNPC International Co. Ltd. Chairman and Petro China Co. Vice Chairman Mr. Wang Zhongcai and officials, officials from Sino Pipeline International Co., Ltd., Petro China Gas Marketing Co., Ltd. and Chinnery Assets Limited on the morning of 19 August.

At the meeting, they discussed matters related to China–Myanmar bilateral cooperation in oil and gas sector, future potentials and opportunities and cooperation programs.

Later in the afternoon, the Union Minister and party met with Power China Group Executive Vice President Mr. Li Yanming and officials, TBEA Company Limited President Mr. Huang Hanjie and officials, China Energy Engineering Group International Company Limited President Mr. Yang Yisheng and officials, China

Huadian Company Chairman Mr. Feng Zheng and officials, Zhefu Holding Company Chairman Mr. Sun Yi and officials.

During the meeting, they discussed speeding up the timely completion of Liquefied natural gas (LNG) and waste heat power plant projects, hydropower projects and national power line construction projects that were being jointly conducted by the two countries.

The Union Minister and

Myanmar delegation met with People's Republic of China National Energy Administration Administrator Mr. Nur Bekri and officials and discussed matters relating to bilateral cooperation, electricity and energy sector projects under China-Myanmar economic corridor.

Later in the afternoon, the Union Minister and party visited Electric Power Planning Design & Research Institute. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister U Win Khaing discusses with TBEA Company Limited President Mr. Huang Hanjie in Beijing. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint signs book of condolences for former Indian PM



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint signs the book of condolences for India's former Prime Minister Mr. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION MINISTER for Information Dr. Pe Myint signed the book of condolences for the demise of former Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India at the Embassy of India, Merchant Street, Yangon, yesterday morning.

Former Prime Minister of India H.E. Mr. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee passed away at All

India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS), New Delhi, on 16 August. India is observing a week-long state mourning for the former Prime Minister from 16 to 22 August.

The Indian Embassy will be kept open from 10am to 12 noon and from 3pm to 5pm on 20 and 21 August for those who wish to sign the book of condolences. — MNA

Union Minister U Ohn Maung attends Myanmar Traditional Food Show in Bagan

UNDER the guidance of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, a two-day Myanmar Traditon Food Show 2018 was successfully held by Myanmar Tourism Federation, Myanmar Hoteliers Association and Myanmar Restaurant Association near Lawkananda Pagoda in Bagan on 18 and 19 August.

The Union Minister deliv-

ered an opening speech at Myanmar Traditional Food Show 2018 on 19 August and Mandalay Region the Commerce Minister, chairpersons, secretary and members of Myanmar Tourism Federation and associates, officials from related departments, diplomats, development partner associations and 300 representatives attended the event.

Myanmar Restaurant Association and Myanmar Chefs Association displayed traditional and locally well-known dishes with 26 stalls from nine places —Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan, southern Shan, Kayah, Mawlaymyine, Dawei, Kayin and Kyaito.

The Union Minister said in his opening remark that this event aims to promote tourism

in green season with the title of Taste of Bagan- Flavours. Also, this food fair is an initiative for promotion of Myanmar traditional food among local people and foreigners.

Tourism may bring about socio-economic development of the people, promotion traditional food and preservation of customs of the local people and cultural heritage.

Food tourism has grown considerably and has become popular among tourists. Food competitions are held to attract the tourists in foreign countries. World Food Tourism Association set 2018 as the Year of the Gastronomy and held food shows to promote gastronomy tourism. Through food show, tourists can taste traditional foods and locally well-known cuisines.

Efforts are needed to create Bagan a popular tourist destination in the competitive tourism market, promoting traditional food. Bagan is such a nice place to travel in the rainy season and this show aims to promote this trip among local

and foreign travelers.

The government is making efforts for Bagan to be listed on UNESCO's World Heritage. All the stakeholders in tourism industry need to cooperate to hold the events like that every year.

The Union Minister and the guests visited the food stalls and encouraged the rowing festival held in Lawkananda Pagoda.

Afterwards, the Union Minister inspected Community Based Tourism implementation and improvement in Magyee-kan Village in Salay Town, Magway Region and addressed the officials to facilitate the visitors and create affordable trip plan. He also advised the related officials to ensure electric power in the village and prepare medical aids.

The CBT can bring benefits to the local residents during a short term. Currently, 21 destinations are designated for CBT and 15 CBT plans in 38 villages are completed. The remainders will be continued to be implemented.—MNA ■



Union Minister U Ohn Maung visits the food stalls in Lawkananda Pagoda in Bagan. **PHOTO: MNA**

Ecosystem conservation

ONCE, forest resources covered 50 percent of the land surface of Myanmar. But, sadly, forest resources had been extensively exploited as one of the main sources of foreign exchange income for the country and for domestic use during the past three decades. And there were also illegal logging and indiscriminate firewood cutting that caused further depletion of forest resources to an unknown extent.

The loss of forest resources was followed by environmental destruction and climate changes as barren landscape is more vulnerable to man-made and natural disasters. Nowadays the entire mankind is facing a lot of problems and hazards and unprecedented degree of natural disasters resulting from climate change. But wildlife is experiencing more hardships as changes in weather patterns has shrunk, and in some cases totally wiped out, most of their habitats. In fact, those events remind us to protect and conserve forest resources as our lifeblood. Beyond that, we must protect and conserve the ecosystem.

An ecosystem includes all of the living things (plants, animals and organisms) in a given area, interacting with each other, and also with their non-living environments (weather, earth, sun, soil, climate, and atmosphere). Ecosystems are the foundations of the biosphere and they determine the health of the entire earth system.

Ecosystems have no fixed boundaries; instead their parameters are set according to the scientific, management, or policy limits. Depending upon the purpose of analysis, a single lake, a watershed, or an entire region could be considered an ecosystem. If a stream is flowing across a forest, both the forest and stream are relying on one another. If the stream dries up, the forest cannot survive, and if the forest is depleted, the stream dies. Here, the stream represents all the natural waterbodies and watercourses and other non-living things, such as land, mountains of the world, and the forest stands for

all the living things including all species of flora and fauna. So, this is a clear example of the interdependent ecosystem of the livings and non-living things on which the very survival of the Earth depends.

It is the duty of mankind to protect and preserve the remaining parts of the whole ecosystem, including wildlife and trees. We in Myanmar are also responsible for the sustainability of the ecosystem. But it is an enormous task. So, the relevant department alone cannot do the job. It alone cannot protect the ecosystem from becoming damaged as the ignorant are still destroying the ecosystem, knowingly and unknowingly. The work calls for the awareness and the involvement of the entire people.

For example, an elephant conservationist was selected for the State Counsellor's gratitude of honour for July this year. According to the records, there are a total of about 150 elephants living in the six forest reserves in Ayeyawady Region, Ngaputaw Township. To prevent the wild elephants from being killed by poachers, protection and conservation works were jointly conducted by governmental and non-governmental organizations, in which U Kyaw Myint Tun @ U Tun Lay of Tin Chaung Village Tract was an enthusiastic participant. Thanks to his relentless efforts, some poachers were arrested, poaching weapons and equipment were seized and elephants can be saved to a certain extent. In fact, saving wildlife amounts to conserving the ecosystem.

So, like this elephant hero, all citizens, well-wishers, and civil society organizations of Myanmar should take part in protecting and conserving the ecosystem with might and main.

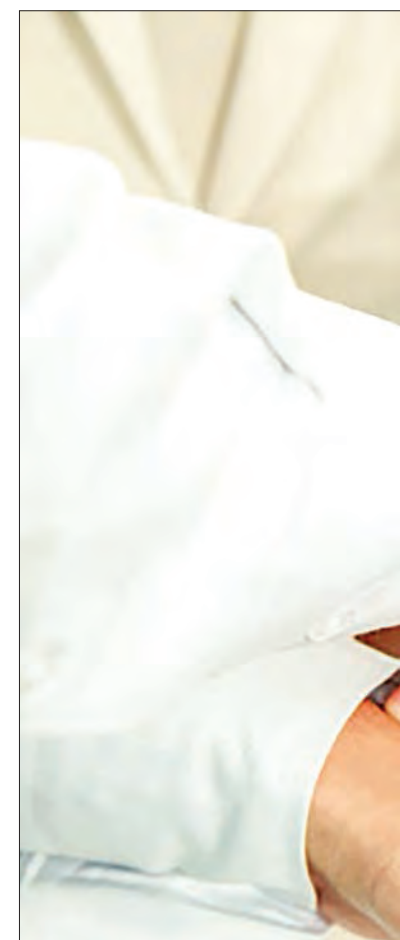
APCSS as a Bridge for

By Professor Chaw Chaw Sein

Civil-military relations (CMR) is important for consolidation of democracy, especially for a country in transition from military to civilian administration. Myanmar's transition since 2011 has been praised by the world due to its peaceful transition and positive reforms. It is no doubt that eight years of its transition is still young and facing with challenges ahead. In this context, it is necessary to have healthy CMR environment in order to tackle these challenges. International collaboration is also one of the supporting factors that can bridge CMR. Here, I would like to highlight an institute, which conduct as a bridge for CMR for the countries in the regions. The Institute is known as Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (DKI APCSS). It is a Department of Defense academic institute that addresses regional and global security issues through various events, attended by Asia-Pacific security practitioners. Since being established on 4 September 1995 in Honolulu, Hawaii, APCSS has built – and continues to build – relationships of trust and confidence among current and future leaders and decision-makers within the Asia-Pacific region. Since its inception, APCSS has run numerous courses, conducted many workshops, and published many documents in effort to advance security in the Asia-Pacific region. The collaboration between Myanmar and APCSS has taken place since

events that I had participated in APCSS. My first participation was the workshop on “Building Inclusive Security Sector in Myanmar”, held in Nay Pyi Taw from 15 through 19 August 2016. It was jointly hosted by Myanmar National Defense College and APCSS. The aim of the bilateral workshop was to share information and to explore potential paths to further enable the security sector transformation and development process in Myanmar. The joint workshop brought together senior officials from Myanmar governmental and security organizations to develop a shared perspective on critical, non-traditional security challenges. The participants were mixed with civilian and military officers. It was a great opportunity for both civilian and military to work together for the understanding of security issues facing the country and finding the way to draft the strategy for action plan.

In December 2016, I was nominated by the Ministry of Education together with four officers from the Ministry of Defense to attend the five-day workshop on “Security Sector Development: National Priorities and Regional Approaches” at APCSS, Honolulu. The five-day workshop was the interaction of multinational whole of government Security Sector Development engagement. The workshop provided five multi-agency cohorts from selected Indian Ocean littoral countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar and Sri Lanka),



professional backgrounds and included military officials, senior military defense, law enforcement, foreign affairs and academia. The workshop enabled creation by each country cohort of a country-specific plan related to an important national Security Sector Development issue, as well as creating a networking mechanism for enhanced security sector collaboration within and between each participant country.

I was nominated again by my Ministry to attend the course on Comprehensive Security Response to Terrorism (CSRT 18-1) at APCSS. It was a four-week course from 12 July to 8 August 2018. It is an honour for me to be back at APCSS as alumni. Truly, it is my pleasure to be part of this distinguish set of people coming from 49 countries and organizations all over the world, representing Southeast Asia, Oceania, South Asia, Middle East and Latin America. This could have not happened without the continued efforts undertaken by APCSS in formulating programmes that would be beneficial for the practitioners in combating terrorism. Of the 108 participants, 64% were from military organizations and law enforcement agencies, with others representing various government ministries, foreign affairs departments and intelligence services and academic institutions.

Let me share some salient points about the course on CSRT



2013 and a hundred and seventy-six fellows (51% civilian and 49% military) from Myanmar had participated the courses offered by APCSS. Among them, thirty-two fellows are women.

Let me highlight three

a platform for enhanced shared understanding of the evolving priorities of national security sectors and the development of a country-specific security sector section plan. Workshop participants had a mixture of

Civil-Military Relations



provided by APCSS. Firstly, APCSS educates and connects us as security practitioners but also helps us share understanding of security threats, challenges that we face today and how to deal with them. Secondly, APCSS makes a lifelong network of professionals (civilian) and security practitioners (military) that will

explore the nature of current and future terrorist threats. It also contributes to achieve a common understanding of global and regional terrorism challenges through lectures from the faculty experts and guest speakers.

Finally, the most interesting programme offered by APCSS is a "Fellow Project". Each par-

My Fellow Project is "Proposal for MA (Security and Strategic Studies) at the University of Yangon". The aim of my Fellow Project is to have healthy CMR with civilian control over military as a long-term goal. In order to meet this goal, it is necessary to produce civilian security experts in academic that will support the security oversight over military. The project cannot be successful without support of my Department (IR), University of Yangon and APCSS. The first step of the action plan for the project is to draft a curriculum. The second step is to get approval from the Board of Study, University Senate and Ministry of Education. I do believe that this project will contribute a stable democratic transition of Myanmar and will support the CMR in nation building, state building, trust building and peace building.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my Ministry and my country for giving me a chance to attend this course. My special thanks go to DKI APCSS and the American Embassy of Myanmar for providing all the necessary requirements and taking care during my stay in Honolulu. I would like to put on record the gratitude I owe to the Ministry of Education and the University of Yangon for every single arrangement to visit APCSS.

References:

<http://www.apcsslink.org>



APCSS educates and connects us as security practitioners but also helps us share understanding of security threats, challenges that we face today and how to deal with them. APCSS makes a lifelong network of professionals (civilian) and security practitioners (military) that will continue to exchange, share and support each other.

continue to exchange, share and support each other. Thirdly, attending this course gives us the opportunity to know and understand, to hear and learn from the experience of all other fellows from many different countries. It offers a good platform and environment for reflection, learning and exchange of ideas and to

participating fellow needs to submit project proposal that will help improve security sector governance and the capacity of nations to deal with security matters. More specifically, the Fellow's Project is designed to directly support us in our work and should involve some aspect of security-based cooperation.

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 14:00 hrs M.S.T on 20-8-2018)

Flood condition of Sittoung River

According to the (13:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Sittoung River has exceeded by about (2½) feet at Madauk above its danger level. It may remain above its danger level during the next (5) days.

Flood condition of Thanlwin River

According to the (13:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Thanlwin River has exceeded by about (5½) feet at Hpa-an above its danger level. It may rise about (½) foot during the next (1) day and may remain above its danger.

Advisory

It is especially advised that people who have settled near the river banks and low lying area in Hpa-an, to avert due to the rise of water level and Madauk, to take precautionary measures.

Flood Warning

(Issued at 14:00 hrs M.S.T on 20-8-2018)

According to the (13:30) hrs MST observations today, the water levels of Ayeyawady River at Hinthada and Zalun are observed as each about (1½) feet below their respective danger levels. The water levels may reach their respective danger levels during the next (3) days.

It is especially advised that people who have settled near the river bank and low lying areas at Hinthada and Zaluntownships, to take precautionary measures.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 20 August, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs MST today, the low pressure area over the Northwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining West Bengal and Odisha coast (India) has moved to North Odisha coast (India). Monsoon is moderate to strong over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 21 AUGUST 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Kayah State, fairly widespread in Kachin State and widespread in the remaining regions and states with isolated heavy falls in Mandalay, Magway, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) mph. Wave height will be about (7 - 10) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Moderate monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 AUGUST 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 AUGUST 2018: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 AUGUST 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Israeli soldiers trade fire with Palestinian on Gaza border

JERUSALEM— Israeli soldiers and a Palestinian militant exchanged gunfire on the Gaza border on Monday, the army said, despite efforts to reach a long-term truce between the two sides.

Israel also kept its only crossing for people into the blockaded Gaza Strip closed for a second day in response to weekend border clashes.

“A terrorist shot at IDF troops in the northern Gaza Strip, in response IDF troops shot towards the terrorist,” the army

said in a statement, referring to the Israel Defence Forces.

No soldiers were wounded. On Sunday, Israel had closed the Erez crossing with the Gaza Strip except for humanitarian cases after weekend border clashes.

A spokeswoman for the Israeli defence ministry unit that oversees the passage said that Erez remained closed on Monday and would be so “until further notice”.

The closure and border incidents occurred despite attempts

by Egypt and UN officials to reach a long-term truce between Israel and Hamas, the Islamist movement that runs the Gaza Strip.

The two sides have fought three wars since 2008.

Israel has enforced an air, land and sea blockade on the Gaza Strip for more than a decade, but grants permission to a limited number of people to cross for various reasons.

An average of around 1,000 Gazans cross through Erez each day, mostly those in need of med-

ical care but also businesspeople, students and others, Israeli authorities say.

Israel had just last week reopened its only goods crossing with Gaza after closing it to most deliveries for more than a month over border tensions.

Gaza’s only other border is with Egypt but the Rafah crossing with the enclave had largely been kept closed in recent years. Cairo opened it in mid-May and it has mostly remained so since.

UN officials and Egypt have

been seeking to secure a long-term truce between Hamas and Israel to allow for humanitarian issues in the impoverished enclave of two million people to be addressed.

Israel is demanding calm and a return of the remains of two soldiers Hamas is believed to be holding. Two Israeli civilians, both said to be mentally unstable, are also believed to have entered Gaza and to be held by Hamas. Israel is also seeking their return.—AFP ■

Ebola deaths in DR Congo rises to 49 with 2,000 feared ‘contacts’

KINSHASA (DR Congo) — The deadly Ebola outbreak in eastern DR Congo has now claimed 49 lives since the start of the month, the government has said, and the World Health Organization expects more cases.

The gradually increasing death toll, with a further 2,000 people feared to have come into contact with the virus, adds to the woes of a country already facing violence, displacement and political uncertainty.

First reported on August 1 in the North Kivu province, the current outbreak has killed 49 of

the 90 cases reported, according to the latest health ministry bulletin on Saturday.

It said of the 49 deaths from the haemorrhagic fever, 63 were confirmed and 27 were probable. Confirmed cases are verified through laboratory tests on samples taken from patients. The cases treated as “probable” often concern sick people with a close epidemiological link to confirmed cases, but who have not been tested.

Most deaths — 39 — were recorded in the agricultural village of Mangina 30 kilometres

(some 20 miles) southwest of the city of Beni. Three deaths occurred in the neighbouring province of Ituri.

Field teams also identified 2,157 “contacts” — people who may have been in contact with the virus — according to the health ministry. WHO spokesman Tarik Jasarevic told reporters on Friday from the UN agency’s Geneva headquarters that it “expects more cases”.

“We do not know if all the chains of transmission have been identified,” he added.

The outbreak is the 10th to strike the DRC since 1976, when Ebola was first identified and named after a river in the north of the country. Ebola has long been considered incurable, though swift isolation and the rapid treatment of symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhoea and dehydration has helped some patients to survive. The quest for a vaccine grew increasingly urgent during an Ebola epidemic that killed more than 11,300 people in the West African states of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2013-15.—AFP ■



The current Ebola outbreak was first reported on 1 August.
PHOTO: AFP

Afghanistan waits for Taliban response to truce offer

KABUL — Afghanistan was waiting on Monday for a Taliban response to President Ashraf Ghani’s suggestion of a three-month ceasefire, an offer welcomed by the United States and NATO after 17 years of war.

Ghani unveiled the government’s latest gambit during an Independence Day address late Sunday, saying security forces would observe the truce beginning this week — but only if the Taliban reciprocated.

The move followed an extraordinarily violent week in Afghanistan that saw that Taliban storm the provincial capital of Ghazni — just a two hour drive from Kabul — and press the fight against security forces across the country, resulting in hundreds of deaths.

The president said his office had cleared “all obstacles” to peace with the announcement following consultations with religious scholars, political parties and civil society groups.

The proposal was warmly greeted by both NATO and the US, with Secretary of State Mike

Pompeo calling on the Taliban to participate.

The Taliban did not immediately respond to Ghani’s proposal but vowed to release hundreds of “enemy prisoners” to mark the Islamic Eid al-Adha holiday that starts this week.

Analysts said the government’s move belied the desperation after recent heavy bloodshed.

“After Ghazni City and everything else, this looks really desperate,” tweeted Bill Roggio, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defence of Democracies.

If the militants accede to the ceasefire, it would be just the second nation-wide truce since the US-led invasion in 2001 that toppled the Taliban regime.

The first, in June, saw thousands of insurgents pour into cities across Afghanistan, eating ice cream and posing for selfies with security forces to celebrate.

The brief respite observed by both sides spurred hopes that a new path was opening for possible peace talks in the country to the end the nearly 17-year-old war.—AFP ■

Egyptian accused of hijacking plane extradited from Cyprus

CAIRO (Egypt) — An Egyptian man accused of hijacking a plane and diverting it to Cyprus has been sent back from the Mediterranean island to his homeland after a two-year extradition battle, officials said on Sunday.

Seif al-Din Mohamed Mostafa, 61, allegedly used a fake suicide belt to seize an EgyptAir airliner from Alexandria to Cairo

in March 2016.

“Cypriot authorities yesterday handed over to the Egyptian authorities, Egyptian detainee Seif al-Din Mohamed Mostafa,” a statement from Cyprus’s justice ministry said.

Officials at Cairo airport confirmed his arrival amid tight security late Saturday.

Egypt’s attorney general

said that Mostafa was being handed over to prosecutors in the country for further investigations.

Mostafa fought his extradition on the grounds he will not receive a fair trial in Egypt, but the Cypriot supreme court dismissed Mostafa’s appeal against being sent home last year.

Mostafa’s request for asy-

lum was refused as Cypriot authorities deemed him a “perpetrator of serious crimes”.

During hearings, Mostafa described himself as a liberal who wanted democracy for an Egyptian people subjected to “abductions, disappearance, illegal detention and extrajudicial killings”.

Mostafa said his motive for

hijacking the domestic Egyptian flight was to seek asylum in Italy and tell the world about the “repressive” Egyptian government.

The justice ministry in Cyprus said Mostafa eventually “expressed the wish to go back to his own country” and withdrew an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights that stayed the extradition.—AFP ■

Doubling down, Brennan again calls Trump behaviour 'treasonous'

NEW YORK — Former CIA chief John Brennan doubled down on Sunday on his charge that Donald Trump has engaged in "treasonous" behaviour and called on Congress to block the US president's attempts to strip other intelligence officials of their security clearances.

Brennan has received an outpouring of support from former top-ranking intelligence officers — but not much from Republican lawmakers — since Trump revoked his top secret security clearance last week in retaliation for what the president called "unfounded and outrageous allegations."

Trump served notice that other top former and current officials — all Democrats — also were at risk of losing their clearances, and the White House has reportedly drawn up more revocation orders, raising the chilling specter of an "enemies list."

In an interview with NBC's "Meet the Press," Brennan reaffirmed his most inflammatory accusation against the president.

"I called his behavior treasonous. I stand very much by

that claim," he said. "These are abnormal times ... I have seen the signs blinking red on what Mr Trump has done and is doing."

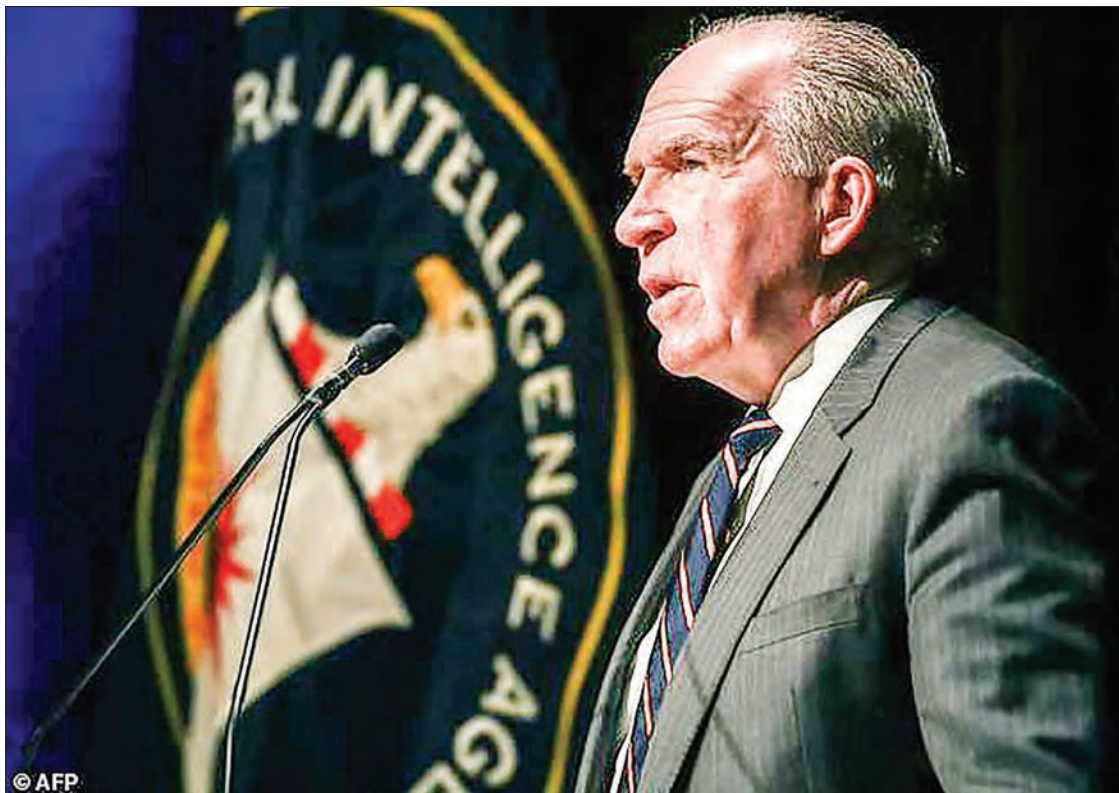
Brennan leveled the charge after Trump met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Helsinki last month and cast doubt on the US intelligence community's conclusion that Moscow meddled in the 2016 election to sway it in Trump's favor.

Special Counsel Robert Mueller is investigating whether Trump's campaign colluded with Russia and whether the president sought to obstruct justice.

Earlier this week, Brennan denounced as "hogwash" Trump's repeated claim there was "no collusion" with Russia.

"This is the time for members of Congress to step up," he said on NBC, referring to a move by Democrats in the Senate to constrain the president's ability to revoke clearances without following the normal process.

Republican Senator Ron Johnson, chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, defended Trump's actions towards Brennan, telling "Fox



Former CIA director John Brennan — shown here in September 2016 — says he knows he has a "bullseye" on his chest over his comments on Donald Trump. **PHOTO: AFP**

News Sunday" that the former CIA chief had "crossed a line" in his criticism of the president.

But he added: "I don't want to see this become routine. I don't want to see it be politicized."

Retired admiral Michael Mullen, former chairman of the

Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on the same show that while Trump had the authority to pull security clearances, it evokes "the enemies list under president Nixon and even before that in the early '50s, the McCarthy era where the administration starts putting together lists of individuals that

don't agree with them."

"So it's creating a list of political enemies, in particular those who have worked in a government and some very specifically who spent their life in government," he said. "Doing this would be really off-base." —AFP ■

Knifeman killed in Spain police station attack

MADRID (Spain) — A man armed with a knife was killed when he attacked a police station near the northeastern Spanish city of Barcelona early Monday, police said.

"A man armed with a knife entered the police station in Cornellà to attack the officers. The attacker was shot," the Catalonia regional police said on Twitter.

A police spokesman refused to comment on local media reports that the man was from Algeria and had shouted "Allahu akbar" (God is greatest) during the attack.

The incident occurred days after the first anniversary of a deadly jihadist rampage in Catalonia.

Sixteen people were killed on 17 August, 2017 when a van drove into crowds on the popular Las Ramblas boulevard in the heart of Barcelona and in a knife attack in the nearby resort of Cambrils.

The Islamic State (IS) group claimed responsibility for the attacks. —AFP ■

Brazil sends troops after clashes at Venezuela border

SAO PAULO — Brazil will send troops to its border with Venezuela on Monday after residents of the Brazilian border town of Pacaraima drove out Venezuelan immigrants from their improvised camps, amid growing regional tensions.

Tens of thousands of Venezuelans have crossed the border into Brazil over the past three years as they seek to escape the economic, political and social crisis gripping their country.

The latest show of tensions began early Saturday, hours after a local merchant was robbed and severely beaten in an incident blamed on Venezuelan suspects, in Pacaraima, where an estimated 1,000 immigrants are living on the street.

Dozens of locals then attacked the two main immigrant makeshift camps and burned their belongings, leading Venezuelans to cross the border back into their home country. Shots were fired, stores were shuttered and debris littered the streets.

"It was terrible, they burned the tents and everything that was inside," said Carol Marcano,

a Venezuelan who works in Boa Vista and was on the border returning from Venezuela. "There were shots, they burned rubber tires." Marcano said that some Venezuelans reacted to the attack by destroying a car with Brazilian license plates. She and her companions were among many who took refuge at checkpoints on the Venezuelan side of the border.

Three Brazilians were hurt in the clashes, a spokesman for military police said. No information was immediately available on the state of the Venezuelans involved.

The merchant who was attacked "is known, he is a neighbor, and there was indignation when it was learned that he had been robbed," a local told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"People began to expel Venezuelans who were in the center of the city, forcing them to return to their country."

Roraima state Governor Suely Campos made a plea to temporarily close the border and asked Brazil to send security reinforcements to "face the increase in crime" she links

to Venezuelans in the region.

In turn, the public security ministry vowed to send a contingent of 60 troops due to arrive Monday to join teams in the area.

Venezuelan immigrants reviled

Tensions are rising in Latin America over migration triggered by the crises in Venezuela and in Nicaragua, where President Daniel Ortega has led a brutal crackdown on anti-government protesters.

Peru and Ecuador are halting immigrants at the border by requiring would be border-crossers to show their passports — which many lack — instead of simple identity cards.

Last week alone, 20,000 Venezuelans entered Peru, authorities say. The restrictive measures there go into effect on 25 August. Colombia has said it fears that Ecuador's border controls, which went into effect Saturday after the country declared a migration emergency, will leave thousands of Venezuelans stranded in Colombia.

An estimated 3,000 people

cross every day from Colombia to Ecuador in the border town of Rumichaca.

The United Nations estimates that 2.3 million Venezuelans have fled the crisis looking for work and to escape poverty, while Colombia has given temporary residence to more than 800,000.

'Guarantee safety'

Many Venezuelans are aiming further afield to settle in Peru, Chile, Argentina or even Uruguay. Peru said 5,100 Venezuelans crossed into the country on 11 August, a record for a single day.

In Costa Rica, hundreds of people took part in sometimes violent protests Saturday using Nazi symbols to repudiate Nicaraguan migrants.

Some demonstrators, carrying swastikas and shouting anti-immigrant slogans, tried to attack Nicaraguans gathered in the central La Merced park in San Jose, and clashed with police who tried to contain them, Security Minister Michael Soto said, adding that there were only some minor injuries. —AFP ■

South Koreans meet relatives in North after decades apart

SOKCHO (South Korea) — Dozens of elderly and frail South Koreans met their Northern relatives on Monday for the first time since the peninsula and their families were divided by war nearly seven decades ago.

The three-day reunion is the first for three years and follows a diplomatic thaw on the peninsula. The meetings began at Mount Kumgang, a scenic resort in North Korea, Seoul government officials said.

Millions of people were swept apart by the 1950-53 Korean War, which separated brothers and sisters, parents and children and husbands and wives.

Hostilities ceased with an armistice rather than a peace treaty, leaving the two Koreas technically still at war and the peninsula split by the impenetrable Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), with all direct civilian exchanges — even mundane family news — banned.

The 89 ageing South Koreans, dressed in their best suits in the scorching sun, hobbled one by one to 14 coaches in the South Korean port of Sokcho — wheelchairs alongside the vehicles — some excited and others in a state of disbelief. Then the convoy set off, escorted by police

and medical personnel, and later crossed the DMZ into the North.

Among the group was Lee Keum-seom, now a tiny and frail 92, who was to see her son for the first time since she and her infant daughter were separated from him and her husband as they fled.

At the time the boy was aged just four. He is now 71.

“I never imagined this day would come,” Lee said in Sokcho. “I didn’t even know if he was alive or not.”

‘Last time’

With time taking its toll, such parent-child reunions have become rare.

Since 2000 the two nations have held 20 rounds of reunions but most of the more than 130,000 Southerners who signed up for a reunion since the events began have since died.

More than half the survivors are over 80, with this year’s oldest participant Baik Sung-kyu aged 101. Baik, who was to meet his daughter-in-law and granddaughter, said he had packed clothes, underwear, 30 pairs of shoes, toothbrushes and toothpaste as gifts. “I also brought 20 stainless spoons,” he added. “I bought everything because it’s my last time.” Some of those selected



Elderly South Koreans like Kim Bong-eoh will meet family members in the North later Monday. **PHOTO: AFP**

for this year’s reunions dropped out after learning that their parents or siblings had died and that they could only meet more distant relatives whom they had never seen before.

But Jang Hae-won, 89, who fled their hometown in Hwanghae province along with his older brother, said he would meet his nephew and niece to offer them a glimpse of their father’s life.

“They don’t know what their father looks like so I will tell them what he looked like and when he died,” Jang said. “But that’s it, because the more we talk, it will only be more sad.”

Watching eyes

The reunions are resuming after

a three-year hiatus as the North accelerated its pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles and relations worsened.

But after a rapid diplomatic thaw the North’s leader Kim Jong Un and the South’s President Moon Jae-in agreed to restart them at their first summit in April in the DMZ. The two Koreas have since discussed cooperation in various fields at meetings between officials.

But while Kim and US President Donald Trump held a landmark summit in Singapore in June, Pyongyang has yet to make clear what concessions it is willing to make on its nuclear arsenal, while Washington is looking to maintain sanctions pres-

sure on it. Families at previous reunions have often found it a bitter-sweet experience, with some complaining about the short time they were allowed together and others lamenting the ideological gaps between them after decades apart. Over the next three days, the participants will spend only about 11 hours together, mostly under the watchful eyes of North Korean agents. They will have only three hours in private before they are separated once again on Wednesday, in all likelihood for the final time.

Lim Eung-bok, who is meeting his brother and his family, said: “I have so many things I want to say but there are a lot of restrictions.”—AFP ■

Kono calls for increasing members joining arms trade treaty

TOKYO — Japan’s Foreign Minister Taro Kono on Monday called for collective efforts to encourage more countries to join the arms trade treaty, as an international conference got under way in Tokyo to discuss how to effectively enforce it.

“To continue to increase the number of states parties, we should work together to promote the value and role of the ATT,” Kono told participants of the 4th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.

“The treaty aims to enhance regional and international peace and security through the appropriate control of international trade and prevention of illicit transfers of conventional weapons,” Kono said, adding that its “universalization” is one of the imminent challenges.



Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

The Arms Trade Treaty entered into force in 2014 with the aim of regulating illegal arms trade and preventing weapons from falling into the wrong hands, such as terrorists.

Currently, there are 97

states parties but major powers such as China, India and Russia have yet to sign the treaty. Aside from Japan, only five countries in the Asia-Pacific region have ratified it.

Japan is hosting the five-day conference whose participants include government officials and representatives from nongovernmental organizations and industry groups.

For the host of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, boosting antiterrorism measures is a key task.

A series of sessions are scheduled during the period to discuss a range of topics related to arms trade such as control systems and interagency cooperation. —Kyodo News ■

India successfully tests anti-tank guided missile, guided bombs

NEW DELHI — India successfully flight tested its indigenously developed helicopter launched anti-tank guided missile and guided bombs — smart anti-airfield weapons (SAAW) in western state of Rajasthan, officials said on Monday.

The test was carried out at Pokhran of Jaisalmer district about 452 km west of Jaipur, the capital city of Rajasthan.

“Indigenously developed helicopter launched anti-tank guided missile ‘HELINA’ has been successfully flight tested from army helicopter in the ranges of Pokhran yesterday,” a defence ministry spokesman said. “The weapon system has been tested for its full range.” According to officials the weapon system re-

leased smoothly from the launch platform, tracked the target all through its course before hitting it with high precision.

Senior officials from India’s Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) and army participated and witnessed the flight tests. Separately, indigenously designed and developed guided bombs — SAAW were successfully flight tested from Indian air force aircraft at Chandan range. Officials said the weapon is capable of destroying variety of ground targets using precision navigation. India’s Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has congratulated the DRDO on the successful flight tests for further strengthening the defence capabilities of the country.—Xinhua ■

Leadership fears see Australia PM back away from climate targets

SYDNEY — Australia shelved plans to embed carbon emissions targets in law on Monday, after a party revolt against embattled Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

With its heavy use of coal-fired power and relatively small population of 25 million, Australia is considered one of the world's worst per capita greenhouse gas polluters.

Turnbull's predecessor Tony Abbott was in charge when Canberra agreed to cut emissions by 26 percent by 2030 as part of the so-called Paris Agreement.

But Abbott, who was ousted by moderate Turnbull in a Liberal party coup three years ago and once declared climate change "absolute crap", has since railed against the commitment he made.

He has argued it should not be enshrined in law as part of the govern-



Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has been forced to shelve plans to embed carbon emissions targets into law. PHOTO: AFP

ment's new energy policy, known as the National Energy Guarantee (NEG), as consumers complain about soaring electricity prices.

"As long as we are in it (Paris) we will be running our power system to reduce emissions, not to

give us affordable, reliable power," Abbott, now a vocal backbencher, said on Monday. Several right-wingers allied to Abbott had threatened to vote with the opposition to block the NEG, and with the government only having a wafer-thin

parliamentary majority, it was doomed in its current form. Turnbull admitted there was not enough support for the bill as he ditched plans to try to legislate the targets — an embarrassing u-turn to a key element of his signature

policy. "We are parties to the Paris agreement and the government has committed to that, but the simple reality is that we need to have effectively all of our members in the House of Representatives to vote with the government to

carry legislation," he said. "At this stage, we don't have that."

The backdown does not mean Australia has abandoned its commitment to the UN climate agreement, only that it has postponed indefinitely any attempt to make the target enforceable through law.

But closing ageing coal-fired power stations and a troubled transition to clean energy has seen power bills soar.

Internal disunity over the issue came to a head at the weekend with rampant speculation that Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton could challenge Turnbull for the Liberal leadership, a move he denied. It comes with a new poll showing the government lagging even further behind the Labor opposition — 45 to 55 percent on a two-party basis — and national elections due by mid-May next year. —AFP ■

Ethiopia opens plant to turn waste into energy

ADDIS ABABA (Ethiopia) — Ethiopia on Sunday inaugurated a power plant which converts waste into energy, next to a filthy open-air dump in Addis Ababa where a landslide last year killed more than 110 people.

Named Reppie, the facility is the first of its kind in Africa, according to the government and the British company Cambridge Industries behind the project, and will turn 1,400 tons of waste per day into energy. Ethiopian Presi-

dent Mulatu Teshome said at the ceremony that the country "has been investing extensively in hydro power, geothermal, wind energy and now biomass to boost the manufacturing sector with a supply of clean, renewable energy."

Reppie is located beside a massive dump called Koshe, a slang word for "dirt" in the country's main Amharic language. There for over 40 years, Koshe serves as the main rubbish tip in Ethiopia's capital which has a rapidly

rising population, currently at more than four million people. A huge landslide killed more than 110 people in March 2017, which scavengers blame on the construction of the incineration plant next door. Building of the waste-to-power plant began in 2014 at a cost of around 118 million dollars (103 million euros). The incinerated waste will generate steam which will then drive a turbine that produces electricity at a projected power of 25 megawatts per day. —AFP ■



A photo taken on 12 March, 2017 shows a view of the main landfill of Addis Ababa on the outskirts of the city, where Ethiopia has built a power plant to convert waste into energy. PHOTO: AFP

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‘Crazy Rich Asians’ sparkles at N America box office

LOS ANGELES — Highly anticipated rom-com “Crazy Rich Asians” — the first Hollywood film with a mainly Asian cast in a generation — dazzled the North American box office in its debut weekend, claiming the top spot, industry estimates showed on Sunday.

The Warner Bros adaptation of Kevin Kwan’s best-selling novel of the same name raked in \$34 million since hitting theaters on Wednesday, box office tracker Exhibitor Relations said. Of the total, the film took in \$25.2 million at the weekend.

Starring veteran actress Michelle Yeoh, British-Malaysian former BBC host Henry Golding and American sitcom star Constance Wu, the film tells the story of a American economics professor who meets her super-wealthy boyfriend’s family in Singapore — and all the drama that ensues.

It is the first Tinseltown film with a predominantly Asian cast since “The Joy Luck Club” in 1993.

Shark thriller “The Meg” tumbled to second place in its second week, taking in \$21.2 million. It stars action movie regular Jason Statham as a rescue diver who tries to save scientists in a submarine from an attack by a huge, prehistoric shark.

“Mile 22” — a new spy thriller-action flick starring Mark Wahlberg — opened in third place at \$13.6 million.

Another debut film, prehistoric adventure tale “Alpha,” shared fourth place at \$10.5 million with summer blockbuster “Mission: Impossible - Fallout.”

The latest installment in the “M:I” franchise has now taken in \$180.7 million overall.

Rounding out the weekend’s top 10 were:



“Crazy Rich Asians” stars Gemma Chan, Michelle Yeoh, Henry Golding, Awkwafina and Constance Wu, seen here attending the premiere at TCL Chinese Theatre IMAX on 7 August, 2018 in Hollywood. **PHOTO: AFP**

“Christopher Robin” (\$8.9 million)	Summer Vacation” (\$3.7 million)
“BlacKkKlansman” (\$7 million)	“Slender Man” (\$5 million)
	“Hotel Transylvania 3: Summer Vacation” (\$3.4 million).—AFP ■

Amitabh Bachchan and other celebs urge people to help flood-hit Kerala

MUMBAI — Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has expressed concern over the “frightening” situation in Kerala where 197 people have lost their lives and 36 are missing since 8 August due to floods and landslides.

The deadliest deluge in Kerala in close to a century has battered the scenic state, with its infrastructure, standing crops and tourism facilities severely hit.

The 75-year-old actor took to Twitter and urged people to contribute to relief fund for the state.

“The devastation caused by incessant rain in Kerala is frightening! Hundreds and thousands of our sisters and brothers are in deep anguish!” Bachchan wrote.

“We must do all we can to contribute as much as we can towards the needs of the people of Kerala... I have... You must too...” he added.

Bollywood celebrities like Karan Johar, Varun Dhawan, Hrithik Roshan, Shahid Kapoor, Alia Bhatt and Anushka Sharma, among others also tweeted support for the state and its people.

Hrithik wrote, “The situation in Kerala is critical. Help is required. Please let’s come forward and do whatever we can.

Our friends in Kerala need us right now. I have contributed a sum and I request you all to do whatever you can. God bless #KeralaFloodRelief.”

Actor Sidharth Malhotra said he has contributed to the relief fund for the state and wrote, “Let’s all get together and show our unified strength for Kerala. Contribute however you can and donate any amount here. Pray for everyone in distress. #KeralaFlood.”

“Kerala is on red alert and Habitat for Humanity India is helping those who are stranded! I urge everyone to help those in need...” Jacqueline Fernandez tweeted.

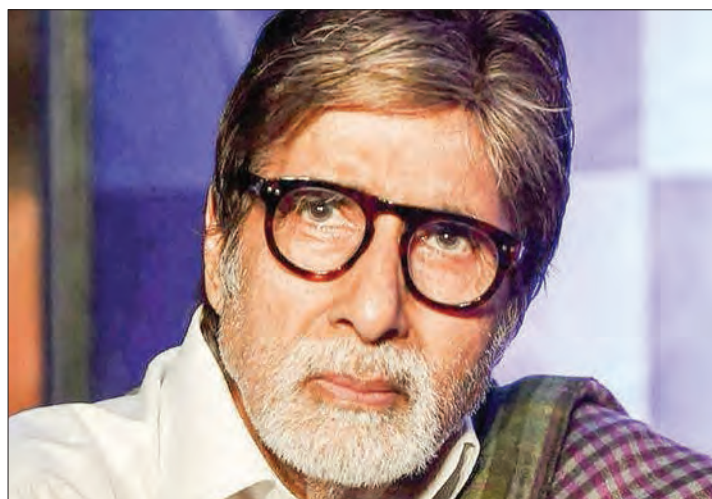
Swara Bhasker shared

a message on her Instagram page and also urged people to donate for the cause.

“The state of #Kerala in #India has been devastated by floods. Hundreds have died and bodies are still being recovered. 600,000 people are living in shelters. Please donate and help #savekerala #keralafloods,” she wrote.

“Karwaan” actor Dulquer Salmaan tweeted a poster with emergency numbers to help the people.

“Urging and requesting the #nationalmedia to focus and draw attention to #keralafloods! Each day is looking more grim for millions,” he said.—PTI ■



Megastar Amitabh Bachchan. **PHOTO: PTI**

In Uganda, ‘Rolex’ means time — for an eggy snack

KAMPALA — When people talk about a “Rolex” in Uganda, one of the last things they probably have in mind is a luxury watch.

So at Kampala’s third annual Rolex festival on a hilltop in the Ugandan capital on Sunday, there were no stalls to be seen selling pricey wrist wear.

In Uganda, the Rolex is the country’s favourite snack, a sandwich made up of an omelette and chapati bread, and it derives its name from a play on the words “rolled eggs”.

Organizers hope the festival will turn what many regard as a poor man’s supper into a tourist attraction.

“Rolex is a delicacy in Uganda,” Tourism Board official Patrick Muhire told AFP.

The dish, which originated in the eastern town of Busoga, quickly became popular among students at Makerere University in Kampala: at around 1,000 Ugandan shillings (26 US cents, 23 euro cents), it was not only nourishing, but very affordable as well.

Its appeal spread rapidly from there.

“Most people took it to be a poor man’s food. But with the festival, it is being accepted by the elites as ... a national delicacy,” Muhire said.

“Ever since we started the annual Rolex festival, there are restaurants which have started doing the Rolex and some hotels have embraced it, too,” he continued.

There are already many regional variants of the “Rolex”.

In eastern Uganda, for example, bamboo sprouts are mixed in with the chapati, while in the north, cooked vegetables are added.

It comes in various sizes, too, with the super-sized “Swazzneggar Rolex” — cheekily named after Hollywood musclem Arnold Schwarzenegger — using between six and 10 eggs and big enough to feed an entire family.

At the festival, Indian, Mexican and Kenyan chefs all offer their own special takes on the sandwich.

There’s also a whiff of politics in the air, with the music of Bobi Wine blaring from the loudspeakers as the queueing customers wait for their food.

Wine is the stage name of Robert Kyagulanyi, a popstar-turned-politician who is a fierce critic of President Yoweri Museveni.

Kyagulanyi is currently in jail for the illegal possession of firearms.—AFP ■

Kyoto University team eyes clinical test of platelets derived from iPS cells

KYOTO — A Kyoto University team plans to begin a clinical test using platelets grown from induced pluripotent stem cells to treat Aplastic anemia, a serious disease, sources with knowledge of the plan said on Sunday.

The team led by professor Koji Eto is expected to begin the clinical test after getting approval from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. The university has already endorsed the plan.

Expectations are high in the field of regenerative medicine for iPS stem cells that can grow into any type of body tissue.

The world's first transplant of retinal cells grown from iPS cells into a patient has already

been conducted and research is under way into the application of such cells to treat Parkinson's disease and heart failure.

So far, the team has established a method to produce high-quality platelets — a key component of blood that can stem bleeding — in large numbers through the use of iPS cells.

In the envisaged clinical test, the team plans to grow platelets from iPS cells from a patient. They will be injected into the patient to see the safety and effectiveness of the method, according to the sources.

Patients with Aplastic anemia are easy to bleed, get infections, and suffer from headaches as platelets and white blood cells

decrease.

Patients with falling numbers of platelets are often treated with blood transfusions.

But the patient in the upcoming clinical study has a special immune type and thus the use of platelets derived from the patient's own iPS cells can control rejection, the sources said.

Platelets are used in blood transfusions during surgery and to stem bleeding when people get injured.

Blood donations are one of the most useful ways to secure platelets for use in medical setting. But platelets can be used for a short period of time and ensuring stock is a challenge. —Kyodo News ■



Photo taken on 28 February, 2017, in Kyoto, shows Kyoto University professor Koji Eto speaking about a plan to make platelets using iPS cells. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Exoplanets may be water balls

WASHINGTON — Scientists have shown that water is likely to be a major component of planets orbiting other stars that are between two to four times the size of Earth.

The study presented at this week's Goldschmidt conference held in Boston will have implications for the search of life in our Galaxy.

A new evaluation of data from the exoplanet-hunting Kepler Space Telescope and the Gaia mission indicated that many of the known planets might contain as much as 50 per cent water, much more than the Earth's 0.02 per cent water content by weight.

"It was a huge surprise to realize that there must be so

many water-worlds," said lead researcher Li Zeng at Harvard University. Scientists have found that many of the 4,000 confirmed or candidate exoplanets discovered so far fall into two size categories: those with the planetary radius averaging around 1.5 that of the Earth, and those averaging around 2.5 times the radius of the Earth.

"We have looked at how mass relates to radius, and developed a model which might explain the relationship," said Li.

Li's model indicated that those exoplanets which have a radius of around 1.5 time Earth radius tend to be rocky planets, while those with a radius of 2.5 time Earth radius are probably water worlds. "This is water, but

not as commonly found here on Earth," said Li. "Their surface temperature is expected to be in the 200 to 500 degree Celsius range. Their surface may be shrouded in a water-vapor-dominated atmosphere, with a liquid water layer underneath."

"Moving deeper, one would expect to find this water transforms into high-pressure ices before we reaching the solid rocky core," said Li.

Li said about 35 per cent of all known exoplanets which are bigger than Earth should be water-rich and these water worlds likely formed in similar ways to the giant planet cores (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune) which we find in our own solar system. —Xinhua ■



The scientists collected statistical data by recording the growth of plants in an artificial soilless system using a 3D-camera. **PHOTO: TASS**

Skoltech gurus use computer vision to bolster precision agriculture

MOSCOW — A research team from Skoltech's Space Centre (SC) and the Centre for Computational and Data-Intensive Science and Engineering (CDISE) has come up with an approach to predict plant biomass gain based on 2D-and 3D-images, the institute's press office reports. Their conclusions will make it possible to bolster the efficiency of precision farming both on Earth and in space.

The scientists collected statistical data by recording the growth of plants in an artificial soilless system using a 3D-camera. The information they obtained enabled them to establish the connection between the expansion of the total surface area of all leaves with the increase in the plants' total biomass. Then the enlargement of the leaves' area was captured using a 2D-camera and a dynamic model of plant growth was built based on this data.

To perform the experiment, the researchers used an automatic system with artificial growth capabilities, 2D- and 3D-cameras as well as sensors to collect data on the surrounding area. This system makes use of machine learn-

ing for modeling plant growth and forecasting its dynamics. According to the authors of the study, such an approach facilitates and lowers the costs of forecasting systems.

In the future, the research team intends to develop recommendatory systems for the optimization of greenhouse facilities based on the data collected and the algorithms of machine learning. The new findings from the experiment, as well as the development of efficient methods of their analysis, will also be beneficial for developing autonomous life support systems in space and on Earth.

New technological breakthroughs in precision agriculture will open new doors to fighting hunger in developing countries, enhancing food security, and boosting the efficiency of agriculture. Precision farming often faces some issues and unsolved tasks, with optimizing the use of resources being considered the main problem. To overcome this obstacle, scientists are putting together models, which make it possible to predict growth and optimize food production. —Tass ■

Mexican astrophysicist discovers first galaxies in universe

MEXICO CITY — Mexican astrophysicist Carlos Frenk Mora has identified some of the first galaxies in our universe together with a team of researchers, said the National Autonomous University of Mexico on Saturday.

The newly-identified galaxies are: Segue-1, Bootes I, Tucana II and Ursa Mayor I. All were formed more than 13 billion years ago. The discovery backs a current evolutionary model of

the universe, called the Lambda Cold Dark Matter Theory, which maintains that the elementary particles that make up dark matter drive cosmic evolution.

The most weak galaxies near the Milk Way were considered unworthy subject for study by scientists a decade ago, but new researches have revealed treasures for us to learn about the primitive universe, said Mora. —Xinhua ■

Second day of 18th ASIAN Games-2018

THE second day of the 18th Asian Games continued yesterday in the Indonesian cities of Jakarta and Palembang. Myanmar Olympic Committee Vice-President and Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Mya Lay Sein and Myanmar Olympic Committee General Secretary and Director-General of the Department of Sport and Physical Education U Myo Hlaing gave their support to the Myanmar sports teams competing there.

In the indoor stadium in Jakarta, Daisy Oo Juliet from Myanmar faced off with a Thai competitor in the Women's Taekwondo Sparring-53 kilo division but lost to her opponent. Myanmar's Zaw Lin Htet also lost to his Afghan opponent in the Men's Taekwondo Sparring-57 kilo division.

In the Jakarta wushu stadium,

Myanmar's Myat Noe Eain competed in the Taichi Chuan competition, garnering 19.04 marks over two days and achieving 10th place. Aye Thitsar Myint from Myanmar also entered in the Women's Taolu competition, garnering 19.01 marks over two days and achieving 7th place. Myanmar's Thein Than Oo competed in the Men's Taolu competition and earned 9.68 marks, achieving 6th place, and will compete in today's competition as well.

Meanwhile, in the women's three-member sepak takraw competition in Palembang, Myanmar triumphed over Malaysia after winning three matches.



Aye Myat Yadanar Oo from Myanmar earned 604.6 marks in the 10M Air Rifle Women competition, in Palembang, achieving 39th place.

Myanmar teams also competed in the international boat rowing contest for men's eight-member race and women's four-member race. The contest will continue today as well.

Myanmar won against Iran

2-0 in the Jakarta stadium men's football competition.

Additionally, in the men's volleyball competition, Myanmar won against Kazakhstan with scores of 17-25, 25-22, 25-19, 25-18, three-one matches. — GNLM

'We made incredible mistakes': Mourinho fumes as United crash

BRIGHTON (United Kingdom) — Jose Mourinho admitted Manchester United had paid the price for "incredible mis-

takes" in their dismal 3-2 defeat at Brighton on Sunday.

Mourinho's side were blown away on the south-coast as Brighton scored twice in two minutes thanks to goals from Glenn Murray and Shane Duffy midway through the first half.

Romelu Lukaku got one back, but Pascal Gross's penalty capitalised on more poor United defending to send Brighton into the interval with a 3-1 lead.

United rarely looked like mounting a fightback and Paul Pogba's penalty with virtually the last kick of the game came way too late.

A shell-shocked Mourinho

conceded United's players had only themselves to blame for their first defeat of the Premier League season.

"We were punished by the mistakes we made. For me that's the story of the game. We made incredible mistakes in some crucial moments. Mistakes that killed us," Mourinho said.

"Especially that third goal — we expected to come at 2-1 with positivity — then the third goal killed us off in the second half. Our second goal came too late.

"The week leading up was good and I expected the team collectively to be better. There are basic mistakes that makes almost an impossible mission to win the match."

Many of Mourinho's stars, including World Cup winner Pogba, new signing Fred and French forward Anthony Martial, were anonymous for long periods, but the

boss refused to criticise individuals.

"I don't want to go in that direction. I have to learn from my reality," Mourinho said.

"Last season when I was critical of my team and was debating openly of the performances I was criticised for being too open about my players.

"I will be open when they are doing well. I cannot criticise the desire of my players."

—AFP ■



Manchester United's Portuguese manager Jose Mourinho gestures from the touchline during the English Premier League football match between Brighton and Hove Albion and Manchester United at the American Express Community Stadium in Brighton, southern England on 19 August, 2018. PHOTO: AFP



Manchester United's English defender Luke Shaw runs with the ball during the English Premier League football match between Brighton and Hove Albion and Manchester United at the American Express Community Stadium in Brighton, southern England on 19 August, 2018. PHOTO: AFP