THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw paid homage to the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadaws and sought Ovada from them at Vijaya Mingalar Dhamma Hall on Kaba Aye Hillock yesterday afternoon.

First, the President supplicated religious affairs before saying he was delighted to see the venerable abbots healthy enough to walk without any assistance and that it was encouraging for the Sasa and to seek Ovada from the abbots.

Afterwards, Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Abhidhaja Maharatha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Bhamo Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa delivered Ovada on Dana, Peyyavijja, Atthacariya and Samanatta. Later, the Chairman and Sayadaws were presented offertories by the President, Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe and officials. —Myanmar News Agency

Indonesian FM presents humanitarian aid for Rakhine State

A ceremony to deliver humanitarian aid donated by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in accordance with the policy of the Union Government of Myanmar was held at the meeting hall of the Rakhine State Government yesterday morning.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno L P Marsudi explained the purpose of the humanitarian aid before she, on behalf of the Indonesian Government, and Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye signed an agreement for the aid. Later, they posed for documentary photos with the guests.

The humanitarian aid included 10,000 articles of clothing, 1,500 boxes of dried noodles, 1,050 boxes of children’s nutritional supplements and 920 bags of flour.

The union minister and the Indonesian foreign minister later attended a ceremony to hand over two schools in Letmache Village and Thetkalpyin Village in Sittway donated by the PLPU, an Indonesian NGO. Later, they visited the childcare centre founded by the ABC Foundation in Mingan Ward and presented food and cash donations for the children. —Myanmar News Agency
Pa-O ethnic people in Mon State meet for National-Level Political Dialogue

A meeting of Pa-O people in Mon State for a preliminary National-Level Political Dialogue was held at the Taikkyuong Monastery in Aleywa Village in Thaton Township, Mon State.

“Under the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, it is necessary to organize political dialogues including the 21st Century Panglong Conference and we are preparing for the national-level political dialogue for the entire Pa-O people.” U Khun Myint Tun, Chairman of the organization committee for national-level political dialogue.

National-Level Political Dialogue for Pa-O ethnic people is scheduled in Shan State (North) with about 500 representatives of the ethnic group across the country.

Fifty representatives will be chosen from Mon State at the ongoing meeting.

U Khun Myint Tun and UPDJC member U Khun Tun Shwe explained the development of the NCA and National-Level Political Dialogues, and participants discussed matters related to establishing a democratic federal union, ethnic rights and roles of women and youths before selecting the representatives.

About 100 Pa-O ethnic people participated in the meeting.—Thet Oo (Thaton)

Nobel Myanmar Literary Festival to be held on grand scale

NOBEL Myanmar Literary Festival—2017 will be held on a grand scale at the National Theatre in Yangon on 22nd, 23rd and 24th January.

U Maw Lin, Chairman of the Organization Committee for the literary festival said that it is the third time since the first such festival was held in Myanmar, with the first event highlighting literature and peace, the second focusing on children’s literature and third one on literature, which mainly appeals to those who start reading books and literary enthusiasts, before saying that will the country be able to enjoy progress only when its literature has developed.

He also said that literary festival and a book fair will also be held in front of the theatre and the opening ceremony will be held in two agendas before saying that rare books will also available at the book fair.

U Win Cho, Secretary of the organizing committee, said that there will also be seven topics on literature and U Maw Lin will facilitate the topic on literature nursery while Saya Munag Khin Min, Saya Thitsar Ni, Saya Myayalatt Maung Myint Thu and Saya Nyein Min will participate in the discussions of the topic.

The festival will feature 24 rare book shop and 150 new bookshops, morning free-of-charge Montlitha, afternoon Myanmar traditional drum entertainments and about 200 cartoons.—Yi Yi Myint and Ohmar Thant

UN Rights envoy holds press conference in Yangon

MS YANGHEE LEE, UN’s Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, held a press conference in Yangon Friday, calling for building trust between the two communities in northern Rakhine.

During her 12-day visit, she visited Kachin, Rakhine and Mon States as well as Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw.

During her visit to northern Rakhine, she visited the border outposts where the 9 October attacks occurred, four villages in northern Rakhine and the prison in Buthidaung.

She also met with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Union ministers, the Attorney-General, MPs from parliametary committees, the Rakhine State Peace and Development Committee and the Investigation Commission in Maungtaw.

During her visit to Yangon, Ms Yanghee Lee held talks with responsible personnel of the Peace Commission at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, officials of the Insein Prison and Myanmar Press Council.

She also visited a hard labour camp in Zin Gyaik, Mon State.

Ms Yanghee Lee arrived in Myanmar on 8 January to assess the recent developments in the human rights situation in the country, especially in northern Rakhine, where coordinated attacks by violent armed insurgents killed nine police officers.

At the press conference, she condemned the deadly October 9 attacks on the border guard posts.

In the security clearance operations that have followed, Ms Lee urged government forces to perform their duties within the law.

“It would be particularly important for the security forces to always act within the parameters of the rule of law and in compliance with human rights,” Ms. Lee said.

The envoy, however, expressed optimism, saying government officials are committed to improving the situation.

“From my meetings and conversations with the state counsellor and various officials, I can see their genuine commitment and dedication in improving the lives of all in Myanmar,” she said.

She called for stepping up efforts for increasing humanitarian aid to northern Rakhine State.—GNLM
Myanmar Ramayana story to be performed at Panda Hotel

A Myanmar Ramayana play will be performed to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Pyayon Township Association (Yangon). The anniversary will be celebrated at Panda Hotel on Sunday, it is learnt.

At the ceremony, the annual general meeting of the Pyayon Township Association will be held and members of the association will elect a new executive committee, pay respects to elderly people over the age of 80, honour those who were awarded literary and music medals by the government and present prizes to those who have passed the matriculation exam with at least three distinctions.

Shwe Taung Pan theatrical troupes will perform dance and music, it is learnt.—Myanmar Alin

Crime NEWS

Heroin and stimulant tablets seized

A combined team comprised of members of Anti-drug Unit (3) and the Mohmyn Police seized a Toyota Probox on the road near Whekhar Village in Hpakanton Township on Thursday. They also seized 44 grams of heroine and 690 stimulant tablets and 11 grams of broken stimulant tablets from Daw Sint.

In a separate incident, police from Kyauktalan Station searched the house of Khun Tun Aung in Naungka Village in Taunggyi and found 800 stimulant tablets and 11 grams of broken stimulant tablets on Thursday.

Police from Mohnyin Police Station also seized 44 grams of heroin and 690 stimulant tablets and stone-collecting labourers,” said U Tint Soe, State Hluttaw representative.

“The conflicts between companies and manual labourers are often to mediate between the government and the migrant miners and jade dealers, whose businesses are of manageable scale, and jade hunters are engaged in the jade business in the region. Administrators and Hluttaw representatives often have to mediate between stone companies and hand pickers.—Myitmakha News Agency

Authorities mediate between mining companies and labourers in Phakant

AUTHORITIES are intervening in the conflicts between mining companies and the migrant miners and labourers in Phakant Township, Kachin State, according to U Tint Soe, the representative from State Hluttaw Phakant township Constituency 2 on Monday.

“The region has so many problems. So, we tried to solve them as much as possible. Especially, we have a lot of squatters in the region. There are over 10,000 squatter houses in our region. The squatter houses were built at the jade mines, and so they suffer from landslides, house collapses. We tried to mediate whenever conflicts break out between company officials and stone-collecting labourers,” said U Tint Soe, State Hluttaw representative.

“The conflicts between companies and manual labourers are often to mediate between stone companies and hand pickers,” he added.

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Traffic accident on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway

A Toyota Hiace heading to Yangon from Nay Pyi Taw crashed into the aluminum road divider between Mile-posts 4/1 and 4/2 on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway before it caught fire, killing eight out of the nine passengers, including seven women, and injuring one male passenger yesterday morning.

Police and the fire brigade rushed to the scene and sent the bodies and the injured male passenger to Hlegu Hospital.

The passengers on the vehicle were from Hexagon Construction Company in Thingangyun, Yangon.

They were reportedly on their return trip from a Bagan pilgrimage.

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