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Government refutes rights group report on Rakhine

THE government yesterday strongly refuted a recent report by a rights organization that accused Tatmadaw troops of burning down houses in northern Rakhine State.

A special press conference was held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday to announce the formation of an information committee that would be in charge of releasing information about the conflicts in Rakhine, but the main topic of discussion was the recent Human Rights Watch report that alleged government troops to have set fire to houses in Maungdaw on 10 November. Based on the report, the Bangkok Post published a news story on 14 November about human rights abuses, allegations that the government resolutely denies. The Tatmadaw True Information Team has also refuted the report.

Concerning the accusations in the report, it has been announced that findings of the committee from its field inspections will be released shortly. The Bangkok Post on 14 November published a news story of violent attacks by government troops in Maungdaw that started on 9 October, the same day that border guard outposts were attacked by armed men. Other media outlets also published the news story.

The State Counsellor, in consultation with leaders of the Tatmadaw, sent teams



A photo released by Human Rights Watch, above, shows widespread areas of burnt homes in Maungdaw that they allege were set by Tatmadaw troops. A photo of the same area taken by Tatmadaw troops in helicopters last week, below, show fewer areas of destruction. The government also contends that the arson fires were set by attackers. PHOTO: HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH (ABOVE); MINISTRY OF INFORMATION (BELOW).

to Warpate, Kyetyoepyin, Pyaungpate, Dargyisar villages and surrounding areas by Tatmadaw helicopters on 15 November in order to take photos or to get a first-hand view of the situation. The Tatmadaw field inspection

team found that 105 structures in Warpate, 30 structures in Kyetyoepyin Village, 30 structures in Dargyisar Village, 20 structures in Pyaungpate Village had been burnt down. Findings of the teams were

displayed at the press conference that showed photos from Human Rights Watch as well as those from the Tatmadaw that seemed to show very different views of the same area.

The government photo-

tos show a much smaller area of burnt houses, while the Human Rights Watch photos show much greater devastation. The government contends that the burnt homes shown in their photos were caused by attackers, not by the Tatmadaw.

Yesterday's news conference also included an announcement from the Secretary of the State Counsellor's Office Information Committee. Deputy Director-General U Zaw Htay of the President's Office said that a State Counsellor's Office Information Committee has been formed by the president's office. The aim was to release correct information about the situation in Rakhine State in a timely manner.

The committee will hold press conferences and issue press releases when warranted. Then, the committee responded to queries of the media.

Concerning the question on declaring the Maungdaw area as an operation zone and the use of helicopters in fighting, U Zaw Htay said that the area was declared as operation zone because of the violent attacks. The limited use of helicopters was begun because a commanding officer was attacked. Although helicopters can carry rockets and bombs, the helicopters contained only mounted machine guns.

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IED discovered on village road in Maungdaw

ON Wednesday morning, an improvised explosive device (IED) was discovered on the road that links Maungdaw, Zinpaingnya and Ngakhuya villages in Maungdaw Township.

On patrol, a combined team comprised of the government troops and the border guard police found the IED planted by the violent attackers on the road about 500 meters south-west of Kanpyin village at about 9:30 am and cleared it.

The IED was 4 inches in diameter and 8 inches in height, and made from car engine parts.

The combined team was conducting its area clearance operation around three.—Myawady



The improvised explosive device. PHOTO: MYAWADY

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Workshop on federalism held in Nay Pyi Taw

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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw hears clarification on additional budgets

PYIDAUNGSSU Hluttaw resumed its third regular meetings in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, planning to discuss the additional budget bill and remaining bills which should be given priority for the benefit of the people.

At the meeting, Member of the Joint Bill Committee U Aung Kyi Nyunt read out the report of the committee on the third bill amending the Ward or Village

Administration which will be discussed at the parliament.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu sought approval from the parliament to allow additional budget amounting to K1088,028.456 million in the 2016-2017 financial year.

Meanwhile, Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Naing Thet

Lwin clarified that the additional budget of K1,341.101 million from the 2016-2017 fiscal year budget of the Ministry of Information is from the working capital of the News and Periodicals Enterprise of the ministry and not from the Union Budget, adding that seeking capital expenditure of K8.036 million is to pay for the rent of land for the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs. Minister of

State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin sought additional budget of K20,20.485 million for 44 Myanmar embassies.

Deputy Minister Rear Admiral Myint Nwe sought additional budget of K100 billion for the Ministry of Defence.

Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Tin clarified that the additional budget of K148.161 million sought by the Ministry

of State Counsellor's Office salaries and travelling allowances for the ministry's permanent secretary, chairman, vice chairman and members of the peace commission, leader and members of the advisory team and supporting team.

Similarly, other ministries also clarified the additional budgets they sought from the parliament.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw session begins



Dr Win Myat Aye. PHOTO: MNA

THE third regular session of the second Pyithu Hluttaw commenced in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday with 401 out of 426 representatives in attendance.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint delivered the opening speech at the session and urged representatives to perform their duty responsibly and accountably with due diligence.



Dr Than Myint. PHOTO: MNA

In response to a query raised by a representative, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye explained the arrangements for construction of one cyclone shelter each in Zeedaw and Kontan Villages in Manaung Township, Rakhine State.

The Rakhine State Government had requested the ministry

to build cyclone shelters in five coastal villages in Rakhine State, and the National Natural Disaster Management Committee appropriated Ks259.16 million for the two shelters, according to the union minister.

Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint said that the ministry collects information on commodity prices on a daily basis and sometimes cooperates with merchant associations, if necessary.

The ministry would not intervene in rising commodity prices as prices depend on demand, supply and market, he added. Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing said that the ministry has issued the Myanmar National Building Code since May 2016 and 17 engineering teams are conducting inspection and quality control of roads, bridges and airports.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

Amyotha Hluttaw commences



Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe. PHOTO: MNA

THE third regular session of the second Amyotha Hluttaw began in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw delivered the welcoming address to representatives. Representatives from Shan State, Rakhine State and Taninthayi Region raised questions about whether the government has plans to build new classrooms in their constituencies. Deputy Minister for Education responded to the questions. Representatives from Kachin State, Chin State and Ayeyawady Region raised questions related to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe responded to the questions.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Info Committee formed for Rakhine issues

THE President's Office announced yesterday the formation of the State Counsellor Office's Information Committee.

The formation of the committee is aimed at real time releasing of information related to issues in Rakhine State, according to the announcement.

The information committee is

chaired by Deputy Minister for the State Counsellor's Office U Khin Maung Tin, while Vice Chairman for the committee is Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo, the announcement read.

Members of the committee are U Kyaw Soe, Managing Director of the News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information, Daw Aye Aye Soe,

Deputy Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Police Col Myo Thu Soe of the Ministry of Home Affairs and U Zaw Win Aung, Director of the Ministry of Border Affairs. U Zaw Htay, Deputy Director-General of the President's Office, has been selected as the secretary of the committee.— *Myanmar News Agency*

MNA plane veers off runway at Manaung Airport

A Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) plane skidded off the runway while landing at Manaung Airport in Rakhine State yesterday morning. There were no injuries but the plane suffered damage. The Cessna Grand Caravan XY-AMC was landing at Manaung Airport, also known as Samonte Airport, in Kyauk Phyu District at about 9am when the right tire of the plane became flat, causing the plane to veer off the



The Cessna Grand Caravan XY-AMC seen after skidding off the runway. PHOTO: MNA

runway.

None of the 8 passengers or crew members on board were injured. It is learnt that only the propeller was damaged.

Myanmar National Airlines is making arrangements to bring in another plane so that the flight need not be cancelled, it is learnt.— *Myanmar News Agency*



Commissioners meeting the local people. PHOTO: IPRD

RAKHINE State Advisory Commission visited the market in Thechaung Village, Sittway, and talked with Bengalis and Maramagiyis yesterday morning.

Later, the commission met with fifty local people including elder U Ba kyaw in Ohntawgyi Relief Camp, fifteen local ethnic people including U Tun Aung Kyaw in Yechanpyin Vil-

lage and 25 local ethnic people including U San Tun Kyaw in Zawpujar Village. The commission talked with them and asked questions.

In the afternoon, the commission visited Setyokya ethnic relief camp. The commission also held a meeting with 13 representatives of UN and INGOs at the Sittway Hotel.— *Tin Tun (District IPRD)*

State Counsellor receives US-ASEAN Business Council President

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received Mr. Alexander C. Feldman, President and CEO of the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council and the U.S. delegation accompanied by United States Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Scot Marciel, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting,

the State Counsellor called for the expansion of bilateral economic cooperation between Myanmar and the United States and invited the U.S. investments to Myanmar.

The State Counsellor also briefed the U.S. delegation on the implementation of the economic development framework of Myanmar and the economic policies under the new Government.—*Myanmar News Agency*



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Mr. Alexander C. Feldman, President and CEO of the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council. PHOTO: MNA

Government purchasing process to be more transparent

DEPUTY Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win has stressed the need for transparency in the government's purchasing procedures because it makes up 10 to 20 per cent of the country's GDP.

The deputy minister made the remark at the forum for ASEAN governments' purchasing knowledge held at the Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Local and foreign ex-

perts are participating in the two-day forum which is aimed at assisting in the government's reforms in purchasing systems. The ministry is drafting, in cooperation with the World Bank, a law on rice purchasing that will meet the international standards.

The government has operated its purchasing through the open tender system since 2011.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw and wife attend launching of Mekong region eye care tour program in Myanmar



President U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin pose for a photo with a medical team. PHOTO: MNA

EYE Care tour program in Mekong region named as Light was launched in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday with the presence of President U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin.

A medical team including eye specialists from China will operate eye surgery on 52 patients suffering eye cataract from 16 to 18 November at the Eye, Ear, Nose, Throat Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the opening ceremony, Dr Myint Htwe, Union Minister for Health said, "According to the es-

timate released by WHO, there are nearly 246 million cases of eyesight deficiency whereas 39 million are suffering blindness. In Myanmar, eyesight related diseases—glaucoma, cataract, need of glasses, eye injuries, diabetes and hypertension. Of them, glaucoma is 60 per cent of the total. Presently, glaucoma patients are expected to be nearly 350,000 in Myanmar. For now, only 100,000 glaucoma patients had their eyes operated, thus more patients still needs to have eye operated.

WHO's target for eye operation (glaucoma) is 3,000 every one million population with the rate for Myanmar in 2014-2015 reaching 2,038.

Only if measures for protecting blindness are carried out in collaboration with ministry of health, project departments for protection of loss of eyesight, general hospitals at regions, states and district levels, WHO, NGOs from home and abroad and the whole populace, can be the target of WHO—eradication of curable eyesight

diseases in the year, 2020. At the ceremony, Visakha Foundation which is joining hands with the program, donated a Cassette Sterilizer and two auto-clave to the hospital.

Under the program, 100 patients received free-of-charge eye surgeries in Yangon while another 100 patients in Thitagu Eye Hospital in Sagaing.

Myanmar is the third country where the program was launched, after Laos and Cambodia last month.—*Myanmar News Agency*

DELIGHTFUL NOVEMBER AT SEDONA HOTEL YANGON



WEEKEND BUBBLY BRUNCH

Relax this weekend away from the hustle and bustle at Sedona's 'Bubbly' Brunch that serves up an indulgent spread of mouth-watering delicacies and cuisine, with seafood, sushi, sashimi, carving & 'live' cooking stations and an extensive salad bar for the health conscious!

Immerse yourself in luxurious surroundings with 'Live' Entertainment, comfort and 5* services at our lavish Weekend 'Bubbly' Brunch every Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday from 11.30pm to 3.00pm at D'Cuisine.

*Inclusive of free flow wine, champagne, beer & soft drinks
*Free use of swimming pool for brunch diners.
*Senior above 60 yrs and children below 12 yrs old enjoy 50% discounts.
*Free Parking

SEAFOOD AND BBQ BUFFET DINNER

Escape the everyday patched and noisy environs to enjoy a delicious, leisurely dining setting in luxurious comfort of D'Cuisine.

Indulge yourself, family and friends in our spectacular seafood night with our wide selection of Seafood and grill items from the Cold Buffet to the BBQ sections plus a selection of delicious dishes.

Time : Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays
6.30pm to 10.00pm

Venue : D'Cuisine All Day Dining Restaurant

**Inclusive of free flow of wine, beer & soft drinks



Tatmadaw flies passengers from Yangon to Coco Island



Passengers boarding the aircraft on 15 November, 2016. PHOTO: CNC' OFFIC

FOR the convenience of government servants as well as local staff and families of Tatmadawmen who are assigned to Coco Island, the Tatmadaw has been arranging for the transport of passengers and consumer goods and foodstuff with the

use of military aircraft and sea vessels.

On the morning of 15 November, 9 passengers, foodstuff and consumer goods were sent from the Headquarters of Mingaladon Air Force Base in Yangon to Coco Island by a Myanmar Air Force

aircraft.

Later that day, 14 passengers—local people, government servants, local staff and Tatmadawmen — and goods were flown from Coco Island to Yangon. — *Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services*

India, Myanmar and Thailand Friendship Motor Car Rally, 2016 Flagged-off

THE Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways, Shipping and Chemical Fertilizers Shri Mansukh Lal Mandaviya flagged off a Friendship Motor Car Rally from India Gate lawns in Delhi to Bangkok today. His Excellency Chalit Manityakul, Ambassador of Thailand was also present on the occasion. The objective of the rally is to improve connectivity by road in the South-East Asian region and to sensitize the stakeholders of India Myanmar and Thailand Motor Vehicle Agreement regarding potential benefits of such a regulatory regime.

While addressing the gathering, Shri Mandaviya said that this rally will also play an important role in developing the economic, transport and cultural relations between the three countries. He said that this rally will give a boost to the PM

Narendra Modi's 'Act East Policy' and will improve our relationship with our neighbouring countries. A commemorative stamp for IMT Rally, 2016 was also released on the occasion.

The rally caravan will cover a distance of 5,722 KMs along the IMT Trilateral Highway with about 80 participants from all the three countries, in 20 Indian made vehicles on a journey from Delhi to Bangkok over 19 days. Ceremonial flag off will also be held in other cities and state capitals enroute like Sarnath, Bodhgaya, Patna, Siliguri, Guwahati, Shillong, Kohima and Imphal and Bagan and Yangon in Myanmar and Bangkok in Thailand.

The rally that will conclude at Bangkok on 2nd December, 2016, will further cement cultural and economic ties among the three nations and highlight

the potential benefits of connectivity and integration in the region and in keeping with India's focus on its close neighborhood. The basic purpose of this rally would be to sensitize people about the fact that an all weather road, connecting New Delhi and Bangkok would soon be operational. With the opening of Trilateral highway, it would become a reality to travel from New Delhi to Bangkok by road. A trial run of passenger vehicles on the IMT Trilateral Highway up to Naypitaw in Myanmar was carried out during 9-14 November, 2015 in which Indian vehicles travelled to Myanmar on Imphal -Mandalay -Bagan- Naypitaw route and back and Myanmar vehicles joined the Indian vehicles on the return journey from Naypitaw to Imphal and returning to Myanmar.—*GNLM*



Participants of India, Myanmar and Thailand Friendship Motor Car Rally, 2016 being seen. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Action taken against hundreds of squatters

OVER Ks1.8 million in fines was earned from over 410 squatters who constructed buildings on Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) land and/or beside the road from April to September, 2016, said U Myint Thaug, regional minister for Planning and Finance on Yesterday at 2nd Yangon Region Hluttaw Third regular session.

"YCDC does not allow the building of squatting structures which were constructed on Yan-

gon's main roads. We will remove them with the combined teams," said the minister.

Authorities from Yangon regional government took action against the squatters who broke sections 44,45,63(E) 63(F) and 67 of YCDC law, he added.

Most of the buildings used by squatters are garages, car service centers, car showrooms and fuel retailing shops, said Hluttaw representative U Kyaw Zeya. — *Myitmakha News Agency*

Harmful food to be seized beginning in January

AUTHORITIES will take action against those who manufacture harmful food and do not abide by the rules and regulations set by the Food and Drug Administration Department, according to the Ministry of Health and Sport.

"The products must be furnished with labels, certification from FDA, license numbers including dates of production and expiry. If we find the foods lacking these requirements in the

market, we will seize them," said FDA director-general Dr. Than Htut on 15 November.

"Firstly, we will seize only the goods which do not meet the standards laid down by the FDA" Dr. Than Htut said. "If producers fail to obey for a second time, we will take action in accordance with the law". FDA will take action in cooperation with other organisations concerned.— *Myitmakha News Agency*

Crime NEWS



Kyaw Thet. PHOTO: MPF

10,000 yaba tablets seized in Nawnghkio

ANTI-NARCOTICS police discovered yaba pills on a passenger bus at milepost 80/4, near the Nawnghkio entrance gate on Tuesday. Acting on a tip-off, police searched and found 9,555 Yaba tablets inside a bag owned

by Kyaw Thet, 20 when they searched a Than Lwin Man bus. Police have filed charges against suspect under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Laws.— *Myanmar Police Force*

Alphard hits road divider on Yangon-Mandalay highway

A Toyota Alphard en route to Yangon from Nay Pyi Taw driven by Soe Kyaw struck the road divider causing a flat tire of one of the front wheels around 5:45am yesterday. The accident happened between mileposts 182/4 and 184/5 near the Thagaya highway police

station on Yangon-Mandalay Highway.

No one was injured in the accident, but the vehicle damage amounted to Ks0.3 million. The driver was deemed guilty of careless driving by police under section 279 of the Penal Code. — *Than Oo (Laymyethnar)*

LOCAL Business

High tax rate resulted in low demand in condominium market

WITH the high tax rate levied on property, the luxury condominium market is cooling, the developers said.

According to the new Condominium Law, 20 per cent of the value of a condo worth between Ks30 and Ks100million if the buyers failed to explain how they earn and 30 per cent for a condo valued above Ks100million have to be paid. Sellers have to pay 10 per cent of the value.

In addition, there is a 7 per cent stamp duty on the sale of property in the three biggest

cities of Myanmar -- Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw. A 5 per cent stamp duty is levied on real estate dealings in other cities. With the appreciation of the US dollar, the sale of middle-quality and high-quality condominiums are often conducted using dollars instead of kyats, it is learnt from the real estate market.

The price of luxury condominium apartments slumped by about 15 per cent because of the cool market, whereas other condominium prices went up.— *Mon Mon*

Bidding to be opened soon on bus supply for BRT Lite

THE Yangon Bus Public Company is reportedly planning to buy 100 more buses in BRT (bus rapid transport system) and tenders will be invited in the third week of November.

The buses have to be made in Korea and slated to arrive in December. The invitation to tender to purchase about 100 buses will be issued soon. With more buses arriving, phase three will remain unchanged, said Dr. Maung Aung, the chair of Yangon Bus Public Company.

Currently, the buses in the BRT Lite system are running three routes using a fleet of 65

buses imported from foreign countries, it is learnt. There are a total of about 2.6 million commuters daily in Yangon and about 100 passengers take each BRT bus a day. The BRT Lite system aims to reduce traffic congestion by providing safe and comfortable public transport. The BRT charges a flat rate of Ks300 per ride. Customers may buy pre-paid cards at ticket centres which have been opened in Botahtaung, Myaynigon, Hledan, Wireless Market, Eight Miles, Htaukkyant, Thamine and Kokkai between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.daily.—*Mon Mon*



A BRT bus pauses at a bus stop near Bahan Third Street.
PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

Automated system available in border trade camps by 2018

THE Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS) is planned for use in border trade camps by 2018, according to the Customs Department.

To facilitate trade, MACCS was launched at international ports, Yangon Airport International Cargo Terminal and Thilawa Special Economic Zone operations starting on 12th November. This will now be extended to border areas. The automated system will replace the time-consuming manual processes. Exporters,

importers, customs officials and other government agency representatives will be able to access MACCS through the internet, saving time and transportation costs. A faster custom procedure can make trading more effective, an official from the department said. Japan International Corporation Agency (JICA) initially provided over 3,990 million yen and technical assistance for MACCS, while Myanmar government spent Ks5,700million, it is learnt.—*Mon Mon*



People walk past Yangon Stock Exchange on 11 November 2016. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

Stock trading cool at YSX

STOCK trading is still cool at Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX), with a volume of 19,154 shares on 16th November. The trading volume of Myanmar Citizens Bank on 16th November notably plunged down to 22 shares, according to YSX.

The Myanmar Stock Price Index (MYANPIX) was at 634.64 on 16th November. The value of stock trading at YSX was Ks105,100,300, with a trading

volume of 1,005 shares of First Myanmar Investment (FMI), 18,127 shares of Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH) and 22 shares of Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB).

On 16th November, the share price of FMI was Ks16,000, while that of MTSH was Ks4,900 and MCB Ks9,000 at closing time. After MTSH's split of shares, the stock trading volume scaled up on 4th November. However, the

share trading has been cool since 8th November.

Share trading volumes at YSX were 18,424 shares on 8th November, 16,497 shares on 9th November, 13,499 shares on 10th November and 13,414 on 11th November. The stock trading volume slipped to 8,040 shares on 15th November and rose back to 19,154 shares on 16th November, according to the statistics of YSX.—*Ko Htet*

Myanmar Industrial zone operations expected to double in 2017

BUSINESSES in industrial zones are expected to double in number next year because many businessmen are eyeing the sector for investment, said U Aye Thaung, the chairperson of Shwe Lin Pan Industrial Zone.

The industrial business plays a vital role in the country's economy, which is expected to be bolstered by a flood of foreign direct

investments. Therefore, the industrial zone operations are likely to increase twofold.

Producing skilled labourers is crucial to effectuate the development in an industrial zone. There are currently 29 industrial zones in Myanmar. That number is low when compared to international countries, which means there is much room for growth.

Moreover, the industrial zones that can fulfill the requirements of the domestic market and produce quality products are essential to an emerging economy. Many food products are still currently imported from the foreign countries.

Therefore, fixing the infrastructure problem in industrial zones should be given priority, according to officials. -200

Rubber market sales stable despite high price

THE export market of rubber is stable in spite of the current high price, which resulted from the rise in the global rubber price, businessmen said.

Over 80 per cent of rubber production in Myanmar is slated for export to China. Local rubber consumption is below 10 per cent. However, the rubber demand in the domestic market has

risen because of increase in tyre production.

The export volume of rubber will rise only if the production rate from rubber farms is boosted. Most rubber farm owners sell the latex once it is produced. Only some of them store the rubber while waiting for the price goes up.

Over 80,000 tonnes of rubber

are exported yearly and this year, export volume is expected to hit nearly 100,000 tonnes, according to the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

The price of raw rubber price is Ks840 per pound, which is about Ks140 higher than the price from the same period of last year, it is learnt from rubber entrepreneurs.—*Ko Htet*

New Zealand evacuates tourists, locals stranded by earthquake

WOODEND/WELLINGTON — Helicopters ferried scores of residents and tourists out of a small New Zealand town on Wednesday as others boarded naval ships, three days after the region was completely cut off by landslides following a major earthquake.

Prime Minister John Key pledged to push emergency laws through parliament if necessary to prop up businesses in Kaikoura, a seaside tourist town famed for its whale watching and seafood delicacies some 150km (90 miles) north of Christchurch.

"If we are helping pay the wages and we can get some of the tourists back ... then we can get through the worst of it and get you out the other side," Key told business leaders in Kaikoura after flying in by helicopter.

International tourists contributed NZ\$14.5 billion (\$10.31 billion) to the New Zealand economy in the year to March, the private-sector Tourism Industry Association (TIA) estimates, up 20 per cent on the previous year and over-

taking the dairy industry as the country's biggest export earner.

One tourist ferried out of Kaikoura by helicopter said he planned to continue his journey, despite describing the 7.8 magnitude quake that killed two people as "very frightening."

"It was rocking around like there were 10 people who were outside pushing it," Chris Stewart, 62, a finance broker from Australia, said of his experience inside a campervan.

Stewart landed with other evacuees in Woodend on Wednesday, a small town north of the South Island's largest city of Christchurch, where officials processed people in a community hall.

Asked if he was concerned about staying in New Zealand, where he plans to hire another campervan to complete his two-week holiday, Stewart said: "Hell no, I've crossed it off the bucket list: lived through an earthquake."

The quake that struck just after midnight on Monday rocked much of the country, waking people and



Evacuees formerly stranded in the earthquake-affected town of Kaikoura stand alongside the helicopter that brought them to the town of Woodend, near Christchurch, New Zealand, on 16 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

stirring memories of the 6.3 magnitude Christchurch tremor that killed 182 people in 2011. A tsunami alert that followed Monday's quake sent many rushing for higher ground, before the threat was lowered.

Local TV pictures showed huge landslides covering roads and rail routes, and crevasses in highways. Large sections

of rocky coast were covered in seaweed and abalone, apparently lifted out of the sea by the force of the quake.

Key on Wednesday rang US President-elect Donald Trump, after missing his calls earlier in the week. Key said Trump expressed sympathies over the earthquake and the pair discussed the economy and trade.

Several ships were diverted from celebrations of the Royal New Zealand Navy's 75th anniversary to head to Kaikoura with supplies and emergency aid.

Transport Minister Simon Bridges said officials were working night and day to clear an inland route.

Key told local businesses he was considering "throwing some money" at

an international online campaign to promote Kaikoura once road access had been restored to reassure tourists it was safe to visit as the peak summer season approached.

The government would also put together a business package in the next few days to allow businesses to keep staff on the payroll until tourists returned, Key said.

After the meeting, local resident Glenn Ormsby said businesses were still worried: "Summer's coming up, and what do we do? It should be our busiest period and what do we do?"

In the capital, Wellington, large buildings rocked by the quake were shut off due to earthquake damage as aftershocks continued and strong winds were expected in the coming days.

Authorities said they would have to bring down a multi-storey building near the country's Parliament due to structural damage. The Defence Force's damaged headquarters was closed to its 1,200 staff and a spokesman said he did not know when it would re-open. —Reuters

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Japan regulator OKs another nuclear reactor to run beyond 40-yr limit



An employee of Kansai Electric Power Co's stands next to the connection unit of an emergency power generator during a demonstration before an inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) members at Ohi nuclear power plant in Ohi, Fukui prefecture, in 2012. PHOTO: REUTERS

TOKYO — Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority gave approval on Wednesday for a third reactor to operate beyond the mandated 40-year maximum lifespan, signaling a further weakening in enforcement of the limit introduced after the 2011 Fukushima disaster.

The No. 3 unit at Kansai Electric Power Co.'s Mihama plant in Fukui Prefecture is the latest reactor allowed to continue in service beyond the

limit following two such units at the utility's Takahama complex, also in Fukui.

The Mihama No. 3 unit, which began commercial operation in December 1976, went offline in May 2011 for a regular checkup and has not been restarted, undergoing inspections to meet tougher safety requirements introduced after the Fukushima disaster.

Kansai Electric plans to spend about 165 billion yen (\$1.5 billion) to upgrade

the facilities at the reactor with a capacity of 826,000 kilowatts to meet the new regulations, which reflect the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster.

The restarting of the reactor is not expected before the spring of 2020 to allow time for the operator to finish preparing all the required safety measures, according to Kansai Electric. The utility said in a written comment that it

hopes to "smoothly resume the operation of reactors whose safety is confirmed," adding it will start considering details of construction work for safety measure as soon as possible.

The Nos. 1 and 2 reactors at its Oi nuclear power plant on the Sea of Japan coast have been in commercial operation for 36 to 37 years. The company is considering extending the operation period for the two reactors as well.

The 40-year operational limit has been included in the regulations with the aim of encouraging the retirement of aging reactors that could be prone to accidents.

Although operation for an additional 20 years is possible, nuclear regulators initially indicated that it would be extremely difficult to actually get approval for an extension.

Some utilities have decided to scrap their aging reactors due to expensive safety costs. Kansai Electric has given up restarting the Nos. 1 and 2 reactors of the three-unit Mihama plant. A total of six reactors at five plants in the country will be scrapped under the 40-year rule.—Kyodo News

Investigation into scandal-hit South Korean president expected to be delayed indefinitely

SEOUL — South Korean prosecutors initially announced its plan to investigate scandal-hit President Park Geun-hye on Wednesday, but the investigation is expected to be delayed indefinitely as the president's counsel requested it to minimize the number of being investigated.

The prosecution office had claimed the need for a face-to-face questioning of President Park no later than Wednesday given that it plans to indict Park's longtime confidante, Choi Soon-sil suspected of intervening in state affairs from the shadows, around Saturday. However, the embattled president's attorney said on Tuesday that the number of the face-to-face questioning should be minimized as rival political parties agreed to a bill to appoint a special prosecutor

who will probe into the case independently. Questioning the president through documents would be desirable, the attorney noted.

Prosecutors said it can investigate President Park on Thursday, but the direct questioning looks hard to be carried out by the current investigative unit of the Seoul Central District Prosecutors' Office incapable of forcing the president to be investigated.

The attorney, who is seeking to let the president avoid multiple investigations, is forecast to accept a document questioning by the current investigative unit and allow the special prosecutor to directly investigate the president after allegations prove to be true. Under the country's constitution, a president has immunity from being criminally executed except for charges of

treason and insurrection, but investigation is allowed if the indictment is suspended until the end of single, five-year term.

Opposition parties denounced the delayed investigation. Choo Mi-ae, chairwoman of the main opposition Minjoo Party, told a supreme council meeting that it was deplorable for the president's lawyer to insist on the minimized probe and document questioning when new suspicions surrounding the scandal emerge every day.

Choo, who is leading the party's campaign to let President Park resign, raised suspicions about the president's attempt to destroy evidence, saying the case cannot be concluded without investigation into the president who is suspected of having a deep involvement. —Xinhua



South Korean President Park Geun-hye speaks during an address to the nation at the presidential Blue House in Seoul on 4 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte gestures while delivering a speech during the 80th National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) founding anniversary at the NBI headquarters in metro Manila, Philippines on 14 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Philippines' Duterte says trusts Trump to be fair on immigration

MANILA — Philippine leader Rodrigo Duterte thinks he will get along with Donald Trump as the US president-elect "has not meddled in human rights" issues, and he trusted Trump's judgment to deal fairly with the undocumented workers he plans to kick out.

Duterte's hostility towards traditional ally the United States has defined his presidency so far, but he has changed his tune since Trump's surprise election win last week.

"It was a well-deserved victory. You (Trump) are the chosen leader of the most powerful country," Duterte told reporters at a function at the presidential palace late on Tuesday.

He acknowledged Trump's intent to crackdown on illegal migrants. Large numbers of Filipinos are believed to be working illegally in the United States and remittances from all US-based Filipinos is equivalent to 3 percent of the country's GDP.

"I trust in his judgment that he would be fair in the matter of the treatment of illegal immigrants. I cannot talk for the illegals because, whether President

Trump or anybody else for that matter, an illegal is always an illegal."

Duterte's volatility and willingness to castigate anyone he disagrees with earned him the nickname "Trump of the East" when he was campaigning as the alternative candidate in a presidential election he won in May by a big margin.

His warm words for Trump contrasts starkly with the abuse he poured on incumbent Barack Obama, who he told repeatedly to "go to hell" and called a "son of a bitch" for daring to voice concern about the death toll in Duterte's drugs war.

When asked if he thought he would get along with Trump, he said he could be friends with anyone and noted the incoming president had not said anything about human rights — a no-go topic for Duterte and a trigger for his rage.

"We don't have any quarrels. I can always be a friend to anybody especially to a president, a chief executive of another country," he said. "He has not meddled in the human rights." —Reuters

Rail project in focus as Japan, Malaysia leaders meet in Tokyo

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Malaysian counterpart Najib Abdul Razak began talks in Tokyo on Wednesday, with the leaders expected to touch on a proposed high-speed railway line linking Malaysia's biggest city of Kuala Lumpur with Singapore.

Japan is set to pitch its "shinkansen" high-speed rail technology for the project when bidding opens next year, as part of Abe's strategy to grow infrastructure exports.

Abe has stressed Japan's status as an exporter of "high quality" infrastructure, emphasizing the shinkansen's safety record.

Najib's visit comes on the heels of his trip two weeks ago to China, seen as becoming Japan's closest competitor for the project. Japan lost out to China in bidding in September last year for a high-speed rail link in Indonesia between the capital Jakarta and Bandung, a provincial capital.

"Japan places high importance on our relationship with Malaysia, and I look forward to working with (you) toward marking next year 60 years since the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations," Abe told Najib at the outset of their talks.

"Next year is a very important milestone in our bilateral ties, and we must make it very significant...to indicate that our relationship is enduring, our relationship is strong and our relationship is mutually beneficial," Najib replied.

The leaders are also likely to discuss territorial disputes in the South China Sea, according to Japanese government officials.

Malaysia is one of several Southeast Asian countries with an overlapping territorial claim with China in the sea. While Japan does not have any claim to the South China Sea, it has repeatedly condemned attempts to unilaterally change the status

quo in light of its own territorial row with China in the East China Sea.

The South China Sea also serves a key shipping route for Japan's imports, especially of oil from the Middle East.

Following the leaders' talks, the governments of both countries are expected to sign an agreement for Japan to provide Malaysia with two used patrol vessels from the Japan Coast Guard.

Japan has also given patrol vessels to Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam in an effort to strengthen the maritime security of countries abutting the South China Sea.

The leaders are expected to affirm their coordination as strategic partners in addressing issues of regional importance, the Japanese officials said. Japan and Malaysia are this year serving overlapping two-year terms as nonpermanent members of the UN Security Council. —Kyodo News

Security challenges on agenda as South-East Asia's defence ministers meet in Laos

VIENTIANE — Security threats and challenges were on the agenda as ministers of defence of 10 South-East Asian countries met in the capital of Laos Wednesday.

"Our region is still faced by both traditional and non-traditional security threats and challenges, which no single country can handle alone, meeting chair, Lao Minister of National Defence Lt. Gen. Chansomone Chanyalath said in his opening remarks of ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) Retreat.

"In general, regional and international environments continue to undergo complex and rapid changes, ASEAN and the international communities continue to be concerned about challenges and developments across regions of the world, Lt. Gen. Chansomone said.

"Terrorism and extremism are posing threats to regional and global peace and stability as demonstrated by the brutal attacks in many parts of the world including in our region," he said.

"Natural disasters and climate change also continue to

pose threats and challenges to regional security since they adversely impact people's livelihoods as well as the national, regional and international socio-economic development," the Lao defence minister said.

The ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Retreat is one of the multilateral meetings being held in Laos as per its 2016 chairmanship of the 10-member grouping.

The ADMM is the highest ASEAN defence and security cooperative mechanism. —Xinhua

Opinion

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Human rights vs protectionism

Khin Maung Aye

THE universal recognition of human rights calls for the constitutionalisation of international law and foreign policies based on human rights and principles of rule of law, limitation and separation of government powers, social justice, democratic peace and national as well as international constitutionalism (Petersmann). The eight core principles of constitutionalism must be applied in mutual levels wherever power risks being abused.

Constitutionalism is described as a bottom-up struggle for the protection of human rights as well as human dignity in the Kantian sense of maximum equal liberty for the per-

sonal development of every individual. In this regard, it is worth remembering that the WTO guarantees of freedom, non-discrimination, rule of law, compulsory adjudication of international disputes, and of a mutually beneficial division of labor are shown to be compatible with the six basic functions of human rights law.

Whatever the justifications for, or consequences of, economic protectionism, it is an inescapable fact that as a policy that denies individuals the opportunity to trade freely, it is not compatible with individual rights. Advocates of protectionism argue that tariffs and quotas protect American businesses and American jobs from

foreign competition, and protecting jobs is more important than protecting individual rights (David Holeberg).

In fact, protection of individual rights is an essential precondition for the very existence of jobs as well as the only condition without which jobs are worth nothing, just as they were in former Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany or ancient Egypt. Without individual rights, jobs are nothing more than the assigned toil of slaves.

The simple truth is that domestic jobs are not protected, but in effect are destroyed by protectionism. Of course, some jobs, the jobs of the protected industries, are not lost – at least not in the short run, and thus

are protected and even created. But what about all other jobs that will be lost because of the protectionist policies?

As an afterthought, think about the principle of protectionism being extended to regions/states too, since it should be important to protect jobs there. Then, following the premise of the good of protecting jobs, imagine extending protectionism to cities to protect city jobs, then to neighborhoods, and ultimately to families themselves: if nobody in the family will buy from outsiders, then a single family can have and keep all the jobs they want and do everything on their own. Wouldn't consistent protectionism be great?

Those Which Are Worth Being In Compliance With Ethics

Wai Yan Maung

SUCH-AND-SUCH a saying had ever been heard.

American newspaper publisher, Joseph Pulitzer, once said that the 3 eternal principles for journalists to conceive in their minds are accuracy, accuracy and accuracy.

John Hersey, a journalist and the writer of the work, "Hiroshima" said, "A journalist must not concoct stories and use any subterfuges in their writings. He is always to be ready to say truths without hesitation."

To err is human, but —

There is no one free from errors, but as a journalist with an onerous responsibility, compared to those of ordinary people, needs to pay great attention to their works so as not to humiliate and harm the reputation of other individual or organization or the majority.

As per the promulgated news media law, journalism is emphatically acknowledged to be the fourth estate. It is regarded as the one responsible for linking 3 Panels—legislative, executive and judiciary bodies with the Fifth Panel, all citizens.

Especially, in time of building a democratic federal nation people greatly hoped for, news media is responsible for reporting in the right way to protect democracy and for making prompt response to requirements and interest of the society.

Controlling those perform-

ing their respective responsibilities in the above-said 3 panels to harmoniously move on the right path and not to go astray is the ethic of journalism.

Media ethics and news media

In the promulgated news media law, it is definitely prescribed that journalists are under duty to abide by ethics acquired. There are accuracy of facts and thorough scrutiny of any information included in it.

In addition, media ethics enacted by Society of Professional Journalist—(SPJ) in 1996 and which is still being exercised by international media men contain the fact: "Every news and information from available sources must undergo the process of confirmation for accuracy of facts & figures and it must be free from careless mistakes. Concurrently, any biased writings will never be allowed."

So long as being in compliance with media ethics and reporting in the right way exist, media will get the respect and trust of 3 Panels, reliance and trust of the people and acknowledgement and trust of international media. Depending upon abiding by media ethics, value, reputation and professional status can be assessed.

Such-and-such a story is being heard.

Yet, some journalists are making false news as if someone is speaking out it. Those include fabrication and subterfuges. They neglect the truth. Some influen-

tial persons from media group themselves are saying in a wrong way. Their humiliating words caused misunderstanding and defaming over organizations and their leaders. What they said on purpose may raise a furore over leading role of the aggrieved party. Media have no right to say whatever they want. They must speak out the truth and what they speak out must be true. This incident reminds me of John Hersey's words: A journalist must not concoct stories and use any subterfuges in their writings. He is always to be ready to say truths without hesitation."

Are defamatory accusations in compliance with media ethics?

Recently, a person, in-charge of a media organization, described his accusation in an article interview under the caption of "**Government organizations fail to abide by the news media law**," in bold type. In its body, the same words were expressed.

His comments made while making conclusion over an event are defamatory accusation towards all governmental organizations operating the nation's machineries on behalf of the people.

No one is above the law. Yet, readers may misconstrue that the government itself did not follow the news media law, thus causing the potential loss of people's trust over their hoped-for government.

It can be assumed to be a miserable one because it does not comply with 3 principles of Joseph Pulitzer as well as ethics for

media men to follow as prescribed in section 9 of news media law. Furthermore, in case the aggrieved will exercise rights to protect, unsatisfactory incidents will be emerging.

Freedom of expression means that —

During the time of the former regime and since the advent of the incumbent government's rule, "Freedom of Press" and "Freedom of Expression" are widely shouted.

In accordance with the prescription, "Every individual is able to openly disclose their belief and opinions if they are not against the law prescribed," censor law was abolished in August of 2012.

Yet, as regards those who abused freedom of expression, U Zar Ga Nar made a noteworthy remark, "Freedom of expression is not freedom of insult. We value freedom of expression. It is not freedom of swear word as well." U Zar Ga Nar is none other than a famous performer as well as a prisoner of conscience. He dared to criticize and point out weakness of consecutive governments.

Union Minister for Information too called for media men to express in accord with media ethic and to pay stress to take responsibility and accountability, together with freedom of expression, at the 5th media development conference held early this month.

What will happen to cases which do not comply with ethic?

Citizens will be harmed firstly due to these cases. Consequences which will result from misunderstanding false as true can be enlarged too much.

The second victim is the aggrieved person or organization who is accused. A wrong news may lead a person or organization to a ruined life or situation.

The third victim is the person in question—that is himself who creates the problem. The aggrieved can respond to it according to his will. The offender has no right to say what to do and what not to do, just after expressing at random without accuracy of facts.

In article 347, chapter 8 of the Constitution of Republic of the Union of Myanmar, it is prescribed that the Union shall guarantee any person to enjoy equal rights before the law and shall equally provide equal protection.

And it is prescribed in article 375 that an accused shall have the right of defence in accord with the law.

However, now is the time for the whole populace to shape our country with our concerted effort. For this I would not like our panels to spend our precious time by solving problems within us. This is my real desire.

To sum up, would that

We, the media men stand up as the fourth estate, performing our duties in the interest of the nation, acquiring the whole populace including the government as the media men abiding by ethics acquired.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Counsellor's Office Information Committee

Press Release 1/2016

2nd Waning of Tazaungmon, 1378 ME
(16 November 2016)

The following is an unofficial translation of press release 1/2016 of the State Counsellor's Office information committee.

1. As regards the news item about burning the abodes in Maungtaw area which appeared in Bangkok Post 14th November 2016 issue, the statement of the Tatmataw's True News Releasing Body was published in State-run newspapers of 15/11/2016 issue.
2. To be able to release the true situation concerning the news accurately, aerial photos were taken by Tatmataw-owned helicopter in the villages of Wapeik, Kyetyoepyin, Dargyizar and surrounding area in addition to on-the-ground-sightseeing in the evening of November 15. During the inspection, it was found that nearly 105 buildings in Wapeik village were burnt down, with about 30 in Kyetyoepyin, 30 or so in Dargyizar and some 20 abodes in Pyaungpik set on fire.
3. Upon receipt of the news that some 10 armed attackers entered Wapeik village in the evening of November 13, security forces went to clear them out. Due to the clearance attack of

the security forces, the attackers set houses in the village on fire and fled away. That news was published in the Myawady newspaper and broadcast on Myawady TV on November 14. The Bangkok Post covered a news report based on satellite photos released by Human Rights Watch, in which it accused that some 100 buildings were burnt down before November 13. It was reported in Myawady newspaper and on Myawady TV on October 13 that there were only 25 buildings burnt down in the above-said village before the news released by HRW. According to findings from investigation, it is learnt that 105 units out of its original number of buildings—261 houses were ruined in the fire. Despite the fact that 245 houses in the village of Kyetyoepyin were described to have been burnt down in Bangkok Post, only 30 out of its original number—362 were found to have been destroyed by the arsonists.

Similarly, according to the on-the-ground-survey, there were only 30 buildings burnt down out of its origi-

nal number—330 in Dargyizar village. BP accused that 700 buildings were destroyed by the arsonists. Although HRW expressed that 85 buildings were ruined in the fire, the actual number was only 20. It has been released that outbreaks of fire were caused by the violent attackers.

4. During the aerial inspection of the fire-destroyed sites by helicopter, some buildings were found blazing near Yekhatchaung Gwasone village at 3 p.m or so. Government troops in the line of security duty extinguished the fire. In it, 17 houses were burnt down.
5. It was found that armed attackers waging terrorist attacks on Maungtaw area are burning villages and spreading false news and concocted stories linking with some media with a view to getting monetary aids from international organisations and misunderstanding security forces launching area clearance operation. The activities of area clearance operation in Maungtaw area will be released to keep pace with the time.

Government refutes rights group report on Rakhine

>> FROM PAGE 1

He also said that findings of the committee will be released starting tomorrow, with the media allowed to cover news in the area in the same ways as diplomats were allowed to visit. A news team from the Ministry of Information led by a director has been sent there in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Home Affairs. Based on the security situation of the news team, private media will also be sent there, he said.

He also pledged to cooperate with the media for sensitive conflict reports in the future.

U Zaw Htay continued to say that the office of the Rakhine State Information Committee is opened at the Presidential Palace, with Maj-Gen Soe Naing, the deputy leader of the Tatmadaw Information Team, together with other responsible personnel being at the office.

He also pledged that the information team of the Tatmadaw would release ground reports in Rakhine State as soon as it is ready.

Regarding the challenges faced by the government in restoration of community peace and stability in Rakhine state, U Zaw Htay said out of 36 suspects arrested on 12 November, Mohammad Islam, 41, was living in Pwintphyuachung Village and he, along with villagers, went to the fighting with the government troops. He added that Mohammad Islam told the police during the interrogation that the violent attackers who came back from Bangladesh set fire to the homes.

The Deputy Director-General continued to say that Sardu Army, who was arrested on 14 November, told police that he came to Myasin Village together



Deputy Director-General U Zaw Htay talks to media at the press conference in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA



Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo.

Comparison of figures released by Human Rights Watch and actual destruction

Village	HRW (Houses)	Real (Houses)
Warpaik	100	105
Kyetyopyin	245	30
Pyaungpaik	85	20
Dargyizar	All destroyed	30

with villagers to fight the government troops.

U Zaw Htay continued to say that diplomats asked the villagers during their trip to the conflict areas whether they understood the writings on the placards they were holding, the villagers replied that they did not understand them and they received the writings from Viber. The villagers did not answer who sent the words to them, he added.

Maungtaw conflict was not

a simple phenomenon and it was found that violent attackers are planning how to fight the security forces when the troops came to their village.

It needs to create an environment for peaceful coexistence of the both communities to get grid off the extremism from the villagers who were inculcated, he added.

However, it was found that it was difficult to solve the issue as the attackers are mixing with the villagers and it needs to take time

to settle the problem, he said.

During the investigation into rape accusations in the conflict areas, local women replied that no rape cases happened there, he said.

The fresh conflict in the Rakhine State was the third one and instigators behind the conflict were linking with the international communities, he said.

Daw Aye Aye Soe, Deputy Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the Oc-

tober-9 attacks were considered instigating the conflicts as all denied the human right resolution proposal at the United Nations.

Regarding the measures taken by the government troops, Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo said that the coordinated attacks on the four border outposts on 9th October are considered infringing on the sovereignty of the country.

In response to the attacks in which nine policemen were killed and 65 arms were taken away by the armed attackers, the government troops are still carrying out operations within the limit allowed by the government and in accordance with the international laws.

Regarding the using of a helicopter in the fighting, he continued to say that the troops were under attack from three directions by more than 830 armed attackers in which 30 were with guns and the remaining were holding machetes, spears and catapults. To disperse the crowd, the troops first used rubber bullets to control them and one commanding officer died in the earlier situation.

To save the troops and the injured officers, the Tatmadaw used the helicopter but did not use rockets and bombs following the Geneva Convention rules.

Regarding the reporting at conflict areas, he said the attackers were not in uniform and the troops could not exactly say where the camps of the attackers were. The security forces were ambushed frequently and the area was declared the operation area as it was difficult to ensure security and safety, he added. The troops are taking security measures in the areas following the instructions of the government and international rules, he said.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Workshop on federalism held in Nay Pyi Taw



Union Minister Naing Thet Lwin.
PHOTO : MNA

NAING THET LWIN, the Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs, delivered a speech at a workshop on federalism held at Royal President Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

"It is necessary for us to thoroughly study the characteristics of federalism. Now that the term 'federal' is officially accepted, mottos and slogans such as 'From 21st Panlong Union Peace Conference to Democratic Federal Union,' are being heard everywhere. And billboards showing support of the whole populace are ubiquitous" he said in his speech.

He went on to say: "In exercising federalism, one country differs from another. Similarly, their results are found to be different. Only if federalism is suitable for nature and the real situations of a nation, can success be achieved. We need to openly dis-

cuss federal systems. If we can relate experiences gained from this workshop and study further, it will be of great help for peace, stability and development of our country."

U Han Yong Hue, Executive Director of the Euro-Burma Office (EBO) Myanmar, Mr Don Stephenson of Canada Foreign Ministry (Myanmar Affairs) and Programme Director of Forum of Federations extended greetings and posed for the photos.

The workshop was attended by inter-region and state ministers for ethnic affairs, international scholars and responsible officials. During the meeting, the subjects—introduction to federalism, unity and difference, sharing power and authority, sharing of natural resources, federalism and resource sharing, and protection of minority rights under federalism—will be discussed.

Mr Stephenson of Ministry of Canada Foreign Affairs (Myanmar programme) said: "I am very glad to share knowledge and experience on Federalism not only from Canada but also international experiences including India and Germany. I deeply assert that federal systems which is suitable for one country should be built depending on the respective countries' historical background and nature in building federal systems. According to the experience of Canada, it is of great need to have a political leader with skilled and broad-minded vi-

sions. There needs to be peaceful negotiation among political leaders. And we need to reach an all-inclusive agreement. If we build federalism based on understanding, we will gain national reconciliation, political stability and economic wealth."

U Han Yong Hue, executive director of EBO Myanmar, said the conference was important from an informational and practical perspective.

"At the request of the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs to discuss federalism, we held this meeting in collaboration with Forum of Federations and international experts to know well about what federalism is, how it is to be implemented. Ministers at Region and State levels as well as the whole populace need to know federalism so that we can build a federal nation. Federal means a kind of government's administrative system. Federal attends democracy."

The programme director of Forum of Federations said the two-day workshop was designed to give historical context to federalism and also to see how it could be applied to Myanmar.

"Federalism causes unity, economic development, mutual understanding and peace" Mr. Stephenson said. "Our organization is a Canada-based non-governmental organization, consisting of board of members sent by 10 federal countries. We will discuss facts on federal systems in a short period of time".—*Myanmar New Agency*

POEM:

"Counsel To Boys (3)"

- * Whatever you are, be brave, boys!
The liar's a coward and a slave, boys!
Don't be rude, be mild.
Be pitiful and don't be wild.
Never be a useless and worthless knave, boys!
- * Whatever you are, be helpful, boys!
This's better than to be sinful, boys!
Still stick to the right.
Try with main and might.
Be open, broad – minded and merciful, boys!
- * Whatever you are, be good and kind, boys!
Be noble in manner and mind, boys!
Give a hand to the poor.
It's blessed, that's for sure.
Such a good friend is hard to find, boys!
- * Whatever you are, be gentlemanlike, boys!
To your friends, be brotherlike, boys!
Never be disaffectionate.
With friends, always be corporate.
Last of all, try to be humanlike, boys!

Daw Aye Aye Pyone
(Retired Teacher)

Myanmar Cricket Federation Yangon Club Cricket 2016-2017 Season

- T20 knockout tournament
- T20 league
- Six a side cricket tournament
- Yangon Cricket League (35 and over)

All the Yangon Cricket Clubs are requested to enter their teams for the upcoming events. The Myanmar Cricket Federation will conduct these events on Sundays starting 20th November and onward. The team managers meeting will take place on Friday 18th November at 4pm sharp in M.o.F office at Aung San Stadium. For further information and to enter teams please contact the following persons.
U Kyaw Kyaw 09 – 5415289, U Mg Mg 09- 73242811
U Kyi Min 09 – 5059584, U Michael 09 - 252545470

Court to sentence seven policemen for detainee's death

ON 23 November, the court will hand down the sentences for seven policemen deemed responsible for the death of a detainee while they were investigating his case, according to Thaton district court.

"The policemen do not admit, just saying that it is not their fault. They have the right to deny. But, the detainee died during investigation. They are found guilty, so they will have punishment, said Thatdon district leader U Tin Maung.

On 2 March, 2016, Kyaw Thet Aung, 32, was charged with theft at Thaton town. When the police were investigating, Kyaw Thet Aung died in the prison. According to the post-mortem examination, the victim died of internal bleeding in the abdomen.

"I want only the fair judgment", said the victim's wife, Daw Nan Thidar Hlaing. The seven policemen were charged under section 302/114 of the criminal code. — *Myitmakha News Agency*

FFVPE Association plans to submit loan proposal for growers

THE Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association will submit a proposal to the government to get loans for growers with the aim of further developing the sector, it is learnt.

"The growers need the capital when they grow the fruits and vegetables. So, we will submit the proposal to the government. We also plan to give loans to the cultivators", said U Soe Than Min Din, chairman of the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Ex-

porters Association (FFVPEA).

The FFVPEA is planning to build a mango, pomelo, avocado and mushroom cultivation zone. Also, the FFVPEA will submit a proposal to receive land from government.

Fruits and vegetables from Myanmar are mainly exported to China. The FFVPEA will try to export Myanmar fruit not only to China but also to other countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and the European countries.— *Myitmakha News Agency*

Harvesting demonstration on model field in Kayin State



Harvesting on a model field in progress. PHOTO : HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)

A paddy plantation demonstration using the Sin Thu Kha pedigree seed—registered seeds (RS), and certified seeds (CS)—and harvesting on a model field took place on the five acres of paddy fields owned by farmer U Tar Kalose in Flue Village, Myawady Township, Kayin State on Tuesday.

At the event, the township officer of the Myanmar Agricul-

tural Service said that farmers should use seeds produced from Sin Thu Kha pedigree paddy seed production fields in order to achieve higher paddy yield. Pedigree paddy seeds have been stored in systematic ways to distribute to the farmers so that they can grow pedigree paddy in real time.

To find out an accurate paddy yield per acre, a paddy on a

0.10 acre field was harvested with the use of winnowing machine. The paddy yield per acre is 110.81 baskets per wet paddy and 99.73 baskets per dry paddy.

Present at the ceremony were district and township departmental officials and staff, members of the support committee and 126 farmers from the villages in Myawady District. — *Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)*

Kurdish militia YPG to depart Syria's Manbij after training, US diplomat says



Kurdish fighters from the People's Protection Units (YPG) greet each other in the northeastern city of Hasaka, Syria, on 21 August 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ISTANBUL/BEIRUT — The Kurdish YPG militia will pull its forces from the Syrian city of Manbij and withdraw east of the Euphrates River in order to participate in the campaign to liberate the Islamic State stronghold of Raqqa, it said in a statement.

US special envoy Brett McGurk described the move as a "milestone", saying on Twitter that all YPG units would depart Manbij after training local units to maintain the city's security against Islamic State.

Turkey has repeatedly called for the YPG to withdraw east of the Euphrates. Ankara views the militia as a hostile force with deep links to Kurdish militants who have fought a three-decade insurgency on Turkish soil. Ankara has also said YPG fighters should not be involved in the planned Raqqa offensive.—Reuters

Under siege in Mosul, Islamic State turns to executions and paranoia

ERBIL (Iraq) — A few weeks ago, a person inside Mosul began to send text messages to Iraqi military intelligence in Baghdad.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of Islamic State, "has become in-temperate," said the early November message, written by an informant inside the city who has contact with the group but is not a member of it.

"He has cut down on his movements and neglects his appearance," the message read. "He lives underground and has tunnels that stretch to different areas. He doesn't sleep without his suicide bomber vest so he can set it off if he's captured."

The text message, which Reuters has seen, was one of many describing what was happening inside Islamic State as Iraqi, Kurdish and American troops began their campaign to retake the group's northern Iraqi stronghold of Mosul.

The texts, along with interviews with senior Kurdish officials and recently captured Islamic State fighters, offer an unusually detailed picture of the extremist group and its leader's state of mind as they make what may be their last stand in Iraq.

The messages describe a group and its leader that remain lethal, but that are also seized by growing suspicion and paranoia. Defectors or informants were being regularly executed, the person texted.—Reuters

Air strikes pound rebel-held east Aleppo after weeks-long pause

BEIRUT — Intense air strikes resumed in rebel-held districts of eastern Aleppo after a weeks-long pause on Tuesday, killing at least three people, residents and a war monitor said.

Syrian state television said the Damascus government's air force took part in strikes against "terrorist strongholds" in Aleppo's Old City while Russia said it had struck Islamic State and former Nusra Front sites elsewhere in Syria, without mentioning Aleppo.

The bombardment appeared to mark the end of a pause in strikes on targets inside the city declared by Syria's government and Russia on 18 October.

"Our houses are shaking from the pressure. Planes are soaring above us and

the bombardment is around us," said Modar Shekho, a resident of eastern Aleppo. Both rocket strikes by jets and barrel bombs dropped by helicopters were used, residents and a war monitor said.

State-owned Ikhbariyah television reported large troop deployments along several main fronts in the Aleppo theater in preparation for a major ground offensive that it said was imminent and awaiting "zero hour" to begin.

The renewed violence in Aleppo will be closely followed in Washington where President-elect Donald Trump has signaled he intends to take a different approach to Syria from that of President Barack Obama, who has backed some rebel

groups. Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, whose approach in Syria has been praised by the US president-elect, spoke by phone on Monday and agreed to "combine efforts to tackle international terrorism and extremism", the Kremlin said.

Aleppo has become the fiercest front in Syria's five-and-a-half-year war, pitting President Bashar al-Assad, supported by Russia, Iran and Shi'ite militias against Sunni rebels including groups backed by Turkey, the United States and Gulf monarchies.

Damascus describes all the rebels fighting to oust Assad, which include both nationalist groups and jihadist factions banned by Western countries, as terrorists.



A still image taken from a video footage and released by Russia's Defence Ministry on 15 November 2016, shows a jet taking off from Russian Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier near the coast of Syria. PHOTO: REUTERS

Islamic State does not operate in rebel-held areas, including eastern Aleppo, but the former Nusra Front, now known as Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, does.

Aleppo has for years been divided into government-held western and re-

bel-held eastern sectors but the Syrian army and its allies managed to isolate and besiege the insurgent districts during the summer. Its allies include Iran's Revolutionary Guards, Lebanon's Hezbollah and Iraqi Shi'ite militias.—Reuters

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Hundreds of people take arms against Taliban in Afghanistan as armed group speeds up activities

SHEBERGHAN, (Afghanistan) — Hundreds of people have taken up arms against Taliban outfit in the northern Jawzjan province after the armed group has intensified activities in the neighbouring Saripul and Faryab provinces.

"Several hundred people gathered in Faizabad district, Jawzjan province this afternoon and vowed to support government forces in the war against Taliban

rebels," a pro-government armed man Zabit Khan told Xinhua on Tuesday.

He added that the people have bought arms and ammunition with their own money to fight Taliban insurgents, and that "the remedy to eliminate Taliban rebels is mobilizing people against the hardliner group and backing government forces."

Taliban militants fighting the government to re-

gain power, according to locals, have killed innocent civilians, destroyed schools and ruined health clinics.

"We have been fed up with the Taliban's harsh interpretation of Islam and their despotic policies," another pro-government armed commander Sahib Khan told Xinhua, warning the armed insurgents to either lay down arm or face dire consequences of the people's wrath.—Xinhua

Global terrorism deaths fall, but rise 650 per cent in OECD countries

LONDON — Deaths from terrorism in OECD countries increased by 650 per cent last year despite a marked fall globally as Islamic State (IS) and Boko Haram militants suffered military defeats at home but committed more attacks abroad, a report said on Wednesday.

The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) said worldwide there had been 29,376 deaths caused by terrorism in 2015, a drop of 10 per cent and the first fall in four years, as action against Islamist militants IS in Iraq and Boko Haram in Nigeria cut the numbers killed there by a third.

However, the report said the groups had spread their actions to neighbouring states and regions, causing a huge increase in fatalities among OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) members,



People pay their respects under a commemorative plaque next to the "La Belle Equipe" bar and restaurant in Paris, France, on 13 November, 2016, after a ceremony held for the victims of last year's Paris attacks which targeted the Bataclan concert hall as well as a series of bars and killed 130 people. PHOTO: REUTERS

most of which are wealthy countries such as the United States and European nations.

It said 21 of the 34 OECD member countries had witnessed at least one

attack with most deaths occurring in Turkey and France where coordinated attacks by IS gunmen and suicide bombers at the Bataclan music venue, a soccer stadium and several ca-

fes in Paris last November killed 130 people.

Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden and Turkey all suffered their worst death tolls from terrorism in a single year

since 2000, according to the index which is produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) think-tank.

In total, 23 countries registered their highest ever number of terrorism deaths.

"While on the one hand the reduction in deaths is positive, the continued intensification of terrorism in some countries and its spread to new ones is a cause for serious concern and underscores the fluid nature of modern terrorist activity," said Steve Killelea, the IEP's executive chairman.

"The attacks in the heartland of western democracies underscore the need for fast-paced and tailored responses to the evolution of these organisations."

The annual index ranks countries based on data from the Global Terrorism Database run by a

consortium based at the US University of Maryland.

Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria, which accounted for 72 per cent of all deaths, were the top five ranked countries in the GTI.

The United States ranked 36th, with France 29th, Russia 30th and the United Kingdom 34th.

The global economic impact of terrorism was assessed to be \$89.6 billion with Iraq suffering the greatest impact, at 17 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

IS was the deadliest group in 2015, the report said, overtaking Boko Haram with attacks in 252 cities that led to 6,141 deaths.

However, Boko Haram's move into neighbouring countries Niger, Cameroon and Chad saw the number of fatalities in these countries increase by 157 per cent.—Reuters

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES-Individual Consultants)

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Agricultural Development Support Project (ADSP)
Credit No. : 5624 MM

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is in the process of receiving funds from the World Bank toward the cost of the ADSP Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The Project Management Unit now invites expressions of interest from qualified candidates for the below positions. Interested consultants must provide their updated curriculum vitae, indicating personal and technical skills, qualifications and experience in similar assignments. In submitting their expressions of interest, consultants are kindly requested to indicate the positions they apply and the reference numbers stated below.

1. National Finance Officer (Ref # SC-15)
2. National Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (Ref # SC-13)
3. National Environmental Safeguards Specialist (Ref # SC-11)

The Services are expected to be carried out over a period of 12 months with the possibility of extension depending on the performance. The location of work will be the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) Loans and International Development Association (IDA) Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers dated July 2014 ("Consultant Guidelines"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. A Consultant will be selected in accordance with procedures set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information and a copy of the detailed Terms of Reference (TORs) can be obtained at the address below during working days from 10:00 to 15:00 hours.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail, or by Fax) not later than November 30, 2016.

Attn: U Tint Lwin, Director of Procurement

Department: Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation

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Greek police, protesters clash in Athens during Obama visit

ATHENS — Riot police fired teargas on Tuesday at protesters demonstrating just a few kilometers (miles) from the presidential mansion where Greek leaders were hosting a state banquet for visiting US President Barack Obama.

About 7,000 people, among them many hooded protesters and members of the Communist-affiliated group PAME, marched through the streets of central Athens holding banners reading "Unwanted!"

The police clashed with the protesters after they tried to break through cordon lines to reach the parliament building and the US embassy. Some

demonstrators threw two petrol bombs at police before dispersing into nearby streets close to Athens's main Syntagma Square.

In a separate protest in the northern city of Thessaloniki, protesters burned a US flag.

The visit comes only two days before the anniversary of a bloody 1973 student revolt that helped topple the 1967-1974 military junta which was backed by the US government.

Obama, who will be succeeded in January by Donald Trump, arrived in Greece on Tuesday on his last foreign tour as president of the United States.—Reuters



Protesters clash with riot police during a demonstration against the visit of US President Barack Obama, in Athens, Greece, on 15 November 15, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

France, UN tell Trump action on climate change unstoppable

MARRAKESH, (Morocco) — France and the United Nations on Tuesday stepped up warnings to US President-elect Donald Trump about the risks of quitting a 2015 global plan to combat climate change, saying a historic shift from fossil fuels is unstoppable.

French President Francois Hollande, addressing almost 200 nations meeting in Morocco on ways to slow global warming, said that inaction would be “disastrous for future generations and it would be dangerous for peace”.

Both he and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on Trump, who has called man-made global warming a hoax, to drop a campaign pledge to cancel the global 2015 Paris Agreement that aims to shift from

fossil fuels to cleaner energies.

“The United States, the largest economic power in the world, the second largest greenhouse gas emitter, must respect the commitments it has undertaken,” Hollande said to applause. The agreement was “irreversible”, he said.

In such UN meetings, it is very rare for leaders to single out others for even veiled criticism. Both Hollande and Ban were among the architects of the Paris Agreement.

“What was once unthinkable has become unstoppable,” Ban said at a news conference of the Paris deal, agreed by almost 200 governments last year after two decades of tortuous negotiations. The accord formally entered into force on 4 November after a record



United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon speaks with French President Francois Hollande during a lunch at the Royal Palace during the UN Climate Change Conference 2016 (COP22) in Marrakech, Morocco, on 15 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

swift ratification.

Ban said Trump, as a “very successful business person”, would understand that market forces were driving the world economy towards cleaner ener-

gies such as wind and solar power, which are becoming cheaper, and away from fossil fuels.

“I am sure he will make a fast and wise decision” on the Paris Agreement, Ban

said, saying he had spoken to Trump by telephone after his victory and planned to meet him. Ban, who has made climate change a core part of his 10-year UN stewardship ending this year,

said climate change was having severe impacts from the Arctic to Antarctica and that 2016 is on track to be the warmest year on record.

Trump has said he wants to boost the US coal, oil and shale industries, abandoning President Barack Obama’s plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 26-28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025. The Paris accord, aiming to phase out net greenhouse gas emissions this century, was driven by increased scientific certainty that man-made emissions drive heat waves, floods and rising sea levels.

Ban said that companies including General Mills and Kellogg, states such as California and cities such as Nashville and Las Vegas were working to cut their greenhouse gas emissions.—Reuters

Assange questioned for second day at Ecuador’s UK embassy over rape allegation

LONDON — Prosecutors questioned WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange for a second day at the Ecuadorian embassy in London, where he has been holed up for four years, in an investigation into allegations that he committed rape in Sweden in 2010.

Assange, who enraged Washington by publishing a flood of secret US diplomatic cables, fled to the embassy for fear that Sweden could end up sending him on to the United States where he could face a long prison term for leaking US secrets.

Swedish Chief Prosecutor Ingrid Isgren spent several hours at the embassy on Tuesday where she posed questions through an Ecuadorian prosecutor, before leaving without making comment.

“The interview with Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London has ended,” the Swedish Prosecution Authority said in a statement. “As the investigation is ongoing, it is subject to confidentiality.”

Assange, who has repeatedly denied the rape allegation, sought refuge in Ecuador’s embassy in Au-



Prosecutor Ingrid Isgren from Sweden leaves Ecuador’s embassy in London, Britain, on 15 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

gust 2012. He is wanted in Britain for breaching bail.

In 2010, WikiLeaks published thousands of classified US military and diplomatic documents in what became one of the largest information leaks in US history.

Assange made international headlines in early 2010 when WikiLeaks re-

leased classified US military video showing a 2007 attack by Apache helicopters that killed a dozen people in Baghdad, including two Reuters news staff.

The results of the interview will later be reported from Ecuador to the Swedish prosecutors in a written statement.—Reuters

Thailand finds 33 new cases of Zika, says health ministry

BANGKOK — Thai health officials on Wednesday said 33 new Zika virus cases have been detected in the country as officials step up screening for groups at high risk from the disease such as pregnant women.

“We confirmed 33 new cases last week and have detected the virus in two further provinces,” Ministry of Public Health spokesman Suwannachai Wattanayingcharoenchai told Reuters.

Suwannachai said health campaigns warning travelers about Zika have been increased as many Thais flock to the capital Bangkok to take part in national mourning activities for King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who died on 13 October.

“This is a period of movement with people

coming to the capital from the provinces to take part in various activities,” he said. “We have to remind them that Zika is a silent disease and some people won’t have symptoms.”

Thailand became the first country in Southeast Asia in September to confirm Zika-linked microcephaly, a condition that results in babies being born with small heads, and has one of the highest number of Zika cases in the region.

Other parts of Southeast Asia have reported dozens of cases of Zika, including city state Singapore where 450 cases have been reported in 2016.

Thailand has reported more than 680 cases of Zika since January but its Department of Disease Control has said the virus is manageable.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGSAOTONG VOY. NO (184) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.11.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MSTL-1 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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Van Gogh museum dismisses claim discovered sketchbook authentic

PARIS — The Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam has dismissed an art historian's claim that a collection of discovered sketches were drawn by the Dutch artist, saying they were imitations.

At a news conference in Paris on Tuesday, Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov presented "Vincent Van Gogh, The Lost Arles Sketchbook", a book showing prints of dozens of drawings the University of Toronto professor and Van Gogh specialist say are by the artist.

Welsh-Ovcharov and publishers Seuil say the sketches are from the post-impressionist painter's move to Arles in the south of France in 1888. However, the Amsterdam museum, a leading authority on the "Sunflowers" and "The Harvest" artist, said its experts disagree after looking at pictures of the works.

"The Van Gogh museum had seen a high definition set of drawings as photographs," Welsh-Ovcharov told reporters.

"Now, when I was a university professor and I taught courses on connoisseurship and on art history, that is the worst thing anyone can do — to tell me that they made a decision on what is a work of art by a photograph."

The museum, which counts some 500 Van Gogh drawings and four of his sketchbooks, said



Copies of the book 'Vincent van Gogh: The Lost Arles Sketchbook' are displayed during a news conference about a lost sketchbook by Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh, in Paris, France. PHOTO: REUTERS

it had known "for some time" of the album, adding its experts had studied "high-quality" photographs of 56 drawings, out of a total 65, sent to them.

"Their opinion, based on years of research on Van Gogh's drawings in the museum's own collection and elsewhere ... is that these album drawings are imitations of Van Gogh's drawings," it said.

"The experts examined its style, technique and iconog-

raphy, and among their conclusions were that it contains distinctive topographical errors and that its maker based it on discolored drawings by Van Gogh."

Welsh-Ovcharov said she was called while in France to look at a sketchbook found in a storeroom in Arles which had come to the attention of Franck Baille, who manages an auction house in Paris, to verify whether it was by Van Gogh.

"I looked at it and ... it was an 'OMG' moment, oh my God, and I said it's not possible, I've seen many Van Goghs that were supposedly Van Goghs and they weren't," she said.

"And I looked at it and I saw all the things that Van Gogh stands for in terms of reed-pen brushwork, graphite underground work, the whole possible elements," she said, adding she had the drawings verified by various specialists.—Reuters

Captain America leads movie nominees at People's Choice Awards

LOS ANGELES — The third 'Captain America' movie, "Captain America: Civil War" has been nominated in the Favourite Movie and Favourite Action Movie category at the 2017 People's Choice Awards.

The nominations were announced by Jordana Brewster, Jamie Chung at the Paley Center for Media in Beverly Hills.

"Deadpool" is also a leading nominee with a nod in the Favorite Movie and Favourite Action Movie categories.

Another Marvel movie joining the competition is "X-Men: Apocalypse". Other blockbusters joining the race include "Finding Dory", "Zootopia" and DC's "Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice" and "Suicide Squad".

In actor/actress categories, "Deadpool" star Ryan Reynolds will compete against the likes of Kevin Hart, Robert Downey Jr, Tom Hanks and Will Smith in the Favourite Movie Actor category.

The Merc with a Mouth depicter is also nominated for Favorite Action Movie Actor. Meanwhile, Scarlett Johansson is up for Favourite Movie Actress against the likes of Jennifer Lawrence and Margot Robbie.—PTI



Family members of Japanese actor Toshiro Mifune. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Late actor Mifune honoured with star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

LOS ANGELES — A ceremony was held Monday to unveil a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame for the late Japanese actor Toshiro Mifune, who appeared in a number of films directed by Akira Kurosawa.

"Next year will be 20 years since Mifune passed away and it is great to know that his accomplishments are still acknowledged and appreciated," Rikiya Mifune, Mifune's grandson, said during the ceremony.

"He would talk in a gruff and manly manner, and always have a perfect posture like a true samurai even at home," the 28-year-old film producer said

of his grandfather, who died when he was nine.

Mifune (1920-1997) rose to prominence with his roles in famed director Kurosawa's films including "Rashomon" (1950) and "Seven Samurai" (1954). The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, which administers the honour for entertainment professionals, announced in June last year that Mifune would be added to the list.

Steven Okazaki, who directed "Mifune: The Last Samurai," an upcoming documentary film on the legendary actor, also attended the event.—Kyodo News

Sonam Kapoor to be honoured at Asia Vision Movie Awards

MUMBAI — Sonam Kapoor is set to be honoured with the best actress award for her performance in "Neerja" at the Asia Vision Movie Awards to be held in Dubai this week.

The 31-year-old actress won rave reviews and accolades for her portrayal of slain Pan Am flight attendant Neerja Bhanot in the Ram Madhvani directed film.

Sonam will be presented with the best actress award at the 11th Edition of the awards, to be held at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium this Friday, a press release issued here said.

The actress also won best actress award at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne. Earlier this year she won the critics choice award at the Hello Hall of Fame, for the role.

On work front, Sonam will be seen next in "Veere Di Wedding" alongside Kareena Kapoor Khan, Swara Bhaskar and others.—PTI

Sonam Kapoor. PHOTO: REUTERS

'Beauty & The Beast' trailer shatters online viewing record

LOS ANGELES — The trailer for Emma Watson's new "Beauty & the Beast" movie has broken "Fifty Shades Darker" record for the most views in 24 hours.

The Disney teaser has been checked out over 127.6 million times since its release online on Monday, reported Ace Showbiz.

"Fifty Shades Darker" beat "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" record with 114 million views in its first full day earlier this year.

According to Disney bosses, 27 million of the trailer's 127 million-plus views were generated from Watson's Facebook page.

The film also stars former Downton Abbey regular Dan Stevens, Ewan McGregor, Ian McKellen, Stanley Tucci, and Emma Thompson.

"Beauty and the Beast" will be released in March 2017.—PTI

Pink diamond nets \$18 million in 'healthy' market: Christie's

GENEVA — A pear-shaped pink diamond sold for 18.127 million Swiss francs (\$18.11 million) on Tuesday to an Asian collector bidding by telephone at an auction marked by "healthy prices", Christie's said.

The top lot at its semi-annual Geneva sale, the stone weighs 9.14 carats and is graded fancy vivid pink, the highest possible color grading. Its pre-sale estimate was 16 million Swiss francs to 18 million. "The pink diamond (went to) an Asian collector, a big mega Asian collector," Rahul Kadakia, international head of jewelry at Christie's, told reporters after conducting the sale.

In May, rival Sothe-

by's sold a pear-shaped vivid pink diamond of 15.38 carats for 30.8 million Swiss francs (\$31.46 million at the time), setting a world record.

Christie's, celebrating its 250th anniversary, netted nearly 97 million Swiss francs with 77 per cent of 217 lots sold, against 110 million francs a year ago. Several major gems, including a Colombian emerald and diamond ring by New York jeweller David Webb, stalled on the block.

A pair of diamond drop earrings, "Miroir de l'Amour" (Mirror of Love) by a new French boutique jeweller that has revived the illustrious name and "same philosophy" of 18th Century jewellers Boehmer

et Bassenge, sold for 17.56 million Swiss francs after more than 5 minutes of bidding. They had no reserve price, the secret minimum set by the owner, which is rare at auctions.

"It made a great price for a really fabulous pair of diamonds. Very healthy prices will give a great boost to the white diamond market," Kadakia said. "Diamonds are bouncing back."

The auction house said the flawless white stones, weighing 52.55 and 50.47 carats, respectively, are the "the world's largest perfect pear-shaped diamond drops ever to be offered at auction". The pre-sale estimate was 20-30 million Swiss francs for the



An assistant poses with Miroir de l'Amour, a pair of flawless diamond pear-shaped earrings and the diamond necklace Le Jardin d'Isabelle, during a sale preview at Christie's auction house in London, Britain, on 20 October 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

earrings, whose buyer remained anonymous.

"The buyer is highly likely to be a newly minted Russian or Chinese billionaire oligarch or busi-

ness tycoon, who does not shy from flaunting their wealth," Tobias Kormind, managing director of London-based 77 Diamonds, said in a statement earlier

this week.

A Boehmer et Bassenge diamond and coloured necklace, offered on the same terms, went for 8.047 million francs.—Reuters

Roma designer hopes fashion can build bridges in Hungarian society

BUDAPEST — Transforming traditional flowery Roma patterns into bold, modern prints, designer Erika Varga aims to use fashion to increase acceptance of the Roma minority in Hungarian society.

She launched Romani Design, Hungary's first Roma fashion label, with her younger sister Helena Varga six years ago.

Since then her colourful, sometimes flamboyant, designs have won fans in Hungary, as well as in Brussels, Berlin, Paris and India, where she has also presented her women's and menswear collections.

Inspired by the traditional clothing of her rich Roma cultural heritage Varga, 46, hopes fashion can fight stereotyping in society.



Models dressed in Romani Design clothes walk the catwalk at a fashion show in Budapest, Hungary, on 12 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Born in eastern Hungary, she was a jewellery maker before turning to clothes. She also worked for several years as a men-

tor to young Roma people — can experience that she says has had a profound influence on her mission now as a fashion designer.

"We talked a lot about how important it is to find and live fully their Roma identity," she said of her mentoring work. To succeed in this, she said, society needs to change as well, to be more open towards Roma people, who make up about 5 per cent of Hungary's population.

"The reason why Romani Design was created is that I wanted a much more intensive and stronger communication channel and ... to boost the prestige of Roma culture," Varga told Reuters in the small sewing room in her studio in Budapest. At a glitzy fashion show in the capital featuring Hungarian designers over the weekend, held by Marie Claire magazine, models strolled the catwalk in Varga's vibrant Romani designs.—Reuters

World's giant jade Buddha statue to be displayed in Viet Nam

HO CHI MINH CITY — One of the world's biggest Buddha statues carved from precious jade will be displayed in Viet Nam's southern Binh Duong province from 18-23 November, Viet Nam News Agency reported Monday.

The Venerable Thich Minh Luc, secretary general of the provincial Buddhist Shangha, said

the jade statue, carved in Thailand with a weight of four tons and height of 4.2 metres, will be displayed at Hoi An Pagoda. It will then be brought to Go Ken Pagoda in southern Tay Ninh province on 25 November. The statue will then be brought to Australia, its final destination, after its journey across 20 countries.—Xinhua

Japan to launch satellite 20 December to explore Van Allen radiation belt

TOKYO — Japan's space agency said on Tuesday a satellite will be launched 20 December from the Uchinoura Space Centre in southwestern Japan to study high energy electrons in geospace.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency said a second-generation Epsilon rocket will carry the satellite named the Exploration of Energisation and Radiation in Geospace aloft.

The satellite will gather information meant to clarify how highly charged electrons in the Van Allen radiation belt are created, as they are generated and vanish repeatedly along with space

storms. The radiation belt lies within the geospace, or the region of outer space nearest to earth and including the upper atmosphere, ionosphere and magnetosphere.

The 26-metre-high second Epsilon Launch Vehicle is a revamped version of the first one launched in September 2013, with enhanced launch capability and artificial intelligence that perform checks and monitor operations.

The Epsilon rocket will be launched between 8pm and 9pm on 20 December from JAXA's space center in Kimotsuki, Kagoshima Prefecture.—Kyodo News



Myanmar International

(17-11-2016 07:00am ~ 18-11-2016 07:00am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:25	Am	Atuladhipati Mahamunisacca Koe Htat Kyee Pagoda
07:42	Am	Buddha Image Built Of Bamboo Strip
07:54	Am	Modifying Natural Thanakha Bark into Ready-make Skin Care Product
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Lucrative Myanma Rattan Industry
08:44	Am	Will you feed the pigeons?
08:49	Am	Family Kahtein Festival
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Myanma Pottery

09:51	Am	Orchid Lover
10:03	Am	News
10:25	Am	Myanmar Traditional Instruments (MYANMA OBOE)
10:51	Am	Sai Ye Kwan

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Wednesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:25	Pm	Travelogue "To the coastal region (Myeik - Kawthoung)" (Part-1)
07:50	Pm	Yangon Markets: Da Nyin Gone Market
08:03	Pm	News
08:27	Pm	Innovative Handiworks Based On The Art Of Line Drawing
08:45	Pm	village Belle

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Wednesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

Spain fight back to snatch draw with England

LONDON — Isco scored in the sixth minute of stoppage time as Spain launched an improbable fightback to snatch a 2-2 friendly draw against England with both their goals coming after the 89th minute at Wembley on Tuesday.

England looked like ending a dismal year with a glimmer of hope as a first-half penalty from Adam Lallana and Jamie Vardy's header after the break gave them a thoroughly deserved two-goal lead.

Yet the comeback began with the home fans already heading for the exits as Iago Aspas cut into the area and

thumped the ball into the top corner beginning a nervy retreat from England deep into their own territory.

Isco then stunned the Wembley crowd by hitting the ball through substitute keeper Tom Heaton's legs from a tight angle to deprive England boss Gareth

Southgate of a major scalp to end his four-game spell in interim charge.

Despite a disappointing end to England's evening, Southgate remains well-placed to take the England job on a permanent basis and the Football Association may feel an otherwise incisive attacking display against one of the world's big hitters has greased the wheels sufficiently for his appointment.

He has now won two and drawn two of his four games in charge but has steered England through a period of turmoil after Sam Allardyce was forced out 67 days into the job following a newspaper sting and Roy Hodgson quit after a dismal Euro 2016.

"I have loved doing it," he told

ITV when asked if he wanted the job.

"But it's not my decision, I think we are proud of what we have done with the team. We were asked to take over a situation in a temporary measure and tonight's performance really was very special."

England opened the scoring after nine minutes when Lallana's inch-perfect pass found Vardy running in behind the Spain defence.

While the Leicester striker's first touch was far from perfect, he managed to knock the ball around advancing Spain keeper Pepe Reina, who took the forward's legs away to concede a penalty that Lallana thumped high into the net.

The Liverpool playmaker has scored in each of his last three games for England, having

failed to find the net in his previous 26, but his evening was curtailed midway through the first half when he was forced off through injury.

In his absence, England's threat initially dropped, yet they doubled the lead two minutes into the second half as Vardy ended a 14-game goal drought for club and country with a diving header at the far post from Jordan Henderson's cross.

It could have got better for England but substitute Theo Walcott forced Reina to parry a sharp effort and Henderson scuffed the rebound wide, before former Liverpool forward Aspas cut into the England box to thump the ball into the top corner.

That sent jitters through the entire England side, which Isco exploited in the dying seconds.—Reuters



Spain's Isco scores second goal. PHOTO: REUTERS

Djokovic digs deep to repel Raonic onslaught

LONDON — It has been missing for a while but Novak Djokovic rediscovered his warrior spirit to tame Canada's Milos Raonic 7-6(6), 7-6(5) in a riveting duel and guarantee progress from his group at the ATP World Tour Finals on Tuesday.

The 29-year-old Serb's recent malaise has cost him the world number one ranking he held for 122 weeks but when backed into a corner by an inspired Raonic, he responded in the belligerent manner that has earned him 12 grand slam titles.

World number four Raonic threw the kitchen sink at the elastic-limbed Serb for two hours and 14 minutes, striking 42 winners and 14 aces but Djokovic, aiming for a fifth consecutive title at the year-ender, was equal to everything — just.

Having edged a high-intensity first-set when Raonic double-faulted on set point in a tense tiebreak, Djokovic looked to have broken the shackles in the second to lead 4-2.

Raonic, who dialled up his mighty serve to speeds of 140mph, stormed back to rock Djokovic on his heels and came within a missed forehand of extending the match into a decider.

But Djokovic produced a magical backhand flick at 5-5

in the night's second tiebreak, then an ace, before Raonic succumbed to an eighth successive defeat at the hands of the Serb when his backhand flew wide.

With two wins in the bag Djokovic, whose form has tailed off since winning the French Open in June, is now assured of a semi-final spot although with 200 ranking points up for grabs in his final group match against Gael Monfils he will not be letting up. Raonic will be favourite to beat Dominic Thiem and reach the semis too, although the Austrian will be heartened by his 6-3, 1-6, 6-4 defeat of fellow debutant Monfils earlier.

"I managed to hang in there mentally and stay strong and believed that the opportunities would come," Djokovic, who needs to better Andy Murray's performance here to reclaim the number one ranking, said.

"It could have gone either way this match. He's such a strong player and has got firepower. "Two tiebreaks against a big server is a great win."

Despite having won only one set in their previous seven matches, Raonic betrayed no inferiority and forced Djokovic to save three break points early on.—Reuters



Serbia's Novak Djokovic. PHOTO: REUTERS

Messi magic puts Argentina back on World Cup track

SAN JUAN (Argentina) — A Lionel Messi masterclass, netting a brilliant free kick before laying on two more goals, put Argentina's World Cup qualifying campaign back on track with a resounding 3-0 win over Colombia on Tuesday.

The win lifted Messi's team, recovering from two successive defeats, into fifth place in the South American group with 19 points, one behind Ecuador and Chile, who beat Uruguay 3-1 with an Alexis Sanchez brace.

Brazil, away to Peru in Lima in a later match, top the table with 24 points while Uruguay are second with 23. Colombia dropped to sixth on 18 points.

The top four go through to the 2018 finals in Russia with the fifth, at present Argentina, qualifying for an intercontinental playoff for another berth.

"It's hard to analyse (the match) when you concede those kinds of goals and the more so when one team has a player like Messi," said Colombia coach Jose Pekerman.

"With the second goal, the match became practically impossible (for us). You try to get goals back but we couldn't and Messi made the difference."

Argentina took a ninth-minute lead when Messi curled his free kick over the wall and into the top left corner of David Ospina's net off the underside of the bar for his 57th Argentina goal.

Falcao came close for Co-



Argentina's Lionel Messi is challenged by Colombia's James Rodriguez during 2018 World Cup Qualifiers at Del Bicentenario Stadium, San Juan, Argentina on 15 November. PHOTO: REUTERS

lombia at the other end when he headed James Rodriguez's free kick just over Sergio Romero's bar after 18 minutes.

Five minutes later Messi's superb ball over the defence was met on the edge of the six-yard box with a firm header into the bottom far corner by Lucas Pratto, justifying his inclusion in place of the benched Gonzalo Higuain.

Colombia pushed Argentina back in the second half though the home side threatened again when Messi fed Angel Di Maria but his shot from a tight angle hit

the post.

Di Maria did, however, break a goal drought for his country stretching back eight matches, in the 83rd minute.

Messi cheekily stole the ball from a defender, raced into the box and laid the ball square where Di Maria blasted his 18th Argentina goal into the roof of the net.

Rodriguez hit the post with a free kick in stoppage time with Colombia's last chance of the match.

In Santiago, Sanchez scored twice in the second half as Chile came from a goal down after Edinson Cavani had put the Uruguayans ahead and Claudio Bravo saved a late Luis Suarez penalty.

Striker Eduardo Vargas equalised in first half stoppage time and Sanchez put Chile ahead with a shot from the edge of the box then raced in close to tap in his second.

Ecuador scored three second half goals in Quito, a header from defender Arturo Mina and strikes from Miller Bolaños and Enner Valencia to beat Venezuela 3-0 and push them back to the bottom of the standings.

Bolivia, who had Gabriel Valverde sent off after an hour for a second booking, beat Paraguay 1-0 at home in La Paz thanks to an own goal by Gustavo Gomez.

A second successive defeat pinned Paraguay back in seventh with 15 points.—Reuters