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Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets King of Belgium, PM and EU heads

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, left, shakes hands with European Council President Donald Tusk at the European Council headquarters in Brussels, Belgium yesterday. **(FULL STORY ON PAGE-3) PHOTO: REUTERS**

Minimum wage, child labour protections coming

EFFORTS are being made to establish a fixed minimum wage for workers and for them to obtain full legal rights, said U Thein Swe, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population at

a press conference yesterday.

The Union Minister said data statistics from a survey by the Directorate of Labour and the International Labour Organisation on the labour force,

child labour and rate of entry into the workforce following high school graduation is uploaded on the ministry's website. To aid Myanmar workers abroad, Foreign Worker Ambassadors

have been appointed in countries large numbers of Burmese workers and memorandums of understanding have been signed to ensure smooth transit for workers. **SEE PAGE-2**



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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမာန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Gov't takes steps to protect people from ravages of climate change



U Henry Van Thio addresses at the meeting of the National Water Resources Committee. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Union Ministries have teamed up to manage all the water resources of Myanmar to fight flood and drought induced by climate change.

At the coordination meeting of the National Water Resources Committee on future work plans yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, in his capacity as the Chairman has urged ministries concerned to coordinate with each other and to assess the strength and weaknesses in the cooperation works which would benefit the country and the people.

He also advised to discuss and suggest on effective work processes in managing national water resources by the committee and for ministerial depart-

ments to mutually support each other.

Present at the meeting were Vice Chairman of the National Water Resources Committee the Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung, committee members Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr. Aung Thu, U Pe Zin Tun, National Water Resources Committee advisory members and officials.

U Henry Van Thio also stressed the importance of effective management of the country's water resources, which is the aim of the National Water Resources Committee, and to discuss together on future work processes of the committee.

The Ceremony for World Water Day 2017 that fell on 22 March 2017 was held in March

by the National Water Resources Committee together with water related ministries, departments, international organizations, local and foreign non-government organizations and private businesses. At the ceremony a program to start the "National rainwater harvesting movement" was included.

On the matter of National Water Policy book, he said arrangements were under way to edit the content of the book in stages based on the views and recommendations of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Commission for the Assessment of Legal Affairs and Special Issues and the ministerial departments.

The Vice President then invited discussions and suggestions

on duties and responsibilities of the National Water Resources Committee, alleviating water scarcity, future work process in water sector development, co-ordination among ministries on related works, rainwater harvesting movement and future work of the National Water Resources Committee.

Next, the Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, the Vice-Chairman of the committee explained about the future work processes of the National Water Resources Committee.

Afterwards, the Committee Secretary, U Tun Lwin Oo, the Director-General of the Water Resources Utilization Department, explained about the Committee's

works. Committee member Lt-Gen Ye Aung and National Water Resources advisory members then discussed about the rainwater harvesting movement, processes in alleviating the flooding and inundation and processes in alleviating and relief of water scarcity to which the Vice President provided additional explanations.

The Vice President said the explanation of work done by each ministry and suggestions on future work of the Committee would help decide the Committee's future work and responsible ministries and related ministerial departments were asked to cooperate and coordinate their works.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Minimum wage, child labour protections coming

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Various systems and networks have been implemented to offer job opportunities, depending on the increasing population and GDP as well as based on the needs of old and new factories and workplaces.

The ministry is working according to the 2012 Social Security Law so that both workers with insured employment and unemployed workers have the right to join if they wish and a national survey for the workforce with social security is being carried out. Extra focus is made on supporting and developing worker's hospitals with enough medical staff and medical equipment.

The ministry has also been working on lowering the policy of black list entries that ban entry into Myanmar, assisting in online e-visas and entry visas, restoring citizenship to former Myanmar citizens living abroad, lessening procedures for foreign residents applying for permanent residence, and easing restrictions for re-entry visas for immigrant workers.

Also in process are the issuing of various household registrations and registration cards for

migrant workers and students from basic education schools, issuing of concerned registration cards based on the 1982 Citizenship Law, issuing of National Verification Cards (NVCs) in Rakhine State.

The ministry is also working on migrant workers of mixed ethnicities to legally relocate, changing NRC cards to a smart card format, carrying out National ID (NID) surveys, carrying out continued broadcasts by Mayu FM Radio, and performing tasks for migrant Myanmar workers abroad.

Also in progress are the processes that will allow Hluttaw Research Committees to utilise household registration surveys, issuing of reports for household registration surveys based on townships in accord with the 2014 Population and Household Census, uploading information on Department of Population's website www.dop.gov.mm and UNFPA's website of <http://myanmar.unfpa.org/census>, and issuing work schedules for ethnic registrations in accord with the 2014 census.

Afterwards, responsible officials answered questions raised



U Thein Swe, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population. **PHOTO: MNA**

by members of the media.

Permanent Secretary U Myint Kyaing said that, according to the 2014 census, Myanmar had a population of 51,480,000 people. The previously mentioned number of 60 million people was an estimate calculated based on international standards. As of 28 April, the population of Myanmar has reached over 53 million.

Permanent Secretary U Myo Aung said the ministry has been unable to carry out surveys for the number of unemployed people after 1990, but in collaboration with the ILO they have been able to conduct surveys for child labour and the workforce in Myanmar. The ILO standard for des-

ignating a person as employed is if they work at least one hour a week. According to this standard, the unemployment rate in the country is found to be 0.8 per cent but international standards have calculated the unrealised potential of the workforce as 6.9 per cent. The statistics show the rate of employed citizens as 33.9 per cent with the actual figure of the workforce being 21.9 per cent.

Permanent Secretary U Myo Aung also said the statistics for migrant Myanmar workers abroad is based on estimates and is calculated to be 10 per cent of the country's population. The Committee for Education, Health and Human Resource Development chaired by the Vice President reports that migrant Myanmar workers abroad has reached over 200,000, while unofficial and illegal migration is more than that number. Efforts are being made to obtain detailed statistics.

Permanent Secretary U Myint Kyaing said the ministry reviews former Myanmar residents applying for permanent residence back in Myanmar based on whether they are included on any blacklists or have committed any crimes. Only those who are

free from the two categories are allowed for reapplication for Myanmar citizenship.

Director General U Htay Hlaing said immigrant workers to Myanmar can stay based on the permitted duration on their entry visas and reapplication for visas is necessary when their term expires. Immigrant workers in Nay Pyi Taw council areas are approved after careful scrutiny from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population with recommendations from ministries concerned. Illegal immigrants will be charged with legal action in accord with the 1947 Immigration Law.

Permanent Secretary U Myo Aung said fixing a rate for minimum wages is the main responsibility of the National Committee for Designating Minimum Wage formed with government officials, employer representatives, worker representatives, and expert advisers and is currently in the process of conducting meetings for regional and state levels. He also said it is impossible to designate a minimum wage immediately and requires more inclusive meetings from all sides of the sector.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets King of Belgium, PM and EU heads

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is currently in Brussels, Belgium on an official visit, met separately yesterday with King Philippe, Prime Minister H.E Mr Charles Michel and Mr Donald Tusk, (President) of European Union.

Following the meeting with King Philippe at the King's Palace in Brussels, she held talks with Prime Minister Mr Charles Michel over promoting bilateral cooperation and promoting capacity of the Myanmar Police Force and water management issue being assisted by Belgium.

They also discussed assistance to be provided by Belgium to national reconciliation, peace making and development of democracy in Myanmar.

After the meeting, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held talks with President of the European Council Mr Donald Tusk at the EU Council Office.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed promoting the bilateral relations.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also clarified the government's efforts for Myanmar's transition to democracy, for national reconciliation and for eternal peace and for stability and development in Rakhine State.

Also present at the meetings were Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin, Myanmar Ambassador to Belgium U Paw Lwin Sein, Director-Gen-



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and King Philippe enter the King's Palace in Brussels. **PHOTO: MNA**

eral of the Protocol Department U Thant Zin and officials.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the EU Commission, hosted a working luncheon in honour of the Myanmar delegation led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

During the luncheon, the State Counsellor and Mrs Federica discussed matters relat-

ed to the government's efforts for national reconciliation and peace, for stability and development in Rakhine state and EU's assistance to Myanmar to achieve success in the country's democratic transition.

Following the luncheon, they held a joint press conference at the EU Commission building, during which Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Mrs. Mogherini, the EU's top diplomat, disagreed on whether an international mis-



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Prime Minister of Belgium Mr. Charles Michel. **PHOTO: MNA**



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi gives a press conference with European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini in Brussels. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

sion from the United Nations should look into alleged human rights abuses by Myanmar security forces against members of the Muslim community in Rakhine State.

"We are disassociating ourselves from the resolution because we don't think the resolution is in keeping with what is actually happening on the ground", Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said.

The State Counsellor said

she would only accept recommendations from a separate advisory commission led by former U.N. chief Kofi Annan. Any other input would "divide" communities, she added.

The U.N. Human Rights Council adopted the resolution brought by the European Union without a vote in March. China and India distanced themselves from the U.N. resolution. —Myanmar News Agency and GNLM ■

Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand demand labour rights

Phanida/Mizzima

MYANMAR migrant workers in Thailand joined Thai workers to mark International Workers' Day (May Day) by marching in procession in Chiang Mai, Thailand on the evening of April 30.

They also held a press conference on labour rights on International Workers' Day which fell on May 1 and presented their demands to Chiang Mai District Office at City Hall.

This procession in Chiang Mai was jointly organized by over ten organizations which work for labour rights.

Nan San Ngin, former President of Workers Solidarity Association (WSA), said that the procession was done with the objective of Myanmar migrant workers getting equal rights with Thai workers.

"We marched in procession and demanded to get equal rights in accordance with Thai labour law," she said.

On the morning of April 30, Myanmar migrant workers held a seminar at Uniserv Hall in Chiang Mai University attended by over 170 workers and exchanged their experiences relating to violations of their rights and difficulties faced in their workplaces.

Migrant worker Mi Nge said that they would like to get equal rights with their fellow Thai workers who enjoy medical care and safety in the working environment.

About Ks 880 million worth WY-stimulants seized in Maungtaw

ABOUT 440,000 WY-stimulant tablets worth Ks 880 million were seized at 3-mile inspection gate in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State on the morning of 1st May.

While local police force were conducting regular inspection at the 3-mile inspection gate, the police found a suspicious looking pajero in gray colour driven by Than Tun Naing, 36, en route from Buthidaung to Maungtaw and found 440,000 WY/R-stimulant tablets worth Ks 880 million

at about 10:30 am.

The police also arrested the driver together with Zaw Oo, 32, and a military officer and an other rank soldier on board the vehicle. The police are still investigating the case for handing over the two soldiers to local forces.

And, the driver Than Tun Naing and Zaw Oo have action taken by Pyin Phyu local police, according to the State Counsellor's office Information Committee.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Worker sorts fish to sell at Nyaung Tan jetty in Pazundaung Township, Yangon Region. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR

Local fishery exports increase this year

Soe win (MLA)

THE export volume of local fisheries products has increased this year compared to the same period last year, according to the Fisheries Department.

“Although we have not confirmed the figures yet, the export volume of local fisheries products during this fiscal year is expected to be on the rise, as the shipment

of fisheries products I record are high”, said U Win Kyaing, the general secretary of the Myanmar Fisheries Association. “Also, we increased the supply of fisheries products to meet higher demand”.

The fishermen did their fishing in June, July and August of fiscal year 2016-2017, and caught mostly hilsa, a type of herring. This year, local people could buy

and consume the fish at a competitive price. The fish are sold mostly in the form of dried fish and fish paste in the market.

The locally bred fish and river fish exports have also increased, according to local fishermen.

The cost of fish feed are on the decline since the Thingyan festival. The fishermen are mainly using beans, bran and corn for

fish feed. They buy the beans for fish feed at a price of Ks400 per viss, bran for Ks290 per viss and corn for Ks350 per viss, according to the Myanmar Fish and Shrimp Feed Producers and Sellers Association.

The price of raw materials used as crop feed are decreasing because they are imported from Viet Nam, India, Argentina and Brazil at a competitive price. ■

NEWS BRIEFS

Murder in Buthidaung

A man was found dead with knife wounds yesterday morning after he was kidnapped by five masked assailants.

Mahmoud Pharo was kidnapped by five unnamed men from his home in Maunggyi Taung (2) ward in Buthidaung, Rakhine. His wife, Sabina Kardu, immediately reported to the police whereupon a search party formed with the village leader and family members found the body of Mahmoud Pharo in Darpinesayar village tract. An investigation is underway to uncover the culprits behind this case. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Heroin stimulant pills seize in Patheingyi Tsp

A local anti-drug squad discovered 0.11 kilo of heroin and 4,000 of stimulant pills from Aung Ye Zaw Moe, 25, and Maung Maung, 25, in Mandalay on 1st May. The two suspects have been filed charges under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — Myanmar Police Force ■

New policy to announce for imported cars

The Ministry of Commerce will announce a new policy for the vehicles imported with consignment system. There are news that vehicles in the automobile showrooms and centers which were imported with consignment system will be permitted to use in the regions/states other than Yangon. However, the news cannot be confirmed yet.

Currently, there are over 5,000 vehicles in domestic automobile showrooms and centers which were imported with consignment system. Most of vehicles are made in Japan with under 2000 to 2005 models. Although the Commerce Ministry has planned to return the vehicles to imported countries if these vehicles are not sold out until June this year. The Ministry will implement a new policy to solve this problem. —200 ■

SSB issues Ks6,200m of social benefits

SOCIAL Security Board (SSB) has issued Ks 6200 million of social benefits to the insured workers during the last financial year.

SSB has granted Ks 6188.759 million to 149,063 insured workers as social benefits between April 2016 and February 2017.

During 2016-2017 financial year, SSB provided compensations amounting to Ks 1,689 million to over one hundred thousand sick people, Ks 2,020.433 million to women workers for child de-

livery. SSB also provided funeral expenses, travelling allowance for hospitalization, permanent disabilities as well as temporary disabilities.

Social security board has 15 different kinds of insurance policies. The main activities of SSB: registering the working establishments which are entitled according to the law; registering the employees, collection of contributions and providing direct cash benefits. The organization

also compensates insured employees to receive medical treatment. Contributions are to be made on the basis of the salaries and wages they are earning with the employer having to contribute three per cent of the contribution due whereas the employee, two per cent in order that the employees can be entitled to receive medical treatment.

The social security organization has issued 697,781 insurance scrutiny cards and 512,995 tem-

porary cards as of January 2017 for the insured workers to enjoy benefits according to Social Security Act of 2012. There are 355,704 out-patients and 5,691 in-patients who have received medical treatment in 96 social security clinics. A total of 31,274 patients received medical treatment from 1,660 mobile health care teams. Also, 34,035 insured workers from 1,340 work establishments received medical treatment from mobile health care teams.—Zaw Zaw ■

Growers get healthy profits for durian fruit

DURIAN manufacturers in Kyunsu, a town in the Myeik District of Taninthayi Region, say that they are receiving a good price for durian, one of most popular fruits in Myanmar, this harvest season.

Durian manufactured in Katalu, Kabinggaung, Htain-

chaung, Kangyi and Pyinhtetaww villages in Kyunsu Township are mostly sent to Myeik market.

Residents from other townships including Taninthayi, Palaw and Palauk in the district also widely cultivate durian fruits.

All farm activities in a durian orchard are directed to achieving

a profitable crop of fruits in a growing season.

At present, a large durian is worth Ks4,000 while a small one is sold for Ks500 per head, said a grower, adding that the prices are also based on quality and freshness of the fruits.

A durian tree starts bearing

fruit during the 10th year of its development.

One tree has the capacity to produce more than 200 durian but only in the summer, farmers said.

There are also durian gardens in Mon and Kayin states.—200 ■

About Ks2000 billion agricultural loans to be lent in current FY

Phyo Lwin Aung (AMIA)

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation is planning to give around Ks1980 billion in agricultural loans to farmers this fiscal year, its spokesperson said.

These kinds of loans will be disbursed to a target group of farmers beginning this month with a very low interest rate.

Under the ministry's scheme, rice growers will receive Ks150,000 per acre of farmland while other crop growers will be lent Ks50,000 for an acre of land, said U Myo Tint Tun, assistant secretary in the ministry.

Under its lending rules, the ministry will grant agricultural loans for monsoon crops to farmers who have no more than ten acres of paddy. A total of Ks1400 billion was lent to those



A farmer harvests paddy crop from a field in Kangyidauk, Ayeyawady. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR**

cultivators at an 8 per cent interest rate last fiscal year to grow monsoon crops.

It was hard for rice growers to meet target profits this year because of untimely weather that occurred in June, July and

August. The drop in rice prices seriously affects domestic manufacturers.

Therefore, the ministry announced that it would extend the repayment period for disaster-hit growers who said it would be difficult to return their loans to the government during the target repayment period.

The yearly prices of 100 baskets of rice are usually between Ks400,000 and Ks600,000. The prices have declined to Ks350,000 this harvest time.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation is working to promote the country's agriculture industry under its five-year development plan. The major aim of the project is to improve socio-economic status of rural community by promoting involvement of farmers operating small-and-medium-scaled agribusiness. ■

Production costs of melon increases by Ks5 lakhs per acre in ChaungU Tsp

THE agricultural cost of production has increased by more than Ks500,000 per acre of plantation this season, say melon manufacturers in ChaungU Township, Sagaing Region.

ChaungU Township annually produces a large amount of muskmelon and watermelon through over 30,000 acres of plantations. Growers in the town carry out a commercial planting and distribution of melon, one of most favoured fresh fruits during the hot season. General expenses covering labour charges, packing and transportation costs for muskmelon farms have significantly risen this season when compared to the same periods of previous years.

The total cost of production for an acre of watermelon reached over Ks2 million, while

farmers spent more than Ks5 million for the same acre of muskmelon, one of growers said. "Last year, the production cost of watermelon was between Ks1.5 million and Ks2 million per acre, while the agricultural expenses for muskmelon hit Ks4.5 million to Ks5 million each acre. The figure increased to Ks500,000 on average per acre of melon plantation this season," said U Soe Lwin, chairman of the regional watermelon and muskmelon producers and exporters group.

He went on to say that manufacturers get good prices from the export of fresh melons despite high production costs.

Melons produced in the township are exported mainly to neighbouring China via the Muse border gate.—200 ■

An advertisement for Sule Square in Yangon. The background is a wide-angle photograph of a cityscape at dusk or dawn, with many buildings and lights. In the foreground, a laptop is open on a desk, and a white mug is visible. The text is centered and reads:


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Ministries clarify performance

A press conference for the current government's one-year performance was held yesterday at 1 pm at meeting hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw.

Attending the press conference were Union Minister for Labour, Immigration & Population U Thein Swe, Deputy Minister for Ministry of Defence Rear-Admiral Myint Nwe, Central Bank of Myanmar Deputy Governor U Set Aung, Nay Pyi Taw Council secretary U Win Shein, departmental officials, local and foreign media personnel.

Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Union Minister for Labour,

Immigration & Population U Thein Swe explained about immigration, national registration, acquiring skilled workers, data collection of workers, setting minimum wage, publishing of handbook on human resources development index, elimination of forced labour, education on Labour law and increasing job opportunities.

Ministry of Defence

Deputy Minister for Ministry of Defence Rear-Admiral Myint Nwe explained about environmental conservation, disaster relief and rehabilitation, re-opening of university training corps, health care in rural area and preventive work on mili-

tary recruitment of underage children.

Central Bank of Myanmar

Central Bank of Myanmar Vice Governor U Set Aung explained about implementation of monetary policy, sale of government exchange certificate and government treasury bond on behalf of the government, permission to open foreign banks (branch), interbank money market and improving banking fundamentals.

Nay Pyi Taw Council

Nay Pyi Taw Council secretary U Win Shein explained about education, health, road, bridges, dam/reservoir, elec-

tricity, water and other development works implemented in the council area, land and security matters.

Questions and answers

Local and foreign media asked about works by Ministry of Labour, Immigration & Population on former nationals applying to re-register as Myanmar nationals, permitting on permanent residency, setting minimum wage, validating Myanmar population, number of people working abroad, unemployment data collection and issuance of religious identity cards to members of religions (monks, priests); works by Ministry of Defence on upgrading

the Tatmadaw, attendance to National Defence and Security Council meetings, security of northern Rakhine State, activities of Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings and Myanmar Economic Corporation; works by Central Bank of Myanmar on foreign currency control, Kyat 50,000 banknote, changing of salary payment by card instead of cash and status of foreign banks (branch) opening; works by Nay Pyi Taw Council on regional development, issuing of farm and land titles, squatters, occurrence of major crimes and city development programs to which official from respective departments responded. ■

CBM clarifies measures for controlling inflation

Inflation, monetary policy, and the US dollar exchange rate were discussed at a press conference yesterday on the performance of the Central Bank.

"With a view to controlling inflation, a major factor in the stability of money, that is, acquisition of economic development with stable prices, implementations are being made by means of Reserve Money Targeting," said, U Set Aung, Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar at the press conference held on May 2.

If the development of monetary volume exceeds the target, excess amount of monetary volume is to be withdrawn after inviting auction.

In the financial year 2016-2017, 23 auctions were invited, with Ks343 billion of excess money at a time on the average withdrawn from the market."

He added, "In implementing monetary policy, the Central Bank of Myanmar is making implementation of laying down the interest rate policy, designation of the least-needed special fund, laying down money exchange rate policy and accomplishments on free market. The Central Bank of Myanmar commenced to sell treasury notes in actions starting from 28th January 2015 to reduce filling national budget deficit which can cause money inflation, as for the Central Bank of Myanmar, and for the emergence of management on governmental debt. As of 20th September, 2016

system of selling treasury bonds in auction was started.

In the financial year 2016-2017, Ks1201 billion worth of treasury bonds were sold out. Likewise, Ks3622 billion worth of treasury notes were sold. Up to 31st January 2017, 13 branches of overseas banks, 24 private banks, 1481 branches, 16 private foreign currency companies, 45 representative branches of overseas banks were opened. CBM-Net was introduced in January 2016.

Visa Card, Master Card, JCB Card, UPI Card had been granted at home and abroad. Moreover, local banks had been granted to issue Prepaid Cards. In January 2017, all the banks in Myanmar have been granted to issue International Card (Master/Visa/JCB/UPI) as international credit card (clean card) that can be used in and out of the country."

In response to a question about the performance of the Myanmar Central Bank, U Set Aung said help from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund would go toward improving the country's monetary system, which would include informational classes to raise the knowledge of monetary policy of the public.

"Out of US\$100 million from the World Bank, \$25 million will be used for the Central Bank, with the remaining 75 million to be used by Ministry of Planning and Finance. Monetary System of Myanmar will be upgraded with the loan. By doing so, the monetary



U Set Aung, Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar at the press conference held on May 2. **PHOTO: MNA**



U Myo Aung, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration & Population. **PHOTO: MNA**



Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo, Spokesperson of the Tatmadaw. **PHOTO: MNA**



Deputy Minister for Defence Rear-Admiral Myint Nwe. **PHOTO: MNA**



U Myint Kyaing, Permanent Secretary of the Labour, Immigration & Population. **PHOTO: MNA**



Nay Pyi Taw Council Secretary U Win Shein. **PHOTO: MNA**

system of Myanmar will be better than the present payment system more than the present one. Moreover, a training center is to be established for the development of monetary knowledge. It is difficult to forecast the rise and fall of dollar currency exchange rate. Not only in Myanmar but also in the world, policy of respective country and international policy and situations have to be taken into consideration, hence difficulty to carry out the stability of

dollar prices.

Especially, internal micro-economic development must be improved. For the stability of foreign currency market, arrangements are being made with the help of IMF. I did not hear matters on issues of 50,000 Kyat notes.

Firstly an arrangement of disbursing remuneration for staff has been being negotiated with the Ministry of Education. Servicemen's salary has been

arranged to be paid not only by card system but also by mobile payment", he said.

Afterward, the Vice-Governor replied to the questions in regards to demand of news and information on monetary bank statements and on opening branches of foreign banks. Currently there are representative office branches of 13 branches of foreign banks opened, it has been learnt.

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Ministries clarify performance

FROM PAGE -6

Tatmadaw reforms itself to become modern defence forces

The Tatmadaw is reforming itself to become a modern defence force, but the budget being used by the Tatmadaw is low compared with armed forces of neighboring countries.

“The aim is to become a modern Tatmadaw. In the past, emphasis was on handling internal insurgency but the present upgrades and modifications are geared towards defending against external threats. The country’s defence budget is, percentage-wise, less in comparison to those of neighboring countries,” said Deputy Minister for Defence Rear-Admiral Myint Nwe at the press conference on one-year performance of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Attempts are made to manufacture military equipment on our own. Furthermore, welfare of the troops is a priority for the infantry commanders.

If the national budget and economy development, our troops will be provided with equipment of the similar level to our neighboring countries, he added.

If the military’s strength is increased, expenditure in the national budget will also increase. Therefore, depending upon the situation, the Tatmadaw will be modified and upgraded accordingly, he said. Rear-Admiral Myint Nwe said the ministry is working for national development and to support the people’s chosen path towards a multi-party democracy.

The Tatmadaw, together with the government, is conducting environmental conservation, disaster relief and rehabilitation, re-opening of university training corps, health care in rural area and preventive work on military recruitment of underage children.

During 2016 in Sagaing, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon, Ayeyawady regions, Chin, Rakhine and Shan states, the Tatmadaw renovated and rebuilt 944 pagodas, 58 monasteries, 4,687 houses, 64 schools and five hospitals effected by strong winds and provided relief aids worth more than Ks116 million.

During the heavy rains of

2016 in the aforementioned regions and states and in the 2017 January flooding in Taninthayi Region a total of 7,777 households were evacuated by Tatmadaw aircrafts and helicopters flying 41 sorties, delivered 127 tons of cargoes and provided relief aid worth more than Ks119 million. The Tatmadaw also donated more than Ks798 million to repair and renovate pagodas, religious edifices and houses in Bagan damaged or destroyed by an earthquake in 2016 August.

In 2016, the Tatmadaw provided security, relief aid and helped evacuate 580 households affected by fires in Sagaing, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon Regions, Rakhine and Shan States.

From 2016 April to 2017 March, Tatmadaw specialists provided medical treatment to 1,785 locals, vaccinations to 15,053 locals and healthcare services to 86,326 locals of Htankhawlamma village, Lahe Township and Kesankarlan village, Nanyun Township, and Naga Self-Administered Zone affected by measles disease outbreak. Tatmadaw specialists and medical staff also participated in the education activities carried out in 22 townships of Naga Self-Administered Zone.

The Ministry of Defence under the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and United Nations Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (UNCTFMR) signed an agreement on a plan of action for prevention of military recruitment of underage children on 27 June 2012.

The CTFMR members, accompanied by a senior military officer, conducted monitoring visits to 13 battalions and 66 underage children were released from the armed forces and returned to their parents.

Tatmadaw was adhering strictly to the signed UNCTFMR plan of action for prevention of military recruitment of underage children and cooperating fully with CTFMR to de-list the Tatmadaw from the military recruitment of underage children list.

Regarding the economic activities of Tatmadaw’s businesses, Rear Admiral Myint Nwe said the aim of Myanmar Economic Holdings is to provide social welfare to the Tatmadaw members and their families, and to support the welfare and relief of the people. It was formed in 1990 with an investment share

of Ks40 million from Ministry of Defence and Ks16.098 million from Tatmadaw personnel and veterans totaling Ks56.098 million. Up to 24 March 2017, the military personnel, battalions, regiments and veterans put up Ks16,084.755 million in share.

From fiscal year 1990-1991 to 2016-2017, tax totaling Ks89,992.2 million was paid to the government.

The aims of Myanmar Economic Corporation is to support the country’s economic development, reduce the Tatmadaw expenditure, provide required products for the Tatmadaw, relief and support the Tatmadaw family members, produce and construct cost effective equipment and building materials for the Tatmadaw.

The Nay Pyi Taw Council is drawing city plan with the Geographic Information System-GIS, taking the squatters issue in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area into consideration.

Nay Pyi Taw Council to construct housings for squatters

The government would inject 16 billion into construction of housings in Nay Pyi Taw to provide housings to squatters in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, said U Win Shein, Secretary of the Nay Pyi Taw Council.

According to the data, more than one thousand squatters have stayed on farm land, forest land, private owned land and department owned land in three townships in Nay Pyi Taw region.

Meanwhile, the Nay Pyi Taw Council is drawing an city plan with the Geographic Information System-GIS, taking the squatters issue in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area into consideration.

The squatter is one of the issues related to crime in the police force’s plan to reduce the crime for 2017. In 2017 crime reduction, preventative actions, compiling lists of squatters and investigations were being carried out.

In regarding with the big

criminal cases that have increased in Nay Pyi Taw council, Police Colonel Zaw Khin Aung said that they have analyzed the annul cases. There were 84 cases in 2016 and increase of 14 cases compared to 70 cases in 2015. In average for 84 cases, there were about seven cases a month. The first quarter has shown 23 cases that can be analyzed as having no obvious progress.

In security concerns, there had been 81 criminal cases, 10 were big cases, in Nay Pyi Taw council region, the number has increased by three more compared to last year. Most of the cases were robbery and rape. Compared with last year’s figure, 130 cases has increased, most were stealing of motor

The government has used Ks 5,414 million for educational works in eight townships in the 2016-2017 fiscal year and upgraded 70 high schools from primary schools and appointed an additional 885 teachers in the 2016-2017 fiscal year that totals 7,362 teachers in which 884 senior assistant teachers, 2,826 junior assistant teacher and 3,652 primary school teacher. The teacher and students ratio has become 1 to 26 in high standard level, 1 to 25 in middle class level and 1 to 31 in the primary level.

In the health sector, the government has also opened Child Hospital, Women Hospital, Eye, Ear and Throat (ENT) Hospital, and one rural health care sub centre. The ratio of doctor and patient is now one to 1,933 patients and nurse and patient ratio is one to 1,056.

With regard to activities for land management, the government has approved 58.54 areas of lands to those who have applied to government for other purpose, in accordance with the law of Farm Land, its rule and regulation. The Land Scrutiny Committee has transferred 211.46 acres of ministries confiscated lands to 65 farmers during its one year period.

The government has opened 10 departmental public service offices in eight townships in Nay Pyi Taw, the union region and has provided 32,721 services.

Regional rice reserve is 100.20, cooking oil is 162.16 and bean is 478.69 in 2016-2017 fiscal year.

The government has loaned 120 million to 11 villages under the budget of Mya Sein Yaung livestock system and villages can now breed cows, goats, pigs and chicken in Nay Pyi Taw region for 2016-2017 fiscal year.

In transportation sector in Nay Pyi Taw, 16 more mini buses were added to 280 vehicles in five bus lines in downtown and increased 26 more high way bus lines with 274 vehicles after 17 bus line associations were organized.

However, on the questions for construction of circular train and universities, Permanent Secretary U Myo Aung said that there have been no plans in Nay Pyi Taw council region at the moment. — Myanmar News Agency ■

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Timing is everything

Kyaw Myaing

In life timing is everything. There is an English saying "Time and tide waits for no man". That is why all of us have to be careful in managing time. In personal life, in business or in government service, it is very important to meet the deadlines.

In the countryside the farmers know the value of doing their work according to the changes of the weather as their work depends upon weather patterns. For example, they have to know when to plough their fields, do the planting of the paddy seeds and also when to reap their harvest. That is why we have this saying in Myanmar, "don't take out the plough after the rains have gone".

The businessman also has to be very careful not to miss important deadlines. Whether you are the owner of a very small shop or the Managing Director of a company, the same rules apply about timing. Time management

is very important. For example, the owner of a general merchandize store knows what he needs to do at what time. Some of the things need to be done in proper sequence. He must know what his customers need. If he wishes to sell umbrellas during the rainy season, he must make it a point to order umbrellas before the rainy season arrives. This is an example of doing things in proper sequence.

The successful businessman never misses an appointment. He has his own personal system to remind himself either by using a desk calendar or the calendar function in his smart phone. No matter what system you use it is important that you always arrive ahead of the appointed time so that you have enough time to take a short rest before your meeting.

At the national level it becomes many times more important because things need to be done on time. If things are not done on time, government projects will not be successful. For example,

when economic reform is not done in proper sequence and on time, the failure of these reforms can affect the lives of the people. Instead of producing the expected results, we can get negative effects.

Some experts say that political reforms need to be done first. Other experts say that economic reform should come first. In the opinion of the writer, it depends on the situation so there is no hard and fast rule. Each country should be treated as a special unique case.

The case of the YBS – Yangon Bus Service is a case in point. With proper planning and better execution, the introduction of the new bus system could have been smoother and the interests of the commuters could have been served better. The lesson to be learnt in this case is that good intentions are not a very good substitute for better planning. If a project needs a certain amount of time, enough time should be given. Once the confidence of the general public is lost, it is very difficult to regain it. ■

A friend in need is a friend indeed

Ba Khet Zan

Ancient teaching

Confucius said, "To put the world right in order, we must first put the nation in order; to put the nation in order, we must first put the family in order; to put the family in order, we must first cultivate our personal life; we must first set our hearts right."

The philosophy is still relevant for human community especially for our country because if we cannot cultivate ourselves how we can get good friends or how we can do good for our nation.

True friend

"A true friend unbosoms freely, advises justly, assists readily, adventures boldly, takes all patiently, defends courageously, and continues a friend unchangeably." So wrote William Penn, an English philosopher, the 17th century poet. A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. We must select our friends wisely and then stick to them.

Parents' exhortation

In my younger days, my parents tended to guide me in choosing friends and they used to say, "Dot's be acquainted with him because he is a womanizer." or "Don't let this young girl come into your life: She's a heartbreaker." As a good boy, I obeyed my parents and never

refused to follow their guidelines and thanks to following the parents' advice, I have never been swayed to a wrong way. In my hometown, I have witnessed youths ending their lives tragically due to falling prey to drug abuse or infected with HIV as a result of acquaintance with fake friends.

What I want to say here is that a true friend is of great importance. So do in the international relations.

Can we stand on our own?

In the past we have voiced aloud that we have been living under own monarch for years, we are royals and so on. Yes, it is true that we were royals, we were decedents of royals and we lived under own monarchs. But, nowadays just shouting "We are royals." and get lost in daydream, we cannot catch up with other countries because today is not the time to be satisfied with the glory of the past which is just needed to be preserved.

At this juncture, we need to think critically that do we need help or not.

Today is the age of advanced technology and we must analyze ourselves whether we have technologies that can help build our country or not. This can be called the critical thinking. If we believe that we possess enough technology then go on, and if we decide that we are lack of technology we must seek a way for gaining it. This brings up the question: On whom we are going to rely? The word "rely" here means not to depend totally

on others but to grab know-how. To put it in another way, we need true friends.

People's strength

Citizens of our country are true friends. Nothing is impossible if we hold hands together. No authority can resist the will of the people and thus we must rely totally on the people's strength. But just one thing needs to be considered: Whether the will of the people is in a right position and in a right direction or not. If it is on the right track all are to give a helping hand to reach the goal. To satisfy the desire of the people, we need to build our country to become developed. For the country to be developed it is important to produce great human resource in various fields.

Industrialization

According to the definition given by the Wikipedia "industrialization is the period of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society into an industrial one, involving the extensive re-organization of an economy for the purpose of manufacturing."

Is our country now industrialized? No. We are agro-based one and we need to launch industrial revolution. Becoming an industrialized country will surely be the turning point in our history because it is the shortest way for our country to enjoy prosperity.

SEE PAGE-9

Senior General receives Singaporean Ambassador

DEFENCE Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Singaporean Ambassador Mr. Robert Chua in the hall of Bayintnaung Guest House at 3:00 pm yesterday.

During the meeting, the two representatives discussed matters relating to enhancing cooperation and strengthening relations between the armed forces of the two countries, sending the mutual goodwill naval vessels, sending the trainees for short-term courses, master of management, administration and international relations courses in Singapore, and discussed to attend Shangri-La Dialogue which was held in Singapore. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with Singaporean Ambassador Mr. Robert Chua. PHOTO: MNA

House, cowsheds set on fire

A HOUSE and two cowsheds were set on fire in Marzee village, Maungtaw Township on the morning of 1st May. The fire damaged the house and the two cowsheds with losses amounting to Ks 5 lakh.

Upon interrogation, the owner of the house stated that the fire broke out on the roof at 2:30 am on 2 May and that he saw Shunaya from the same village as he went out to check what happened. The house owner Muzay Malhaud filed a case at the police station. Aung Thabyay local police are interrogating the suspected arsonist.—Myanmar News Agency ■

A friend in need is a friend indeed

FROM PAGE-8

With this end in view, we need to produce many technicians who can make history. Is this enough just to produce the state-of-the-art materials? I don't think so. We need to manufacture them, we need to showcase them, we need to sell them to boost revenue for the country. Without income we can do nothing.

Trade route

Supposed Myanmar is an industrialized nation. She needs to export her goods to other countries in Asia, America, Europe, Africa and Australia including neighbouring countries. To trade with other countries the route among them becomes important. The shorter the route the time and money we must spend on it will be less and the longer the route the cost will be greater.

There is an example of distance and cost. The esteemed daily The Global New Light of Myanmar on 28 April 2017 carried news about MV Tomini Amity which docked at Sule jetty to load bags of rice to export them to western African countries.

The news reports, "The transportation charges will be over Ks 6,000 per tonne when the rice bags are sent from Hlaingthaya to Sule Port. When the merchants transport the rice bags to Thilawa, the bus fare will cost over Ks 8,000 a tonne. Therefore, the arrival of the cargo ship at the Sule Port significantly brings down the cost of shippers and merchants. If the transportation cost can be slashed, the merchants can offer higher prices to the farmers."

This is just within the country and it is not transporting of rice bags from the remote areas to the economic hub,

Yangon. If the transportation charges are too great even from the outskirts of Yangon to the port, we can imagine the charges from one country to another. Therefore, we can deduce from the example that the shorter the route, the more profit we can gain.

Maritime Silk Road

These days, the initiative of the One Belt One Road proposed by China attracts much media attention from around the world. Some tried to approach the initiative from the military point of view, some from economy, and some from political view. No matter which approach is the best, we must choose the flawless one to serve the best interest of our country.

The writer of this article had a chance to participate in China-ASEAN Media Journey on the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road 2017 organized by the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, ASEAN-China Centre and China Report Journal. This is the third one of its kind and during the second trip, the acting chief editor of the esteemed paper GNLM U Aye Min Soe had a chance to participate in the journey.

The journey was aimed at showcasing economic and social development of central China. We, the journalists from ten ASEAN countries, have witnessed the well-developed industries including smart technology.

For the hosts' part, they should link their businesses with the road to each ASEAN countries because just showcasing their success is not enough. They should tell something to their friends, "Hey guys! Here is a plan for you for your consideration." This will bring

more benefit to win-win cooperation.

After the trip, a thought came into my mind: How well if we can channel these technologies into our country.

Yes, there are many countries with advanced technologies. But there also may be many limitations to gain these technologies and thus we must decide how we can get technologies from others which may depend much on their wishes whether they have such a wish or not.

Critical thinking

Critical thinking is a term that we hear a lot, meaning making reasoned judgments that are logical and well-thought out. Based on this thinking we shall choose a way to go forward.

Shot in the arm

The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation will be taken place in Beijing in May and world leaders will meet at the forum to focus on economic and trade links among Southeast Asian, South Asian, African and European countries.

It is hoped that the more the leaders who proffer their ideas to the forum, the better the outcome will be for us all. Without counsel purposes are disappointed but in the multitude of counselor they are established.

To do good for nation

There may be many ways and means or strategies to see our country developed. Among these strategies, establishing good relations with many others will surely bring about prosperity to the nation. Good relationships are to be built on mutual trust and respect, and to be able to maintain these relationships

they should go under regular overhaul to make sure they are trustworthy.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

We, Myanmar, are just at the start of the journey and we have to go a long way. No matter what the difficulties ahead, we must apply the essence of a stanza from the poem *Invictus* by English poet William Ernest Henley which also inspired our national leader General Aung San. The stanza says, "My head is bloody, but unbowed."

We are the captains of our souls

Let us cultivate ourselves, set our hearts high, and stand on our own because we are the captains of our souls. And we need to be patient for better a patient person than a warrior, one with self-control than one who takes a city.

What could be getting answers to our question about national development?

Trusting a true friend to whom we can deal with win-win cooperation may be one of the answers because "Friends come, Friends go, But a true friend is there to watch you grow" as said by a woman named Florence on the Internet. And true friend is the one who comes to you first when you are in despair or distressful situation while others quit you. Then, what shall we do? Do to other as you would have them do to you.

(This article represents the views of the author and should not be construed as an endorsement by the Global New Light of Myanmar.)

Kremlin spokesman confirms Putin, Trump to hold phone conversation on Tuesday

MOSCOW — The Russian President Vladimir Putin's Tuesday agenda includes a telephone conversation with his US counterpart Donald Trump, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told TASS.

"Yes, we confirm that," the Russian presidential spokesman said when asked to comment on reports about such a conversation, which cited White House sources.

According to a Trump administration official, the two presidents are scheduled to hold a telephone conversation at 12:30 pm (16:30 GMT).

Putin and Trump have already held several telephone conversations but have not yet met in person.

Besides, Putin's Tuesday agenda also includes talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"On 2 May, Russian President Vladimir Putin will hold talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Sochi," the Kremlin press service said in a statement. German chancellor



Russian President Vladimir Putin. PHOTO: TASS

will visit Russia for the first time in two years.

The visit is connected to the upcoming G20 Group summit scheduled to be held in the German city of Hamburg in July.

However, Putin and Merkel are expected to focus on key global issues. The two leaders,

who used to hold frequent meetings before the Ukrainian crisis broke out, will, for the first time in the past three years, have a chance to thoroughly discuss the current state of bilateral relations and the prospects for developing energy, trade, economic, cultural and humanitar-

ian cooperation. "The parties plan to touch upon key global issues, including the fight against terrorism, the situation in the Middle East and the implementation of the Minsk agreements aimed at resolving the Ukrainian crisis," the Kremlin press service said.—Tass ■

German official sees promise in expanding Russia-backed Syrian peace talks

BERLIN — Expanding the number of countries involved in Russian-backed peace talks for Syria could offer a chance to jumpstart negotiations on a political solution, Germany's top official for Russia policy said in an interview published on Tuesday.

Gernot Erler suggested that German Chancellor Angela Merkel could raise the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin when they meet in Sochi, Russia later on Tuesday.

"We have to acknowledge that all previous peace efforts have failed," Erler told the Berliner Zeitung newspaper, noting that neither the UN initiative led by diplomat Staffan de Mistura nor the Russia-brokered ceasefire had led to tangible results.

"As a result we have to

think of something new. I think the German side should ask Putin if he can imagine including more countries in the negotiations.

That could offer an opportunity to at least organize a negotiating process," he said.

He said it was clear that a solution to ending the war in Syria was now unthinkable without the participation of Russia, whose military intervention has shifted the course of the six-year-old war in favour of its ally, President Bashar al-Assad.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told news agencies on Saturday that Moscow was ready to cooperate with the United States on settling the Syrian crisis.

Interfax also quoted Lavrov's deputy, Mikhail Bogdanov, as saying the armed

Syrian opposition would participate in the next round of Russian-backed peace talks in Kazakhstan's capital Astana on 3-4 May, which will also involve Iran and Turkey.

Erler rejected a suggestion by Jordan's King Abdullah that the West should accept Russia's 2014 annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine and stop criticising Moscow to encourage Putin to drop his support for Assad. "I consider that a dubious idea. It would mix up two issues that have nothing to do with each other," Erler said.

He said US President Donald Trump initially appeared to favour such a "deal" but had since realised that foreign policy crises could not be handled like real estate transactions.

Russia has vetoed eight

resolutions on Syria to shield Assad's government from action, most recently blocking condemnation of a chemical weapons attack last month that killed dozens of people, including many children. China has backed Russia and vetoed six resolutions.

Erler said Merkel would also press Moscow to uphold its written commitments under the Minsk peace process aimed at ending the violence in eastern Ukraine.

He said Merkel would assure Putin that sanctions against Moscow could be lifted quickly if Moscow demonstrated its resolve to implement the Minsk agreement.

"But Moscow has known that for some time, so the ability to add pressure is very limited," he said.—Reuters ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Dacic: No social justice without developed country

BELGRADE — There is no social justice without a developed country, Socialist Party of Serbia leader Ivica Dacic said on Monday, laying a wreath at the memorial to Serbian socialist and fallen WWI hero Dimitrije Tucovic (1881-1914) on International Workers' Day.

In the period to come, after the fiscal consolidation, the Serbian government's programme will focus on creating a developed Serbia, including new jobs, GDP growth and alignment with EU legislation regarding labour rights, Dacic added.—Tanjug ■

Greek opposition says won't support new bailout pact

ATHENS — Greece's largest opposition party, the conservative New Democracy, said on Tuesday it would not support the deal cut by Athens and its lender when it comes to parliament.

"We will not vote in the new austerity measures that cut pension and tax Greece more," spokesman Vassilis Kikilias told Reuters.

The government has a small but working majority. It is expected to succeed in passing the new measures which stem from latest bailout review by the European Union and International Monetary Fund.—Reuters ■

Acute malnutrition surges in Somalia children — UNICEF

GENEVA — Some 1.4 million children in drought-hit Somalia are projected to suffer acute malnutrition this year, 50 per cent more than estimated in January, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said on Tuesday.

The new figure includes more than 275,000 children potentially facing a life-threatening severe acute form of malnutrition, who are nine times more likely to die of cholera or measles, UNICEF spokeswoman Marixie Mercado said. "The combination is deadly for children," she told a news briefing.—Reuters ■

Armed attacks on ships in West African waters rise — report

ABIDJAN — Armed attacks on ships in West African waters nearly doubled in 2016, with pirates increasingly focused on kidnapping their crew for ransom off Nigeria's coast, a report said on Tuesday.

A recent spate of attacks off Somalia, meanwhile, may also indicate a resurgence of piracy in East Africa as a result of less vigilance, the Oceans Beyond Piracy (OBP) project said.

OBP, a project of the privately funded One Earth Future Foundation that encourages cooperation across the international maritime community to tackle piracy, recorded 95 attacks in West Africa's Gulf of Guinea in 2016, up from 54 the previous year.

Cargo theft, once the main focus of piracy in the region, has given way to an increase in kidnappings, with 96 crew members taken hostage compared to 44 in 2015.

OBP estimated the total economic cost of maritime crime in West Africa at nearly \$794 million.

"One of the reasons we are observing increased incidents of kidnap for ransom is

that the model offers financial gain with less risk to the perpetrators than hijacking for cargo theft," said Maisie Pigeon, one of the authors of the OBP report.

Only one successful hijacking — the product tanker *Maximus*, which was attacked in February off Abidjan, Ivory Coast and then sailed to Nigeria — was recorded in West Africa by OBP in 2016.

"Nigeria ... experienced a spike in attacks, including 18 kidnap for ransom attacks between March and May," it said. "Analysts suggest that this pattern is closely linked to militant attacks against the oil and gas infrastructure in the Niger Delta."

West Africa has emerged as the world's epicentre for piracy in recent years after increased patrolling by international navies and ramped up on-board security largely succeeded in suppressing hijackings off the Horn of Africa.

However, those efforts are expensive. OBP estimated the total cost of counter-piracy operations in the western Indian Ocean at \$1.7 billion last year. —Reuters ■



Al-Salam hospital is seen after it was destroyed during the fighting between Iraqi forces and Islamic State militants east of Mosul, Iraq on 2 May, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Islamic State kills 7 Iraqi soldiers in attacks near Syrian border

BAGHDAD — Islamic State stepped up attacks on Iraqi army positions near the border with Syria, killing seven soldiers and wounding 12 in two attacks staged on Sunday and Tuesday, military sources said.

Islamic State has been fighting since October a US-backed offensive in Mosul, the largest city

that fell under its control in both Syria and Iraq.

Four soldiers were killed and four wounded on Tuesday in an army position near Rutba, a town that controls the access to both the Syrian and Jordanian borders, the sources said.

Three soldiers were killed and eight wounded on Sunday in Akkashat,

north of Rutba, near the Syrian border, they said. Islamic State has already claimed the attack on Akkashat. The border area with Syria is an historic hotbed of the hardline Sunni insurgency sparked by 2003's US-led invasion of Iraq, which empowered the oil-rich nation's Shi'ite majority.

Islamic State, the lat-

est embodiment of this insurgency, overran a third of Iraq in 2014, declaring from the northern city of Mosul a "caliphate" that also spanned parts of Syria.

The militants have been dislodged from most cities they had captured and are now besieged in a northwestern corner of Mosul.—Reuters ■

Deadly Islamic State attack near refugee camp in north Syria—monitor

BEIRUT — An Islamic State attack on Tuesday against a position held by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in northeast Syria killed at least 24 people, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, said.

The attack on a checkpoint at Rajm al-Salibi, the location of a refugee camp near the border between Syria

and Iraq, led to violent clashes, the Observatory reported. More than 30 other people were also injured, it said. The SDF, a coalition of Kurdish and Arab militias, has seized large swathes of northern Syria from Islamic State over the past 18 months and is engaged in a campaign to drive the jihadist group from its de facto regional capital of Raqqa.

On Monday, the SDF

captured most of the strategically vital town of Tabqa, 40 km (25 miles) west of Raqqa along the Euphrates, it said.

It said on Tuesday that fierce fighting continued to capture the last few districts of the town as well as an adjacent dam, Syria's largest, and the last major obstacle remaining before it can begin its assault on Raqqa.

—Reuters ■

TRADEMARK CAUTION

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Dated: 3rd May 2017.

Chinese Communist Party officials funding the Dalai Lama

BEIJING — In a rare disclosure, China's ruling Communist Party has said some of its officials were funding the Dalai Lama by donating money to him, undermining the fight against "separatist" forces. A senior discipline inspection official has "lambasted some party officials for allegedly donating money to the 14th Dalai Lama, saying such behaviour severely undermines the party's fight against separatism," state-run Global Times reported today.

Some party officials have neglected important political issues and the country's anti-separatist struggle, Wang Yongjun, head of the discipline watchdog in Tibet, which is officially called the Tibet Autonomous Region, was quoted as saying.

The Global Times, a tabloid publication attached the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), also quoted a 2016 report issued by Tibet's discipline watchdog linking "15 party officials to alleged illegal overseas separatist organisations in 2014 who provided intelligence to the Dalai Lama clique and funded secessionist activities."

It, however, did not reveal the names or the designations of the officials.

This is the first time official media here has come out with a disclosure of Chinese officials' links with the Dalai Lama after he fled from China to India in 1959.

Wang, in an article pub-

lished yesterday in a magazine run by the CPC, the Central Commission of Discipline Inspection and the Ministry of Supervision, wrote that "some have even donated to the 14th Dalai Lama clique, joined illegal underground organisations and provided intelligence to overseas organisations."

A few party officials are failing to "uphold their political integrity" and are "completely ignoring political discipline," Wang said, adding that such behaviour has affected the CPC coherence and its ability to fight separatism.

China considers the 14th Dalai Lama as a political exile who has attempted to split Tibet from China under the guise of religion.

China has been carrying out a systematic crackdown in Tibet and associated prefectures with Tibetan population to eliminate the influence of the Dalai Lama, who is revered and regarded as a spiritual leader heading Tibetan Buddhism.

In recent years, over 120 Tibetans, mostly monks, have committed self-immolations in different parts, calling for the return of the 81-year-old leader. His recent visit to Arunachal Pradesh which China calls 'South Tibet' soured the relations between India and China further as Beijing lodged a diplomatic protest and announced Chinese "standardised" named for six places in Arunachal Pradesh in retaliation.

—PTI ■



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May walks during a campaign stop in Mevagissey, Cornwall on 2 May, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Britain's May says EU united in getting deal that "works for them"

LONDON — Prime Minister Theresa May warned British voters on Tuesday the European Union was lining up to win a divorce deal that "works for them", using criticism she had "illusions" over the talks to bolster her election campaign.

After being criticised for underestimating the complexity of the Brexit talks with the EU at a meeting in London last week, May said the only way to secure a good deal for Britain was for the country to unite behind her at a 8 June election.

"We need that strong and stable leadership more than ever before," she wrote in the local Western Morning News newspaper before campaigning in southwestern England ahead of an election which is expected to see her Conservative Party in-

crease its majority in parliament by more than 100 more seats.

"The negotiations ahead will be tough. Across the table from us sit 27 European member states who are united in their determination to do a deal that works for them. We need that same unity of purpose here at home to ensure we can get a deal that works in Britain's national interest too."

After meeting May at her Downing Street residence on Wednesday, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker was reported to have said he was "10 times more sceptical than I was before" about the possibility of sealing a deal.

May dismissed the report as "Brussels gossip" and her interior minister, Amber Rudd, told BBC radio on Tuesday that

Britain would negotiate "more discreetly" with the EU and would avoid the leaking of details of meetings.

The prime minister, appointed shortly after Britain voted to leave the EU last year, has stuck to her policy of revealing little about her negotiating hand before the talks start - most likely after the election.

She has been criticised by opposition lawmakers of being "highhanded" in the run up to the talks, potentially poisoning the atmosphere as battle lines are drawn.

The EU cannot hand Britain too much in the negotiations, fearful Brexit could encourage other members to bolt for the door, while May's political legacy rides on the success or failure of the talks.— Reuters ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV MAERSK ABERDEEN VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MAERSK ABERDEEN VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/ M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV NESHAT VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NESHAT VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S LAND AND SEA SHIPPING
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV MCC MERGUI VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC MERGUI VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Venezuela opposition blocks streets to protest Maduro's power shakeup

CARACAS — Venezuela's opposition was blocking streets on Tuesday to decry unpopular leftist President Nicolas Maduro's decision to create a new super-body known as a "constituent assembly," a move they say is a veiled attempt to cling to power by avoiding elections.

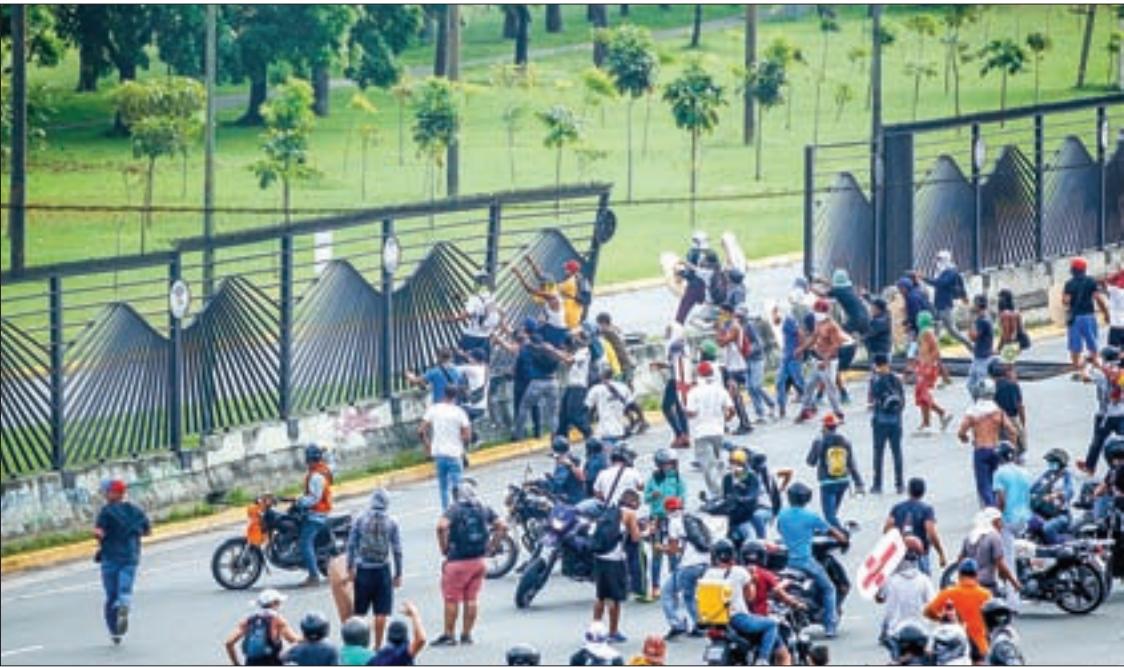
After a month of near-daily protests demanding early general elections, Maduro on Monday announced a new popular assembly with the ability to rewrite the constitution.

His government says that the opposition is promoting street violence and refusing dialogue, so it has no choice but to shake up Venezuela's power structure to bring peace to the oil producer.

Maduro's foes counter that Maduro, a former bus driver they say has turned into a dictator, is in fact planning to staff the new assembly with supporters and avoid elections he would likely lose amid a crushing recession and raging inflation.

Regional elections slated for last year have yet to be called and a presidential election is due for next year.

When asked about elections in an interview on state television Tuesday, the Socialist Party official in charge of the constituent assembly said the electoral schedule would be respected but also suggested the current political turmoil was working against setting a quick date.



Demonstrators enter after breaking a fence surrounding an air force base during a rally against Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro in Caracas, Venezuela on 1 May, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

"One of the aims of the constituent assembly is to seek the conditions of stability to be able to go to those electoral processes," said Elias Jaua.

"Those conditions of normality do not exist," he added, citing protests and institutional clashes between the opposition-led National Assembly and authorities.

Maduro's critics fear the new body will further sideline the current opposition-led legislature and pave the way for undemocratic changes to the constitution, furthering what they say has been a lurch into dictatorship.

The controversial decision will likely swell anti-government protests, already the big-

gest since 2014, as they seek to end the socialists' 18-year rule started under late leader Hugo Chavez.

"This is not a constituent assembly, it's the dissolution of the republic," said opposition lawmaker Freddy Guevara. "A message to Chavismo: It's time to unite to save Venezuela from Maduro."—Reuters ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV SINAR BALI VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BALI VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV CAPE FLORES VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CAPE FLORES VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GLODEN SEA

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV DA ZHONG VOY. NO (150)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DA ZHONG VOY. NO (150) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-5 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S COSCO SHIPPING CO LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV SINAR BATAM VOY. NO (009)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BATAM VOY. NO (009) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

Hollywood writers talks resume as strike deadline looms

LOS ANGELES — Hollywood writers and representatives of movie and television conglomerates on Monday resumed contract talks aimed at staving off a strike as early as Tuesday that could black out TV talk shows and soap operas.

The 9,000-member Writers Guild of America and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) spent much of the weekend in negotiations ahead of a midnight PT (6 am Tuesday GMT) contract expiration deadline, Hollywood trade outlets reported.

A source close to the talks, who wished to remain anonymous because he was not authorized to speak to the media, said there had been “significant moves to reach agreement” over the weekend.

Variety, quoting sources, said negotiators ended the weekend “with more cautious optimism” about avoiding a strike than previously. The Hollywood Reporter said there could be an extension of the talks beyond midnight on Monday.

But if there is no agreement, the WGA is prepared to call for a stoppage and for picketing of the big TV and movie studios as early as Tuesday morning.

“T-shirts are printed. Signs are ready to go. Hope we don’t need them,” tweeted David Slack, a writer on CBS shows “Person of



A view shows the “iconic ‘Hollywood’ sign overlooking Southern California’s film-and-television hub in the Hollywood Hills in Los Angeles, California, US, on 1 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Interest” and “MacGyver” after a union meeting on Saturday.

The two sides have imposed a media blackout on the talks, which are centered on the revolution in the television industry that has seen the arrival of streaming services like Netflix and Amazon, and a decline from around 22 episodes to 8-10 episodes seasons of scripted comedy or drama.

The WGA says its members, who are paid per episode, have suffered an average 23 per cent drop in earnings in the past

three years. Royalties for shows sold on DVDs, streaming platforms and cable TV are also at issue, along with funding for the WGA’s health plan.

The AMPTP represents entertainment giants Comcast Corp, Walt Disney Co, CBS Corp, Viacom Inc, Time Warner Inc and Twenty-First Century Fox Inc <FOXA.O., which control TV and movie production in the United States.

If a strike is called, audiences would first see the impact on late night talk shows, which

use teams of writers to pen topical jokes. Daytime soap operas would be next affected, but most TV network comedy and drama shows due for broadcast in the next 2-3 months have already been written and filmed, network executives have said.

The last WGA strike, in 2007/8, went on for 100 days. TV networks broadcast re-runs and more reality shows, while the cost to the California economy was estimated at \$2.1 billion, according to the Milken Institute.—Reuters ■



Kendrick Lamar. PHOTO: REUTERS

Kendrick Lamar’s ‘Damn’ holds steady atop Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Kendrick Lamar’s latest album “Damn.” held onto the top spot of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, holding off Drake and Ed Sheeran.

Lamar’s “Damn,” which debuted atop the chart last week, sold a total of 238,000 album units in its second week of release, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan. Canadian rapper Drake’s “More Life” climbed one spot to No 2, while British singer Sheeran’s “Divide” climbed one spot to No 3.

The Billboard 200 album chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album). New albums in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week include rockers Incubus at No 4 with “8” and the soundtrack to the upcoming Marvel superhero film “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol 2” at No 8.—Reuters ■

Tiger’s ‘Baaghi 2’ to release on 27 April next year

MUMBAI — The first poster of Tiger Shroff’s “Baaghi 2” is out and the actor looks stronger and more rebellious than ever.

The 27-year-old actor will reprise his role as Ronnie in the sequel to the 2016 action film. The movie will hit the screens on 27 April, 2018.

Tiger took to Twitter to share the first look of the film. “Here we go... again #Baaghi2 #SajidNadiadwala @khan_ahmedasas @NGEMovies @foxstarhindi,” tweeted the actor.

The poster shows a bare-backed Tiger dressed

in a commando-esque pair of pants, holding a gun and appears to be waiting for a chopper amid the aftermath of a war.

The tagline of the film reads, “Baaghi 2: Rebel for Love”.

While the first film of the franchise was directed by Sabbir Khan, choreographer-filmmaker Ahmed Khan has been roped in to direct the sequel.

The makers, however, have not yet revealed the name of the female lead for the second part. Shraddha Kapoor had starred opposite Tiger in the first film. —PTI ■

Filmmaker Michael Moore brings his political satire to Broadway

LOS ANGELES — Provocative documentary maker Michael Moore is bringing politics to Broadway with a one-man show billed as “guaranteed to take audiences on a ride through the United States of Insanity.”

Producers said on Monday that Moore, the Oscar-winning maker of thought-provoking films on guns, the war in Iraq and the US healthcare system, will make his Broadway debut in July with “The Terms of My Surrender.”

The 12-week limited run will see the liberal Moore, 63, use his satirical humor to target Wash-



Michael Moore. PHOTO: REUTERS

ington politics and US President Donald Trump.

“So, the question is posed: ‘Can a Broadway show take down a sitting president?’ Well, it’s time to find out,” said the release announcing the show. Moore, a vocal critic of Trump,

won an Oscar in 2003 for his gun violence documentary “Bowling for Columbine,” and was nominated for an Oscar in 2008 for “Sicko,” an indictment of the US healthcare industry.

He is also the author of best-selling books including “Stupid White Men” and “Here Comes Trouble.” In October, three weeks before the 2016 presidential elections, he released the anti-Trump documentary film “Michael Moore in Trumpland.” Tickets for “The Terms of My Surrender,” beginning on 28 July, go on sale on Monday.—Reuters ■

Celebrities embrace avant-garde challenge at 2017 Met Gala

NEWYORK — On a night when celebrities can let loose on their fashion choices, pop princesses and Hollywood actress took it up a notch in the avant-garde department at New York’s Met Gala on Monday.

The 2017 Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute ball was themed “Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between,” an homage to highly structured creations of the Japanese designer and her avant-garde label.

Pop singer Katy Perry, a co-chair of the ball, lived up to the theme’s challenge with a custom Maison Margiela “Artisanal” ensemble by John Galliano, an imperial red tulle dress and a veil embroidered with the word “Witness.”

Eric Wilson, fashion news director at InStyle, described this year’s theme as “extremely challenging” compared to years past and agreed that Perry’s outfit was courageously on point.

“I think she’s without a doubt the hit of the night so far,” Wilson said. “It’s very brave to wear something that disguises who you are so much on the red carpet.”

Rihanna was no slouch either, embodying Kawakubo’s penchant for dramatic silhouettes in a custom Comme des Garçons floral dress with cutouts and oversized ruffles. The singer earned the most mentions on social media, said Kellan Terry, an analyst at the social media mon-

itoring company Brandwatch.

“Happy” singer Pharrell Williams in jeans and leather jacket, and star couple Tom Brady and Gisele Bundchen in matching silver helped fashion maven and Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour host the annual fundraising gala, which is sometimes referred to as “the Oscars of the East Coast.”

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian went against the theme, sporting a white dress by Vivienne Westwood with no clutch, no jewelry and no Kanye West, her fashion-loving husband. Sister Kendall Jenner dared to be bare, wearing a sheer slip that left little to the imagination, both in front and back.

Donning a beige Ralph Lauren trench coat gown paired with

big silver hoop earrings, actress Priyanka Chopra dropped jaws and turned heads. Tennis star Serena Williams also served up drama with a baby bump under her green Atelier Versace dress.

Actress Zoe Kravitz went with a strapless pink and black Oscar de la Renta gown with an off-the-shoulder train, receiving much praise on social media, where the hashtag #MetGala was top trending.

Wilson said an added plus to Kravitz’s dress is that it “looks comfortable.”

“Some of these pieces are gorgeous on the red carpet,” Wilson said. “But I’m assuming that a lot of these celebrities are going to be changing once they get through that door and sit down to dinner.”—Reuters ■



Rihanna. PHOTO: REUTERS



Beautiful landscape at the border of Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. PHOTO: XINHUA

New tourist route starts from Xishuangbanna, crosses Thailand, Myanmar, Laos

BEIJING—A new tourist route that crosses four countries has been officially introduced to Xishuangbanna in southwestern China’s Yunnan province on the first day of May, opening a new chapter of tourism for the province.

More than 200 tourists from all over the country became the first to experience the new route. It starts from the Lancang River’s Guanlei Port in Xishuangbanna and to Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos by both river and road.

The Lancang-Mekong River originates from the Tanggula mountain range in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and flows through Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, and Cambodia before finally entering the South China Sea in Viet Nam. Because of the “Belt and Road” initiative and an economic cooperation mechanism in the Lancang-Mekong

sub-region, transnational tourism in the region has become Yunnan’s hottest travel product.

Zhu Chuanchu, who heads the tour agency which organized the new route, said that it not only lets people experience the natural beauty and cultural features of the river, but gives them a chance to understand the “Belt and Road” initiative in participating countries.

“It is an 8-day trip in which tourists will travel 262 kilometers down the river,” Zhu said. Compared with traditional road trips, the river trip is cheaper and safer and it offers tourists more flexibility. The trip’s river-road combination will become a new way to experience cross-border tourism in Yunnan. It is also an extension of visitors’ trips to Yunnan, further promoting the international tourism of Lancang-Mekong River. —Xinhua ■

MRTV

Programme Schedule
(3-5-2017, Wednesday)

6:00 Am	4:35 Pm
◆ Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw	◆ Documentary
7:00 Am	5:10 Pm
◆ Breakfast News	◆ AFC Cup & Myanmar Club
7:35 Am	5:20 Pm
◆ Money Talk Myanmar	◆ Documentary (Part-1)
8:40 Am	5:30 Pm
◆ Documentary	◆ MRTV Travelogue
9:30 Am	6:15 Pm
◆ Pyi Thu Ni Ti	◆ Football Magazine
9:45 Am	6:30 Pm
◆ Documentary	◆ Real Story Real
11:45 Am	◆ Movies
◆ Documentary	◆ AFC CUP 2017 Myanmar Club (LIVE Broadcast) (Johor Darul Ta'zim Vs Magwe)
12:30 Pm	6:50 Pm
◆ TV Drama Series	◆ Documentary
1:00 Pm	◆ Documentary
◆ Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competition	◆ TV Drama Series
2:35 Pm	◆ Musician's Talk
◆ TV Drama Series	
3:25 Pm	
◆ Kyae Pwint Myaye Yin Khon Than	

mitv

Myanmar International

Programme Schedule

(3-5-2017 07:00am ~ 4-5-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News	10:25	Am	Shwe Maw Daw: The Glory Of Bago City
07:26	Am	Myanmar Charitable Labour Association	10:51	Am	Mt. Naw Bu Baw
07:39	Am	Buddha Image Built Of Bamboo Strip			
07:51	Am	Delicacies From Magwe			
08:03	Am	News			
08:25	Am	Super Myanmar Traditional Stick Form(EP-2)			
08:42	Am	Grow Back for Posterity "The down of development"			
08:53	Am	Kyaikhteeyoe: Bamboo Guns			
09:03	Am	News			
09:26	Am	Hive Hunter			
09:46	Am	Kayah Traditional Dance			
10:03	Am	News			

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Travelogue: A Tour in Korea (Ep-1)
07:43	Pm	Famous pagodas of Sagaing
07:52	Pm	Snake Dancer
08:03	Pm	News
08:25	Pm	Myanmar Delicate Artistic Handy Creations - Lacquer Ware Making
08:51	Pm	Entrepreneur: Soe Nyi Nyi

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) -Today Repeat(09:00 Am~11:00 Am)
(11:00Pm~03:00 Am)-Tuesday Repeat(07:00 Am~11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00Am~11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)



Liverpool's Emre Can scores their first goal during the Premier League between Liverpool and Watford at Vicarage Road on 1 May, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Magical Can goal boosts Liverpool's top-four push

LONDON — Liverpool's Emre Can produced a goal of quite stunning brilliance to earn a crucial 1-0 victory at Watford on Monday that boosts the Reds' push for a top-four finish in the Premier League.

A game that had been meandering along amid much me-

diocrity came to life on the stroke of halftime when Can's extraordinary overhead scissors kick from Lucas's chipped through ball rocketed into the top corner.

The goal, hailed by club great Jamie Carragher on Sky Sports as "one of the great Liverpool goals", illuminated a dull first-half which had only just

been enlivened by substitute Adam Lallana's dipping volley for the visitors that struck the bar.

An uninspired Watford side pushed for an equaliser after the break and came close when Sebastian Prodl smashed a left-foot shot against the bar for the Hornets in the 94th minute.

The victory strengthened

Liverpool's hold on third place with 69 points, three points clear of fourth-placed Manchester City and four ahead of Manchester United, who are fifth.

The two Manchester sides, though, have a game in hand over their Merseyside rivals in the race for Champions league qualifying places. —Reuters ■

Asia Olympic chief quits FIFA role over bribery scandal

HONG KONG — Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, the FIFA Council member who also runs the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), said on Sunday he was resigning all his posts in football after being drawn into the latest bribery scandal to hit the game's governing body.

The Kuwaiti issued a statement on Saturday "strongly" denying any wrongdoing. His comments came after US Court documents made reference to a Kuwaiti OCA official as being involved in the bribery case of FIFA's audit and compliance committee member, Richard Lai. Lai, also president of the Guam Football Association (GFA), pleaded guilty on Thursday to wire fraud conspiracy charges before US District Judge Pamela Chen in Brooklyn, according to US prosecutors, who said he had taken close to \$1 million in bribes. —Reuters ■

Joshua keen on Klitschko rematch after Wembley triumph

LONDON — IBF, WBA and IBO heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua is eager for a rematch with Ukrainian Wladimir Klitschko following the pair's thrilling fight at Wembley on Saturday.

Joshua defeated 41-year-old Klitschko after 11 rounds in British boxing's biggest bout to extend his winning streak to 19 fights. Klitschko's record now stands at 64 wins to five losses.

A clause in their contract allows the beaten fighter to ask for a rematch but Klitschko said he would take some time before making a decision.

"A rematch will be good, because of the type of fight we had," Joshua told reporters.

"I think he will want to fight again, because a fighter is the last one to know when to stop. But I think the team around him, his



Anthony Joshua and Wladimir Klitschko. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

(soon to be) wife, because they normally wear the trousers, and his brother might advise him differently."

Joshua said he respected Klitschko and had no qualms about a rematch.

"I have the ultimate respect for him inside and outside of the ring. I wouldn't mind fighting him

again if he wants the rematch. It's up to him... So if he'd like to fight again, no problem," Joshua said.

If Klitschko retires, Joshua could face fellow Briton and former heavyweight champion Tyson Fury, who is yet to regain his boxing license, after the two traded words on Twitter last week. —Reuters ■

Zidane denies Real have mental edge over Atletico

MADRID — Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane insists his team do not have a psychological advantage over Champions League semi-final opponents Atletico Madrid despite beating them in two finals in three years. As well as their victories in Lisbon (2014) and Milan (2016), Real knocked out Atletico in the 2015 quarter-finals. Atletico have never lifted European club soccer's most prestigious trophy while Real have won it a record 11 times. Zidane, however, thinks the past will be irrelevant when the teams meet on Tuesday in the first leg at the Bernabeu. "It means nothing that we've beaten them in this competition," he told reporters on Monday. "I'm not thinking about Cardiff (the venue for the final) either. We have to win tomorrow's game. We have pre-

pared well and we are ready. "Everyone is pumped up and we're ready for the run-in. I wish the game would start now." The Frenchman confirmed that defender Raphael Varane is fit to play after recovering from a hamstring injury, but Pepe and Gareth Bale will miss the game due to injury.

Isco is likely to start in place of Wales forward Bale after being rested for the 2-1 win over Valencia on Saturday. The midfielder recalled Sergio Ramos's stoppage-time goal against Atletico in Lisbon that forced the 2014 final into extra-time. "It still makes my hairs stand up," Isco told the club website. "It was a really important goal, when he scored it I knew we wouldn't lose. It came at a key moment and I felt like I'd also scored the goal." —Reuters ■