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Huge crowd gathers at Yangon City Hall to listen to State Counsellor's speech

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Wednesday, 20 September 2017



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw on the government's efforts in dealing with national reconciliation and peace. The State Counsellor also addressed the crisis in northern Rakhine State **PHOTO: AUNG SHINE OO**

Aid for Rakhine discussed

THE delegation led by Ms. Renata Dessallien, United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and the delegation led by Mr. Patrick Murphy, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Southeast Asia, called separately on Dr. Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, at the May Kha Lar Hall of the Office of the Ministry yesterday to discuss aid for Rakhine.

"We had felt pleased and acknowledged the performances of the government for Rakhine State. We would like to help and cooperate in supporting food and commodities currently and in making rehabilitation and resettlement more broadly in the long run. We would like the government to help the local people to understand the tasks of the organizations as UN organisations and international NGOs are responsible to carry out duties according to organisations and their designated responsibilities. In providing subsidies, aid may differ depending upon kinds of sufferings. The fact should be taken into consideration", said Ms. Renata Dessallien.

In the meeting the British Ambassador said, "Now is the time to meet and discuss finding the ways and means to sufficiently provide humanitarian aid."

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State Counsellor: 'Myanmar does not fear world scrutiny'

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday condemned human rights violations in Rakhine State and said violators would be brought to justice, and addressed international concerns.

The State Counsellor made

the remarks in a speech delivered from Nay Pyi Taw, in her first address to the nation since the 25 August attacks by ARSA extremist terrorists, which sparked a military response that has forced thousands of refugees into neighbouring

Bangladesh and thousands of others to temporary camps in southern Rakhine.

"There has been much concern around the world with regard to the situation in Rakhine. It is not the intention of the Myanmar government to apportion

blame or abnegate responsibility. We condemn all human rights violations and unlawful violence. We are committed to the restoration of peace, stability and the rule of law throughout the state", Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said.

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BEST BANK IN MYANMAR

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Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than receives ICRC delegation's head

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than received Mr. Fabrizio Carboni, the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegation in Myanmar and party at the Amyotha Hluttaw Building hall, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday.

During the meeting, mat-

ters relating to implementing the works of the ICRC in Myanmar and cooperation between the Hluttaw and ICRC were discussed. Present at the meeting were Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and officials from the office of the Amyotha Hluttaw. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than holds talks with Mr. Fabrizio Carboni, the head of the ICRC delegation. **PHOTO: MNA**



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint holds talks with Mr. Fabrizio Carboni, the head of the ICRC delegation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives head of International Red Cross

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint received Mr. Fabrizio Carboni, the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegation in

Myanmar at the Pyithu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, views on the process of humanitarian aid being undertaken by the

ICRC in Myanmar, education programmes, workshops and foreign training courses were discussed. —Myanmar News Agency ■

High and mid-level management courses for Hluttaw office staff



An opening ceremony for the start of high and mid-level management courses held in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

A CEREMONY was held at the Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday for the start of high and mid-level management courses organised by the Joint Coordination Committee on Hluttaw Development and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Hluttaw office staff. Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung attended the ceremony and delivered a speech.

Also present at the ceremony were Pyithu Hluttaw international relations committee chairman U Zaw Thein, UNDP Country Director Mr. Peter Bachelor, Dr. Ora Orn Poocharoen of Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Mr. Peter Banson from House of Representative of the Parliament of Australia and Hluttaw officials. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Yunnan Province to build car factory in Mandalay Region

By Ko Moe

Mr. Yan Yu, Vice-President of the Yunnan Provincial General Chamber of Commerce, said entrepreneurs in Yunnan Province, China are making arrangements to set up a factory to produce motor vehicles in Mandalay Region.

“In Myanmar people are driving used cars. The government is also encouraging the import of left-hand drive cars. So we are working to set up a factory producing motor vehicles in Mandalay Region, especially domestic autos and mini-cars,

which are popular with youths,” said Mr Yan Yu.

In doing so, necessary parts are to be imported from abroad to be assembled in Myanmar; it was learnt, targeted at producing approximately 10,000 cars per year. According to Mr Yan Yu, US\$50 million will be invested for the first phase of the project. Applications for permits to assemble and produce motor vehicles has been submitted to the Myanmar Investment Commission. Upon receipt of the permit from MIC, the project will be implemented as soon as possi-

ble, officials said. The YPGCC is also interested in investing in the sectors of infrastructure construction, human resource development, agriculture and transportation, it was learnt.

Entrepreneurs in Yunnan Province have previously invested in a hydro-power plant, the mining and agricultural sectors amounting to US\$10 billion in Myanmar as of June. Trade between Myanmar and Yunnan Province reached US\$6.1 billion in 2016, with US\$3.6 billion from exports and \$2.5 billion from imports. ■

State Chief Judge and High Court family donate for Rakhine nationals

ON Monday morning in the Rakhine State government office, Shan State Chief Judge and families of Shan State High Court donated Ks1.8 million and members of judicial officer courses 1, 8 and 18 donated Ks600,000 for ethnic Rakhine nationals in Maungdaw District who were displaced by the terrorist attacks by the Arakan Ro-



Shan State Chief Judge and family donate cash assistance for Rakhine ethnic nationals in Maungdaw. **PHOTO: TIN TUN (IPRD)**

hingya Salvation Army (ARSA) extremist terrorists Rakhine State Chief Judge U Kyauk, State Judicial Officer U Soe Soe and officials presented the do-

nations on behalf of the donors to State Advocate U Kyaw Hla Tun, who provided in turn a document of honour for the donors. — Tin Tun (IPRD) ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Mr. Patrick Murphy, US Deputy Assistant Secretary, in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor receives US Deputy Assistant Secretary

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received Mr. Patrick Murphy, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Southeast Asia of the State Department, the United States of America, at the Ministry in Nay Pyi Taw at 2:00 pm yesterday. During the meeting, they cordially discussed matters pertaining to bilateral relations, democratic transition, peace and national reconciliation.—Myanmar News Agency



Vice President U Henry Van Thio meets family members of Myanmar Permanent Mission staff in New York. **PHOTO: MNA**

Vice President U Henry Van Thio meets with Myanmar Permanent Mission staff in New York

Vice President U Henry Van Thio, who is in New York for the UN General Assembly, met with the staff and family members of the Myanmar Permanent Mission to the United Nations at the residence of the Permanent Representative on Monday.

During the meeting, the Vice President gave a short

speech, cordially greeted the gathering and presented souvenirs to Myanmar Permanent Representative U Hau Do Suan and his staff. The Myanmar Permanent Representative then hosted a dinner at his residence in honor of the Vice President and party.—Myanmar News Agency



President U Htin Kyaw arrives back Nay Pyi Taw after receiving the medical examinations and necessary surgical operations in Bangkok, Thailand. **PHOTO: MNA**

President arrives back from Bangkok, Thailand

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw returned Nay Pyi Taw yesterday after undergoing medical examinations and necessary surgical operations in Bangkok.

He went to Bangkok, Thailand on 8 September to undergo medical examinations. Medical examinations found Colonic Polyp in the

colon and necessary surgical operations were conducted on 10 September that turns out to be successful.—Myanmar News Agency

State Counsellor: 'Myanmar does not fear world scrutiny'

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"The security forces have been instructed to adhere strictly to the code of conduct in carrying out security operations, to exercise all due restraint and to take full measures to avoid collateral damage and the harming of innocent civilians. Human rights violations and all other acts that affect stability and harmony and undermine the rule of law will be addressed in accordance with the strict norms of justice.

"We feel deeply for the suffering of all the people who have been caught up in the conflict. Those who have had to flee their homes are many. Not just Muslims and Rakhines but also small minority groups such as Daing-net, Mro, Thet, Mramagyi and Hindus, of whose presence most of the world is totally unaware. The State Counsellor addressed international concerns on the situation in western Myanmar. "I am aware of the fact that the world's attention is focused on the situation in Rakhine State and, as I said at the General Assembly last year, as a responsi-

ble member of the community of nations, Myanmar does not fear international scrutiny and we are committed to a sustainable solution that would lead to peace, stability and development for all communities. "After several months of seeming peace and quiet, on the twenty-fifth of August, 30 police outposts, the regimental headquarters in Taungala Village were attacked by armed groups. Consequent to these attacks the government declared the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and its supporters responsible for acts of terrorism as a terrorist group in accordance with the Counter-Terrorism Law Section 6, Subsection 5".

The State Counsellor also said she wanted to explore the reasons why there was an exodus of Muslims to Bangladesh, but also why most of the Muslim community in north Rakhine State did not choose to leave.

"The government is working to restore the situation to normalcy. Since the 5th of September, there have been no

armed clashes and there have been no clearance operations. Nevertheless, we are concerned to hear that numbers of Muslims are fleeing across the border to Bangladesh. We want to find out why this exodus is happening. We would like to talk to those who have fled, as well as those who have stayed. I think it is very little known that the great majority of Muslims in the Rakhine State have not joined the exodus. More than 50 per cent of the villagers of Muslims are intact. They are as they were before the attacks took place. And we would like to know why.

This is what I think we have to work towards. Not just looking at the problems but also looking at these areas where there are no problems. Why have we been able to avoid these problems in certain areas? And for this reason, we would like to invite members of the diplomatic community to join us in our endeavour to learn more from the Muslims who have integrated successfully into the Rakhine State", she said.—GNLM and Reuters

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

ACTING CHIEF EDITOR

Aye Min Soe,
ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR

Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail.com

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORS

Khin Maung Oo,
editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Khin Maung Win (Chief Proof Reader),
Zaw Min, zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR

Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

LOCAL NEWS EDITORS

Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com

TRANSLATORS

Khaing Thanda Lwin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Hay Mar Tin Win,
translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Sandar Soe
Kyaw Zin Tun

REPORTERS

May Thet Hnin,
mayreporter.mmm@gmail.com
Tun Aung Kyaw,
reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

PHOTOGRAPHER

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAM

Tun Zaw (Chief of Computer Team),
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

EDITORIAL SECTION

(+95) (01) 8604529,
Fax — (+95) (01) 8604305

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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

Export of dried elephant foot yams earns nearly US\$3 million

THE export of dried elephant foot yams (*Amorphophallus paeoniifolius*) earns nearly US\$3 million annually, according to a report in the City News Daily yesterday.

The Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (MFVP) is planning to promote the dried elephant foot yam, a vegetable tuber plant, for the export sector. Official statistics show that Myanmar has earned over US\$2.5 million in fiscal 2016-2017. Myanmar exports 700,000 visses of dried elephant foot yams worth Ks7 billion annually. "Local farmers are growing elephant foot yam tubers on their farms. The USAID, MFVP and Dana Association are promoting a farming project for elephant



Elephant foot yam plant,

foot yams, coffee and better farms. Elephant foot yam tuber cultivation training has been planned. There are three types

of elephant foot yams. Currently, local farmers are growing elephant foot yams along with other crops. The elephant foot yams

are mostly grown Myeik, Kawthoung, Ye and Dawei in Taninthayi Region, Kanpetlet, Mindat towns in Chin State.—GNLM■

Eleven vessels repaired by Myanma Shipyards within five months

MYANMA Shipyards has renovated 11 motor vessels with a combined weight of 12,000 DWT (deadweight tons) in dry dock from 1st April to 31st August, according to a report yesterday in City News Daily. Myanma Shipyards is a state-owned enterprise under the

Ministry of Transport and Communications created to construct and repair the motor vessels of both the public and private sectors of the marine industry in Myanmar.

The shipyard was established in 1970 to operate as a ship construct and repair

yard for both local and foreign-owned vessels. Myanma Shipyards has constructed 524 motor vessels and repaired 1,569 motor vessels between 1970 and the last fiscal year.

Recently, the Ministry of Transport and Communications established Myanma

Shipyards as a joint venture. Previously, Myanma Shipyards could only construct and repair the motor vessels weighing 2,000 tons, but in 2005, Myanma Shipyards constructed a 12,000 DWT dry dock to be able to repair larger vessels.—GNLM■

Largest elephant conservation camp in region to be constructed in Ye Nwe reserve forest

AN elephant conservation camp which can accommodate 5,000 elephants will be constructed at the Ye Nwe Forest Reserve in order to be able to implement an ecotourism zone, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The project will be undertaken with an aim to create the

largest elephant conservation camp in the Southeast Asia. About 5,000 elephants from private companies and the Myanma Timber Enterprise will be cared for at the Ye Nwe Forest Reserve.

"The government has suspended timber extraction since 2014. Therefore, there were diffi-

culties in feeding the elephants. So the largest elephant conservation camp will be implemented with the assistance of Four Paws International," said Dr. Phone Win, the chairman of Mingalar Myanmar Organisation. The elephant camp will include a baby elephant care centre, elephant hospitals and

a home for aged elephants. The government provides the land while Four Paws International provides financial assistance, technical assistance and other aid.

The project will be completed within 10 years and will be constructed with eco-tourists in mind.— GNLM■

Tap water system available nationwide by 2030

A tap water project will be available in all villages across the country by 2030, according to a report in the City News Daily yesterday.

The project will be implemented jointly by the Rural Area

Development Department, the UNICEF water and sanitation department, the Basic Education Department and the Public Health Department. The entities involved have already drawn up

the plans and the strategies to be able to implement the tap water system project successfully, officials said. The project will face some challenges in providing tap water to some villages because

of a lack of water resources.

The workshop to implement the tap water system project was held on 5 September at the International Business Centre. — GNLM ■

Forest Department announces to re-enter into contract for perennial rubber tree

FOREST Department informed growers to re-enter into contract with them to be allowed to plant perennial rubber tree, according to a report of Myanmar Alin, on Monday.

Dr Nyi Nyi Kyaw, Director-General of the Forestry Department said rubber trees were allowed to be planted on forest areas in 1995. Those land areas were transferred to agriculture department and the rubber entrepreneurs signed lease with them. When the entrepreneurs who signed the lease sold their land, the Forest Department asked the agriculture department to return these lease contracts.

The Forest Department will grant 30-year-contract for rubber farms, following negotiations between initial owner and current owner. If needed, contract can be extended.

Regarding to land permit,



Worker scrapes rubber latex at a rubber plant. PHOTO - REUTERS

U Ohn Than from Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association (MRPPA) said that rubber plantation acres were developed in virgin and vacant land areas across Bago Yoma forest. Therefore, those rubber plantation acres have

been requested to be granted permit. About 150,000 acres of rubber farms were not authorized to operate. These lands also had squatters that could not be removed and thus, infrastructure could not be made.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA)■

Yedashe pulses growers eye peanut and corn instead of green gram and mung bean

GROWERS in Yedashe Township, Bago Region are interested to change the crops which are stable in market instead of mung bean and green gram which are unstable in market due to India's import policy change, according to a report of Myanmar Alin, on Monday.

Rice is the main crop in Yedashe Township, Bago Region and most of the farmers choose to grow mung bean and green gram if they are not growing summer paddy.

Instead of mung bean and green gram which are unstable in the market, the growers are eyeing profitable edible oil crops.

Price does not matter in growing peanut because its oil can fetch good price. Corn also has China's market, plus domestic snack production and feedstuff production. This is why we will grow peanut and corn

after harvesting rain paddy, said a farmer to Myanmar Alin.

Yedashe's grower yearly farms rain paddy in alluvial soil areas in forest reserve and across Sittaung river basin. Having harvested the rain paddy, farmers are preparing to grow peanut and corn on land areas in which summer paddy cannot be cultivated.

There are more than 20,000 acres of summer paddy in Yedashe Township and other crops are cultivated on the farm land areas which are not fit for summer paddy. Paunglaung dam in Nay Pyi Taw this year started to provide irrigation water to some village tracts in Yedashe Township for summer paddy cultivation. This being so, the higher number of summer paddy growers in coming summer means the lesser number of pulses growers.—Ko Lwin (Swar) ■



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State Counsellor's speech on Government's efforts with regard to National Reconciliation and Peace

The following is the full text of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech on the Myanmar government's efforts at reconciliation and peace given in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. The State Counsellor also spoke on the crisis in Rakhine State, calling on world community in helping find peace for Myanmar.

Distinguished guests,

Last year, when I addressed the United Nations' General Assembly as the representative of the newly established government of Myanmar, I reaffirmed our faith and confidence in the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is in this enduring belief in the capacity of nations to unite to build a more peaceful and prosperous world, a kinder and more compassionate home for all mankind, that we wish to share with members of the international community, the challenges that our country is now facing and the steps that we are taking to overcome them. This year, as I shall not be able to travel to New York for the United Nations' General Assembly, I have arranged this diplomatic briefing.

When our people voted for the National League for Democracy in the elections of 2015, they in fact entrusted to us, the task of carrying out three responsibilities: democratic transition, peace and stability, and development. None of these challenges are either easy or simple. Transition for us is a transition to democracy after half a century or more of authoritarian rule, and now we are in the process of nurturing our nascent and yet imperfect democracy.

Peace and stability was something that we had to achieve after nearly seventy years of internal conflict that started on the day of our independence back in 1948. And development has to be achieved within the context of the first two – nurturing democratic values, establishing peace and stability, and achieving the kind of sustainable development that would be seen as equitable by all our peoples.

Burma is a complex nation as all of you know, and its complexities are compounded by the fact that people expect us to overcome all of these challenges in as short a time as possible.

I think it is only fitting that I should remind you today that our government has not yet been in power for even eighteen months. It will be eighteen months at the end of this month. Eighteen



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech on the government's efforts with regard to national reconciliation and peace in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 September. **PHOTO: MNA**

months is a very short time in which to expect us to meet and overcome all of the challenges that we have been expected to do.

This does not mean that we are not ready to go on with our task of overcoming these challenges. Because I believe in the community of nations, I am prepared to share with all our friends who wish us well and who understand our problems and sympathies with us, what we have been doing to achieve democratic transition, peace and stability, and development.

I am aware of the fact that the world's attention is focused on the situation in Rakhine State. As I said at the General Assembly last year, as a responsible member of the community of nations, Myanmar does not fear international scrutiny and we are committed to a sustainable solution that would lead to peace, stability and development for all communities within that State. I then went on last year to give a brief outline of our plans to

We condemn all human rights violations and unlawful violence.

achieve this end.

Unhappily, on 9 October 2016, eighteen days after the delivery of my address at the General Assembly, three police outposts were attacked by armed Muslim groups. There were further attacks on 11 October and 12 November and these clashes resulted in loss of lives, injuries, burning of villages and the displacement of peoples in the affected areas. Many Muslims fled to Bangladesh.

Since then, the government has been making every effort to restore peace and stability and to promote harmony between the Muslim and Rakhine com-

munities. Even before these outbreaks took place, we had established a Central Committee for rule of law and development in the Rakhine and invited Dr. Kofi Annan to lead a Commission that would help us to resolve the longstanding problems of that State. But, in spite of all these efforts, we were not able to prevent the conflicts from taking place. Still, throughout the last year, we have continued with our programme of development and the establishment of peace and harmony.

After several months of seemingly quiet and peace, on 25 August, thirty police outposts, as well as the Regimental Headquarters in Taungthazar village, were attacked by armed groups. Consequent to these attacks, the government declared the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and its supporters responsible for acts of terrorism, as a terrorist group in accordance with the Counter-Terrorism Law, section 6, subsection 5.

There has been much con-

cern around the world with regard to the situation in Rakhine. It is not the intention of the Myanmar government to apportion blame or to abnegate responsibility. We condemn all human rights violations and unlawful violence. We are committed to the restoration of peace, stability and rule of law, throughout the State. The security forces have been instructed to adhere strictly to the Code of Conduct in carrying out security operations, to exercise all due restraint, and to take full measures to avoid collateral damage and the harming of innocent civilians. Human rights violations and all other acts that impair stability and harmony and undermine the rule of law will be addressed in accordance with strict norms of justice.

We feel deeply for the suffering of all the people who have been caught up in the conflict. Those who have had to flee their homes are many – not just Muslims and Rakhines, but also small minority groups, such as the Daing-net, Mro, Thet, Mramagyi and Hindus of whose presence most of the world is totally unaware.

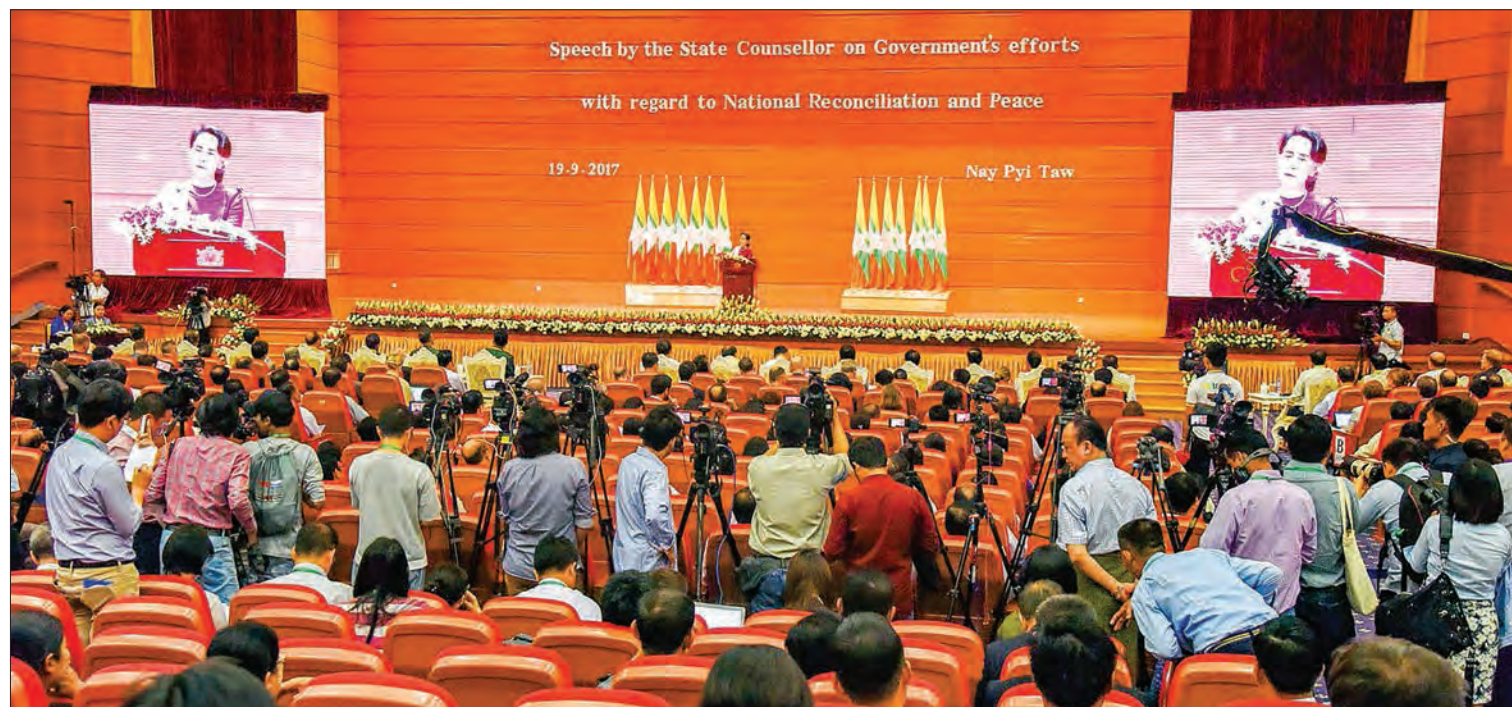
Humanitarian assistance was provided to displaced communities by a team led by the Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement from 27 August 2017 onwards. Details of humanitarian assistance programmes will be made available to all of our guests in due course.

The final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State chaired by Dr Kofi Annan, was made public on 25 August, in fact, the very day on which the last round of attacks took place. We are determined to implement the recommendations of the Commission. Those recommendations that will bring speedy improvement to the situation within a short time frame will be given priority. Other recommendations we will have to take time over, but every single recommendation that will benefit peace, harmony and development in the Rakhine State will be implemented within the shortest time possible.

The government is working to restore the situation to normalcy. Since 5 September, there have been no armed clashes and there have been no clearance operations. Nevertheless, we are concerned to hear that numbers of Muslims are fleeing across the border to Bangladesh. We want to find out why this exodus is happening. We would like to talk to those who have fled as well as those who have stayed. I think it is very little known that the great majority of Muslims in the Rakhine State have not joined the exodus. More than 50 per cent of the villages of Muslims are intact. They are as they were before the attacks took place. We would like to know why.

This is what I think we have to work towards. Not just looking at the problems, but also looking at the areas where there are no problems. Why have we been able to avoid these problems in certain areas? For this reason, we would like to invite the members of our diplomatic community to join us in our endeavour to learn more from the Muslims who have integrated successfully into the Rakhine State. If you are interested in joining us in our endeavours, please let us know. We can arrange for you to visit these areas, and to ask them for yourself, why they have not fled, why they have chosen to remain in their villages, even at a time when everything around them seems to be in a state of turmoil. Apart from what we are doing in the matter of allaying the fears of our people, I would like to say that we have been continuing with our socio-economic development programmes in Rakhine.

Let me outline a few of them. The Rakhine State Socio-Economic Development Plan 2017–2021 has been drafted to boost regional development in various sectors. Hundreds of new jobs and opportunities have been created for local people through Public Private Partnerships. The viability of a new Special Economic Zone to bring new jobs and businesses is being assessed. In terms of infrastructure development, electrification has been expanded with new roads and bridges built, including a new highway connecting remote areas previously only accessible by boat. All people living in the Rakhine State have access to education and healthcare services without discrimination. Healthcare services are being provided throughout the State including hard to reach areas, with new mobile clinics.



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech on the government's efforts with regard to national reconciliation and peace in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 September. **PHOTO: MNA**

The government has upgraded 300 schools in Rakhine. The vocational and technical training programmes have begun. Muslim students also have access to higher education without any discrimination.

Humanitarian aid reached all communities in 95% of the affected areas before the recent attacks on August 25. We are now starting another round of humanitarian aid endeavour which we hope will take care of all the peoples in the region.

With regard to IDP's, three camps have been closed and the necessary assistance provided, including the building of new houses. There is more to do in this area. We are aware of the challenges and we are facing them.

With regard to citizenship, a strategy with specific timelines has been developed to move forward the National Verification Process. But this is a process which needs cooperation from all communities. In some Muslim communities, their leaders have decided that they are not to join in the verification process. We would appreciate it if all friends could persuade them to join in the process because they have nothing to lose by it. We are also trying to promote inter-communal religious harmony by engaging inter-faith groups. A new curriculum is to be introduced in schools with a focus on moral civic ideas and peace and stability.

A new FM radio channel has been set up to provide information on, amongst others, healthcare, national verification process, and education to all communities. It broadcasts in Rakhine, Bengali and Myanmar languages.

Training and capacity building for police and security forces is being provided in cooperation with the EU and United Nations agencies.

Since December 2016, local and foreign media groups have been given access to areas previously off-limits in Rakhine. Even after the outbreaks on 25 August, we arranged for several media groups to visit the afflicted areas.

The government is working hard to enhance existing relations with Bangladesh. The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and the National Security Advisor visited Bangladesh in

the verification of those refugees who wish to return to Myanmar. We will abide by the criteria that was agreed on at that time. As our National Security Advisor has assured Bangladesh, and which I can confirm now, we are ready to start the verification process at any time. Those who have been verified as refugees from this country will be accepted without any problems and with full assurance of their security and their access to humanitarian aid.

I understand that many of our friends throughout the world are concerned by reports

has emerged as a body committed to the defence of human rights. Not of any particular community's rights, but of the rights of all human beings, within the borders of our country.

As we concentrate on problems in the Rakhine State, I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that there are problems as serious for us as what is happening in the west of our country. We have been trying to build peace out of internal strife. A peace that must be lasting and that must be accompanied by sustainable and equitable development. We would like to invite you to take part in this peace process. To join us in finding lasting solutions to the problems that have plagued our country for years.

The peace process that we started last year in August is continuing and we are having many difficulties. I am not surprised by this because it is the way of peace processes anywhere in the world, that they come across difficulties and sometimes the processes stall and sometimes they come to a dead halt and sometimes it seems as though everything is falling apart, and yet, in the end, we all gather together and move forward. Because all of us basically want peace rather than war. We want harmony rather than conflict. This is the aspiration shared by all our peoples: peace, stability, harmony and progress. It is not a large agenda, but it is a difficult one.

And as we go forward in our efforts to redress the ills of this nation, I would like to ask our friends who understand and sympathise with, both our aspirations and our problems, to join us.

SEE PAGE-11

Action will be taken against all peoples, regardless of their religion, race, or political position who go against the laws of the land

January and July of this year. We were also hoping for a visit from the Home Minister of Bangladesh but it had to be postponed, for reasons, I think of other commitments on the part of the Minister. We will welcome him at any time that he is able to come and we hope to take forward the arrangements with regard to the security of the border which we are trying to implement together.

There has been a call for the repatriation of refugees who have fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh. We are prepared to start the verification process at any time. A verification process was set up as early as 1993 and based on the principles to which both countries agreed at this time, we can continue with

of villages being burnt and of hordes of refugees fleeing. As I said earlier, there have been no conflicts since 5 September and no clearance operations. We too are concerned. We want to find out what the real problems are. There have been allegations and counter-allegations and we have to listen to all of them. And we have to make sure that these allegations are based on solid evidence before we take action.

Action will be taken against all peoples, regardless of their religion, race, or political position who go against the laws of the land and who violate human rights as accepted by our international community. We have never been soft on human rights in this country. Our government

Bringing about genuine democracy

Khin Maung Oo

THE other day, ceremonies in commemoration of the International Democracy Day were held in the country. Myanmar, our country has been moving towards a genuine democratic system, passing the transitional period for over 6 years. Accordingly, the period can be said to be just in its infancy.

After having lived under feudalism and colonialism, the country gained its Independence, heading for building up a democratic nation. Yet, as known by all, a one-party system and a dictatorship emerged in the country due to the weakness of the democratic system and splits among political parties. Thereafter, the people had to strive for many years in moving toward the goal of a democratic system, suffering myriad of woes.

Now is the time when our nation is

passing through the transitional period towards democracy and making efforts to move on the correct path towards a genuine and more strengthened democratic nation. Our country can be likened to a boat trying to head for its destination in the stormy seas. In fact, we are heading for the democratic state, but we cannot set it up yet, till now. Some mistakenly believe that the country has already become a democratic nation, demanding full democratic rights.

During this transitional period, every individual is required to follow democratic practices such as broad-mindedness, tolerance and forgiveness. Moreover, we need to learn to base our behavior on justice and fairness among ourselves. For the time being, we are to develop the habit of nurturing democratic practices, rather than enjoying the fruits of democracy. It is necessary for all of us not to be too eager

to apply the standards of a full-fledged democracy.

In democratic practices, compromise and negotiation are extremely important. In bringing about democracy, the government and political parties are of great importance, and civil societies, news media and the whole populace need to participate hand in hand and to control the democratic system collectively by using the method of checks and balances.

Democracy being popular in countries all over the world should not be applied in a wrong way. We must pay attention to potential democracy-related dangers. These are none other than the fact that in our surroundings there are those who are not desirous of democracy. There are also others who wish to disrupt the democratic system as they have not been entrusted with the power to lead the people. Then there are those who

are not satisfied with the government's performance and those who would not like to contest in the electoral process in just and fair ways.

Democracy espouses the deterrent principles of shame and fear which guard the world from falling into chaos. Democracy guarantees justice, freedom and equality, leading the country to Peace and Development. It is also capable of bringing forth national prosperity, and guarantees the right of each individual to pursue happiness without infringing upon the rights of others. In moving forward towards a democratic state full of virtues, we must make efforts in unity in accord with democratic standards and consciousness. It is important for all of us to learn from the lessons of the past to ensure that we do not lose our chance to build a federal democratic republic which is the aspiration of all of us. ■

Women of childbearing age around world suffering toxic levels of mercury

By Damian Carrington
The Guardian
Environment editor

WOMEN of childbearing age from Myanmar, the Pacific region and around the world have been found to have high levels of mercury, a potent neurotoxin which can seriously harm unborn children.

The new study, the largest to date, covered 25 of the countries with the highest risk and found excessive levels of the toxic metal in women from Alaska to Chile and Indonesia to Kenya. Women in the Pacific islands were the most pervasively contaminated. This results from their reliance on eating fish, which concentrate the mercury pollution found across the world's oceans and much of which originates from coal burning. The most extreme levels were found in women from sites in Indonesia, where mercury is heavily used in small-scale gold mining and where fish is also commonly eaten. Such gold mining leads to serious mercury pollution and is also a source of harm to women in Kenya, Paraguay and Myanmar. Industrial pollution is another source of mercury, and the research found this affected women in Nepal, Nigeria and Ukraine. "Millions of women and children in communities mining gold with mercury are condemned to a future where mercury impairs the health of adults and damages the developing brains of their offspring," said Yuyun Ismawati, an Indonesian woman from Ipen, the coalition of NGOs that produced the scientific report. "As long as the mercury trade continues, so too will the mercury tragedy."

Cook Islands resident Imogen Ingram, from the Island Sustainability Alliance, learned that her own mercury levels



Women in areas where mercury is used in small-scale gold mining had some of the most extreme levels of contamination. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

were two-and-a-half times higher than the US Environmental Protection Agency's safety threshold. "It is really alarming to learn that you have, without knowing, passed on mercury to your child," she said. "Mercury contamination across the Pacific Islands is high because we eat fish. But I do not want to be told not to eat fish. Coal-fired power, one of the primary sources of mercury pollution in the oceans, is the real offender. It is time to phase it out." "Mercury contamination is ubiquitous in marine and freshwater systems around the world," said David Evers, executive director at the Biodiversity Research Institute (BRI), which conducted the scientific tests. "This study underscores the importance of global cooperation to address mercury pollution." A global agreement to tackle mercury pollution, the Minamata convention, came into force in August and its first major meeting starts on 24 September in Geneva, Switzerland. It will limit the use of mercury in many products from 2020, but does not ban the international trade in the

toxic metal, most of which ends up in small-scale gold mining. Primary production of mercury can continue in some countries until 2032, as the convention stands.

"There are many many loopholes in the trade in mercury," said Lee Bell, from Ipen, who led the new research. "It has been an eye-opener that the problem is just as widespread as it is. There are still many things to be resolved [in the convention] and it is not moving fast enough." Bell urges all countries to follow the US and EU in introducing unilateral bans on exporting mercury. The study focused on women from 18 to 44 years of age, as they are most at risk because developing fetuses are so sensitive to mercury, he said. "Women have to be very careful, in any country, of what type of fish and how much they eat," he said. The UK's Food Standards Agency advises pregnant women, those trying to conceive and children not to eat any shark, swordfish or marlin, as these top predators have the highest levels of mercury. The FSA also advises these groups to limit

their tuna consumption.

The Ipen work expanded a smaller study it conducted with the UN Environment Programme to test hair samples from more than 1,000 women from 36 places in 25 countries. In the Pacific Islands, which are far from all industrial sources of mercury pollution, 86 per cent of the women had levels above the 1ppm safety limit, with most over three times that.

With levels above 1ppm of mercury, brain, heart and kidney damage can occur. The most recent scientific assessment indicates that lifelong brain damage to fetuses can begin at the lower level of 0.58ppm and in many of the sites studied virtually all the women exceeded this level.

Overall, in the places affected by small-scale gold mining, more than half the women exceeded the 1ppm limit, with results of up to nine times the limit found in Indonesia. In industrial areas, 20 per cent of the women had high levels of mercury. In Alaska, where seals are an important food for the indigenous women tested, a third had high levels.

More than 370 sites polluted with mercury around the world have been identified by Pure Earth, a pollution clean-up group. Its global policy director, Andrew McCartor, said: "Our program clearly demonstrates that mercury contamination is widespread, and the new study from Ipen and BRI shows that it is taking a significant toll on our most vulnerable populations."

McCartor said, as well as stopping the release of mercury, more work is needed to clean up toxic sites: "Many of these sites are essentially orphaned with no plans or funding for cleanup, poisoning generation after generation. The remediation of contaminated sites is crucial, but often ignored and underfunded." ■

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects regional stability works in Sittway



Director of Military Engineers explains about border fencing work to Senior General at Regional Control Command in Sittway. **PHOTO: MNA**

DEFENCE Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe and Lt-Gen Ye Aung arrived in Sittway yesterday afternoon and were briefed by the Regional Control Command (Sittway) Commander.

The briefings concerned a number of topics, including the increased deployment of security personnel in northern Rakhine State after the October 2016 terrorist attacks and reduction of security personnel in February 2017 when regional stability was achieved, which ARSA extremist terrorists took advantage of by recruiting and training for the recent terrorist acts last month. Also discussed were terrorist attacks on local ethnic nationals in June, July and August and step-by-step acts with an aim to destroy the administrative mechanism, deployment of se-

curity personnel to counter this and to clear the Mayu Mountain range, terrorist attacks and engagements from 25 August to 5 September, casualties of security personnel and number of terrorists arrested, number of local ethnic national killed, wounded and missing, wards and villages burnt during the events and status of displaced local ethnic nationals. Additional explanations were made on regional stability works conducted, resettling of ethnic nationals to their places of origin, aid provided to villages in the region regardless of race and religion, and medical treatment and health care provided.

Afterward, the head of the Directorate of Military Engineers explained border fencing work and the director of the Medical Corps explained details of six Tatmadaw special field medical teams who treated

4,503 patients in villages from 2 to 18 September. The Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief remarked on obtaining early intelligence, conducting close control and command of security matters by responsible persons in each stage so that there are no mistakes, working together for regional stability, securing border fences and maintaining them for long-term existence, posting security on the border fence, providing humanitarian assistance to ethnic nationals and citizens living in Buthidaung and Maungdaw region, providing full security for ethnic nationals, having adequate forces to conduct security work, following rules and regulations, and assisting in issuance of national verification cards (NVC) and national verification processes. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Reconstruction of bridges and roads in Maungdaw region

By Tin Maung Lwin & Min Htat Aung

Bridges and roads destroyed by terrorists in the Maungdaw region in northern Rakhine State have been reconstructed, according to the Maungdaw District Road Department. Seven bridges damaged in the terrorist attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) extremist terrorists are No. 3/25 Wetkyein bridge 2 No. 1/27 Padakar Daiwanali bridge 1, No. 4/27 Padakar Daiwanali bridge 2, No. 1/29 Laungboub bridge, No. 5/32 Letyar Chaung bridge, No. 4/34 Arzabaw bridge and No. 2/29 bridge on Maungdaw-Kyeekanyin-Kyeinchaung-Aung Tha Pyay-Bandula road, which were rapidly reconstructed in order for the smooth resumption of transport, communications and secu-



Local people reconstruct bridges and roads destroyed by terrorists in Maungdaw, northern Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MAUNG HMWE**

city works. "The reconstruction has been implemented with the combined forces of engineers, staff from rural development department and local workers.

Although there are difficulties in a lack of workers and low time duration, the bridges and roads were the first to be reconstructed so that there would be easy transport, which imple-

ments stability and the peace process in Maungdaw", U Zaw Min, assistant director (civil) of Maungdaw District Road Department said yesterday.

During the terrorist attacks of 25 August, extremist terrorists destroyed roads and bridges with landmines and by cutting down trees to block and cut off transport. ■

Thai PM urged to protect free speech of Myanmar migrants

BANGKOK -- The Thai Government should de-criminalise defamation and protect the rights of 14 Myanmar migrant workers and other human rights defenders being targeted with criminal defamation and related charges for bringing attention to alleged labour rights violations, a labour rights group said yesterday.

Fortify Rights and 86 civil society organisations, businesses, and parliamentarians yesterday published an open letter to Thailand's Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha, calling on the Thai Government to "immediately take pro-active steps" to protect freedom of expression, labour rights, and the rights of human rights defenders in Thailand.

"Businesses in Thailand are increasingly using defamation complaints to target critics and deflect attention from serious allegations of wrongdoing," said Amy Smith, the executive director of Fortify Rights.

"Thai authorities need to stand up for free speech and workers' rights." Thammakaset Company Limited — a Thai-owned poultry company — filed a defamation complaint against the 14 workers on 6 October, 2016 alleging the workers damaged the reputation of the company by submitting a complaint to the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT) on 7 July, 2016. The Don Muang Magistrates Court in Bangkok is scheduled to consider Thammakaset's complaint against the workers on 4 October.

In the complaint to the NHRCT, the workers claimed that the company failed to pay

minimum and overtime wages, forced them to work excessive hours, and confiscated their identity documents. On 14 September, Thailand's Supreme Court upheld a lower court's order for Thammakaset Co. Ltd. to pay a total of Ks68 million (US\$51,000) in compensation to the 14 workers for violating their rights.

Thammakaset Co. Ltd. also filed a complaint against Andy Hall, a British human rights defender, on 4 November, 2016, alleging criminal defamation and violations of the Computer Crimes Act 2007 for his social media comments on the alleged labor rights abuses in relation to the 14 migrant workers. The Bangkok South Criminal Court will determine whether the complaint has sufficient merit to proceed to trial on 15 December.

The open letter called on the Prime Minister's Office to "ensure the right to freedom of expression for workers, activists and others who report on human rights and labour rights abuses allegedly committed by companies during their business operations" and de-criminalise defamation. The letter also called on the Thai Government to enforce labour protections for all workers, including migrant workers.

"General Prayut should make good on his promises to ensure businesses in Thailand uphold basic rights and protections. Enforcing labour rights and protecting the right of workers to complain would be a good start," said Amy Smith. "It's up to the court to see the case against these workers for what it is — frivolous." —GNLM

Ultraviolet index to reach higher level at end of monsoon

The ultraviolet (UV) index can be high across the country at the end of monsoon, which will end in mid-October, said Dr. Tun Lwin, the former director-general of the Myanmar Meteorology and Hydrology Department yesterday.

The UV index is expected to reach a very higher level, stated Dr. Tun Lwin in his Facebook post.

According to global warming, climate change causes natural disasters such as flooding, untimely rainfall, overheating, earthquakes and cyclones all

over the world. In Myanmar, several states and regions experienced heavy rains and damages during this rainy season.

According to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal on 19 September. Concerning flood warning issued at 3:30 pm observation, the department warns of water level in Chindwin River which is currently below danger level to reach its danger level within the next 3 days. —Sandar Soe ■

Reaction from diplomats to State Counsellor's speech on National Reconciliation and Peace

U Tha Sein, Zin Oo,
July Moe (PHOTO: ZIN OO)

Mr Hong Liang, Ambassador of China to Myanmar:

"This (Rakhine issue) issue is very complicated. They need time and joint efforts of all parties in Myanmar. International communities should give constructive contribution to this issue. The Chinese government's position is very clear. We support the Myanmar government in its efforts for restoring peace and stability in Rakhine. The humanitarian assistance to that part of Myanmar is very urgent. China is doing its own."

Russian Ambassador Mr Nikolay A Listopadov

There is no evidence of ethnic cleansing in Rakhine. Only a constructive approach can solve the Rakhine issue, which is complicated. International communities should also show how they can cooperate effectively with Myanmar government. Meanwhile, the Myanmar government needs to solve the citizenship is-



Mr Hong Liang, Ambassador of China to Myanmar.



Ambassador of Russia to Myanmar Dr Nikolay Listopadov.



UNICEF Deputy Representative, Paul Edwards.



H.E. Mr Vikram Misri, the Indian Ambassador.

sue in terms of the National Verification Process because this issue is very important for Muslim community there.

Recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine led by Mr. Kofi Annan should be effectively implemented. And the human rights violation issue should be solved in accordance with the law. Another challenge is the mistrust between the two communities, and this issue should be solved, too.

Paul Edwards, deputy representative of UNICEF

"The further attacks since that date, so she's in a better position to know that than I am, but obviously, people make their own decisions as to whether they stay or whether they go, and it will take some time to settle down and for a peaceful situation to occur.

I think we have to take the speech at face value, as to what she said in terms of her wish for peace to come to the area. We have to take at face value what she said about there being no further military operations since the fifth of September. But of course none of us really know what's hap-

pening there if we're not there."

Shri Vikram Misri, Ambassador of India to Myanmar:

"This address contains very a positive message. We all appreciate the problems, conflicts and challenges that Myanmar is facing. The situation that came out in Rakhine State concerns not only Rakhine but also neighbours including us in India.

It is also clear that authorities have the right to provide security to defend themselves against violent attacks. This is also important to prevent violent

attacks on innocent civilians. International communities stand ready to help the government of Myanmar in addressing these challenges.

We would like the situation to deal with this within the context of the rule of law and of course to deal with the kind of flow of people we have seen across the border.

The State Counsellor said Myanmar is ready to take back the refugees born across the border, and then further steps will be taken in accordance with the law here in terms of a national verification process." ■

Huge crowds listen to State Counsellor's speech nationwide

By Zaw Gyi Panita

THE State Counsellor's speech delivered yesterday morning at Myanmar International Convention Center II was broadcasted live and shown on large LED screens nationwide attracting huge crowds.

People turned out to listen and to support the State Counsellor.

"This speech is believed to be able to reduce the international pressure on the northern

Rakhine State affair. I came to listen and support the speech, as it will bring a lot of benefit to our country", said U Moe Min of Sanchaung Township, who listened to the State Counsellor's speech at City Hall in Yangon.

Food and water were distributed to the people who gathered on Mahabandoola Road and in Mahabandoola Park to listen to the State Counsellor's speech.

Many in the crowd were



A crowd gathers at the City Hall in Yangon listening Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

seen holding posters showing support for the State Counsellor.

"Donors are donating food and water to the people who came to listen to Mother Su's speech", one resident noted.

The large crowds were an indication of support for the State Counsellor, one resident said.

"This also shows that the

people are together with Mother Su", said U Myint Khaing of Ward 1, Mayangon Township.

Ko Aung Win of Latha Township said he hoped the speech would improve international relations.

"As one of the people, I respect and value the speech of the people's leader.

Similarly, people from the countries of the world are be-

lieved to respect and value it", he said.

Ko Aung Win added that the speech is very important for the country.

People who came out today hope the speech will hopefully reduce the pressure exerted by some countries on northern Rakhine State affairs and will bring forth good results in the country", Ko Aung Win said. ■

State Counsellor's speech on efforts with regard to National Reconciliation and Peace

FROM PAGE-7

We would like you to join us in a positive and constructive way to find new paths towards peace and stability and towards harmony.

We would like you to think of our country as a whole. Not just as little afflicted areas. It is as a whole only that we can make progress. I would like to use the analogy of a healthy human being. A healthy human being has to be healthy all over. You cannot neglect his general health just to concentrate on one particular ill. I use this analogy because our [health] sector is one that has made the greatest progress since we came into the administration last year. By concentrating on public health, we have found that other health problems can also be better addressed. For example, within one year, deaths from HIV were halved – not because we are concentrating just on HIV/AIDS, but because we were concentrating on public health as a whole, the health of all of our peoples and all our communities. This is how I would like you to look at our country.

We are a young and fragile democracy facing many problems, but we have to cope with them all at the same time, in the way that we have to cope with all of our health problems at the same time. We cannot just concentrate on a few. I would like to invite you to join us in finding new ways, new answers, more constructive, more positive, more

innovative, and possibly more daring.

If we cannot resolve our problems quickly, it does not mean that we are never going to be able to resolve them. It just means that the suffering of our peoples is extended. We would like to bring an end to the suffering of our peoples as quickly as possible. We would like to make our country a nation, within whose borders, everybody can live in security and prosperity. This is a large order. This is a big ambition. But it is not one impossible to fulfil. We all have to join together.

I accept that the real responsibility lies with us, the people of this country. All the people of Myanmar, from the government, to each and every single individual within this country has the responsibility for the development and progress of this country. But, we would like our friends to join us in our great endeavour. This is certainly a big endeavour. An ambitious endeavour. A determination to build out of a country, beset by many problems, a State that is healthy, that is strong, that can look forward to a secure future.

It is sad that in meeting our diplomatic community, I am obliged to focus on just a very few of our problems, when there are so many which I think we could resolve together. That is why I am opening the door to all of you who wish to join us in our endeavours. We invite you to join

us, to talk to us, to discuss with us, to go with us to the troubled areas, where we can guarantee security for you, because we don't want the added problems of anything happening to any of you, so we would like you to join us, then to see for yourself what is happening and think for yourself, what can we do to remove these problems? And also, I want you to take special care to study the peaceful areas – how have they managed to keep the peace? How have they managed to preserve harmony? Why are they not at each other's throats in these particular areas? These are the answers that we need. It is not just a matter of removing ills, but also of promoting what is positive. We have to remove the negative and increase the positive, and we would like to do that together with all of you.

As you will probably be aware, our Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is leading our humanitarian assistance programme. We are very happy that the International Committee of the Red Cross is joining us in this and we would welcome others who would like to aid us in our endeavours. Many have already committed to help us by donating generously – in cash as well as in kind. We will make sure that everything that is given towards the promotion of peace and harmony in the Rakhine is used in the best possible way to benefit all communities.

We don't want Myanmar to be a nation divided by religious beliefs, or ethnicity or political ideology. We all have the right to our diverse identities and we all have the right to strive to fulfil our lives in the ways in which we believe are right. But we also have to work together because we belong to one nation. And as we belong to one nation, we also belong to this world.

It is for this reason that we place great importance on the role of the United Nations as an assembly of nations which was created to promote peace and harmony, to ensure that our world should not ever again, in future, fall into the suffering that we all experienced during the Second World War. It was with the intention of putting an end to wars – that is to say – putting an end to conflicts, that the United Nations was established, and I would like to think that what we are doing here today, may be the beginning of a truly strong and effective movement to bring an end to all the conflicts within Myanmar. The conflicts between our communities, between our peoples, and also the conflict of ideas with regards to how we are to go forwards. Conflicts of ideas can be sorted out, can be removed through discussion and dialogue and through open-minded and the generosity and courage, that enables us to see other people's point of view. I would also like

to say that the generosity and courage that would enable other people to see our point of view as well.

It is by cooperating only, that our world can go forward. By attacking each other, either with words, or with weapons, or even with emotions, will not help us. Hate and fear are the main scourges of our world. All conflict arises either out of hate or fear. It is only by removing the sources of hate and fear that we shall be able to remove conflict from our country and from our world.

As you know, there are many allegations and counter-allegations. I have not gone into any of them because it is not my purpose to promote and encourage conflict, whether of ideas, or of arms, but to try to promote harmony and understanding. I hope that you will understand us and join us in our endeavours.

As I said earlier, this is a diplomatic briefing. This was intended to keep the members of our diplomatic community and the representatives of our friends from all over the world, in touch with what we are trying to do. But in some ways, it is more than just a diplomatic briefing. It is a friendly appeal to all those who wish Myanmar well. A friendly appeal to help us to achieve the ends that I think, you would agree are desirable, not just for this particular country, but for countries all over the world.

Thank you.

Aid for Rakhine discussed

FROM PAGE-1

Tasks for resettlement are voluminous, so we would like to collectively help Myanmar in finding ways for using all resources as much as possible. There may be many related programs of providing humanitarian aid to be implemented in the long run. We would like Myanmar to cooperate as needed, concerning aid to be provided by international communities. We were well convinced of the hardships experienced in carrying out the tasks of the government. Negotiations need to be made broadly."

The Union Minister said, "The Government is trying their best for the successful implementation in dealing with Rakhine State affairs. Situations which the country is solving currently are different from those in the period when suggestions on Rakhine State were made.

Now the government is making efforts to implement under the current situations. In supporting humanitarian aid, we hope that international communities will be able to closely connect with the Government. Simultaneously, we believe that we can discuss applicable means and ways with supportive partner groups. Practically applicable strategies are to be laid down after selecting sectors to be prioritized, as we are required to implement suggestions and responsibilities of the committee for implementation over suggestions on Rakhine State being carried out by myself as chairperson. The Government is carrying out the support to Rakhine State under the Red Cross Movement programme. All those involved are striving very hard for the success as much as possible."

Afterward, in regards to the

Red Cross Movement, matters for success and convenience were discussed with the Denmark Ambassador.

In the meeting with Mr. Patrick Murphy, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Southeast Asia, said US is well convinced that Myanmar is facing and dealing with many challenges, asking about the matters for all organisations desirous of helping to cooperate in sending humanitarian aid to displaced people. He stressed the need for the long-term project needs broader help from international organisation. "Those who fled to Bangladesh and displaced people in the country may have many needs. We want to know which projects are to be prioritised, apart from present humanitarian aid programmes.

We would like the government to help returners to come



Ms. Renata Dessallien, United Nations Resident Coordinator calls on Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

to be relocated at their former places," he added.

The Union Minister discussed in detail situations on the formation of the Central Committee for Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development of Rakhine State, and performances of four working committees, and other matters.

In addition, the Union Minis-

ter said that subsidies are being given out to displaced people, based on the statistics collected by the State government. Those who fled to Bangladesh are to be systematically scrutinised if they want to come back. Myanmar is having a good relationship with neighboring countries, including Bangladesh. —Myanmar News Agency

S-400 Triumph to enter duty in Central Military District on Volga River in November

YEKATERINBURG — Air defence systems S-400 Triumph will enter duty in the Central Military District on the Volga River in November, the chief of the district's technical support department, Major-General Fraiz Salyiev told the media on Tuesday.

"In November this year S-400 missile systems will be provided for another unit of the Central Military District's air defence stationed in the Volga River area. Earlier, in 2016 such complexes were for the first time provided for a military unit in the Siberian region," he said.

Salyiev said this year the Central Military District was to get more than 1,100 pieces of advanced military hardware.

"More than half of the amount has been delivered

to the recipients by now. Last February army aviation units received 20 multirole helicopters Mi-8MTV5," Salyiev said.

Russia on 19 September marks Weapons Maker Day.

"We will certainly congratulate the chiefs of the industry's enterprises. The Central Military District and manufactures will arrange for joint festive activities," he explained.

S-400 Triumph is Russia's newest long-range air defence missile system. It is meant for eliminating aircraft and cruise and ballistic missiles, including intermediate range ones, as well as surface targets. Its maximum range is 400 kilometres, and altitude, up to 30 kilometres.

S-400 Triumph was authorized for service in 2007.—Tass ■



In 2016 such complexes were for the first time provided for a military unit in the Siberian region. **PHOTO: TASS**

Swiss shut down 'fake' E-Coin in latest cryptocurrency crackdown

ZURICH — Switzerland's financial watchdog has closed down what it said was the provider of a fake cryptocurrency and is investigating around a dozen other possible fraud cases, in the latest clamp-down on the risks involving virtual money.

The move by the FINMA watchdog comes on the heels of Chinese authorities' ordering Beijing-based cryptocurrency exchanges to stop trading and immediately notify users of their closure.

Virtual currencies such as Bitcoin, which are issued and usually controlled by their developers and not backed by a central bank, are hailed by their supporters as a fast and efficient way of managing money.

But regulators and traditional banks are increasingly concerned about the risks of fraud in the burgeoning online cryptocurrency underworld.

JPMorgan Chief Executive Jamie Dimon last week said Bitcoin, the original and still the biggest cryptocurrency, "is a fraud" and will eventually "blow up".

The QUID PRO QUO Association shut down by FINMA had provided so-called E-Coins for more than a year and had amassed funds of at least 4 million Swiss francs (\$4.2 million) from several hundred users,

FINMA said in a statement on Tuesday.

"This activity is similar to the deposit-taking business of a bank and is illegal unless the company in question holds the relevant financial market licence," FINMA, Switzerland's Financial Market Supervisory Authority, said.

E-Coin was not like "real cryptocurrencies", FINMA said, because it was not stored on distributed networks using blockchain technology but was instead kept locally on QUID PRO QUO's servers.

Reuters was not immediately able to reach Zurich-based QUID PRO QUO for comment.

FINMA said it had three other companies on its warning list due to suspicious activity in cryptocurrencies, and was conducting 11 investigations into other possible fake virtual currencies.

The Swiss finance industry has been looking for new avenues of growth following a weakening of its bank secrecy rules during a global crackdown on tax evasion.

The small Swiss canton of Zug, famed for low taxes that have drawn multinational companies, has been trying to turn itself into a hub for virtual currency firms.—Reuters ■

With new operating system, Apple revamps its money-making App Store

NEW YORK — Apple Inc's newest operating system for iPhones and iPads introduces changes to its marketplace for third-party software to satisfy app developers and add new so-called augmented reality apps.

The system, called iOS 11, is being released on Tuesday ahead of its two newest phone handsets, the iPhone 8 and iPhone X, set to start shipping to customers on Friday and 3 November, respectively.

The most visible changes will come to App Store. The App Store is the backbone of Apple's services segment, which brought in \$21.5 billion in revenue in the past nine months,

a 19 per cent increase over the previous year and a bright spot as overall sales grew only 5 per cent.

The store has been redesigned to give app developers more space for images and text to describe their software. Developers have long grumbled that their software is hard to find in Apple's store unless users type in the precise name of the app or follow a link to it.

"The redesign make it much cleaner and speaks to the pain point of the store: You had so many apps that if you didn't know exactly what you were looking for, it was really hard to find anything," said Car-

olina Milanesi, an analyst with Creative Strategies.

The new store also gives prominent display to games. Games are expected to make up 75 per cent of all revenue for Apple's App Store, according to App Annie, which collects and analyzes market data on mobile apps.

Most of that revenue comes in the form of so-called in-app purchases, where gamers make purchases of tokens, gems and other digital items to unlock new parts of the game.

"It's really the gift that keep on giving from the developer perspective," Milanesi said.—Reuters ■

New Zealand's fuel shortage hits more flights and petrol stations

WELLINGTON — New Zealand's jet fuel shortage on Tuesday forced 39 flights to be cancelled, 13 of them international, with concerns the fuel crisis may spread after fuel stations in the country's largest city Auckland halted high-octane gasoline sales.

The fuel shortage, caused by a damaged pipeline to Auckland Airport, has caused widespread disruption to air travel since the weekend and comes

only days before Saturday's national election with infrastructure shortages a hotly contested issues.

New Zealand's military, which cancelled an exercise with Singapore to save fuel, was trucking fuel supplies around the country in an attempt to ease the shortage and government officials have been asked to avoid non-essential air travel.

Air New Zealand said on

Tuesday it was beginning to refuel long-haul aircraft at the international airport in the capital Wellington. Flights to and from Auckland have stopped at airports in Australia and Pacific islands like Fiji to refuel.

The airline said in a statement it was restricting its ticket sales, which it called an "unusual step", and that it would not accept any last-minute cargo, except for important medical equipment.—Reuters ■

Senior CPC official says stable ties vital to reform of China, Viet Nam

HANOI — Senior Communist Party of China (CPC) official Liu Yunshan said on Tuesday that the stable and healthy development of Sino-Vietnamese relations is conducive to the reform and opening up of the two countries.

Liu, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, arrived in Hanoi on Monday for an official visit to Vietnam at the invitation of the Communist Party of Viet Nam (CPV).

During meeting here with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Liu said the CPC and the CPV constitute a community of shared destiny with strategic significance.

The sound and stable development of the bilateral ties will help to solidify the ruling position of the two parties, which is in the interests of the two parties and people of the two nations, said Liu.

The two economies are highly complementary, with huge potential for practical cooperation, he said.



Liu Yunshan (L), a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, meets with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc in Hanoi, Viet Nam on 19 September, 2017. PHOTO: XINHUA

He called on the two sides to synergize the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative with Viet Nam's Two Corridors and One Economic Circle plan to facilitate the production capacity cooperation.

He also suggested the two nations properly manage and control their divergences, so as to create favorable environment for bilateral cooperation.

China is ready to make joint efforts with Vietnam to upgrade bilateral pragmatic cooperation, said Liu.

Phuc, for his part, said the close high-level contacts have promoted the friendly cooperation between the two countries. Viet Nam is willing to work with China to carry out the consensus reached by General Secretary of the CPV Central

Committee Nguyen Phu Trong and General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee Xi Jinping, he said. Phuc agreed with Liu on synergizing the two countries' development strategies. He suggested the two sides deepen cooperation in investment, trade and major projects, properly deal with differences, so as to bring more benefits to the two peoples.—Xinhua ■

WHO declares Cambodia, Laos free of trachoma eye disease

MANILA — The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday that Cambodia and Laos have eliminated trachoma, an ancient blinding disease.

In a news statement, Shin Young-soo, WHO regional director for the Western Pacific, congratulated the two Southeast Asian countries for successfully eliminating trachoma as a public health problem.

Shin called trachoma "a disease of poverty," adding that communities that do not have good access to safe water and sanitation are the hardest hit.

"But it is possible to tackle this public health problem, as Cambodia and Laos have done, by making the right investments to protect peoples' health," Shin said in a statement.

Trachoma has been a health problem in Cambo-

dia since the 1990s and in Laos since the 1970s.

Cambodia and Laos are the first countries in the WHO Western Pacific region to be validated as having achieved elimination of trachoma as a public health problem, WHO said.

Trachoma, an eye disease caused by infection with Chlamydia trachomatis bacteria, is the leading infectious cause of blindness worldwide, according to a WHO statement.

It said infection is spread through contact with discharge from the eyes and nose of an infected person, particularly young children.

It is spread by flies which have been in contact with the eyes and noses of infected people, the statement read. "Transmission of the infection is closely linked with poor sanitation and hygiene," it said.—Xinhua ■

US, S Korea troops stage mock battle to retake village near N Korean border

POCHEON, South Korea — The screech of incoming fire followed by an explosion resounds across forested hillsides near the border between North and South Korea.

Battalion Commander Rob Kimmel of the US 2nd Armoured Brigade Combat Team, scanned the village at the base of a mountain for the tell-tale smoke.

"That's enemy fire trying to attack ROK forces located there," says Kimmel — referring to South Korea by its official name, the Republic of Korea.

This is a drill.

It is just one of several that major world

powers are engaged in on, over and near the Korean peninsula, amid heightened tension in the wake of North Korea's increasingly frequent missile tests and its sixth nuclear test this month.

The US soldiers are conducting a joint exercise with their South Korean allies, and the mission for the day is to recapture a village in enemy hands.

There is an occasional crack of gunfire from soldiers in combat gear, hiding in the buildings, and prowling round corners of the village, which has been specially created for military training.

About 700 troops are engaged in the four-day drill, called Warrior Strike 8, near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) — the world's most heavily defended frontier.

South Korea and the United States are technically still at war with North Korea after the 1950-53 Korean conflict ended with a truce, not a peace treaty.

Such drills are held regularly, but the military has invited media to observe one for the first time in two years, said Kim Hyon-sok, public affairs specialist of the US 2nd Infantry Division.

The US military has described the exercises

as training for readiness "to fight tonight" against North Korea if needed.

Based in Fort Hood, Texas, Kimmel's team is on a nine-month deployment in South Korea.

"We are continuing to train for situations that may arise," said Kimmel. "It's a big milestone type of exercise...we'll do two to three of these while we're here."

North Korea has repeatedly demanded that the United States and South Korea call off joint exercises, which Pyongyang view as provocative.

A day earlier, US and South Korean warplanes ran bombing drills over the peninsula—Reuters ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.9.2017 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.

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Priyanka Chopra shines bright in white at Emmys 2017

LOS ANGELES — Priyanka Chopra was a vision in white as she made her second red carpet appearance at the Emmys in a Balmain feathered dress.

The 35-year-old “Quantico” star, who twirled her way to the good books of fashion critics last year with flowy Jason Wu red dress, nailed the red carpet this time as well with a shimmering white full-sleeved, self-quilted number and fierce make-up.

Even though the dress was not as sexy as what Priyanka had worn in the past, it was a perfect blend of elegance and power, courtesy the gorgeous embellished, power-shoulders and neckline.

Priyanka wore her hair in a sleek ponytail and her make up had a sensual touch with deep berry on her pout and smokey eyes. White seems to be Priyanka’s favourite red carpet colour, as it is the third time in the row she has picked dresses in the shade for a major event.

The actor opted for a nude-white Zuhair Murad gown for her first Oscars appearance and repeated the colour with a beautiful Ralph & Russo tulle strapless gown at the 89th Academy Awards.

The Indian star presented the outstanding variety talk series award to John Oliver of “Last Week Tonight”, with co-presenter Anthony Anderson.



Lovely in lace! Priyanka Chopra. **PHOTO: PTI**

Priyanka, who started her career in the West with ABC TV series “Quantico”, made her Hollywood acting debut this year with “Baywatch”.

The actor will soon start filming the third season on the show. She will also be seen in two more Hollywood films — “A Kid Like Jake” and “Isn’t It Romantic?”.—PTI ■

Lady Gaga calls off European tour, citing severe physical pain

LOS ANGELES — Lady Gaga on Monday called off the European leg of her world tour, saying she was suffering from severe physical pain and was seeking medical treatment.

The “Born This Way” singer, 31, who says she suffers from fibromyalgia, also canceled an appearance at a music festival in Rio de Janeiro last week and posted pictures of herself in a hospital with a drip on her arm.

She said on her social media accounts on Monday she was disappointed at comments from people online that “suggest that I’m being dramatic, making this up, or playing the victim to get out of touring. If you knew me, you would know this couldn’t be further from the truth.”

“I have always been honest about my physical and mental health struggles,” Gaga added. “It is complicated and difficult to explain, and we are trying to figure it out.”

“As I get stronger and when I feel ready, I will tell my story in more depth, and plan to take this on strongly so I can not only raise awareness, but expand research for others who suffer as I do, so I can help make a difference,” the singer added.

Fibromyalgia is a musculoskeletal pain disorder, often accompanied by fatigue and mood issues, that can be



Singer Lady Gaga performs during the halftime show at Super Bowl LI between the New England Patriots and the Atlanta Falcons in Houston, Texas, US on 5 February, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

triggered by physical trauma or psychological stress.

Gaga’s European tour to promote her latest album “Joanne” was due to start on 21 September in Barcelona, Spain, and continue for six weeks. The dates have been postponed until 2018. “She plans to spend the next seven weeks proactively working with her doctors to heal

from this and past traumas that still affect her daily life, and result in severe physical pain in her body,” promoters Live Nation said in a statement.

The singer was hospitalized in 2013 for a hip injury, and a new documentary, “Lady Gaga: Five Foot Two,” documents her struggles with chronic pain. —Reuters ■

Country music singer Thomas Rhett debuts atop Billboard chart

LOS ANGELES — Country singer Thomas Rhett’s latest album debuted at the top of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, leading six new entries in the top 10.

“Life Changes,” the third studio album by Rhett, sold 94,000 albums, 90,000 songs and was streamed 30 million times, totaling 123,000 album units, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan. The Billboard 200 chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album). Electro-pop group Odesza debuted at No 2 with “Moment Apart” selling 63,000 album units, while alt-rock band The National en-



Singer-songwriter Thomas Rhett arrives at the 11th Annual ACM Honours in Nashville, Tennessee, US on 23 August, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

tered the chart at No 3 with “Sleep Well Beast” selling 62,000 album units. Other new entries in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart included singer-songwriter Jack Johnson at No 5 with “All The Light Above” and country music singers Dustin Lynch at No 7 with “Current Mood” and Kip Moore at No 10 with “Slowheart.”

Last week’s chart-topper, LCD Soundsystem’s “American Dream,” dropped to No 56 this week. On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, British singer Sam Smith’s new track “Too Good at Goodbyes” ousted Taylor Swift’s “Look What You Made Me Do” from the top spot, selling 90,000 copies.—Reuters ■

Giorgio Armani says successor need not be Italian

MILAN — Octogenarian fashion designer Giorgio Armani said on Monday the image of his brand might benefit if he picked a successor — who did not necessarily have to be Italian — for when he retired.

Now 83 and still running the company he founded in the 1970s, Armani has never made explicit who he would want to take over the reins at Italy’s second-biggest fashion house once he steps down. In a first move aimed at addressing succession issues, Armani last year created a foundation in his name to safeguard the group’s future.

In an interview with Italian TV channel RaiNews 24 on Monday, Armani said there

were people inside the group who could carry on his work. “I have several little heirs,” he said mentioning his two nieces and his nephew and his long-time assistant Pantaleo Dell’Orco. “(These are) people who could do good things following up on my path.” Armani’s nieces Roberta and Silvana both work at the group while their cousin, Andrea Camerana, recently left but is still a board member. Dell’Orco heads the men’s lines and sits on the foundation’s board. “However, clearly in the world we live in, a heir is important because they have to be somehow visible, must attend evening social occasions and be photographed,” Armani added.—Reuters ■



Mr Takaaki Nishii, President and Chief Executive Officer of Ajinomoto Co., Inc and officials cut ribbon at the opening ceremony of Myanmar Ajinomoto Foods Co., Ltd. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Ajinomoto expands investment in Myanmar

With capital investment of 10 million US dollar, Myanmar Ajinomoto Foods Co., Ltd ("MAF"), an affiliate of Ajinomoto Co., Inc "Ajinomoto Co.," has built packaging plant for "umami seasoning" "AJI-NO-MOTO" in Thilawa Special Economic Zone, and it has started the sales in Myanmar market.

In 1996, Ajinomoto Co. estab-

lished Myanmar Ajinomoto Industry Co., Ltd in Yangon to package and sell AJI-NO-MOTO, but due to changes in business conditions, the company suspended business activities in April 2000. "We would like to deliver No.1 deliciousness through our safe and reliable products directly to Myanmar people. Then, we will be able to contribute to My-

anmar's growth by sharing our technology, quality management system and human resource development. We are, therefore, employing large number of workforce as we expand our business," said Mr Takaaki Nishii, President and Chief Executive Officer of Ajinomoto Co., Inc.

In the same Thilawa Special Economic Zone, Ajinomoto

Co. has invested approximately USD 22 million to build a plant for "Birdy" 3 in 1 powered beverages. The plant is currently under construction, and the start of sales is scheduled for April 2018. In addition, a production line for Ros Dee flavor seasonings is scheduled to be installed at the AJI-NO-MOTO packaging plant during 2018.—GNLM ■

Japanese people aged 90 and older top 2 million for 1st time

TOKYO — The total number of Japanese people aged 90 and older has topped 2 million for the first time, with a record 7.70 million people aged 65 and older earning wages in some fashion, according to the latest population estimate released Sunday by the government.

The data, released ahead of Monday's Respect-for-the-Aged Day, are the clearest demonstration yet of the rapid graying of a nation where more people of retirement age remain gainfully employed amid a shrinking population. The number of people aged 90 or older stood at 120,000 in Japan in 1980 and has been on the rise since, reaching 1.02 million in 2004. As of 15 September, 2017, the population of the age group had doubled to 2.06 million, up 140,000 from a year earlier.—Kyodo News ■



KBZ's officials donate 3000-gallon water bowser in Pakokku Township. **PHOTO: THURA LWIN - ECO**

BFM assists MPs in Pakokku in fighting against water scarcity with bowser

A management committee of the Pakokku Township's MPs would step up efforts for fighting scarcity of water in coming summer with a donation of 3000-gallon water bowser by KBZ's Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation.

Responsible personnel of the philanthropic foundation handed over the water tanker to Magway Region Chief Minister Dr Aung Moe Nyo in the pres-

ence of members of the Magway Region Cabinet and MPs on 13th September in Pakokku.

The bowser became the 44th one provided by the BFM nationwide for fighting the water scarcity in the country.

The foundation has already supplied drinking water to the scarcity areas in nationwide and sank more than 160 tube-wells.—Thura Lwin-Eco ■

Cambodia's "bamboo train" on brink of disappearance as railway overhaul starts

BATTAMBANG, (Cambodia) — Norry, a home-made bamboo train which has delighted tourists for nearly two decades, is on the brink of disappearance as Cambodia has started to restore the rail line for a train service.

"It felt more like a roller coaster, but it's really nice, and I think it is a good way to transport really heavy things from one to another place, so yes, it's nice," German tourist Theresa Kessemeier said after she completed a ride. In Battambang, about 291 km northwest of capital Phnom Penh, Norry was first invented in the 1980s by railway workers who used it to check and repair train tracks; later local people had used it to transport goods and to travel along the tracks.

Until 1999, local people have used bamboo trains to carry tourists to see bucolic scenery along the dilapidated railroad in Sangke district of northwestern Cambodia's Battambang province and the bamboo trains have gradually become a popular mode of transport for foreign tourists since then.

Canadian tourist Lisanne Lacroix said, "I really, really en-



Tourists enjoy their journey on a bamboo train in Battambang, about 291 km northwest of Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh on 13 September, 2017. Bamboo train, which has delighted tourists for nearly two decades, is on the brink of disappearance as Cambodia has started to restore the rail line for a train service. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

joyed it. You get to see the (rice) fields; you get to see just everyday's lives, so it's a very great experience."

Norry provides a thrilling 7-km ride to tourists for 5 US dollars per tourist, or 10 US dollars for renting a norry for a single trip, and a norry is capable of carrying six passengers. It can be assembled or demolished in only a few minutes.

Two axles stripped from old

vehicles were laid on the train tracks, and a bamboo platform was set on top of them.

A small petrol engine was wedged into a hole that is cut out of the platform and tied to one of the axles with a rubber strap.

Another German tourist Arian Rathmann said before seeing the bamboo train, he imagined that it was like a real train, but it was different from his thought when he saw it.—Xinhua ■

Round two of women's football league begins

Kyaw Zin Tun

The second round of the 2016-2017 KBZ Bank Women's Football League began yesterday with Thitsar Arman beating Gandamar by a score of 7-0 at Aung San Stadium. The first round of the Myanmar Women's Football League was held between 10 December, 2016 and 6 January. In the first round, all seven teams played six matches each. Myawady FC is at the top of the standings with five wins and one tie. Thitsar Arman is in second place with three wins and three ties. Sport and Education FC is in the third place with three wins, two

draws and one loss. Institute of Sports and Physical Education FC won two, drew two and lost two. Gandamar FC won two, drew one and lost three matches.

Zwekapin United FC won one, drew one and lost four matches. YERO FC lost all its matches. Each team in the second round plays six matches. The second round of the KBZ Women's Football League will be played between 9 September and 4 November. The best football club will be awarded Ks15 million, with Ks10 million for second place team and Ks5 million for third place team. The best player will be awarded Ks300,000. ■



Thitsar Arman FC's woman footballers (yellow) is trying to score against Myawady FC's goalkeeper (blue) and defender (red) at the first round of KBZ Bank Women's Football League. **PHOTO: MWL**

DATE	TIME	HOME	AWAY
19.9.2017	4:00	THITSAR ARMAN	GANDAMAR
20.9.2017	4:00	MYAWADY	ZWEKAPIN
21.9.2017	4:00	SPORT&EDUCATION	YERO FC
26.9.2017	4:00	THITSAR ARMAN	ISPE FC
27.9.2017	4:00	SPORT&EDUCATION	GANDAMAR
28.9.2017	4:00	YERO FC	ZWEKAPIN
3.10.2017	4:00	MYAWADY	ISPE FC
4.10.2017	4:00	SPORT&EDUCATION	THITSAR ARMAN
6.10.2017	4:00	ZWEKAPIN	GANDAMAR
10.10.2017	4:00	SPORT&EDUCATION	ISPE FC
11.10.2017	4:00	YERO FC	MYAWADY
12.10.2017	4:00	ZWEKAPIN	THITSAR ARMAN
17.10.2017	4:00	YERO FC	ISPE FC
18.10.2017	4:00	ZWEKAPIN	SPORT&EDUCATION
19.10.2017	4:00	GANDAMAR	MYAWADY
24.10.2017	4:00	ZWEKAPIN	ISPE FC
25.10.2017	4:00	GANDAMAR	YERO FC
26.10.2017	4:00	THITSAR ARMAN	MYAWADY
2.11.2017	4:00	GANDAMAR	ISPE FC
3.11.2017	4:00	THITSAR ARMAN	YERO FC
4.11.2017	4:00	MYAWADY	SPORT&EDUCATION

Round two of women's football league schedule.

2018 AFC Championship qualification to commence

Kyaw Zin Tun

THE 2018 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Championship qualification competitions will begin on 31 October in various countries.

The AFC Championship is an international men's under-19 football competition which will choose 16 teams, including Indonesia, who qualified automatically as the host country for the 2018 event. Of the 47 AFC member associations, 43 teams who entered the

competition were divided into ten groups, Group A to J. Each group is comprised of four teams except for Group A, B and F that are comprised of five teams each.

Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Nepal are included in Group A together with the host Kyrgyzstan. Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives are in Group B together with Tajikistan. Group C includes Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan and host Qatar, while Group D in-

cludes Yemen, Turkmenistan, India and host Saudi Arabia.

Iran, another qualification host country, is in Group E along with Palestine, Jordan and Syria. Host South Korea is in Group F with Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Brunei and Indonesia. Myanmar is included in Group G together with China, the Philippines and the host Cambodia while Viet Nam, Laos, and Chinese Taipei are in Group H together with host Macau. Japan, Thailand,

Singapore and the host Mongolia are in Group I while the host Australia, North Korea, Hong Kong, and Northern Mariana Islands are in Group J.

The teams in each group play with round robin format. All these groups' competitions will be played at their respective host countries between 31 October and 8 November, 2017. Ten winner teams, the host Indonesia and the five best runner-up teams will qualify for the 2018 AFC Championship. ■

Man United's Herrera confident still has key role to play

LONDON — Ander Herrera has made just one Premier League start this season but the Manchester United midfielder has no doubts he remains an important part of manager Jose Mourinho's plans.

The Spaniard earned praise last season for his influence on the side as they won the League Cup and Europa League but has lost his spot to Serbian

midfielder Nemanja Matic this campaign. Overlooked on Sunday despite Paul Pogba's absence through injury, Herrera came on as a 77th minute substitute against Everton and stabilised United's midfield. United then scored three times in the final 10 minutes for a 4-0 win.

"I feel as important as I did last season," the 28-year-old told British me-

dia. "I am a team player and I always say that and if the manager decides to keep me on the bench I will be ready. I said that last season and it is the same now." United's player of the year last season, Herrera said he had no problem watching team mates Matic and Marouane Fellaini from the sidelines. "I can learn from Nemanja and from 'Felly', he

has some abilities that we don't have in midfield. Paul Pogba is our most free midfielder and I can learn from him as well.

"I will try to enjoy every minute I have on the pitch. I want to win titles and feel part of the team and feel important and I really do feel important because the manager makes me feel important." —Reuters ■



Manchester United's Ander Herrera during training. **PHOTO: REUTERS**