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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Union official: the real Rakhine

Union officials explain cause for exodus, ARSA threats, repatriation obstruction

A press conference on developments in Rakhine State including an update on the repatriation effort and clarifications on illegal settlements on the border between Myanmar and Bangladesh was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In opening address at the press conference, U Aung Hla Tun, the Deputy Minister for Information, said the major reasons for the mass exodus of mostly Muslim residents of northern Rakhine State to Bangladesh were fear of arrest, and also threats from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), which attacked border guard outposts in August 2016, sparking a military response. ARSA has been termed a terrorist organisation.

“According to information from reliable sources on the ground, most of these people fled in panic just after the military operation following the terrorist attacks, for fear of being arrested for their involvement or on suspicion. The second reason was threats by ARSA and its supporters. The third reason was many of them were persuaded to flee by the expectations such as chances of resettlement in a third country or better livelihood in the camps in Bangladesh”, said U Aung Hla Tun. Since that time, officials said, concerted efforts at repatriation



The press conference on developments in Rakhine is convened at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar has been ready to receive verified returnees from Bangladesh.

have been made by Myanmar, but delays have occurred due to documentation and misinformation, U Aung Hla Tun said.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe and Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali signed an agreement in Nay

Pyi Taw on 23 November, 2017 that allowed repatriation of displaced residents who could produce proof of residency in Myanmar.

“So far as I understand, ‘proof of residency’ is very liberal. It can be citizenship identity

cards, national registration cards, temporary registration cards, business ownership documents, school attendance certificate as well as the name of the village, etc.”, Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun said.

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‘BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017’

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw debates relocation of IDPs to Yangon

THE 28th-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the second Pyithu Hluttaw was held yesterday. The MPs discussed asterisk-marked questions, the Myanmar Investment Rule and the resettlement of 55 households from Rakhine camps to Yangon in 2017.

Some 18 MPs debated a motion by U Maung Myint from Mingin Constituency to review the union government's decision to relocate 55 Kaman families from three camps in Yanbye, Kyaukp-yu and Pauktaw townships in Rakhine State.

Tatmadaw MP Lt-Col Aung Kyaw Moe said the union government had ignored the final report of the Advisory Commission of Rakhine State (recommendation 25), which noted that the government should try to ensure internally displaced persons (IDPs) return to their places of origin. He said relocating them to Yangon would set a poor example for relocation plans after the closure of IDP camps. He called for an affirmation on whether the relocated Kaman families did so of their



The 28th day of the second Pyithu Hluttaw being convened in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

own choice, and whether they all had national registration cards (NRCs). He said that terrorists can pose as IDPs to participate in relocation programmes, so he advised a thorough inspection and reviews.

Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung responded that the 55 families had moved to Yangon

of their own choice, as a previous batch of Kaman families had already moved to Yangon to receive medical treatment after the communal violence in 2012. He said the Kaman families have already undergone NRC inspection, in accordance with the 1982 National Citizenship Law, and are officially recognised as an ethnic nationality in Myanmar.

He said the Kaman were allowed to move to Yangon, as Article 355 of the Constitution states that citizens have the right to settle and reside in any place within the country.

Deputy Minister U Soe Aung said his ministry had also conducted a discussion meeting, led by Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye, with members of the

Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State representatives from ethnic communities, and civil organisations to review and fulfil the needs of the IDPs in Rakhine State. The Deputy Minister said the motion should be put on record.

U Maung Myint requested the Pyithu Hluttaw to arrive at a decision via electronic voting, and the results were 136 approval votes, 236 turndowns and eight neutral votes. Therefore, Speaker U Win Myint announced that the proposal would be left as a record.

The Pyithu Hluttaw also decided that three nurseries in Hlinethaya Township will have their duties transferred from the Ministry of Construction to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. Speaker U Win Myint also announced further discussions on the Myanmar Investment Rule, reviewed by the Amyotha Hluttaw with no amendments.

The next meeting of the Pyithu Hluttaw will be held on 16 March.—Aye Aye Thant (MNA) ■

Amyotha Hluttaw

Deputy Governor of CBM clarifies loan situation to SMEs, permission for new banks

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) has urged small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to transform themselves, so they can procure loans from private banks, said U Soe Thein, Deputy Governor of CBM.

The CBM is encouraging private banks to develop basic banking services of providing loans, he added. He was responding to questions raised by MP U Kyaw Htwe of Yangon Region Constituency (8) at the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

MP U Kyaw Htwe asked the CBM how it had laid down policies for establishing private banks, if the incumbent government had a plan to give more private banks permission to operate and about the situation of leasing loans from private banks to SMEs in the country.

According to statistics up to December 2017, private banks granted Ks319.228 billion in loans to the agriculture and livestock



The Amyotha Hluttaw being convened in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

breeding sector, making up 1.73 per cent of the total loans granted to the private sector.

SMEs in the country got loans amounting to Ks868.733 billion from private banks in the same period, comprising 4.71 per cent of the total loan given to the private sector.

Regarding permission given to open more private banks, the Deputy Governor said 24 private banks were operating in the country, and the CBM was scrutinising another five banks that had applied for permission to operate.

The number of private

banks currently operating in the country and those that have applied are enough to operate Myanmar's financial services, he added.

Besides this, mobile banking services are becoming popular in Myanmar, and the banking sector is developing, he noted.

“As mobile banking services are effective and can reach areas where no banks have been established, the CBM has suspended granting of permissions to open more private banks now,” said U Soe Thein.—Myo Thu Hein, Hmwe Kyu Zin (Myanmar News Agency) ■

VP U Myint Swe to attend Crans Montana Forum on Africa and South-South Cooperation in Morocco



Vice President U Myint Swe is seen off at Yangon International Airport by Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein, regional ministers and officials yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



The delegation led by the Vice President U Myint Swe welcomed at Mohammed V International Airport in Casablanca, Morocco, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

A Myanmar delegation, led by Vice President U Myint Swe, departed for Morocco by air early yesterday morning to attend the Crans Montana Forum on Africa and South-South Cooperation.

The Crans Montana Forum on Africa and South-South Cooperation is scheduled to be held in Dakhla, Morocco, from 15 to 20 March.

The Vice President was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein, regional ministers and officials.

The Vice President was accompanied by Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Sett Aung.

The delegation led by the Vice President arrived in Casa-

ablanca, Morocco, yesterday afternoon and was welcomed by State Governor of Casablanca Mr Aziz Dadas, Myanmar Ambassador to Morocco U Myint Lwin and other officials along with the troops at Mohammed V International Airport.

The delegation then arrived at Atlas Airport Hotel. —Myanmar News Agency ■

VP U Henry Van Thio attends ceremony to return confiscated land to farmers

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, Chairman of the Central-Committee for Scrutinizing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands, attended a ceremony to return the confiscated land to their owners in Taunggyi yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion at the City Hall in Taunggyi, the Vice President said he was delighted to return the land to their owners.

At the ceremony, of the 1,969 acres abandoned by the Ministry of Defence in Taung-



Vice President U Henry Van Thio visits the Sao San Tun Hospital in Taunggyi yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses the ceremony to return the confiscated land to their owners in Taunggyi yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

gyi District, Shan State, 622.48 acres were returned to 356 farmers, and some 1,347 acres were handed over to the Shan State government.

Since the central committee was formed, the Ministry of Defence has abandoned more than 29,900 acres in Shan State, and of them, more than 12,791 acres were handed over to gov-

ernment departments, while more than 17,127 acres were returned to farmers in the state.

He also urged farmers who received the land to grow high quality paddy to ensure they can find a market for their produce.

Myanmar's rice exports this fiscal year were more than 3 million tonnes, the highest in over 70 years. Myanmar is one of

the region's top rice exporters.

In his address, the Vice President also urged all the departments and institutions responsible to abandon confiscated land.

Following the ceremony, U Henry Van Thio visited Sao San Tun Hospital and spoke to patients receiving treatment there. —Myanmar News Agency ■

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30 Myanmar roofed turtles released in upper Chindwin River

SOME 30 Myanmar roofed turtles, a critically endangered species, have been released into the upper Chindwin River, Kani District, Sagaing Region.

The roofed turtles have been released into the compound that was built inside the Chindwin River in two months through a soft release programme. After two months, the turtles will be released into the Chindwin River.

The Forest Department undertook the Myanmar roofed turtles conservation programme in cooperation with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA).

Myanmar released some 10 roofed turtles into the river in 2007, seven in 2011 and 60 in 2013. Now, it is planning to release some 30 turtles in 2018, said Myo Min Win, who is in charge of the Myanmar roofed turtles conservation camp.

The Myanmar roofed turtle is an endemic species that only survives in Myanmar. Earlier,



PHOTO: WCS

Myanmar roofed turtles were found in the Ayeyawady, Chindwin, Sittaung and Thanlwin rivers. However, they are now found only in the upper Chind-

win river, as rampant fishing has destroyed turtle eggs that get caught in the fishing hook.

According to the Protection of Wildlife and Conservation

of Natural Areas Law (1994), people who catch and smuggle roofed turtles shall be slapped with a seven-year imprisonment term or fined. — Nyi Two

YCDC to accept pandal applications from third week of March

THE Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) will accept applications for the construction of pandals in the Yangon Region from the third week of March, said an official from the Engineering Department (Road and Bridge) of YCDC.

"The YCDC has not decided the amount of deposit for the pandals yet. The YCDC

will grant permission to pandal constructors, and is still considering the size and location for the pandals. We will also announce the amount of fine for violation of regulations," the official added.

The Yangon Region is likely to see a large number of pandals this year, as the government has lifted its ban on pandals.

The Yangon Region government will require that pandals be built by the applicants themselves, and in case of violations, it will impose a fine and cut it from the deposit, said an official from YCDC, who is responsible for Thingyan Festival 2018.

In 2017, there were only 17 big pandals and four medium-sized ones. —GNLM

Farmers receive land compensation for Yangon Myothit project

THE Yangon Region government has started paying compensation to farmers for the new Yangon Myothit project, said Dr. Kyaw Zin Oo, Hluttaw representative from Twantay Township Constituency-1.

Apart from some 15 farmers, most farmers in Twantay Township have agreed to the land compensation. Currently, land compensation is being paid to local farmers. The regional government will compensate farmers for two

acres, even if they have only one acre.

After the payment of compensation, they can be used as urban lands. As a result, land price will increase, and there will be more opportunities for farmers.

"Now, the regional government has started working on land confiscation. The union government is also looking into a few cases for the new project. It is sure to implement the project. We have carried out 11 of

the 17 land confiscation steps," Dr. Kyaw Zin Oo added.

In addition to the Myothit project, which will be implemented on the other side of Yangon, the government will establish special economic zone and deep sea port projects soon. The Japan International Cooperation Agency has drafted all the projects to be completed by 2040. The regional government is developing all the projects on a 17-acre plot as a pilot project. —GNLM

9 million euros allocated for rural electrification project in Shan State (South)

THE government is planning to spend 9 million euros on the electrification project for 253 villages in Shan State (South), said Dr. Soe Soe Ohn, project manager for the electrification project.

The project is part of the National Electrification Plan. The Rural Development Department will develop it in the 2018-2019 fiscal year period with the assistance of German Development Bank. The government will choose villages and invite tenders for the project.

The project aims to install home solar systems in houses. Seven of the nine million euros will be used for the implementation works and the rest for technical assistance.

The department will choose villages in 15 townships. The project will electrify more than 10,000 houses. —GNLM

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Union officials explain cause for exodus, ARSA threats, repatriation obstruction

FROM PAGE-1

"In the middle of February, Bangladesh government sent back over 8,000 forms to us. However, the forms were lacking essential information and all important requirements for biometric verifications. We are doing our best to make this process a success and we sincerely hope Bangladesh government will reciprocate in the same manner."

U Aung Hla Tun added that discussions are ongoing with the UNHCR and UNDP for their involvement in assisting the government in the repatriation process.

U Myint Thu, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said Myanmar has been ready to receive verified returnees from Bangladesh.

U Myint Thu said there have been problems involving prospective returnees and the people illegally living on the border between the two countries. "We have explained intensively to those people that they cannot lawfully occupy and inhabit the area between the boundary line and the 150 feet from it. We also told them that in line with the physical arrangements, Myanmar will repatriate them after verification process. At that time, they said that they would abide by the laws and wanted to return to the places of origin. While Myanmar authorities decide to address their reasonable concerns, they came back with demands with pre-conditions", U Myint Thu said.

"We must stress here that the area occupied by them, under Border Treaty and Law, cannot be inhabited by anyone. More importantly, it will be extremely dangerous as this area is bound to become a foothold of ARSA terrorist", he said.

There are many areas where the international community can play a constructive role in the endeavours in Rakhine State, U Myint Thu said.

"We call for a constructive approach and understanding on the complexity of the challenges in Rakhine State. We also seek support from the international community to help our efforts in finding a durable solution.

The international community can best help us by understanding the prevailing situation and supporting the long-term reconciliation and sustained socio-economic development in Rakhine State", he said.

As part of that effort, Myanmar authorities met with the UNHCR Representative and UN Resident Coordinator in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 February.

The agreement signed on 23 November 2017 between Myanmar and Bangladesh states that "the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar agree that the services of the UNHCR



U Myint Thu, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, talks to media at the news conference in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Sint Sint Aung from Nippon TV.



Htet Naing Zaw from the Irrawaddy.



Dr. Aung Tun Thet, Chief Coordinator of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Aid, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State.



Yuichi from the Nikkei.

could be drawn upon as needed and at the appropriate time".

"We consider that the appropriate time is now to invite the UNHCR and UNDP to get involved in the repatriation and resettlement process of displaced persons as well as in carrying out livelihood development for all communities in Rakhine State", U Myint Thu said.

Dr. Aung Tun Thet, Chief Coordinator of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Aid, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State, reiterated the readiness for repatriation with providing human rights, diversities, tolerance and security for them, adding the UEHRD has built reception centres and accommodation for the returnees.

UEHRD is also working for creating economic opportunities for returnees while working for effective humanitarian aid, holding negotiation for resettlement and for development socio economy and long-lasting peace there.

In the Q and A session, Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun said I would like to request the international media that our country was in successful democratic transition because of the help of the international media.

That's why in the future, I would like to request the international media to support our democratization process and the development of our country.

Asked which charges were filed against detainees in Maungdaw, Police Adjutant-General Police Brig-Gen Win Tun said out of 384 detainees, 248 have been charged under the anti-terrorism law and five are under the arm law. Some were facing for two to three charges.

Regarding the question on some media reports talking about the repatriation that the Myanmar Government verified already that there are 300 persons will the government soon announce that they can go back to the Myanmar side, Director-General U Htay Hlaing of the Immigration Department, replied that the Bangladesh Government had returned forms to us, not the same type we gave them, back in February. It was for 1,673 households consisting of 8,032 people. Up till yesterday, we have verified 93 households consisting of 456 people and we discovered three people with connections to terrorist activities.

Regarding the question on the three hundred people coming back and arrangement for them and when they are

coming back, the Director-General replied that as we've mentioned before, the Bangladesh side gave us forms that did not have fingerprints or mention of former residences or individual photos, they simply give us the family photo so we cannot easily verify them. The Bangladesh side has said they will report back using the forms that both sides have agreed to use, so I hope that answers your question.

We've already sent to the Bangladesh side that these 374 are verified and they can immediately start their repatriation at their own convenience, he added.

Regarding the question on how the government will provide security and safety for returnees who tell the media that they are not willing to go back because they are afraid, U Myint Thu replied that actually they are not refusing to return due to fear. There are high expectations that have lured them into that and there also expectations from ARSA and their supporters. Concerning their security, we have done all we can but we are alone are not responsible to take care of their security.

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UMFCCI, Switzerland delegation discuss IP law at Economic Dialogue

SWISS businessmen have emphasised on the formulation of an intellectual property (IP) law at the Myanmar-Switzerland Economic Dialogue, which was held last Tuesday at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

The dialogue was held with a view to promote foreign investment and trade, according to an announcement made by UMFCCI.

An IP law plays a crucial role in attracting Swiss companies to invest in Myanmar, said Marc Engelhard, Southeast Asia country manager of Economiesuisse,

a Swiss corporate union.

Some 25 companies are working in Myanmar, and more are interested in making investments, said Livia Leu, Switzerland's Ambassador to Myanmar.

These companies are waiting for the development of an IP law, Engelhard maintained.

Officials from UMFCCI explained the drafting of the IP law and other legislations, in cooperation with the government and private sectors.

If Swiss companies invest in Myanmar, the country will get technology-sharing opportunities besides jobs, said U Thaung Tin, Vice President of UMFCCI.

Myanmar businessmen and the Swiss delegation, led by the Switzerland ambassador, discussed matters concerning industrial manufacturing, electricity and power, insurance, food production and healthcare services.

Additionally, they also discussed the signing of the Bilateral Investment Treaty.

This dialogue is the third meeting between Myanmar and Switzerland in five years.

Bilateral trade between Myanmar and Switzerland in the first nine months of this fiscal year was worth US\$14 million. —GNLM

Water supply projects to increase YCDC's capacity to 300 million gallons

WITH the completion of two water supply projects, the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) will be able to supply more than 300 million gallons of water in the region.

The Kokkwa river water pumping project is expected to be completed by 2024, and the La Gun Pyin water supply project will be completed in the 2020-2021 fiscal year, said U Myo Thein, deputy chief of Water and Sanitation Department of YCDC.

"We are implementing these projects to supply sufficient water to the Yangon Region. Also, we are survey-

ing fresh water sources in and around Yangon Region," he added.

The La Gun Pyin water supply project will be able to supply more than 40 million gallons daily to South Dagon, North Dagon, East Dagon, Dagon Seikkan townships, Dawbon and Thilawa Special Economic Zone. Also, the Kokkwa river water pumping project will be able to supply 60 million gallons of water daily to Hlenthaya township, as well as six other townships, such as Ahlon, Kyimyindine, Sanchaung, Kamayut, Bahan, Dagon and Mingalar Taung nyunt.—GNLM

Union officials explain cause for exodus, ARSA threats, repatriation obstruction

FROM PAGE-6

Because it is ARSA who tried to interrupt the process by setting off explosions like landmines while we were starting our repatriation process.

Regarding the questions on responsibility to be taken by the government, Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun said I don't think the international media did enough to make our correct narrative known. Instead of blaming the international media, I'd rather say our media wasn't strong enough to make the proper narrative among the international community.

Chief Coordinator of the UEHRD Dr Aung Tun Thet said there are two things. For security what we can guarantee is that anyone who comes back will have a secure an environment as anywhere else in the country. It's always the perception and therefore when you asked the second question about the narrative, I think there is a three part narrative in this sequence of events.

The first part is the insurrection or the attacks on the outpost by the extremists. The second part of the narrative is the response from the armed forces. The third part is the actions taken after this for resettlement, repatriation, reconciliation, harmony and peace. What is very tragic is that although there is a three part narrative, in the international media you only hear of the second part; the part where the armed forces' response as disproportionate and as robust, these are the acquisitions made. But if you want the whole narrative then I hope emphasis



Khin Yadana from Myanma Alinn daily.



Nyan Hlaing Lynn from Frontier Myanmar.



The journalist from the New York Times.

“We consider that the appropriate time is now to invite the UNHCR and UNDP to get involved in the repatriation and resettlement process”

is given to all the three parts. We are not saying ignore the second part, we are saying please put into consideration the first part which is equally very important for us, as well as the third part where we want to reestablish harmony and reconciliation between the two communities.

So I implore the media to get the whole narrative rather than cherry picking and choosing those that are very

sensational and can be put in headlines but please try to put in more balanced views and that is all we can hope and that is the purpose of this press conference.

Regarding a question on the government's response to rumors of malnutrition of children being linked to slow ethnic cleansing, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Health and Sports Prof. Dr. Thet Khaing Win said that the accusations on Muslim children lacked sound data and the ministry is conducting nutritional statistics survey and micro nutrient survey for children in the whole nation. He said that Rakhine State is not the only area with low nutrition levels for children.

He said they have been giving prioritized nutrition programs to Rakhine State such as supplying food with help from the World Food Programme (WFP), supplementary programs, vitamin programs, and micro-nutrient programs. He

also said that malnutrition is caused by contagious diseases, infestations, and infections which would be the responsibility of the concerned military to provide vaccinations for. He said all the ministries concerned are working together to address this situation and they are also providing surveys for the returnees.

Regarding the question on the government's response to western media labeling the Rakhine situation as ethnic cleansing and genocide, Dr. Aung Tun Thet stated there is no ethnic cleansing and it is a serious accusation.

Also present at the press conference were permanent secretaries and heads of departments of the ministries, diplomats and local and foreign journalists.—Myanmar News Agency (*Full Text of the speeches delivered by Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun and Permanent Secretary U Min Thu are available at www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com*)

History, not the UN, will be final judge on Rakhine

THE terrorist attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) in Rakhine State in August 2017 abruptly changed the state of affairs in northern Rakhine and made restoration of law and order a priority, which led to the displacement of people internally in Rakhine State and across the border.

Since then, there have been misleading, presumptuous and uninformed accusations against Myanmar.

The latest of these accusations is that authorities were bulldozing the ground to build military installations on sites that once were the homes of members of the Muslim community in northern Rakhine.

In reality, the authorities are preparing to construct new structures for returnees as part of the repatriation process.

“What the government does should not be viewed with a preconceived mind and doubtful eyes”, U Htin Lynn, the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the UN in Geneva, told the 37th Session of the Human Rights Council currently meeting in Geneva.

Instead of criticism, the Permanent Representative said he hoped for support.

History, not the United Nations, will be the ultimate judge of what has occurred in Rakhine State.

happening in northern Rakhine.

History, not the United Nations, will be the ultimate judge of what has occurred in Rakhine State.

With regard to alleged human rights violations, the government shall never condone impunity and action will be taken against any perpetrators in accordance with the law if there is concrete evidence. Myanmar strongly objects the use of such words as ethnic cleansing and genocide in reference to the situation in Rakhine State. Myanmar would welcome the international community to play a constructive role in relation to Rakhine State and sought their understanding on the complexity and their support for the government efforts in finding a durable solution. Taking non-constructive measures would be counterproductive, as it will further polarize the communities and undermine the efforts for the long-term objective of reconciliation.

Many ethnic groups, including Rakhine, Daing-net, Mro, Thet, Mramagyi and those belonging to Buddhist, Muslim and Hindu faiths have remained in their villages, as witnessed by members of the diplomatic corps and UN agencies their recent visits.

It is unreasonable to assert that the Myanmar leadership, whose mission has human rights at its core, remains indifferent to the allegations of grave human rights violations. The leadership and the government shall never tolerate such crimes. Myanmar is ready to take action when there is clear evidence.

Myanmar is facing the most challenging time in its history of transition, but the Union Government will turn these challenges into opportunities for national reconciliation and peace leading to further strengthening of democracy. The Myanmar government has expressed its belief that the success of democratic transition will overcome these challenges.

Mogok is a city in the Pyin Oo Lwin District of the Mandalay Region and located 22.92 latitude and 96.51 longitudes and situated at elevation 1162 meters above sea level. Mogok is also renowned as a Ruby Land of Myanmar and is a home to Myanmar, Shan, Palaung, Lisu, Chin, Kokant, Gurkhas Pa-O and other ethnic races.

Mogok History

According to the records, Gemstone trading has been documented by Western travellers in Mogok since the 16th century A.D. But it is believed that gemstone production and trade began earlier, around 6th century AD.

In 1597, King Nuha-Thura Maha Dhama-Yaza annexed the Mogok and Kyatpyin regions as a way gaining direct access to rubies and other gemstones. Up to the 19th century the mines were under the control of Myanmar Kings.

Nga Mauk, an enormous ruby with great color

According to the historical records, an enormous ruby with great color and clarity was discovered in Mogok by a villager named Nga Mauk, who the ruby was eventually named for. The ruby had a total weight of around 80 carats and was presented to the King.

Unfortunately, the Nga Mauk ruby disappeared without a trace after the annexation of Myanmar by the British in 1885.

At that time, Upper Myanmar was took control of the Mogok Stone Tract region and the mines were leased to a British firm (Burma Ruby Mines Ltd.) from 1889 to 1931.

Geology of Gemstone Deposits in Mogok

Mogok stone consists primarily of high-grade metamorphic schists and gneisses; granite intrusive, including gem-bearing pegmatites; peridot-bearing ultramafic rocks; sapphire-bearing syenite and skarn; and ruby- and spinel-bearing metamorphic marble.

At present, it is roughly estimated that there are 1000-1200 gemstone mining operations in the Mogok Stone Tract. These ranges from individual artisanal miners, to cooperatives, independent miners, semi-mechanized operations to large-scale mining companies working with modern excavators, drill-blasting and exploration techniques.

Traditional mining techniques include twin-lon, lebin, hmyadwin and lud-win. Lud-win, for example, involves recovering gem-bearing byon from karstic limestone caves and fissures



Glorious Mogok City to celebrate Festival of Founding 800th Anniversary

By Maung Tha (Archaeology)

which can be sources of rich concentrations of gemstones. Today, on primary host rock and opencast mining of secondary deposits are the most commonly encountered methods.

History of Ruby Land

Authour U Thein Lwin outlines the history of the founding of Mogok in his book titled 'Padamyar Myay (Ruby Land)' in details.

The story goes that three lost hunters discovered rubies at the base of a collapsed mountain in 1217. The hunters returned to their hometown of Momeik with the red-meat coloured gems and offered them to the saopha who then ordered

his guards to set up a village on the site of modern-day Mogok. Mogok is believed to have been built almost 800 years that different ethnic groups have lived in the area peacefully. Besides ethnic culture, there are also their customs, food, flowers and plants which will become the tourist destination of the region.

According to the Myanmar Encyclopedia, it is believed that Mogok rubies have been used in royal jewelry for over 1000 years. But much like the whereabouts of said royal jewels, concrete evidence to corroborate a change in the timeline of the first discovery of gems at Mogok is scarce.

Livelihood of Locals

The livelihood of local residents mainly depends on the mining, trading, cutting and polishing of gemstones-works. Other remarkable feature of the city is the Htar Pwe Gem Market in which sellers from Mogok and nearby towns gather to sell rough gemstones.

The Land of Ruby

Mogok is renowned in the world as 'the Land of Ruby' and located 200 km north of Mandalay in Myanmar. Moreover Mogok has a fairly temperate climate year-round is situated in a valley and surrounded by a large number of mountains which are situated in a valley

surrounded by a large number of mountains.

Mogok has been famous since ancient times for its gemstones, especially ruby and sapphire, but semi-precious stones such as lapis lazuli, garnet, moonstone, peridot and chrysoberyl are also found. The gems are found in alluvial marble gravels by means of panning, tunneling and digging pits by hand. The gravels derive from the metamorphosed limestone (marbles) of the Mogok metamorphic belt.

Mogok, the original source of ruby

According to the report, 90% of rubies come from Mogok

and only in terms of quality Mogok rubies are best compared to other places. The red stones from there are prized for their purity and hue. The mountainous Mogok area is noted as the original source of ruby including the world's finest "pigeon's blood" rubies and the world's most beautiful sapphires in "royal" blue.

Mogok is well-known as the 'ruby land' due to higher quality rubies and other gems such as sapphires, garnet and moonstones. It is believed that the gems trading in Mogok has been dated at 800 years old.

Grand Festival of Founding Mogok

The grand festival to mark the 800th anniversary of founding 'the land of Mogok city' is under preparations.

The festival will be held with the aims of promoting the market of Gems and Jewellery as well as tourism industries of the city, maintaining traditions and culture of the region, and informing the history of Mogok city and creating more job employment opportunities for the local people.

The Mogok 800th anniversary is planned to be held for 3 days from March 29th to 31st at Mhone Kwin, Mogok City. This festival is not merely just for fun but to promote tourism and trading.

Many preparatory and organizing committees for the founding of Mogok City 800th anniversary are being formed across the country including Yangon, Mandalay and Mogok respectively.

Moreover the Tourism Federation, Myanmar Gems and Jewelry Entrepreneurs Association, charity groups and artists will join the meetings which can be able to celebrate the festival on a grand scale.

With the agreement of the members, the committee decided to use 60% of the fund for the festival and the remaining 40% for the community centre to help Mogok residents.

Mogok is the heart of one of the world's foremost ruby and gem mining areas and there are hundreds of working mines scattered around the regions.

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung

Six Leading Myanmar Businesses Invite Collaboration on Gender Equality on International Women's Day

Six leading Myanmar companies came together to affirm their commitment to achieving equality in their workplaces.

FMI, City Mart, KBZ Group, Parami Energy, Aya Bank and Shwe Taung Group have formed a new coalition to push for women's empowerment in the workplace, saying women's equal economic participation is key to Myanmar's economy.

As a way of acknowledging International Women's Day on 8th March, the Business Coalition for Gender Equality (BCGE), in conjunction with the Australia-Myanmar Chamber of Commerce, hosted a cocktail evening which shone the spotlight on workplace gender equality.

The inaugural Chairwomen of the Coalition is Daw Zarchi Tin, Non- Executive Director of Yoma Bank, Director of Strategic Development at First Myanmar Investment Co., Ltd, and a mentor for Myanmar Women's Mentoring Network.

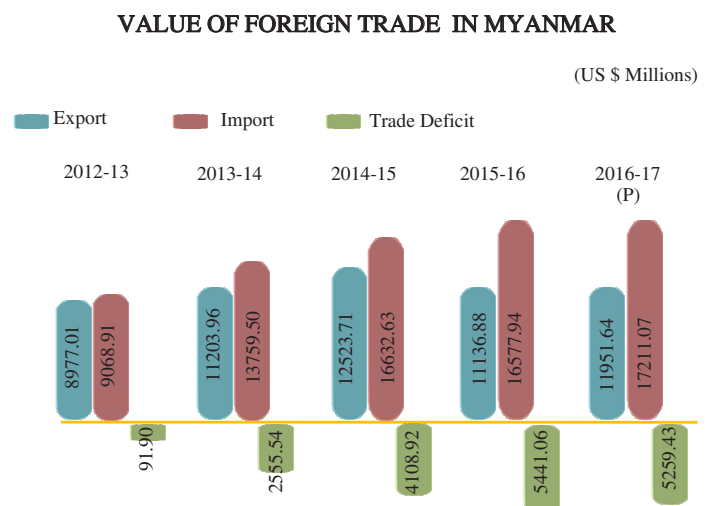
Daw Zarchi Tin said “Although it could be said that I have enough on my plate, when presented with the opportunity to be involved in this initiative, I accepted because I really believe the issue of gender equality affects all of us – and that business, along with government and civil society, has a key role to play in reducing inequalities, tackling poverty, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

“With good champions, business leaders with passion, the sharing of best practices and working in partnership with government, civil society and many others, I know we will gather momentum and make an impact”.

The Coalition is being formed with the support of the Australian Government's Investing in Women initiative. Australia's Ambassador to Myanmar, His Excellency Mr. Nicholas Coppel, attended BCGE's International Women's Day event.

“The Australian government has been very supportive of this initiative. The Coalition very much appreciates that, and we look forward to a strong collaboration moving forward,” Daw Zarchi Tin said.

“Forming the Business Coalition for Gender Equality is only the first step,” she said. “We look forward to many more dynamic, forward thinking businesses joining the business coalition and working alongside us to advance gender equality in Myanmar”.—GNLM



Source: Customs Department
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

External trade exceeds expected amount in first week of March

The value of Myanmar's trade with foreign countries through the sea route and border gates reached the expected target of US\$30.19 billion as of 2 March of the current fiscal year (FY).

Last year, its international trade value registered the highest record. Foreign trade was expected to hit some \$30 billion by the end of this FY, said U Yan Naing Tun, director-general of the commerce ministry.

From 1 April to 2 March this FY, exports were worth \$13.2 bil-

lion, while imports were valued at \$16.97 billion, registering a deficit of \$3.76 billion. The figure is much higher than the expected deficit amount of \$1 billion.

The trade deficit was \$91.9 million in the 2012-2013 FY, \$2.5 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, \$4.9 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, \$5.4 billion in the 2015-2016 FY and more than \$5.5 billion in the 2016-2017 FY, respectively, according to statistics released by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO).

Agro products such as rice,

various types of pulses, corn and others; animal products; fisheries; forest products; minerals; finished industrial goods; and other export products are shipped to foreign countries, while capital goods such as auto parts vehicles, machines, steel, airplane parts; raw materials such as petroleum-based products and plastic raw materials; and consumer products, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and palm oil are imported into the country. — Mon Mon

Antique palm-leaf manuscripts at a monastery in Sagaing Region

Manuscripts over 150 years and made from old palm leaf are kept in iron containers at the Tagundaing monastery in Indaw Township, Sagaing Region.

The manuscripts were written in 1222 according to the Myanmar Buddhist calendar, which makes the manuscripts 157 years old. It was in 1861 according to the western calendar.

They are kept in a five ft. long iron container which is also more than 150 years old. The

containers are kept in a book-case at the monastery.

"These manuscripts are the writings that were submitted to kings more than a century ago. That's why we keep them carefully and systematically in the containers," said U Wilar Thagga, abbot of the Tagundaing monastery.

There used to be seven villages in the region where the monastery is located, now two of them are gone. Village headmen

from these seven villages had to offer presents to Mya Taung Prince, the daughter of King Boe Daw Min Tayar.

It seems that members of the royal court of successive kings would visit the monastery. The monastery allows people to see these palm leaf manuscripts.

Local visitors and tourists can go and visit the monastery, located just eight miles from Indaw Town, to see the manuscripts.—Myanmar Digital News

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Italian Ambassador

CHAIRMAN of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Commission for Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Thura U Shwe Mann

received Ambassador of Italy to Myanmar Pier Giorgio Aliberti at the Hluttaw building (I-1) at some 9.40 a.m. yesterday. Dur-

ing the meeting, they cordially discussed legal issues, peace and development and the democratisation processes—MNA



Thura U Shwe Mann holds talks with Ambassador of Italy to Myanmar Pier Giorgio Aliberti. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Kun Myat receives technical cooperation programme manager of IPU



Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Kun Myat receives Norah Babic, technical cooperation programme manager of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

PYITHU Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Kun Myat received Norah Babic, technical cooperation programme manager of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in his office room in the Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, the aid required for the development of the Hluttaw, capacity development of the representatives and staff from the Hluttaw, as well as technical assistance,

were discussed.

Chairman of International Relations, Inter-parliamentary Friendship and Cooperation Committee Dr Than Win, member of Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Daw Aye Aye Mu, as well as director-generals and officials from the offices of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw, attended the meeting.—Myanmar News Agency



Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and technical cooperation program manager Norah Babic of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) hold talks in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung receives technical cooperation program manager of IPU

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung received technical cooperation program manager Norah Babic of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) yesterday afternoon at the Amyotha Hluttaw build-

ing (J) in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed assistance from IPU for UNDP/IPU and the involvement of the Myanmar Hluttaw in the IPU.—Myanmar News Agency

Philippines' Duterte moves to quit International Criminal Court

MANILA — President Rodrigo Duterte said on Wednesday he was pulling the Philippines out of the treaty underpinning the International Criminal Court, which is examining his deadly drug war.

The outspoken leader, who is accused of stoking the killing of drug suspects with inflammatory statements, has fiercely pushed back since the Philippines became the first southeast Asian nation put under “preliminary examination” by the court’s prosecutors. The ICC announced last month it was launching a study of the killings, which Philippine police put at 4,000 but rights groups say is actually triple that number.

Officially quitting the court requires a year’s notice and experts say pulling out does not preclude an investigation of the deaths, which have drawn international concern.

“It is apparent that the ICC is being utilised as a political tool against the Philippines,” Duterte said in a statement, adding the ICC examination was “unduly and maliciously created”.

“I therefore declare and forthwith give notice... that the Philippines is withdrawing its ratification of the Rome Statute effective immediately,” he added.

Opened in 2002, the ICC is the world’s only permanent war crimes court and aims to prosecute the worst abuses when national courts are unable or unwilling.



Duterte is infuriated the ICC has opened a preliminary investigation into his deadly drug war. PHOTO: AFP

The Philippines, under previous President Benigno Aquino, ratified in 2011 the Rome Statute which underpins the ICC, giving the tribunal authority to investigate crimes on its soil.

Rights advocates and attorneys said quitting the court would not eliminate the possibility of a case before it.

“The Philippines’ intention to walk away from the International Criminal Court is unfortunate, but it doesn’t shut the door on the prosecutor’s scrutiny of the government’s horrendous track record of grave abuses,” said Param-Preet Singh of Human Rights Watch.

“Unprecedented, outrageous attacks”

Celeste Mallari, a professor at the Philippines College of Law, said the court can “investigate any acts that have been done from the time the Philippines became a member of the ICC... until one year after we gave our notice of withdrawal”.

However, should the Philippines fully withdraw from the court it would not be the first to do so, as Burundi became the first ever nation to leave in October 2017.

In a wave of unprecedented

defections, other African nations — Zambia, South Africa, Kenya and Gambia — have also made moves to quit or expressed interest to withdraw as they accused the court of being biased against Africans.

Russia in 2016 dealt the ICC another blow by withdrawing its signature from the Rome Statute.

Duterte, who is buoyed by high popularity ratings in the Philippines, has fiercely defended the drug war as a battle to bring safety to the nation’s 100 million people.

On Wednesday he repeated that defence, citing “baseless,

unprecedented and outrageous attacks on his person as well my administration”.

“The acts allegedly committed by me are neither genocide nor war crimes. The deaths occurring in the process of legitimate police operations lacked the intent to kill,” he added.

But even as early as 13 October, 2016, when Duterte had only been in office less than four months, the ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said in a statement that she was “deeply concerned” over reports of extra-judicial killings of over 3,000 alleged drug users and pushers.

Adding pressure on Manila, in February, the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva raised the country’s human rights record, with Icelandic Foreign Minister Gudlaugur Thor Thordarson calling on the Philippines to accept the visit of a UN Special Rapporteur. Philippine officials had initially said in February that the country was ready to cooperate but asked for fairness.

Duterte’s spokesman Harry Roque also said they would refuse a visit by one such rapporteur Agnes Callamard, who had previously been pressing to investigate the killings.

But Roque has also said the ICC has no jurisdiction over the case because the tribunal was intended as a “court of last resort” and the Philippine courts were fully functioning.—AFP ■

Erdogan hopes Afrin will be ‘totally encircled’ by evening, not seized: presidency

ANKARA — President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hopes Turkish forces will have completely encircled Afrin by Wednesday evening, a presidential source said, clarifying his earlier comments in a speech indicating the Kurdish-held Syrian city would fall by then. “In the president’s speech the sentence ‘I hope that Afrin will have completely fallen by the evening’ should be understood as ‘the encirclement will have been completed by the evening,’” said a presidential source in a message to media, asking not to be named.

Erdogan had earlier stated in a speech at the presidential palace in Ankara that Afrin would fall by the evening to the Turkish army and Syrian allies, a claim rejected by the Syrian Kurds. “We have got a little bit closer to Afrin. I hope that Afrin will, God willing, have completely fallen by the evening,” Erdogan said in the speech. Afrin city is the key target in Turkey’s seven-week operation Olive Branch launched on 20 January and aimed at ousting the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) from the Afrin region of northern Syria. A YPG

spokesman accused Erdogan of “daydreaming” in the speech. The Turkish army and its Syrian allies, who had been looking to complete the encirclement in a two-pronged movement from the east and the west, had Afrin city surrounded on Monday, the army said on Tuesday. “The routes used to the east by the terrorists to enter and go out of the region will be closed today or tomorrow, God willing,” Erdogan added in the speech.

Turkey regards the YPG as a terror group and a branch of a Kurdish militant movement

in Turkey that has waged an insurgency for decades. But the YPG has been a key ally of the United States in the fight against jihadists in Syria and Turkey’s operation against it has raised tensions with Ankara’s NATO allies in Washington and Europe. Erdogan has repeatedly said that after taking Afrin, Turkey’s offensive would expand to key border towns controlled by the YPG right up to the Iraqi frontier. These would include Kurdish-held towns such as Manbij where US forces have a presence, raising the risk of a confrontation

with Turkey’s NATO ally. “We will cleanse Manbij and then in the same way will cleanse east of the Euphrates right up to the Iraqi border,” he said. Erdogan also raised the prospect of a cross-border operation in northern Iraq where the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has waged a decades long struggle against the Turkish army, has its rear bases. “We are surveying the terror nests in northern Iraq at every opportunity,” said Erdogan. “Soon we will bring these down on the heads of the terrorists in the strongest way.”—AFP ■

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar**For Home Box Office, Inc.****By their Attorneys Lall & Sethi**

D-17, South Extension Part-II,

New Delhi - 110049, India

E-mail: info@indialp.comDated 15th March 2018**TRADEMARK CAUTION**

RD Tuna Canners Limited., a company incorporated and under the laws of Papua New Guinea and having its registered office at Portion 1004, Siar, North Coast Road, PO Box 2113, Madang, Madang Province, Papua New Guinea is the owner and proprietor of the following Trademark:

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Daw Khin Myo Myo Aye, H.G.P**For RD Tuna Canners Limited.,****C/o Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.,**

Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),
Corner of Mahabandoola Road and Thein Phyu Road,
Botahtaung Township, Yangon.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.Dated 15th March 2018kmma@kcyangon.com

The new inter-continental ballistic missile Sarmat is one of new weapon systems Vladimir Putin mentioned in his State of the Nation address. **PHOTO: TASS**



Russia's new generation ICBM Sarmat to enter duty after old missile's life cycle expires

MOSCOW — The Russian armed forces will get the new generation inter-continental ballistic missile Sarmat by the moment the life cycle of the current missile Voyevoda is over; Deputy Defence Minister Yuri Bo-

risov told the Russian army daily Krasnaya Zvezda in an interview. "There can be no doubts we will have the new missile Sarmat by the time Voyevoda's service life is over. It is expected that in contrast to its pre-

decessors this missile will be armed with hypersonic warheads, which will make it far harder for defence systems to intercept it," Borisov said. Russian President Vladimir Putin in his message to the Federal As-

sembly on 1 March briefed the nation on some latest achievements in research into new weapon systems unparalleled in the world. The new inter-continental ballistic missile Sarmat is one of them.—Tass ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V GH ROUGH HABIT V. CH 1050

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V GH ROUGH HABIT V. CH 1050 are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-4 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY****AGENT FOR: M/S CA SHIPPING PTE LTD.**

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0092N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0092N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY****AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of BSW where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MAENAM-1 VOY. NO. ()

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Singapore launches public hearings on 'fake news'

SINGAPORE—Singapore on Wednesday launched public hearings on possible legislation to combat “fake news” which critics said could be used to curtail free speech.

A 10-member parliamentary committee was set up in January to tackle false online information which the government says could threaten national security. The wealthy city-state is among the countries looking to introduce legislation to rein in fake news but critics have cautioned this could be used to

exert further control over the media. Some 164 people have written to the committee, including academics, technology and social media companies such as Facebook and Google, and civil activists to give their inputs. The committee will call 79 individuals and organisations to testify over eight days after which it is expected to make recommendations to lawmakers within months.

“Deliberate online falsehoods are a serious global problem... It is a complex problem, affecting



Singapore already has tough laws in place to prevent the incitement of racial and religious discord, as well as legislation covering libel, public protests and dissent. PHOTO: AFP

us in many different ways,” said committee chairman and parliamentary deputy speaker Charles Chong at the opening of the hearing. Several academics were called to testify on

the first day, including cyber-conflict expert Michael Raska, who noted that cyber attacks and false information online could have the same political impact as a military strike.

“How does Singapore deter (these attacks) and respond militarily? These attacks can happen far away where a conventional response is not viable,” he said. Singapore already has tough laws in place to prevent the incitement of racial and religious discord, as well as legislation covering libel, public protests and dissent.

The possibility of more regulation in what is seen as a curb on free speech has some big technology companies worried.

But the Singapore gov-

ernment has said curbing what it calls online falsehoods is necessary and denied it was aimed at curtailing free speech.

“In fact, one of the purposes of dealing with deliberate online falsehoods is to protect free speech and enhance free speech,” Law and Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam, who is on the committee, said during Wednesday’s hearing.

Singapore is ranked 151 out of 180 in the World Press Freedom Index by non-profit group Reporters Without Borders.—AFP ■

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Myanmar Investment Commission Notification No. 5/2018

14th Waxing of Taboung 1379 ME
(28 February, 2018)

Stipulation of the Definition of the Commercial Livestock Farming

In exercise of the power conferred under section 100 (b) of the Myanmar Investment Law, the Myanmar Investment Commission stipulate the definition of “the Commercial Livestock Farming”, which is prescribed in investment activities to obtain the approval of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation under Myanmar Investment Commission Notification 15/ 2017 section 1 (d), means “the Commercial Livestock Farming with investment capital amount over 5 million or MMk 6 billion.”

(Kyaw Win)
Chairman

MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER

1. MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WILL SELL TEAK & HARDWOOD ROUND LOGS AND SAWN TIMBERS BY OPEN TENDERS IN US DOLLARS. PARTICULARS OF THE OPEN TENDER SALES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- (a) DATE & TIME - (23-3-2018) (09:00)A.M
(26-3-2018) (12:00)Noon
- (b) COMMODITIES & VOLUME - TEAK LOGS ABOUT (1537) TONS
- TEAK CONVERSION ABOUT(361)TONS
HARDWOOD LOGS (2017-2018 EXTRACTION YEAR)
- (c) PLACE - PYINKADO , KANYIN , THINWIN , THATYA ,
INGYIN ABOUT(8700)TONS
- TAW WIN HALL, GYOGONE , INSEIN
TOWNSHIP, YANGON.

2. FOR FURTHER DETAILED INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE HEAD OFFICE AND ALSO VISIT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WEBSITE (www.myanmatimber.com.mm).
Contacts:Office Ph:01528771,
E-mail:marketing1ppy@gmail.com

OPEN TENDER COMMITTEE
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

Public Tendering Announcement

Population Services International Myanmar (PSI/ Myanmar)is a non-profit, non-political ,non-governmental and non- religious organization. PSI/ Myanmar has been implementing health programs throughout the country for the past twenty years. Now PSI/ Myanmar plans to hire vehicles include drivers for six months contract to work more smoothly of PSI projects.

- 1) Yangon (Downtown/ Trip) - (4) to (7) Seat – (13) Nos
Light Truck – (3) Nos
- 2) Mandalay (Downtown/ Trip) - (4) to (7) Seat– (8) Nos
Light Truck– (2) Nos

Tender closing date : 22.03.18 (4:00 PM)

Interested vendors/ suppliers can collected detailed information at PSI/ Myanmar-Procurement Unit, No.16, West Shwe Gone Dine 4th Street, Bahan Township, Yangon. If any query, contact Saw Wai Htun Aung, Ph: 01 375854~ 58 Ext 509
Email: swaung @psimyanmar.org

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Stephen Hawking, British scientist who became cultural icon, dies at 76

LONDON — Renowned British physicist Stephen Hawking, whose mental genius and physical disability made him a household name and inspiration across the globe, has died at age 76, his family said on Wednesday.

Propelled to superstardom by his 1988 book “A Brief History of Time”, which became an unlikely worldwide bestseller, Hawking dedicated his life to unlocking the secrets of the Universe.

His genius and wit won over fans from far beyond the rarified world of astrophysics, earning comparisons with Albert Einstein and Sir Isaac Newton.

Hawking died peacefully at his home in the British university city of Cambridge in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

“We are deeply saddened that our beloved father passed away today,” professor Hawking’s children, Lucy, Robert, and Tim said in a statement carried by Britain’s Press Association news agency.

“He was a great scientist and an extraordinary man whose work and legacy will live on for many years.”

Hawking defied predictions he would only live for a few years after developing a form of motor neurone disease in his early 20s.

The illness gradually robbed him of mobility, leaving him confined to a wheelchair, almost completely paralysed and unable to speak except through his



Hawking defied predictions he would only live for a few years after developing a form of motor neurone disease in his early 20s. **PHOTO: AFP**

trademark voice synthesiser.

“His courage and persistence with his brilliance and humour inspired people across the world,” his family said.

“He once said, ‘It would not be much of a universe if it wasn’t home to the people you love.’ We will miss him forever.”

A titan of science

Born on January 8, 1942 — 300 years to the day after the death of the father of modern science, Galileo Galilei — Stephen William Hawking became one of the world’s most well-regarded scientists and entered the pantheon of science titans.

His death was announced on the 139th anniversary of the birth of Albert Einstein.

Inside the shell of his increasingly useless body was a

razor-sharp mind, with an enduring fascination with the mysteries of black holes.

His work focused on bringing together relativity — the nature of space and time — and quantum theory — how the smallest particles behave — to explain the creation of the Universe and how it is governed.

“My goal is simple,” he once said. “It is complete understanding of the universe, why it is as it is and why it exists at all.”

But he was also a beloved figure in popular culture, with cameos in “Star Trek: The Next Generation” and “The Simpsons”, while his voice appeared in Pink Floyd songs.

Tributes began pouring in from scientists around the world, lauding him as an inspiration.

American astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson tweeted his

condolences, with a characteristically cosmological reference.

“His passing has left an intellectual vacuum in his wake. But it’s not empty. Think of it as a kind of vacuum energy permeating the fabric of spacetime that defies measure,” the scientist said.

Stephen Toope, vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge, called Hawking “a unique individual who will be remembered with warmth and affection not only in Cambridge but all over the world.”

NASA issued its own Twitter eulogy, publishing a video of the scientist grinning as he soared into weightlessness on a zero gravity flight at the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, escaping his wheelchair for a brief period of time.

“His theories unlocked a universe of possibilities that we & the world are exploring. May you keep flying like superman in microgravity, as you said to astronauts on @Space_Station in 2014.”

His death even drew mourning from celebrities not normally associated with the intricacies of astrophysics.

American singer Katy Perry said there was “a big black hole in my heart”.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Hawking had “made the world a better place, “ calling his death “anguishing”.

‘Not afraid of death’

Hawking’s first marriage to Jane Wilde in 1965 gave him three children and was immortalized in the 2014 film “The Theory of Everything”.

The couple split after 25 years and he married his former nurse, Elaine Mason, but the union broke down amid allegations, denied by him, he was being abused.

Hawking became one of the youngest fellows of Britain’s most prestigious scientific body, the Royal Society, at the age of 32.

In 1979 he was appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University — a post previously held by Newton — where he had moved from Oxford University to study theoretical astronomy and cosmology.

Hawking was an outspoken commentator on life back on earth, voicing his disapproval in recent years of both the election of Donald Trump in the United States, and Britain’s vote to leave the European Union.

He was unafraid of ruffling the feathers of the religious, dismissing the concept of an afterlife in a 2011 Guardian interview.

“I have lived with the prospect of an early death for the last 49 years. I’m not afraid of death, but I’m in no hurry to die. I have so much I want to do first,” he said at the time.—AFP ■

Netflix pays its queen less than her consort on ‘The Crown’

LOS ANGELES — She’s not known for histrionics, but Queen Elizabeth II would surely struggle to maintain her famous poise if she knew the actress playing her on “The Crown” earned less than the man portraying her husband.

Producers admitted on Tuesday that Matt Smith, Prince Philip on the hit Netflix drama, negotiated a better deal than Claire Foy because of his perceived higher profile.

They did not reveal either salary—Foy’s was put at \$40,000

an episode by Variety last year — but told a panel event in Jerusalem that Smith’s 2010-2013 starring role on the BBC’s “Doctor Who” had been the decisive factor. The explanation has not appeased critics who argued that the discrepancy should only have shown up in the first season, before Foy was garlanded with awards and acclaim.

Foy, 33, was already making a name for herself in British costume drama, with roles in “Upstairs Downstairs” and “Wolf Hall,” when she was tapped to

play the queen. The part has earned her a host of award season nominations, including at the BAFTAs, Golden Globes, Emmys and Screen Actors Guild awards. She has won two SAGs and a Globe. Suzanne Mackie, one of the show’s producers, told the Jerusalem audience the discrepancy was being resolved for the third season but that will not benefit Foy. “The Crown,” which costs \$7 million an episode to produce, is replacing its leads for the start of filming in July, with Olivia Colman stepping in as the queen



Producers admit that Claire Foy (L), who plays Queen Elizabeth II in the Netflix drama “The Crown,” earns less than Matt Smith (R) who portrays her consort. **PHOTO: AFP**

and an actor to replace Smith not yet announced.

Helena Bonham-Carter will replace Vanessa Kirby as Elizabeth’s sister, the late Princess Margaret.

The series comes from the

pen of Peter Morgan, who first lifted the veil on the private world of Elizabeth II in “The Queen” (2006), which was directed by Stephen Frears and earned Helen Mirren an Oscar in the title role.—AFP ■

Glenstone to become one of America's biggest private art museums

WASHINGTON — Glenstone, the museum of modern and contemporary art just outside Washington, announced on Monday a massive expansion set to open October 4 that would make it one of America's largest such private institutions.

Tucked away on more than 230 acres (93 hectares) of rolling meadows and woodlands in Potomac, Maryland, Glenstone first opened to the public in 2006 with funding from billionaire Mitch Rales and his wife Emily.

The former fox hunting estate's natural setting is meant to encourage contemplation for visitors, who can marvel at the art and architecture for free.

Dubbed the Pavilions, the new 204,000-square-foot (18,950-square-metre) building designed by architecture firm Thomas Phifer and Partners features a ring of gallery rooms arranged around a large central water court.

An extra 100 acres of land-

scaping by PWP Landscape Architecture include two recently installed outdoor sculptures.

It's a dramatic expansion from the original, 30,000-square-foot building that increases gallery space by nearly six times and can boost visitor capacity from 25,000 to 100,000 per year, though the number of daily visitors will be limited to ensure a more intimate experience with the art.

Nestled in the landscape, the Pavilions looks like a traditional hill town rising out of the earth.

"Throughout this transformation, we've maintained a single mission: to create a seamless integration of art, architecture and landscape and make it available free of charge to all who wish to visit," Glenstone founder Mitch Rales said in a statement.

Visitors can get a sneak peek at the ongoing construction in May — the exact opening date is unknown for now — with a show featuring work by Paris-born French American artist Louise



Glenstone's expansion would make it one of the biggest private art museums in the United States. **PHOTO: AFP**

Bourgeois, known for her giant metal spiders that have spun their webs across the globe.

- 'Experience unlike any other' -

That show will take place in the original building — the Gallery. The entire museum will be closed in September before the grand reopening the following month. At the Pavilions, 13 different spaces will present works

from the Rales collection. While some of the rooms will show single-artist installations, others will include temporary exhibitions of pieces by various artists.

Among those set to participate in the inaugural installations are Bourgeois, Michael Heizer, Roni Horn, On Kawara, Brice Marden, Lygia Pape, Martin Puryear and Charles Ray.

Most of the work was created

after World War II and spans a wide range of media, from paintings and photographic prints to sculptures and installations.

"We've worked carefully to create a visitor experience unlike any other, providing each visitor with an unhurried, contemplative engagement with the artworks," said Emily Wei Rales, the museum's co-founder and director. —AFP ■

Malaysia's honey hunters defy angry bees to harvest treetop treasure

ULU MUDA (Malaysia) — On a moonless night deep in the Malaysian rainforest, two men perched precariously on high branches use a smoking torch to draw thousands of bees from a treetop hive, braving the angry swarm to collect their prized honey.

The honey hunters, as they are known, are rag-tag groups of villagers who head to remote corners of the jungle every year in search of the rare nectar, hidden in towering tualang trees.

"This is the real thing," said Abdul Samad Ahmad, 60, who has been harvesting honey in this way for more than 20 years.

"There's a lot of nutrition in this honey. You can make it into medicine, for your cough or cold."

Like New Zealand's manuka honey, also hailed for its supposed medicinal qualities, Malaysian tualang honey is expensive, fetching 150 ringgit (\$38) a kilo — a huge amount for people from poor, rural com-

munities.

But the generations-old practice faces myriad threats, from environmental destruction and falling bee numbers to a lack of interest among the young.

The die-hard hunters remain optimistic — for them, there is no greater buzz than climbing trees 250 feet (75 metres) tall to gather honey made by bees gorged on sweet nectar from exotic jungle flowers.

- 'Sting until your body is swollen' -

The honey-collecting season in northern Malaysia's Greater Ulu Muda forest runs from February to April, when giant honey bees arrive from other parts of Asia to make their hives in the trees that stretch high above the rainforest canopy.

On a recent trip, Abdul Samad and six others travelled far into the forest, boarding two small boats and sailing across a lake to reach a tualang. They nailed branches up its trunk a few feet apart to create a makeshift ladder, replacing old ones from the previous year.—AFP ■



Traditional Malaysian honey hunter Zaini Abdul Hamid fixes a ladder to harvest bee nests atop a giant tree in northern Malaysia. **PHOTO: AFP**

Ice bridge in Argentine glacier collapses, no witnesses

BUENOS AIRES — An ice bridge that was part of a glacier at the tip of Argentina has collapsed in the dead of night, thwarting thousands of tourists who had hoped to watch the spectacle.

The natural arch in Los Glaciares National Park in the Patagonia region came crashing down overnight Sunday during a storm while the park was closed, park authorities said on Monday.

An arch forms regularly in a glacier called Perito Moreno as

the water flow from a canal eats away at the ice.

For the first time in 16 years, the bridge fell in 2004 and since then it has come down every four years of so.

"It is always spectacular. The thing is, this time more water accumulated than in the last three or four times," Luciano Bernacchi, director of an ice museum called Glaciarium, told TN television. The Patagonia glacier is a UNESCO world heritage site.—AFP ■



A chunk of ice falls from a famous bridge that formed in a glacier at the tip of Argentina. **PHOTO: AFP**

Dzeko strikes to take Roma into Champions League last eight

ROME — Roma reached the Champions League quarter-finals for the first time in 10 years as Edin Dzeko edged them past Shakhtar Donetsk 1-0 at the Stadio Olimpico on Tuesday and allowed the Italians to win the tie on away goals.

The Bosnian striker's 52nd-minute goal proved enough after a 2-1 first-leg loss in Ukraine, with 10-man Shakhtar failing to find the late strike they needed after Ivan Ordets was sent off late on.

Cengiz Under's goal in the first leg last month ultimately proved crucial for Roma, but Dzeko was the hero on the night and also proved instrumental in Shakhtar defender Ordets being shown a straight red card with 12 minutes left.

That sending-off led to tensions spilling over, with Shakhtar's Facundo Ferreyra picking up a booking for shoving a ballboy over an advertising board.

Eusebio Di Francesco's side are the second Italian team to advance to the quarter-finals after Juventus, with the draw for the last eight taking place on Friday.

"The standing ovation is not for me but for everyone, we are deservedly in the quarter-finals," said Dzeko of the applause which accompanied him off the pitch.

"We managed to do some-



Edin Dzeko celebrates after scoring the goal that took Roma through to the Champions League quarter-finals at the expense of Shakhtar Donetsk. **PHOTO: AFP**

thing Roma hadn't in 10 years, so going forward to play against the best makes us all very proud.

"We are among the eight best sides in Europe."

Roma did not concede a goal at home in the group stage and hammered Chelsea 3-0 at the Stadio Olimpico, so the home fans in the crowd of 47,693 would have been confident their side could get the job done.

The Ukrainians dominated

early possession though, and there was a scare for the hosts when Alessandro Florenzi nearly nodded a free-kick into his own net. Ferreyra then came close after Federico Fazio lost the ball just outside his own box, before Roma struck seven minutes into the second half.

Kevin Strootman sent Dzeko through as Shakhtar tried without success to play the offside trap, and the Bosnian forward

prodded a shot through the legs of goalkeeper Andriy Pyatov and into the net for his fourth goal in the Champions League this season.

Dzeko was then brought down by Ordets who got a straight red card for his troubles, making Shakhtar's task that bit harder.

Roma pounce on mistake

"We knew that sooner or lat-

er they would make a mistake and we'd pounce on it," said Roma coach Di Francesco.

"If we face any opponent with this attitude and determination, we can go far."

"Roma made the most of a single moment," said Shakhtar coach Paulo Fonseca.

"Dzeko of course was a key player, but apart from his goal they didn't have a chance, we had possession. If we had finished off the chances we had in the first leg the match would already have been over."

Roma held on, and after Italy's shock failure to qualify for the World Cup, their progress to the last eight along with Juventus is a boost for the country.

There have not been two Italian clubs in the quarter-finals of the Champions League since 2006/07, when Roma joined eventual winners AC Milan in the last eight. There will also be at least three Italian coaches in the quarter-finals — Di Francesco, Massimiliano Allegri of Juventus and Vincenzo Montella of Sevilla.

Di Francesco added: "I spoke with Montella a few days ago and we said we'd meet in the final."

Antonio Conte could make that four with his Chelsea side facing Barcelona on Wednesday.—AFP ■

Shan United loses to Filipino club with penalty shot

MYANMAR-BASED Shan United FC was defeated yesterday by Ceres Negros, a team from the Philippines, by a score of 0-1 in AFC Cup Group F play at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon. A penalty shot by Ceres Negros star Bienvenido Maranon accounted for all the scoring in yesterday's match. The win preserved Ceres Negros's unbeaten streak in the tourney.

Both teams played very aggressively from the start with 4-3-2-1 lineups employed by each

club. Shan had many golden opportunities to score with their stable play nad slow pass across the match, but failed to convert. At the 14-minute mark, Ceres Negros's striker Maranon made no mistake in the penalty shoot to give the visitor team the lead.

Shan was better in the second half, but again wasted too many chances to equalise the score.

Strikers from the visiting team continued to make strong kicks toward the goal, but all

were saved by Shan's keeper Phone Thitsar Min.

The winning team received yellow cards -- to Mike Ott at 90 minutes mark and Manuel Ott at 27 minutes mark respectively, showing they were eager to score more goals.

Nevertheless a single goal was enough for Ceres to take all three points and retain their spot atop Group F, while Shan's dream of winning the AFC Cup were seriously blunted with just one win.—KyawZin Lin ■

AFC "B" Coaching Certificate Course launched in Yangon

WITH the collaboration of Myanmar Football Federation and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) AFC "B" Coaching Certificate Course was launched at the meeting hall of MFF yesterday.

Official U Tun Tun Aung and other responsible officials along with 24 attendees attended the meeting. Malaysian Coach from AFC, Mr. Gopal Krishnan A S Ramasamy is being conducting the courses according to an official from MFF. The course was started from 13 March and will be concluded on 1 April, he added. The AFC 'B' Coaching Certificate is for coaches who already have

the 'C' Certificate. The course is designed to educate coaches in the advanced techniques and skills of the game, and to help them develop a better understanding of individual or groups of players, tactics and the mental requirements of the game. The course contains more than 107 hours of theoretical and practical contents. The examination focuses on the coaches' practical coaching abilities, knowledge and understanding of the theoretical contents of the game, in addition to a brief presentation of a dissertation to the class.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■