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Thursday, 5 July 2018



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, right, meets with Mrs. Eva Hager, the newly accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Austria to Myanmar. Mrs. Hager was one of several dignitaries who met with the State Counsellor yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor receives ambassadors from UK, Austria, Chief of the Nepalese Army

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, met separately with two recently installed ambassadors and the chief of the Nepalese Army yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. At 10 am, she received H.E. Mr. Daniel Patrick Brendon Chugg, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

An hour later, she received H.E. Mrs. Eva Hager, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Austria to Myanmar.

Later in the afternoon, the State Counsellor received H.E. General Rajendra Chhetri, Chief

of Army Staff of the Nepalese Armed Forces of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting with the British Ambassador and the Austrian Ambassador, they discussed and exchanged views on matters pertaining to promotion

of bilateral relations and mutual cooperation.

At the meeting with H.E. General Rajendra Chhetri, Chief of Army Staff of the Nepalese Armed Forces of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, they discussed and exchanged views on all-round bilateral cooperation.—MNA ■

Day two of JMC-U 17th meeting continues in Yangon

THE 17th meeting of the Union-level Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U) continued for the second day at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) in Yangon yesterday morning.

The meeting was attended by JMC-U Chairman Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and Tatmadaw representatives Lt-Gen Aye Win, Lt-Gen Than Tun Oo, Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dway, Brig-Gen (Retired) Kyaw Zan Myint, JMC-U Vice Chairman (1) Saw Isaac Po, heads of ethnic armed organizations, JMC-U Vice Chairman (2) U Sai Myo Thant, civilian representatives, members of JMC-S and JMC-L, and members of the technical assistance office.

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Foreign and domestic press registration for the third session of Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong

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Committees continue meetings for Union Peace Conference

WORKING committees continued their coordination meetings for the Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong in Nay Pyi Taw's Myanmar International Convention Centre-II yesterday.

The working committees for the political, economic, social, security, and land and natural

environment sectors discussed topics to be submitted at the third session of the Union Peace Conference.

Economic Sector Working Committee

U Hla Maung Shwe said that 11 of the 37 topics compiled last

week have been submitted for inclusion in Paragraph (1) of the Union Agreement.

"We're aiming to have 10 economic sector points included. So far, we have decided to submit 15 points to the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) and they will decide

how many of the points will be submitted at the conference," said U Hla Maung Shwe.

Progress made so far

Director-General U Zaw Htay gave some insights into the working committee meetings.

"We made decisions such as

submitting two topics for the political sector in the last UPDJC. One of them being the rights of ethnic minorities and the second being democratic human rights and gender equality."

He added that the discussions were a bit heated and

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Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives DPRK Ambassador

U T Khun Myat, Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw, received Mr Jong Ho Bom, Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to Myanmar, at the Pyithu Hluttaw hall of the Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw

at 1pm yesterday.

Also present on the occasion were U Tun Tun Hein, the Deputy Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw, and officials from the Hluttaw Office.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat meets with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Ambassador Mr Jong Ho Bom in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Foreign and domestic press registration for the third session of Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong

THE third session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong will take place at the Myanmar International Convention Centre – II in Nay Pyi Taw from 11 to 16 July.

Foreign and domestic journalists attending the conference can register at the Ministry of Information's website www.moi.gov.mm by clicking on Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong (Third Session)

and filling out the MEDIA REGISTRATION FORM. Registration ends at 4pm on 9 July. Press passes can then be picked up at the Ministry of Information on 10 July between 10am and 4pm.

Foreign journalists are required to apply for a visa at the nearest embassy. For further questions, contact the News and Periodicals Enterprise by phone at 067-3412125 or 067-3412126. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Day two of JMC-U 17th meeting continues in Yangon

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The meeting, which commenced on 3 July, will focus on the implementation of the ceasefire agreement between the 16th and the 17th JMC-U meetings, duties and obligations of the JMC-S and JMC-L working procedures, and negotiations regarding some controversial wordings for the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

Besides, the meeting will discuss matters regard-

ing JMC's 2018-2019 financial fund, implementation status of the Local Civilians Monitoring (LCM) groups, donation of ten Volvo cars from China and allocation status, Technical Need Assessment (TNA) by the United Nations, making peace excursions to Norway, Nepal and China, holding civilian meeting of 4th JMC in Papun, and implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and Terms of Reference (ToR). —Zaw Gyi ■

Dr. Win Myat Aye attends 8th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

VICE Chairman of the National Natural Disaster Management Committee Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye is attending the 8th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 3 to 6 July.

At the conference, the union minister discussed Myanmar's policies and strategies at the regional and state level to reduce damage and losses caused by natural disasters, how Myanmar authorities are providing public education on natural disasters and training on assessing risk factors. The union minister also spoke about disaster management, the formation of an emergency response team and contributing towards a disaster-resilient and well-prepared public community, implementing projects that will reduce damage and risks from disasters, how international cooperation is essential in building disaster-resilient buildings, and the need to promote cooperation

with partner organisations in disaster management programmes and projects.

The union minister met with Japan-based Asian Disaster Reduction Center's (ADRC's) Executive Director Mr. Koji Suzuki on 3 July. He met separately with United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) Senior Programme Officer Dr. Shirish Ravan and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Representative for Asia Ms. Kundhavi Kadiresan yesterday.

During these meetings, the union minister openly discussed potential cooperation in Myanmar's disaster management operations, potential support in technology and capacity building initiatives, permission for acquiring satellite images through the Disaster Charter during natural disasters, using space technology in emergency responses, granting scholarships for GIS and Remote Sensing trainings in India and China, opening a

disaster-related geographical mapping class in Nay Pyi Taw in January 2019, launching a state-owned satellite with technological support from India, collaborating with the FAO to provide assistance in regions with food shortages, assistance in agricultural technology that can withstand climate change, and collaboration in Myanmar's implementation of risk reduction strategies.

The Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Management facilitates national dialogue pertaining to progress made on implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 and the challenges faced by each nation; promulgating the Ulaanbaatar Declaration for promoting multinational efforts in disaster risk reduction; and formulating a list of prioritised objectives in implementing the Sendai Framework for 2018-2020 in Asia. —Myanmar News Agency ■



National Natural Disaster Management Committee Vice Chairman Dr Win Myat Aye addresses the 8th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. **PHOTO: MNA**

Demand should be in accordance with rules and disciplines

Now is a time when political consciousness is emerging, with some wavering. Our government complies with demands as much as possible. Like the parents who acquiesce to their children and take action against them if they reach beyond disciplines, our government will take action against those who are undisciplined and take more opportunities than they should. Demand your needs in accordance with rules and disciplines. We will comply with them in accordance with the rules.

(Excerpt from the speech made by Bogyoke Aung San in Natmauk on 25 March 1947)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, right, shakes hands with British Ambassador Mr. Daniel Patrick Brendon Chugg in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, third from right, welcomes the Nepalese delegation led by General Rajendra Chhetri, third from left, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Committees continue meetings for Union Peace Conference

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there was general disagreement when discussing the rights of ethnic minorities. “We couldn’t agree on what constitutes ethnic minority rights, so that topic won’t be included in the upcoming peace conference,” said U Zaw Htay.

“What we’ve discovered is that we need to sort out the federal framework at the peace conference. They have not been clearly defined yet, which means there are no clear basic democratic values either. Truthfully, we hadn’t planned on discussing democratic values yet, so that issue and pre-existing citizen rights were not thoroughly discussed,” he said.

“That being the case, we tried to reach mutual agreement on gender equality concerning the political sector. The other sectors didn’t have much debate. The economic



A working committee meets yesterday in preparation for the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

and land sectors will come up with as many topics as they can. The social sector has six points agreed to be presented at the peace conference and will continue discussing (this

more in the next three days.”

“We’re aiming to have at least 10 points in the social sector because we predict the political sector will only agree on a few points,” said U Zaw Htay.

Attending the meetings yesterday were members of the UPDJC’s secretary group, joint committee members, working committee members from government, Hluttaw, and

Tatmadaw groups, and other officials.

The working committees’ coordination meeting will continue today and tomorrow.— Myanmar News Agency ■

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ACTING CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe,
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR**Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORSZaw Min,
zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com
Win Ko Ko Aung,
kowink2aung@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,
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**May Thet Hnin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

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Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
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Over 100 human trafficking cases reported within six months

By Nyein Nyein

OVER 100 cases of human trafficking were reported from January to June this year, and most of them were forced marriages with men in China, according to anti-human trafficking police force in Nay Pyi Taw.

In the six-month period, about 294 offenders and 176 victims were involved in a total of

107 human trafficking cases. In transnational human trafficking cases, most women victims were sold into forced marriages with men in China. In some cases, victims were coerced to work as marine workers in Thailand.

China topped the list with 84 cases. Twenty-one cases were reported in Myanmar, and occurred within the country, while two cases were reported in Thai-

land. The anti-human trafficking unit rescued 143 victims, while 33 victims including six children are still missing.

Among the cases investigated by the police, 30 cases were from Yangon Region, 27 from Shan State, 17

from Mandalay Region, with the remaining cases registered in other states and regions.

In 2017, Myanmar reported a total of 225 human-trafficking cases, in which 644 traffickers were arrested, while 360 victims including children were being trafficked. ■



Ancient silver coins found in Minhla

HUNDREDS of ancient silver coins dating back to the mid-18th century were discovered by chance yesterday, when a villager was cutting the grass in the compound of his house in Samboke Village Minhla Township, Bago Region.

Following a tipoff, township admin-

istrator U Aung Zaw Htut, together with local police officials, went to the location where a villager, identified as U Win Oo, unearthed the ancient silver coins kept in a small glazed earthen jar while he was mowing the grass.

A total of 380 ancient silver coins are believed to have been cast during

the period from 1840 to 1893 and used in India.

The village administrator informed the Deputy Director of the Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library for Bago Region Daw Aye Nilar about the discovery of the coins.—MDN/Pauk Sa (IPRD) ■



Outstanding Myanmar students pose for a photo at Yangon International airport before departure for Malaysia to attend the YSS-ASEAN Youth Student Volunteer programme. **PHOTO: MNA**

Outstanding Myanmar students leave for Malaysia to attend YSS-ASEAN

A total of 20 outstanding Myanmar students left for Malaysia on 3rd July to attend the YSS-ASEAN Youth Student Volunteer programme, which will be held in Sarawak State in Malaysia from 4 to 22 July.

The students will participate in activities such as education, healthcare, social

environment, agriculture and biology, IT, economic development, preventing natural disasters, together with 18 Chinese students and 180 youth from nine ASEAN countries.

YSS/ Student Volunteers Foundation is wholly owned by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia.—MNA ■

Rohu fish suppliers affected by Saudi Arabia's fish import suspension

By May Thet Hnin

BEING the main export market for rohu fish, Saudi Arabia's suspension of fish imports from Myanmar, beginning from April, has affected rohu fish suppliers, due to the declining price of their trade.

The export and local markets are having a low business, although about 600,000 viss (one viss equals 3.6 lb) of rohu fish are being currently supplied to various fish depot markets every day.

"The supply is stable but the demand is low. The main reason is because Saudi Arabia has temporarily suspended its fish imports from Myanmar. Sometimes, we have to reduce the price so that whatever fish is left, they would not get spoilt," said U Hsan Htike, the owner of Man Thit fish depot.

Recently, the price of rohu fish has declined by about Ks 100 than in the past, depending on the size of the fish.

"This year, some of the fish suppliers did not receive any profit. Therefore, they cannot

afford to run their business next year. This is because 90 per cent of fish suppliers are running their business with loans taken. At present, they cannot repay back 20 per cent of their loans because of the prevailing situation. Fish suppliers could face many challenges if this kind of situation re-occurs. We wish Saudi Arabia to end its fish import suspension by the end of this year," he added.

Myanmar keeps only 25 per cent of rohu fish for local consumption and exports the remaining 75 per cent to Saudi Arabia, UAE, as well as Bangladesh. Myanmar exports farmed fish to Saudi Arabia, accounting for 30 per cent of its farm-raised fish exports and 40 per cent of rohu exports.

At the beginning of 2017, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) detected white-tail disease (WTD) in freshwater prawns. Therefore, Saudi Arabia decided to temporarily suspend its fish and prawn imports from Myanmar, according to the OIE announcement. Saudi Arabia has



Fishmongers stand by idly as they try to sell rohu fish at the Sanpya fish market in Yangon. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

an ongoing suspension of aquaculture products from Viet Nam, Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, giving the WTD as an excuse, although there are no more cases reported.

There have been several discussions between the Ministry of Commerce and officials from Saudi Arabia, after the country suspended its fish imports from Myanmar. As member countries of the World Trade Organization, representatives from both sides have already met with each other. During the meeting, officials from Saudi Arabia stated that they will come to check the fishing hatchery areas, fish depots

and frozen rooms in Myanmar, although the visits have not been materialized yet.

"Saudi Arabia is still suspending fish imports, although there are no more disease cases. We have requested Saudi Arabia that we will not export prawns, if they have any suspicion on prawns, but that Myanmar should be allowed to continue with its fish exports. We know that an inspection team will visit Myanmar, but we don't know when," said U Win Kyaing, General Secretary of the Myanmar Fishery Federation.

Rohu fish hatcheries are found mostly in Twantay, De-

daye, Maubin, Kyaiklat, Pantawan, Nyaungdon, Hlegu, Htantabin, Taikkyi, Letpadan, Bago, Kayan townships.

Currently, local suppliers do not have plans to breed another species of fish in place of rohu fish, said U Hsan Htike.

"It's a little bit difficult to breed another species. Depending on its size, it took us at least a year to breed rohu fish," he added.

There are 480,000 acres of fish and prawn breeding farms across the country, and Myanmar has earned over US\$717 million through its fishery products last fiscal year. ■

WB's VP to discuss partnership projects with Myanmar

By Nyein Nyein

THE World Bank's Vice President for East Asia and Pacific Ms. Victoria Kwakwa will visit Myanmar from 8 to 10 July, according to a press release issued by the World Bank.

The purpose of the visit is to discuss World Bank's partnership with Myanmar during meetings with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, high-ranking government officials, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Discussions will dwell on matters related to development projects jointly implemented between the World Bank and Myanmar, programming of re-



Ms. Victoria Kwakwa, World Bank's Vice President for East Asia and Pacific. **PHOTO: WB**

sources from the World Bank in investments enhancing social inclusion and fostering peace within Myanmar.

In addition, the World Bank

remains engaged in supporting Myanmar's significant transition, including ways to develop the economy throughout the whole nation, including the Rakhine State.

Since its re-engagement in Myanmar in 2012, the World Bank has provided US\$2 billion in soft financing to support economic transition and peace building. Investments have focused particularly on improving school enrollment and learning outcomes, strengthening basic health services, extending rural electrification, increasing agricultural productivity and enhancing management of public resources. ■

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Union Minister Dr Aung Thu receives Austrian Ambassador

UNION Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr. Aung Thu received Austrian Ambassador to Myanmar Mrs. Eva Hager at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting,

they discussed promoting the cordial and bilateral relations between the two countries, and implementation processes for cooperation in fishery sectors.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu holds talks with Austrian Ambassador Mrs. Eva Hager in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Attorney General receives Advisor to DFID

UNION Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo received Mr. Josh Bird, Advisor to Department for International Development (DFID), at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed strategic performances of the Union Attorney

General Office, cooperation processes of DFID and UNDP for rule of law processes, future agendas, and DFID's fields for cooperation at the priority works of Attorney General Office and performances of Rule of Law Centres and reforming the justice sector.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo meets with the delegation led by Advisor to DFID in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Invitation for press conference on Nay Pyi Taw film studio

1. A modern film studio is being constructed in Nay Pyi Taw to promote Myanmar's film industry, create entertainment for Nay Pyi Taw's residents, and serve as an attraction for visitors to Nay Pyi Taw.
2. Accordingly, a press conference will be held to explain about Nay Pyi Taw's accessible location, smooth transportation, and sites for filming. Potential investors and interested media personnel are invited to attend the press conference:
 - a. Date : 6-7-2018 (Friday)
 - b. Time : 10:00 am
 - c. Place : Movie Promotion Sub-department, Information and Public Relations Department, Yangon

Ministry of Information

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman receives Russian Ambassador to Myanmar

ANTI-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi received Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr. Nikolay Listopadov at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed the three implementation processes, including educating, preventing and taking action against corruption by the Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission, important duties of anti-corruption commission's respective departments, along with instructions for civil servants about anti-corruption.



Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi meets with Russian Ambassador Dr. Nikolay Listopadov in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

They also focused on bilateral cooperation between the two countries to combat corruption.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Workshop on Political Communication held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Workshop on Political Communication, jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Information and German-based international cooperation agency Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Ltd. (KAS), was opened at the Meeting Hall of the Information Ministry in Nay Pyi Taw at 9 am on Wednesday.

Deputy Information Minister U Aung Hla Tun and Authorized Representative of KAS in Myanmar Dr. Norbert Eschborn spoke at the opening ceremony of the workshop.

In his opening remarks, the Deputy Minister said the significance of today's workshop, jointly organized by the Ministry of Information and KAS Ltd., is all the participants are officers from the MoI and the topic involves matters concerning public and media relations.

"Our country is facing huge challenges in our transition to democracy, mainly mounting pressure from the international community. The international community always relies on the

reports by influential international media when adopting important policies on a country."

"Therefore, it is high time we tried to understand the nature of the media very well and to engage with them systematically," he said, calling on the participants to make the most of the knowledge gained from at the workshop in the interest of the country.

A total of 19 officers from the Ministry of Information are taking part in the two-day workshop.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun delivers the speech at the Workshop on Political Communication in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Death toll from ferry accident in Indonesia reaches 34

JAKARTA — The death toll from a ferry capsizing Tuesday in central Indonesia rose to 34 on Wednesday, with a surprising new total of 155 people being found alive, local officials said.

The ferry was earlier thought to be carrying only 139 people when it capsized off the southern coast of Sulawesi Island, based on the ship's manifest, and officials earlier in the day said 69 people were rescued, 29 were found dead and 41 others were unaccounted for.

It was not immediately clear if there are still missing

persons.

"Most of the passengers were not wearing life jackets when they jumped into the water amid high waves, heavy rain and limited rescue efforts," National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said.

The ferry ran aground about 300 meters off the coast.

Earlier, Indonesia's director general of sea transportation, Agus Purnomo, said the ferry's captain grounded the ship on purpose in shallow waters in an attempt to save the lives of those on board, as the ship appeared

about to sink.

The sea disaster comes just weeks after a passenger boat sank on Lake Toba in the northern part of Indonesia's Sumatra Island.

That boat is thought to have been carrying as many as 188 people when it sank on June 18, but only 21 survived and three bodies were found, with the rest remaining unaccounted for.

Maritime accidents occur with some frequency in Indonesia, mostly due to safety problems such as overcapacity and bad maintenance of ships and boats.—Kyodo News ■



Photo taken 3 July, 2018, shows passenger boat KM Lestari Maju sinking in waters off Selayar Island in South Sulawesi Province in central Indonesia. It was not immediately clear how many passengers were on board or how many casualties there were. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

S Korea, DPRK start working-level talks over forestry cooperation

SEOUL — South Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Wednesday started working-level talks over forestry cooperation, Seoul's unification ministry said.

Delegations from the two sides launched their dialogue at 10 a.m. local time (0100 GMT) at Peace House, a South Korean building in the border village of Panmunjom.

Ryu Kwang-soo, vice minister of the Korea Forest Service who led the South Korean delegation, told local reporters before heading to the dialogue venue, that he would discuss with his DPRK counterpart issues on an overall forestry cooperation.

The two sides were expected



Delegations of South Korea (R) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) attend the working-level talks over forestry cooperation at the Peace House, a South Korean building in the border village of Panmunjom, July 4, 2018. South Korea and the DPRK on Wednesday started the working-level talks over forestry cooperation, the Unification Ministry said. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

to agree to conduct a joint study on the DPRK's forest situations.

Seoul and Pyongyang held working-level talks last week about cooperation in railway and road, agreeing to conduct joint studies first on the DPRK's railway and road situations.

After their first inter-Korean summit meeting on April 27, South Korean President Moon Jae-in and top DPRK leader Kim Jong Un agreed to increase inter-Korean cooperation exchange in various fields.

South Korea's male and female basketball teams headed to Pyongyang Tuesday for friendly matches with the DPRK players from Wednesday to Thursday.—Xinhua ■

Media watchdog alarmed by Indian journalist killings, hate speech

NEW DELHI (India) — Media watchdog Reporters without Borders expressed alarm on Wednesday about India, with seven journalists killed in the past 18 months and a sharp rise in online abuse and harassment.

"In 2017, the deaths of at least three journalists killed in connection with their work were recorded and a fourth case is still under investigation. In 2018, four journalists were killed in the country in the first six months," RSF said.

"In addition, there has been a sharp increase in online abuse and harassment, and in the self-censorship which looms over the environment in which journalists carry out their work in 'the world's largest democracy'."

RSF issued an "Incident Re-

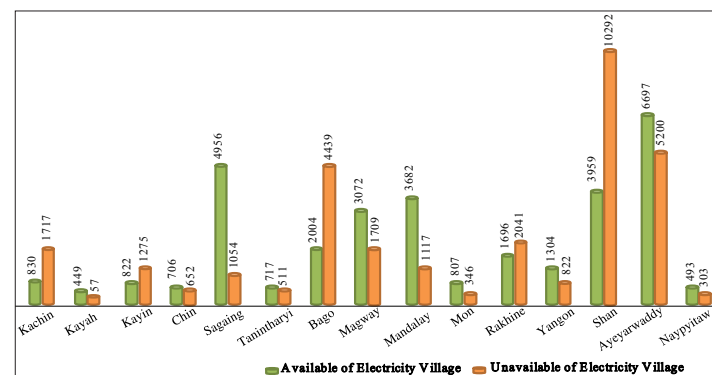
port", an alert to warn about the deterioration of press freedom, the first time the organisation has done so for any country. It also warned India that it risked falling even further down its World Press Freedom Index from its current place of 138th out of 180. The latest murder of a journalist was that of Shujaat Bukhari, editor of an English language daily in the disputed region of Kashmir, gunned down outside the paper's office on June 14.

More than 40 journalists have been killed in India since 1992, according to the US-based Committee to Protect Journalists. Reporters in India often face harassment and intimidation by police, politicians, bureaucrats and criminal gangs. RSF also took the Indian government to

task over online hate campaigns and harassment by "armies of trolls" associated with Hindu nationalists loyal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It cited the case of journalist Rana Ayyub being subjected to a "hellish nightmare" of online hate messages, sexist insults, faked pornographic videos and calls for her to be gang-raped and murdered.

Ayyub's recent book "Gujarat Files: Anatomy of a Cover Up" alleges government complicity in anti-Muslim violence during the 2002 riots in the western state of Gujarat when Modi was its chief minister. Ayyub's ordeal has also earned the Indian government criticism from the United Nations special rapporteurs.—AFP ■



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Women's rights are human rights

THE standard of a country rises up when it ensures the rights of women. Achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is the unfinished business of our time, and perhaps the greatest human rights challenge in our world.

When celebrating Women's Day, women need to emphasize not just women's rights. Additionally, consider how to use these rights for the benefit of all. If women have rights and opportunities, others will more easily reap benefits that were once denied.

But this will take work. For women demanding rights, they need to show their enthusiasm to perform their duties energetically. Demanding rights without taking responsibility and accountability, which are wholly left to the government, does not comply with democratic standards.

It is also important for women to look back at what we have accomplished. We need to do things to better ourselves as well as others, both physically and mentally.

We need to view these hardships as opportunities to show our abilities to overcome challenges. We must be proud that we have the chance to do our best while facing weaknesses.

It is important that there must be regular progress year by year. As long as we live, we will have opportunities to improve.

At the same time, Myanmar's women and girls, who make up more than half of the country's total population, should use the democratic practices of mutual respect, understanding and trust of each other so that they can fully apply their abilities and skills when participating in building a peaceful democratic society.

The inclusion of women in all aspects of society strengthens and improves the stability of the country.

If we look back on our history, we are weak in moral strength and still face hard times in the financial sector. There are many areas in which we have to improve.

We believe that the sheer power of our country's women — more than half the population — will contribute to economic

development.

Investments in the success of women are investments that pay off, and educated women have the power to change the world.

We need to view these hardships as opportunities to show our abilities to overcome challenges. We must be proud that we have the chance to do our best while facing weaknesses.

For this we must support each other, regardless of race or religion. Our country's women need to stand up for each other and believe in their capabilities. More importantly, we need to bring about change by teaching our children, the next generation, to love and respect the women in their lives. Only then will the day come when the hand that rocks the cradle will truly be able to rule the world.

Sustainable societies through cooperation

K. Zin Thit (Mann Tetkatho)

THE Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a fine collection of 17 global goals set by the United Nations for member countries to attain and realize by 2030.

Among the SDGs objectives, Goal 12 is on 'Responsible Consumption and Production'. In other words, it is to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

The targets of Goal 12 include using eco-friendly production methods and reducing the amount of waste. By 2030, national recycling rates should increase, as measured in tons of material recycled. Furthermore, companies should adopt sustainable practices and publish sustainability reports.

It is to be fully noted that to attain and realize the SDGs, entities such as governments, institutions, banks, corporates are exerting all-out efforts. Countries across the globe have accepted the aims and objectives of SDGs, with International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) spearheading it.

It is amazing to witness that since the inception of ICA in 1895, the alliance has endured for 123 years, embracing continuous development along with 107 countries, covering 308 cooperatives, councils and unions, and including 2.6 million cooperative societies formed with 1.2 billion people from this planet.

International Co-operative Day

International Co-operative Day is an annual celebration of the co-operative movement and has been observed on the first Saturday in July since 1923 by the ICA. It is being recognized by the UN and celebrated across the world.

Myanmar is a member of ICA, and the country has celebrated International Co-operative Day annually since 1995 at the central level. The Department of Cooperative has geared itself up to celebrate ICA

Day festival on Saturday, 7 July 2018, at office number 16 in Nay Pyi Taw, with displays such as photo gallery and sales of coop products.

It is obvious that Myanmar cooperative societies are moving ahead towards sustainable development similar to other cooperatives societies across the world. As of 31 May 2018, members numbering 4.25 million from 40,554 cooperative societies are shouldering tasks for the socio-economic enhancement and sustainable development.

The formation of cooperative society is not based on individual performance, but through the collective endeavor and undertaking in a particular area for a common aspiration, by choosing the board of executive directors of their own, with their mind concentrated on member participation.

When looking into the sustainability of Myanmar cooperative societies, it is recorded that the first formation started in 1905 and endured many decades for over 113 years.

It is unfortunate to say that since 1989, successive governments have failed to provide cash and aid assistance towards Myanmar cooperative societies. Despite the setbacks, some development tasks were able to be realized, such as that of Ks534.473 billion cultivation loan for the agriculture sector; that of Ks135.195 billion purchasing loan for agricultural machineries and appliances through installment repayment system; that of Ks26.632 billion for agricultural mechanization development, which is tantamount to uplifting the agriculture development scheme of the future.

Highlights

'Sustainable development for the people' at the grassroots level could be seen in the case when Ks666.66 billion loan have been spread out to 3.22 million members of agriculture and animal breeding cooperative societies, including street and village

hawkers, as of May 2018, without any discrimination.

Moreover, it is to take note that Myanmar cooperative societies have been lending hand in cash and kind towards rural commodity production forces in a bid to solve and to redress the difficulties in the rural areas. Whatever the situation may be, cooperative societies exist-

ing over 100 years on Myanmar soil could be uplifted into vitality through the slogan of ICA in during this year and in the coming years ahead.

SDG Goal 12 is to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns as follows.

Sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resources and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all. Its implementation helps to achieve overall development plans, reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competitiveness and reduce poverty.

Sustainable consumption and production aims at 'doing more and better with less,' increasing net welfare gains from economic activities by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the whole lifecycle, while increasing quality of life. It involves different stakeholders, including businesses,

consumers, policy makers, researchers, scientists, retailers, media and development cooperation agencies, among others.

It also requires a systemic approach and cooperation among actors operating in the supply chain, from producers to final consumers. It involves engaging consumers through awareness-raising and education on sustainable consumption and lifestyles, providing consumers with adequate information through standards and labels and engaging consumers with sustainable public procurement, among others.

These aims and objectives have been urged by the ICA to all cooperative societies across the world to be implemented through the most attractive slogan. In other words it could be seen as that of with 'sustainable consumption and production of goods and services' as the general theme, and that a global survey selected the Coops Day slogan to be 'Sustainable societies through cooperation.'

Innovative images

With a view to enhance development, Myanmar cooperative societies must work together with innovative ideas along with local and foreign cooperatives. At this juncture, cooperative societies must spearhead in all

directions in a balanced manner for new innovations. With these unique identities as non-profit associations among the local NGOs and CSOs, Myanmar cooperative societies could stand tall with much honor.

Assistance

In fact, cooperatives societies are formed for people-centered development. The recently-adopted Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) has included the scheme of cooperative investment. Lawmakers have also taken up discussions over the development of cooperative sector. The cooperative societies could be termed as 'cooperation hands' for the sustainable development of the people.

Various INGOs are assisting Myanmar cooperatives societies. Many international entities have been lending hands, such as the Sweden Cooperative Center (We-effect), Netherlands' Agriterria, Canadian Cooperative Association (CCA), German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation (DGRV), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Union (ACCU) through their commitment to help 2019-2022 projects.

Endeavors

The writer of this article would like to pledge and urge the government, the parliaments, and the INGOs to exert all-out efforts in helping cooperative societies working for the agriculture sector.

In conclusion, the writer would like to highlight that Saturday 7 July 2018, is the International Co-operative Day, a day of significance. Annually, the ICA issues a motto or a catchphrase, and for 2018 it is, 'Sustainable societies, through cooperation', which must be complied by all Myanmar cooperative societies and cooperative members. The author has firm belief and confidence in all of them.

Translated by UMT (HK)

Depending on regular electricity for survival

Lokethar

ASK any layman on the streets of Yangon what they expect most from our democratic government. I am sure about seven out of ten would reply မီးလျှပ်စီး that is, to have a regular electrical power supply.

Since the advent of the democratic government, there has been fewer disruptions of electricity in various townships of Yangon City (though it seems that the distribution to various townships vary somewhat). When it comes to electrical power supply, the people of Yangon City are hardly concerned with figures as to how

much electricity is available, how much is distributed or how much is lost to 'pilferage' by dishonest users.

It's not surprising, as electricity is to Yangon City as blood is to the body. All of us, including households, small, medium and large businesses, factories in the industrial zones, are dependent on the supply of electricity for survival.

Take the average household. Nearly every one nowadays has a television and electric cooking stove (less messy than wood or charcoal stoves). The so-called 'middle class' cannot survive without their refrigerators and air cons. There is no way to es-

timate what additional electrical equipments make life easier, or what more the wealthy might have. All these people become miserable when the electricity supply is disrupted, even for a short while, and many of us put the blame (perhaps unjustly) on the electrical power suppliers.

The small and medium businesses enterprises which are dispersed all over the city, as well as industries in the industrial zones, of course, cannot function with erratic electricity. The production will definitely stop or slow down. In case of non-stop processing industries, much loss can be incurred due to interruption of the

process. These and large-scale industries as well as hospitals, department stores, shopping malls, hotels, etc. have to invest in emergency generators to immediately start up in the event of power outage, even for a short time.

The electrical power supplying authority is undertaking all possible measures, with the help and support of friendly countries, to ensure more and better supply of electricity. It would be understandable by the people if the electrical power supplying authority makes an appearance and says publicly why disruptions may sometimes happen. It could be due to problems with the distribution transformers, switch

gears, transmission lines/cables, etc., or other reasons.

People on their part should also try to conserve electricity by all means. Those resorting to pilfering of electricity should be exposed, so that action may be taken against them. In fact, there could be more surprise inspections of suspicious electricity meter users to uncover pilferage.

According to the reply to a starred question regarding electricity generating projects made in the parliament recently, the Union Minister concerned explained that, according to the Electricity Law, under the Public Private Partnership modality, four electricity generation project propos-

als were issued Notice to Proceed (NTP) on 30 January 2018, with regard to sourcing funding arrangements, design and supply of LNG, etc. Three of the proposals were for LNG to power, including one in Yangon and another using hydropower in the Rakhine State.

Electrical energy is a form of energy and to generate it requires other forms of energy. These are gas, hydropower, oil, coal, wood, wind, sea tide, solar energy, nuclear energy, etc. For Myanmar, the most suitable seems to be the first four; at least for the time being.

Myanmar is producing large amounts of gas on a 'production sharing' basis between the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise and

foreign oil and gas and extraction enterprises that have jointly invested in the gas extraction. However, Myanmar has to be selling gas to neighbouring countries to earn foreign exchange required for the economy.

Oil produced locally, it seems, is not enough for generation of more electricity and some fuel oil has to be imported. The other option is probably hydropower sources which, according to past surveys, are many in Myanmar. However, transforming hydropower to electricity on a large commercial scale entails huge investments as well as extensive measures to prevent disruptions to the environment.

The last option would be coal. But to import 'environment friendly coal' and transport it to the power station may pose challenges in terms of feasibility and cost.

The 'reusable energy sources' such as solar energy and wind energy, are still in their 'infancy' in Myanmar, so to speak. Those might not yield long term acceptable outcomes.

Whichever energy source is used for the generation of electricity, it is the layman's humble opinion that providing more 'electricity' required to power the whole country, including Yangon City, should be given top priority by our government.

Two people fall critically ill near UK nerve poisoning town

AMESBURY (United Kingdom) — Two people are in hospital in critical condition after exposure to an “unknown substance” in the same British town where a former Russian spy and his daughter were poisoned with a nerve agent earlier this year, officials said on Wednesday.

Counter-terrorism police, who led the investigation into the poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal, said they were assisting local police in the investigation which has been declared a “major incident” by the emergency services.

Scientists at Britain’s defence laboratory at Porton Down are carrying out tests to try and establish if there is any connection between the two incidents, British media reported.

The couple, a man and a woman in their 40s, were discovered unconscious at a house in a quiet, newly-built area in Amesbury, a village near the prehistoric monument of Stonehenge.

Amesbury is about 12 kilometres (eight miles) from Salisbury, where the Skripals were found slumped on a bench in March in an incident that sparked a bitter diplomatic crisis with Russia.

The two patients “are both currently receiving treatment

for suspected exposure to an unknown substance at Salisbury District Hospital,” a police statement said.

“They are both in a critical condition.”

The hospital is the same one where the Skripals were treated.

The pair were found on Saturday with police saying they initially suspected that they had fallen ill after using “heroin or crack cocaine from a contaminated batch of drugs.”

“However, further testing is now ongoing to establish the substance which led to these patients becoming ill and we are keeping an open mind as to the circumstances surrounding this incident.”

‘Such a quiet place’

Security cordons have been set up around the areas where the pair went before they fell ill with security boosted in both Amesbury and Salisbury.

A spokesman for Public Health England (PHE) said “it is not believed that there is a significant health risk to the wider public.”

“This will be continually assessed as further information becomes known,” he said.

Local resident Natalie Smyth, 27, told AFP she saw fire

engines and ambulances arrive at the house on Saturday.

“They shut the road. They said it was a chemical incident and then that it was drug-related. It is so strange, it is such a quiet place,” she said, indicating that the emergency services personnel were wearing protective suits.

Robert Yuill, a local councillor, said he had seen five ambulances outside the house.

But he said the emergency services reaction to the incident was “far less intense” than after the Skripal poisoning.

Police ‘containing any risk’

One of the areas cordoned off was Amesbury Baptist Church, which held a party that the two attended on Saturday.

“We understand this may well be the last event this couple went to in public,” church secretary Roy Collins told reporters.

“We are all quite puzzled and shocked — naturally the connection with Salisbury and recent events there mean there is a heightened public interest,” he said, indicating the pair were “not church members or regulars”.

“We are praying for the couple, one of our members knows them and clearly there are concerns for them and any others in the community.”

Collins said around 200 people had attended the event but “nobody else has suffered any ill effects”.

The hospital said it remained “open as usual” and advised people to attend routine appointments unless contacted to do otherwise.

Wiltshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner Angus Macpherson said police had worked hard to contain “any risk that might be there”, the BBC reported.

Macpherson said there was “no reason to think it’s connected” to the Skripal case.

Skripal, 67, and his 33-year-old daughter Yulia, who was visiting from Moscow, collapsed on 4 March in Salisbury.

They were treated for an extended period of time before being released from Salisbury hospital.

A police officer who came to their aid, Nick Bailey, was also taken to hospital.

Russia has rejected British accusations of involvement in the Skripal poisoning, which sparked a diplomatic crisis that saw Russia and the West expelling dozens of diplomats in tit-for-tat moves.

Britain said a Soviet-made nerve agent dubbed novichok was used on the Skripals. —AFP ■

Thai official says still unsure about how soon boys trapped in cave could be evacuated

BANGKOK — Nobody seems to know as yet how many days it might take until the 13 adolescent males trapped inside a flooded cave in northern Thailand can be brought out safely, according to a senior government official on Wednesday.

Rescuers have prepared equipment and mapped out plans to evacuate the 12 youth soccer players, aged between 11 and 16 years, and their 25-year-old coach from Tham Luang Khun Nam Nang Non cave in Mae Sai district of Chiang Rai province, about 860 kilometers north of Bangkok, where they have entered for a dozen days since June 23.

A team of experienced British divers found the boys alive and safe after they had dived about three kilometers deep in the cave’s strongly-flowing subterranean water, said Chiang Rai provincial governor Narongsak Osotthanakorn. Though rescuers could not predict how longer it will take for the boys to be evacuated safely, the provincial governor said they will certainly not do anything which might jeopardize the safety of the evacuees.

Navy Seal divers and paramedics have taken turns to closely take care of the boys who looked exhausted at a dry spot of the flooded cave with food, medicine and supplies. The provincial governor commented that rescuers could not as yet tell how soon the boys will be brought out safely due to “difficulties” doing so.

The subterranean water in the cave was flowing so fiercely it apparently discouraged the rescuers from putting the safety of the boys at risk, according to Narongsak, who is currently in charge of the rescue mission.

“For the time being, we cannot tell how many days it might take until the boys could be evacuated out of the cave safely,” he said. While waiting for the flowing streams to subside, the Navy Seal divers were teaching the boys to dive with oxygen masks in preparation for the planned evacuation, he said.—Xinhua ■



Police officers are seen outside Amesbury Baptist Centre in Amesbury, nine miles north of Salisbury, southern England on 4 July, 2018, believed to be cordoned off in relation to a major incident declared after two people were found unconscious at a residence in Amesbury. PHOTO: AFP

Erdogan to be sworn in Monday with new powers

ANKARA, (Turkey) — President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will on Monday be sworn in for a second mandate as Turkey's head of state after his election triumph last month, assuming sweeping powers granted under a new constitution, a presidential source said.

Erdogan, who has dominated Turkey first as premier from 2003 then president from 2014, scored an outright victory in the first round of the 24 June elections with 52.6 per cent of the vote.

Those elections were particularly crucial as it is only after the polls that the new presidential system, which was agreed in a 2017 referendum and opponents fear will lead to one man rule, comes into force.

Erdogan will be sworn at the parliament, a presidential source, who asked not to be named, told AFP. State media reports said the oath ceremony would be at 1300 GMT.

Two hours later a "transition



Iraqi forces advance as they take part in an operation against Islamic State group jihadists east of Tuz Khurmatu on 7 February, 2018. PHOTO: AFP

ceremony" marking the shift to the new system will take place at his vast presidential palace on the outskirts of Ankara, Anadolu news agency reported.

The Turkish leader is expected to deliver a speech during the ceremony to be attended by

leading figures from the business, art and sports as well as foreign heads of state, according to the Hurriyet daily.

The ceremony will be followed by a dinner and then Erdogan is due to announce his new cabinet, it said.

Under the new system, Erdogan will enjoy greater powers with the authority to appoint and sack ministers, judges and other state officials.

The post of prime minister, currently held by Erdogan's ally Binali Yildirim, is to be scrapped

as of Monday, leaving the president in full and sole charge of the government.

A decree published in the Official Gazette on Wednesday formalised the transfer of some duties and authorities of the cabinet to the president.

Also, the references in certain laws like "cabinet" and "prime ministry" have been changed to say "president" and the "presidency," according to the decree.

The new regulations will come into force on the day the president is sworn in, Anadolu said.

The new parliament is meanwhile expected to be sworn in two days earlier on Saturday.

Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has failed to secure a majority in the 600-seat parliament on its own in the June elections. But it does enjoy a clear majority within a pact with its partner the right-wing Nationalist Movement Party (MHP).—AFP ■

Iraq launches major anti-IS operation after killings

BAGHDAD — Iraqi forces launched a major operation against remnants of the Islamic State group on Wednesday following public anger over the jihadists' murder of a group of abducted civilians.

Dubbed "Vengeance for the Martyrs", the operation will see army, special forces, police and Kurdish peshmerga fighters hunting down IS cells in the centre of the country, Iraq's Joint Operations Command (JOC) said in a statement.

It comes after the bodies of eight IS captives were found late last month along a highway north of Baghdad. Some of the abductees had appeared in a video in which IS threatened to execute them unless Baghdad released female prisoners. The JOC statement said army, federal police, special forces, peshmerga fighters and the Hashed al-Shaabi paramilitary force had launched "a vast operation to clear out the region east of the Diyala-Kirkuk" highway. The operation was being supported by the Iraqi air force and the US-led coalition that in-



Erdogan's poll success tightened his 15-year grip on power in the face of a revitalised opposition. PHOTO: AFP

tervened against IS in Iraq and Syria after the jihadists seized control of large parts of both countries in 2014.

One jihadist had already been killed and eight captured, the JOC said, and equipment including vehicles and bombs destroyed. The operation marked the first time that federal Iraqi forces and the peshmerga were working together since clashes following last year's Kurdish independence referendum.

Iraq declared victory over IS

in December after expelling the jihadists from all major towns and cities in a vast offensive.

But the Iraqi military has kept up operations targeting mostly remote desert areas from where jihadists have continued to carry out attacks. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi had vowed to avenge the eight civilians killed by IS and ordered the execution of hundreds of convicted jihadists. Thirteen jihadists on death row were executed last week.

—AFP ■

Iran accuses Mujahedeen over Paris rally bomb plot

TEHRAN — Iran has accused an exiled opposition group of orchestrating an alleged plot to bomb one of its own rallies near Paris and said a couple arrested in Belgium were actually members of the group. Belgium, France and Germany detained six people over the alleged plan to bomb a weekend rally of the People's Mujahedeen of Iran in the Paris suburb of Villepinte.

Tehran has dismissed accusations it was behind the plot. In a fresh statement, the foreign ministry said it was the People's Mujahedeen itself that was behind the "scenario".

"Based on the information available, the individuals arrested in Belgium are among the ... notorious and operational elements" of the People's Mujahedeen, the ministry said on its website. "Relevant Iranian authorities are prepared to offer the necessary cooperation by presenting the required documents and evidence to shed light on the real dimensions of this pre-planned scenario orchestrated by the terrorist group," it said.

French and Belgian author-

ities said on Monday a Belgian couple of Iranian origin had been arrested in Belgium on suspicion of planning the attack. The others arrested included a Vienna-based Iranian diplomat.

Reviled by Tehran, the People's Mujahedeen was founded in 1965 and has been banned in Iran since 1981. The rally on Saturday was attended by thousands of people and attracted several US politicians, including former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani, who is now President Donald Trump's personal lawyer. The announcement of the arrests coincided with the start of a European tour by Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, who is visiting Switzerland and Austria to seek guarantees from European powers over a landmark 2015 nuclear agreement, after the US unilaterally pulled out of the deal in May.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who is with Rouhani in Europe, said on Monday the foiled Villepinte attack was a "false flag ploy" to harm Iran and offered his country's help in investigating the matter.—AFP ■

Trump reverses Obama-era race guidelines for admissions

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's administration took steps on Tuesday to rescind Obama-era guidelines that encouraged schools to take applicants' race and ethnicity into account to promote diversity.

The move indicates federal support for schools to adopt a race-blind admissions process and brings the highly contentious issue of affirmative action once again to the fore.

The Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld — though with an increasingly narrow view — the practice of considering race as a factor in order to ensure minorities are integrated at elite US educational institutions.

But the policy shift enacted by the Trump administration and the retirement of key swing vote Justice Anthony Kennedy at the end of this month — with his replacement likely far more conservative — spell trouble for affirmative action. "When issuing regulations, federal agencies must abide by constitutional principles and follow the

rules set forth by Congress and the president," Attorney General Jeff Sessions said in a statement. In previous administrations, however, agencies often tried to impose new rules on the American people without any public notice or comment period, simply by sending a letter or posting a guidance document on a website. That's wrong, and it's not good government."

The administration of president George W Bush, a Republican, had similarly issued race-neutral admissions guidance. Trump's Democratic predecessor, Barack Obama, had issued two sets of admissions to colleges as well as elementary and secondary schools "on the voluntary use of race to achieve diversity," saying educational institutions had a "compelling interest" in doing so.

The guidance documents were among 24 the Justice Department rescinded, claiming they were "unnecessary, outdated, inconsistent with existing law or otherwise improper."

They included infor-



Barack Obama had issued two sets of admissions to colleges as well as elementary and secondary schools 'on the voluntary use of race to achieve diversity'. PHOTO: AFP

mation on federal protections based on national origin. Most were from the Obama era.

"This move from Attorney General Sessions is

a concrete signal that there is a war being waged on civil liberties from the highest levels of government," said Faiz Shakir, national political director of the Ameri-

can Civil Liberties Union. "This is another attack by Sessions and President Trump on people of colour. Our chief law enforcement officer is dismantling struc-

tures that prevent racial discrimination in education, in housing and in ensuring fair treatment of juveniles in our criminal justice system."—AFP ■

Clashes after French police shoot young man dead

NANTES (France) — Groups of young people clashed with police in the western French city of Nantes late Tuesday after a 22-year-old man was shot dead by an officer during a police check.

Cars were burned and a shopping centre partly set alight in the Breil neighbourhood as police confronted young people, some armed with molotov cocktails. The circumstances in which the man was killed are being investigated by the police.

The incident occurred around 8:30pm (18:30 GMT) when police stopped a vehicle over an infraction, local police chief Jean-Christophe Bertrand said.

The identity of the driver was "not clear and

officers received orders to bring the driver to the police station." The driver then hit and slightly injured a police officer, he added.

"One of his colleagues then fired, hitting the young man who unfortunately died," he said.

Police sources confirmed the young man was wounded during a police check while in a vehicle after he "refused to comply" with police requests.

He was hit in the carotid artery and declared dead on arrival at hospital, the police sources said.

National police are investigating to clarify "the facts and determine in what circumstances the policeman used his weapon," said Pierre Sennes, the public prosecutor for

Nantes.

Steven, 24, who lives in the area, told an AFP journalist that he had "heard explosions" and headed to investigate.

"I saw everything burning. There were fires in the bins, the cars. They were breaking everything. It lasted ages," he said, adding that things later calmed down.

Violence also broke out in two other sensitive areas, Dervallieres and Malakoff, where vehicles were also set on fire.

Police reinforcements are expected in Nantes, especially in the Breil neighbourhood, which was already on high alert after an incident last week possibly involving a military weapon, according to a source close to the case.—AFP ■

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kmma@kcyangon.com
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Ex-Malaysian PM Najib charged with corruption

KUALA LUMPUR (Malaysia) — Former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak was formally charged Wednesday with corruption linked to a multi-billion dollar financial scandal that contributed to his shock election defeat less than two months ago.

The first ex-premier in Malaysia to appear before a judge, Najib pleaded not guilty to three counts of criminal breach of trust and a separate charge that he abused his position to pocket 42 million ringgit (\$10.4 million).

Each charge could see him jailed for up to 20 years.

The unprecedented court appearance came the day after the 64-year-old was arrested at his luxury home by officers probing how billions of dollars of state funds disappeared on his watch.

In court, the former leader appeared tired and hung his head often during proceedings.

Allegations of massive corruption were a major factor behind the electoral earthquake in May that toppled Najib's long-ruling



Malaysia's Attorney-General Tommy Thomas (C) speaks to the media after former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak appeared before a judge at the Duta court complex in Kuala Lumpur on 4 July, 2018. Najib was formally charged on 4 July with corruption linked to a multi-billion dollar financial scandal that contributed to his shock election defeat less than two months ago. **PHOTO: AFP**

coalition and ushered in a reformist alliance headed by his 92-year-old former mentor Mahathir Mohamad. Wednesday's court hearing was the latest step in a quick-moving investigation into alleged wrongdoing by Najib, his family and many of his close political and business allies.

"Najib is the first (former) prime minister ever to be charged in court in the history of Malaysia," said

Tian Chua, vice president of Parti Keadilan Rakyat, a key political party in the current ruling coalition.

"It signals a new era where no one in public office will be immune from punitive action if they abuse power," he added.

Strong prima facie case

Najib is expected to be freed on bail later Wednesday after the court decided on a one million ringgit bond. The former premier

was also ordered to surrender his two Malaysian passports.

Attorney General Tommy Thomas, who leads a 12-member prosecution team, had requested bail of four million ringgit in cash, but Najib's lawyer Muhammad Shafee insisted his client was "not a flight risk".

The court set a tentative date for the trial, beginning in February 2019.

"We have a strong

prima facie case which we intend to prove in the trial," Thomas told reporters after the hearing.

Thomas had to move the venue of his press briefing to a different part of the building after Najib supporters heckled him and demanded that he speak in Malay, the country's national language.

"As far as we are concerned we have been fair," Thomas said. "Why should (Najib supporters) suspect we will not give a fair trial?"

According to an investigation by the Wall Street Journal, \$10.6 million originating from SRC International Sdn Bhd, an energy company that was originally a subsidiary of 1MDB, was transferred to Najib's personal bank accounts, a fraction of hundreds of millions of dollars from 1MDB that was allegedly funnelled to him.

Najib and the fund deny any wrongdoing.

Since the election loss Najib has been banned from leaving the country.

"We pray Datuk Seri Najib gets a fair trial. It is a test from Allah," the for-

mer leader's daughter-in-law Nur Sharmila Shaheen told AFP, using an honorific title, adding her father-in-law was "calm".

A press statement issued by Najib's camp late Tuesday said the impending charges and other investigations "are politically motivated" and motivated by "vengeance" under Mahathir. It vowed that Najib "will contest these charges and clear his name in court".

Najib and his allies are accused of plundering billions of dollars from the 1MDB to buy everything from US real estate to artworks. Shortly after his downfall, a treasure trove of valuables was seized in raids on properties linked to Najib and his family — including cash, jewellery and luxury handbags — worth up to \$273 million.

He and his luxury-loving wife Rosmah Mansor were questioned by investigators, as were his stepson Riza Aziz, whose firm produced the hit 2013 movie "The Wolf of Wall Street", and his former deputy Zahid Hamidi.—AFP ■

Many Vietnamese hospitalized in heat wave

HANOI — There has been an increasingly bigger number of people in Viet Nam who are hospitalized in recent days due to hot weather, Viet Nam News Agency reported on Wednesday.

The Obstetrics and Pediatrics Hospital in central Nghe An province on 2 and 3 July recorded almost 1,800 children coming for medical checks-up and treatment, mainly for pneumonia, bronchitis, di-

arrhea and scarlet fever.

The Dong Da General Hospital in Hanoi received 700-800 patients for check-up and treatment each day during the past week, 200 higher than the figure in normal days. Elderly pa-

tients account for 70 per cent of the total.

The Vietnamese Health Ministry on Tuesday sent a warning to provincial and city-level health departments, hospitals and health centres, asking

them to step up monitoring weather forecast and implementing medical examinations.

The severe heat wave that has scorched Viet Nam's northern and central regions since last

weekend is predicted to end on Friday, but until then the localities will continue to suffering from a high temperature of 38-40 degree Celsius, authorities said on Wednesday. — Xinhua ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (058N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (058N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4-7-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V AREZOO VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V AREZOO VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5-7-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

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Dated 5th July 2018 lmm@kcyangon.com

Marvel's newest star on female villainy, karaoke with Spielberg

LOS ANGELES — When Hannah John-Kamen learned she was to be Marvel's next supervillain, she let out a yelp, hung up the phone and cranked up "Do My Thang," Miley Cyrus's empowering paean to self-determination.

"Wrecking Ball" might have been a better fit, given the actress's shock-and-awe introduction in "Ant-Man and the Wasp" as Ghost, an ethereal entity who passes through walls but packs a vicious punch.

"I was back in London and I got the call, and it was all my agents together. I remember I literally just screamed. I was in my apartment, I was walking around, going, 'Oh my God, oh my God!'" the 28-year-old Briton recalls. "I was so excited. And then I just blasted out Miley Cyrus's song 'Do My Thang.' I don't know why, it was just on my playlist, and I blasted that out and just danced."

In Hollywood, a role in a Marvel movie that lasts until the end credits can be a key to the kingdom, offering follow-up appearances in spin-off movies and all manner of "Avengers" mashups. John-Kamen — who has credits in "Game of Thrones" and "Black Mirror" as well as parts in "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," "Tomb Raider" and

"Ready Player One" — is ready for superstardom.

'Movie moment'

The daughter of a Nigerian forensic scientist and Norwegian former fashion model from north-eastern England, she still pinches herself when she thinks about working with Steven Spielberg. She describes taking direction from the icon on the spring blockbuster "Ready Player One," in which she played sinister gamer gang leader F'Nale Zandor, as "absolutely amazing."

"There's no feeling like when you've done a take and he's so happy and he'd go, 'Now that's a movie moment!' And you've got that coming from Spielberg," she told AFP in an interview in Pasadena, southern California.

"I mean, it's nuts. We would sing show tunes together. We'd sing 'Singin' in the Rain,' we'd sing 'Guys and Dolls.' In between takes, we'd sit. Sometimes we'd get the lyrics printed and we'd just sing," Spielberg, according to John-Kamen, has a "wonderful voice" and a joy about him that makes his movie set a "fun playground that you get to go in and play." "Ant-Man and the Wasp," which hits US theaters on Friday, is the sequel to 2015's "Ant-Man," the 20th release in Disney's Mar-



Hannah John-Kamen says she's ready for superstardom after scoring a role as Marvel's next supervillain. PHOTO: AFP

vel Cinematic Universe (MCU), and the first to feature a woman in the title role.

Starring Paul Rudd and Evangeline Lilly, it is also only the second MCU film with a female principle adversary, after Cate Blanchett's Hela in "Thor Ragnarok" (2017).

John-Kamen's Ava/Ghost — an anti-capitalist saboteur turned supervillain in the comics — acquires her mysterious powers in a lab accident that makes her cells intangible.

"It's a male character in the comics... but to be the first person to take it off the page and actually give her life, it was an honor," John-Kamen said.

High stakes

The actress says it was im-

portant not to play Ghost as a traditional villain — no dastardly plans for taking over the planet — instead giving a nuanced performance that emphasizes her tragedy.

"I'm doing this for a reason, as an objective. The stakes are high. I don't think you just wake up in the morning and go, 'Ha ha ha! World domination — that sounds fun!'" the actress said.

"So I definitely approached that with the mind of going, 'Okay she's the good guy and everyone else can go to hell.'"

Executive producer Stephen Broussard said Marvel was looking for someone less recognizable and was taken with John-Kamen's "intensity, her vulnerability and with her sense of humor."

Her previous training as a dancer coupled with the desire to fully flesh out Ghost's threadbare backstory made her perfect for the role, he added.

As is Marvel's custom, John-Kamen was initially told very little about the part but enjoyed "every single minute" of the audition process, which eventually took her to Atlanta to meet director Peyton Reed. "You think with an audition you'd be like, 'Oh my gosh, I was so nervous. Oh my goodness, I was shaking.' Of course, there's a high anxiety but I remember just getting in there and going, 'Oh, okay — I feel really relaxed,'" she recalled.

"I'm really excited about this material and what we can do, and I'm excited to show you what I've come up with."—AFP ■

Dystopian 'Sorry to Bother You' affirms vitality of black cinema

LOS ANGELES — With its dystopian story of racial exploitation behind the veneer of modern America, "Sorry to Bother You," the first movie by the rapper Boots Riley, is showing the fresh vitality in African American cinema. The movie, which hits US theaters on Friday, comes a year after the runaway success of "Get Out," the first feature film by Jordan Peele about a town of wealthy white people who conspire to implant themselves into African American bodies.

"Sorry to Bother You," also made on a small budget, marks a new outlet for the militant voice of Riley, best known as the front-man of The Coup, the politically engaged and critically praised hip-hop group.

With echoes of science-fiction classic "Metropolis," the film focuses on exploitation at

a telemarketing firm, whose workers are crammed into the basement as executives work on floors above them in vast rooms bathed in light. Separating them is an elevator, which becomes the setting for several comical scenes. The hero Cassius — played by Lakeith Stanfield, who also starred in "Get Out" — can only ascend in the elevator, and the symbolic social ladder, as he switches into a "white voice."

New settings for race

Much like "Get Out," set in a placid town where the villain is said to have voted for Barack Obama, "Sorry to Bother You" shines a light not on police brutality or other more obvious issues in Donald Trump's America but instead looks at racism in ostensibly safe confines.

In "Sorry to Bother You," the

CEO of fictitious corporation WorryFree reflects the worst traits of a Silicon Valley executive, a visionary who dreams of uber-workers who are half-human, half-horse. Riley — the son of Chicago labour activists who has spent his life on the fringes of Silicon Valley in Oakland, California — searched for several years to find an audience for his screenplay. He first turned "Sorry to Bother You" into a 2012 album by The Coup which merged rap delivery with live orchestration.

The 47-year-old first-time director said it was an uphill battle to be taken seriously in film.

It's "as difficult as it would be if your favorite saxophone player said he wanted to build your house. You are a musician with a script — who wants to read that?" he told AFP.

The film pays tribute to sev-

eral social movements of recent years including Black Lives Matter and Occupy Wall Street, in which Riley was active.

It is too early to tell if "Sorry to Bother You," which won acclaim at the Sundance Film Festival in January, will see the same success as "Get Out" — let alone "Black Panther," the much-larger budget film from Marvel about an African super-hero that has quickly become one of the highest-grossing movies of all time.

But cast members are saluting the rise of such films as proof that, some 30 years after the breakthrough of Spike Lee's racial drama "Do the Right Thing," African American cinema is dynamic, original and nuanced.

Tessa Thompson, who plays Cassius' girlfriend Detroit in "Sorry to Bother You," voiced

hope that more movies would follow, saying that black cinema's problem had never been a lack of talent. "It really has to do with a lack of opportunity and a perceived lack of an audience. What you see with 'Get Out' is that there is an audience for it — and the audience, by the way, is not just black," said Thompson, whose previous films have included 2014's historical saga "Selma" and last year's action flick "Thor: Ragnarok." Stanfield said that African American films were showing they can be "imaginative and crazy" — and also simply fun. "You don't have to come see us talk about our place in America and cry all the time," he said. "You can leave the theater feeling hopeful, like this film makes me feel, and still talk about the deep things that affect us every day."—AFP ■

Rare US independence declaration found in UK archive

LONDON — A rare parchment copy of the American Declaration of Independence has been found at a British archive among the papers of an aristocrat who supported the rebels, officials have said.

The manuscript was discovered at the West Sussex Record Office in the southern English city of Chichester by a team of researchers led by two Harvard University academics.

Tests supported the hypothesis that it was produced in the 1780s, West Sussex County Council said earlier this week — just a few years after the declaration itself was issued in 1776.

The document “is the only other contemporary manuscript copy of the Declaration of Independence on parchment apart from the signed copy at the National Archives in Washington DC,” known as the Matlack Declaration, a council statement said earlier this week.

There are other printed parchment copies and handwritten copies on paper but the Sussex Declaration, as it has been dubbed, and the Matlack Declaration in Washington are the only two known ceremonial parchment copies of the declaration. Multi-spectral imaging of

the document “revealed a date beneath an erasure on the document” which reads either “July 4, 178” or “July 4, 179”, researchers said. The fourth digit for the year may have been permanently erased.

The Harvard Gazette said the clerk drawing up the document was “inexperienced” as the date was written on a slight downward slant and the year of the production of the document was used rather than the year in which the declaration was enacted.

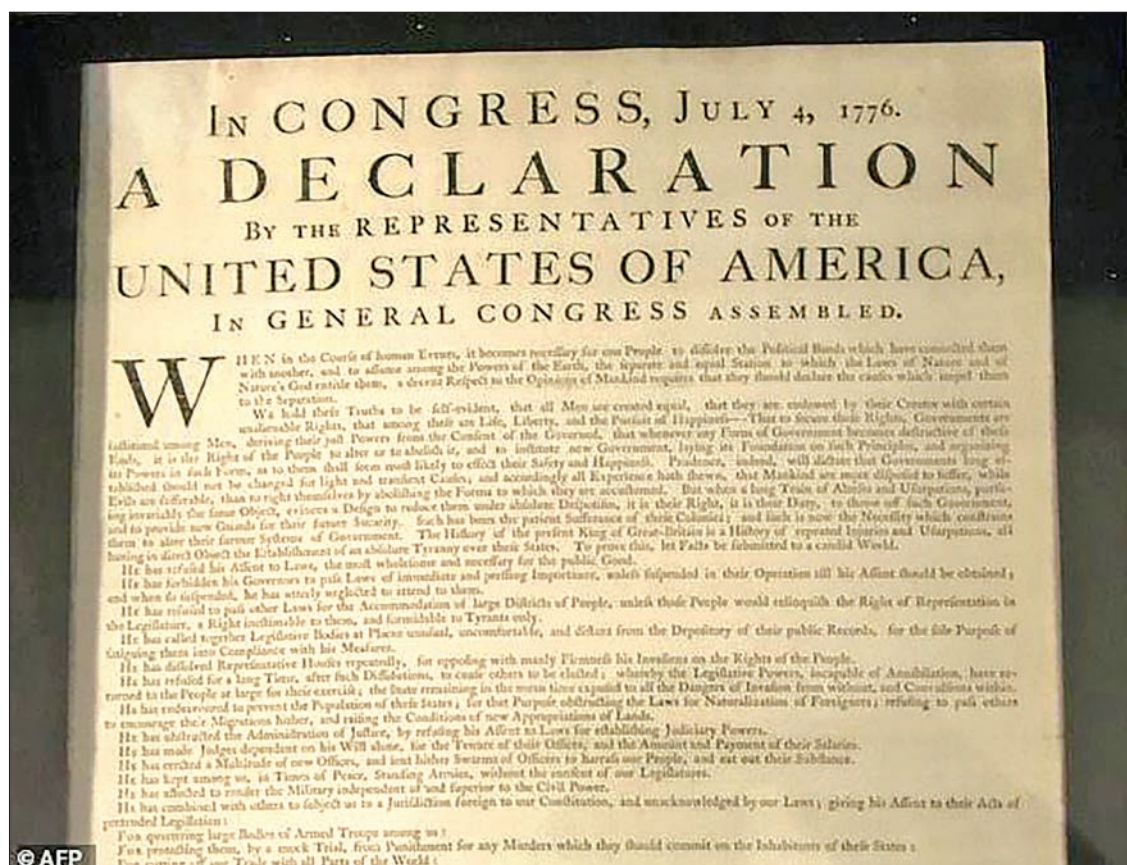
Adopted on July 4, 1776, the declaration states that 13 American colonies then at war with Britain would regard themselves as independent sovereign states no longer under British rule.

4 July is celebrated as Independence Day in the United States.

Sheepskin parchment

Researchers said X-ray fluorescence analysis of the document found a high iron content in holes in the corner of the parchment, indicating that nails may have been used to hang it.

DNA tests also revealed the parchment was made of sheepskin. The parchment is believed to originally belong to Charles



An original copy of the US Declaration of Independence from 1776 on display in Philadelphia. **PHOTO: AFP**

Lennox, the Third Duke of Richmond, an army officer and politician known as the “Radical Duke” for his support of American colonists during the Revolution.

The Harvard Gazette said the most interesting feature of the document was its treatment of the list of signatories.

“In contrast to all other 18th-century versions of the declaration, on this parchment the list of signatories was not grouped by states.

“The team hypothesises that this detail supported efforts... to argue that the authority of the declaration rested on a unitary

national people, and not on a federation of states,” it said.

Harvard academics Emily Sneff and Danielle Allen carried out the research along with the West Sussex Record Office, the British Library, the Library of Congress and the University of York.—AFP ■

Giant penguin and dancing hare animate London park art fair

LONDON — Visitors to London’s Regents Park this summer will be met with the unusual sight of a giant penguin and a dancing hare as part of an annual sculpture fair.

For the second year, Frieze Sculpture will take over the famous park’s English Gardens for three months, showcasing the work of 25 international artists, free of charge. Curator Clare Lilley, from the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, said the event would allow the public to experience “a snapshot of the fantastic imagination of artists and variety of sculpture being made today”.

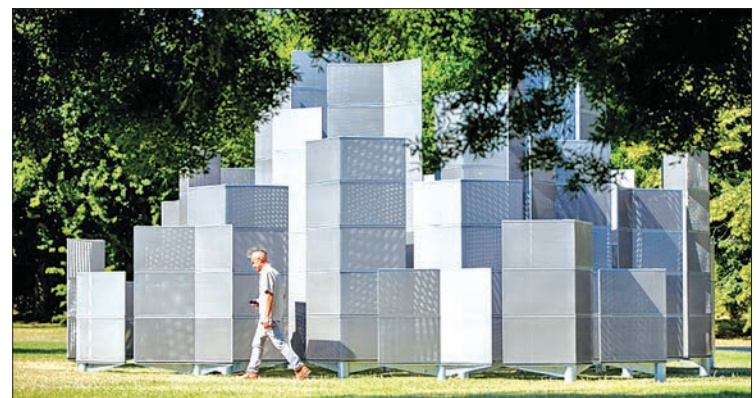
The “celebration of sculpture”, which opens on Wednesday, brings together a diverse roster of artists, including South Korea’s Kimsooja, India’s Bharti Kher and Britain’s Larry Achompang. “There is a geographic spread: the artists come from South Africa, South Korea, Scandinavia, Europe and the United States,” Lilley told AFP.

“In terms of age too, there is a nice span, since Haroon Gunn-Salie, from South Africa, is 29, whereas John Baldessari, from the United States, is 87.

“Also, there are a lot of female artists this year, that is important for us,” she added. “Optic Labyrinth” by British artist Conrad Shawcross comprises a four-metre (13-foot) high stainless steel installation with holes for visitors to walk through. “At

first, one sees it as minimalist, industrial, austere but when you go around, the sun goes through and it becomes alive, decorative and generous,” he explained.

More than five million people visited last year’s inaugural event, which has two sister events — Frieze London, dedicated to contemporary art, and Frieze Masters, specialising in art from the ancient era and Old Masters to the late 20th century.—AFP ■



People walk around a sculpture entitled “Optic Labyrinth” by British artist Conrad Shawcross in Regents Park London as part of the Frieze Sculpture exhibition.. **PHOTO: AFP**

Lost Saramago journal retrieved from his computer

LISBON — Eight years after his death and 20 after he penned the work, a previously unknown volume of a journal by late Portuguese author Jose Saramago will finally come to light after being retrieved from his computer.

The work, written in 1998 when he won the Nobel Prize for Literature, is the sixth and last volume of “Cuadernos de Lanzarote” (Lanzarote Diaries) and will be published in October in Portugal and Spain, his widow Pilar del Rio said on Tuesday. Saramago was living on the Canary island of Lanzarote when he died in 2010, aged 87, and the work was found buried in a file on his computer, said Del Rio, who heads the Jose Saramago Foundation in Lisbon.

“I thought everything had been published. I was very perplexed when I realized nobody had got wind of this book’s ex-



Portuguese writer Jose Saramago, seen here in 2009, died the following year at age 87 on the Canary island of Lanzarote. **PHOTO: AFP**

istence,” she said.

Saramago had in fact cryptically referred to the volume in 2001. “I wouldn’t like it, just in the year something really noteworthy has happened to me (his Nobel award), if someone came along and told me I hadn’t done it,” he joked in allusion to a follow-up during the presentation of the fifth volume of the journal.

Saramago is known for such novels as “The Gospel According to Jesus Christ” and “Blindness.”—AFP ■

Southgate looking ahead after England penalty shootout win



England's goalkeeper Jordan Pickford stops Colombia's forward Carlos Bacca's shot during the penalty shootout at the end of the Russia 2018 World Cup round of 16 football match between Colombia and England at the Spartak Stadium in Moscow on 3 July 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

MOSCOW — England manager Gareth Southgate said he “doesn’t want to go home” as he called on his young side to build on their penalty shootout victory over Colombia in the World Cup last 16 on Tuesday.

After a second-half penalty gave Harry Kane his sixth goal of the tournament, Yerry Mina's last-gasp header kept Colombia alive, only for England to win on penalties at a World Cup for the first time after defeats in 1990, 1998 and 2006.

“We played so well in the 90 minutes, we showed resilience to come back from huge disappointment and kept calm,” Southgate told ITV.

“Shootouts are tough. We had talked long and hard about owning the process of a shootout. They kept calm. The players

have taken it all on board, it's a special moment for us.

“We looked at technique, how we needed to be as a team, the goalkeeper's role.”

England will next face Sweden in the last eight on Saturday in Samara, bidding to reach the semi-finals for only the third time.

“A special moment but now I'm thinking about Sweden,” added Southgate, whose penalty miss saw England lose to Germany in the Euro 96 semi-finals at Wembley.

“This was special but I want us to go on. Sweden is another team we have a poor record against. We have underestimated them for years.

“They have created their own story and made history. I don't want to go home yet.”—AFP ■

Myanmar to play football powerhouse Bahrain

IN preparation for the 2018 Asian Games and the 2019 SEA Games, the Myanmar national U-23 football team will play friendly matches with four countries, including Bahrain, from 1-5 August.

The competition will take place as part of Alpine Cup 2018, to be held in Mandalay.

The four teams participating in Alpine Cup 2018 will be Myanmar, the U-23 team from Asia's powerhouse Bahrain, the South

Korea U-19 squad, and the Thailand U-23 team.

Bahrain's national football team was founded in 1951 and joined FIFA in 1966.

Bahrain's U-23 team are fresh off a winning performance in the PSSI Anniversary Cup 2018 in Indonesia.

The under-23 nationals clinched the title after beating North Korea 4-1 in their concluding match. They finished the

competition with two wins and a draw – the other win being a 1-0 result against the Indonesian hosts and then a 3-3 stalemate with Uzbekistan.

They have never reached the World Cup, but have won FIFA's most improved team award in 2004, and finished fourth in the 2004 Asian Cup, beating Uzbekistan in the quarter-finals but losing to Japan in the semi-finals by a score of 4-3.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■

Japan captain retiring after World Cup dreams dashed

TOKYO, (Japan) — Japan captain Makoto Hasebe has announced his retirement from the national team, on the heels of the squad's heart-breaking ejection from the World Cup in a match against Belgium.

“I have decided to end the chapter of my career with the national team with this tournament,” Hasebe wrote on his Instagram account.

The 34-year-old defensive midfielder's departure from the Blue Samurai could mean a changing of the guard for the team, with former AC Milan striker Keisuke Honda, 32, also saying he plans to retire from the national squad.

Hasebe, who won the German Cup with Eintracht Frankfurt last season, has been on the national team for

more than 12 years under five coaches.

This year's World Cup is his third, after South Africa in 2010 and Brazil in 2014, and saw his team come heartstoppingly close to the quarterfinals before crashing out against Belgium.

Japan were ousted after Belgium came from behind to win 3-2 in their first match in the knock-out round.

The team will head next to the Asian Cup in the United Arab Emirates early next year, and may also be looking for a new coach.

Akira Nishino, who took over months before the World Cup after the controversial firing of his predecessor Vahid Halilhodzic, has been tight-lipped on his future plans despite reports he could be replaced.—AFP ■

Football festival for kids held in Mandalay

A grassroots football festival, supervised by the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF), was held at Bahtoo Stadium in Mandalay yesterday morning.

Participating in the ceremony were officials from Mandalay, football authorities from the MFF, players and coaches from Mandalay-based Yadana-

bon FC and children from basic education schools in Mandalay and their parents. The ceremony was well-attended, with children kicking balls into the net, eager to show their football skills on the pitch. “It is a wonderful festival for our children, and they all enjoyed it. We hope the MFF can celebrate these kinds of festivals

more in Mandalay”, said U Maung Hla Tun, the parent of one of the young participants.

Similar festivals will be held later in other cities in different states and regions, including Yangon, Patheingyi, Bago, Mawlamyaing, Taunggyi, Monywa and Sittway, according to the MFF.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■