

NATIONAL

Vice-Senior General meets with Indian Army Chief of Army Staff



PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Union Attorney-General receives Danish Ambassador

PAGE-3

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. V, No. 159, 13th Waxing of Tawthalin 1380 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Saturday, 22 September 2018

Three main work processes

Nation building, establishing a Union and transition to democracy

- Now is the time to reconstruct the nation to make it a peaceful, stable and strong one.
- At the same time, effort is being exerted to build up a Union in which justice, freedom and equality, being the fundamental laws protecting human society (Loka Pala), aspired since attainment of independence, will prevail. The Union we are building ensures equality and justice in the political, economic and social spheres; it is pure in ideology and is owned and cherished by all.
- Additionally, efforts are also being taken to develop our democratic transition into a mature democracy. In fact, these three processes are not to be implemented separately, but all together.

(Excerpted from the report on the current work of the government, delivered at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 19 September 2018)

President receives Ambassador of Thailand

Ongoing cooperation in trade, economic, investment sectors to be raised

UWIN Myint, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Mr. Jukr Boon-Long, outgoing Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar at the meeting hall of the Presidential Palace at 2pm yesterday.

During the meeting, matters related to increasing bilateral relations and cooperation, raising ongoing cooperation in trade, economic and investment sectors were openly discussed.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, U Min Thu, Deputy Minister from the Office of the President, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs U Myint Thu and officials.

— MNA ■



President U Win Myint holds talks with Mr. Jukr Boon-Long, outgoing Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

INSIDE TODAY

BUSINESS
Viet Nam-Myanmar Trade & Investment Promotion event held
PAGE-5



OPINION
Human Rights Council on wrong side of history over Rakhine issue
PAGE-8

NATIONAL
MoU signed to implement Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme
PAGE-2

NATIONAL
MR, ROK train companies seek ways to improve train services in Myanmar
PAGE-3



Vice-Senior General meets with Indian Army Chief of Army Staff

DEPUTY Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and party who are in India on an official visit went to India Gate on the morning of 18 September to lay a wreath at Amar Jawan Jyoti, the Flame of the Immortal Soldier, and signed the visitors' book.

Next, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services arrived at Republic of India Ministry of Defence South Block Lawns to receive the salute of the Guard of Honor and then inspected the Guard of Honor.

Afterwards, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services met with General Bipin Rawat, UYSM, AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, ADC Chief of Army Staff of

the Indian Army at the Chief of Army Staff Office and discussed widely on border security, stability, increasing relations between the two armed forces and increasing cooperation.

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and party then went on to meet with Vice Chief of Naval Staff of the Indian Navy, Vice Admiral Ajit Kumar P, AVSM, VSM and discussed for mutual benefit matters conducted between the two navies, and cooperating in the best possible way towards the security of Indian Ocean.

In the early evening, the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation met with Republic of India Minister of Defence Mrs. Nir-mala Sithraman at South Block



Vice-Senior General Soe Win and party meeting with Indian military officials. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

and discussed and exchanged views on status of cooperation and relations based on mutual friendship and respect between the two armed forces, increasing the relations and cooperation between the two armed forces in the future as well as stability and security of the border region, foreign policy of Myanmar and

defence policy of Tatmadaw.

Later in the evening, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services met with staff and families of Myanmar military attaché (army, navy, air) office and seven (Tatmadaw) officers attending courses in New Delhi at the hotel.

After the meeting, the

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services arrived at Army Battle Honours Mess and attended the official dinner hosted by Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army General Bipin Rawat and wife, according to the news released by the Commander-in-Chief Office. — MNA ■

Panel discussion on Making Good Movie: Pre-Production to be held on 23 September



Film Development Centre in Yangon, which was launched on 21 July 2018. **PHOTO: MNA**

A PANEL discussion on Making Good Movie: Pre-Production will be held at the Film Development Centre, located at Golden Valley, Bahan Township, Yangon, on 23 September.

The discussion will be jointly held by Ministry of Informa-

tion, Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) and Film Development Centre management with the aim of obtaining useful experience in movie production, and interested persons can attend, it is learnt.

— MNA ■

MoU signed to implement Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme

A CEREMONY to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, representatives of employers and employees and International Labour Organization (ILO) for implementation of Decent Work Country Programme (2018-2021) in Myanmar to support the country's development and reduce poverty, was held at Thingaha Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe said appropriate local work programmes will be implemented in the three priority areas for all people, including vulnerable persons in conflict areas, where conflicts had occurred in the past and disasters had occurred; strengthening the following basic worksite procedures and rights; and increasing socio-security protection for all people, especially vulnerable workers and peoples. As it has been drawn up in coordination with the development policy of the State and linked to SDGs (sustainable development goals), it will allow technical



MoU being signed by officials from ILO at Myanmar Decent Work Country Programme in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

and vocational work capacity development in youths and those who had come of age, enable them to acquire appropriate work and obtain increased social protections. By strengthening and observation of worksite basic rules and rights, it will support the country's development and poverty reduction, said the Union Minister.

Next, ILO Deputy Director General Mr. Greg Vines delivered a message of greetings and ILO Liaison Officer Rory Mungoven explained about the implementation of

the program.

Afterwards, the Union Minister, ILO Deputy Director General, three employer representatives and three employee representatives signed the MoU, followed by an employee representative and an employer representative delivering words of appreciation.

The event was attended by invited guests from embassies, representatives from programme implementing ministries, employer and employee representatives. — MNA ■

Trade Mark Ads

Call
Thin Thin May,

09251022355,
09974424848

Cash assistance benefits disabled people, construction of houses for locals in Rakhine State: Union Minister

MINISTRY of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement provided cash assistance to people with disabilities and to construct houses for ethnic people in Rakhine State yesterday.

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye and Deputy Minister U Soe Aung attended a ceremony to provide cash assistance to people with disabilities, held at U Ottama Hall in Sittway, and handed over Ks282 million to Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu for 9,421 disabled persons in Rakhine State.

Following the ceremony, the delegation led by Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye held talks with local authorities at the Rakhine State Hluttaw's meeting hall over socio-economic development works in the state.



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye attends a ceremony to provide cash assistance to people with disabilities at U Ottama Hall in Sittway yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is committed to development of Rakhine State, as the state is least developed one among regions

and states in the country, said Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye, chairman of the Resettlement and Socio-Economic Development Work Committee for

Rakhine State.

He urged the MPs of the Rakhine State Hluttaw and the people to cooperate with the committee in its efforts for the

development of socio-economic life of the people.

At the meeting, Dr. Win Myat Aye and officials concerned replied the questions raised by MPs over the current situation of the state.

Following the meeting, the Union Minister attended a ceremony to fund construction of a centre for raising disaster awareness and free-education service and construction of houses for ethnic people in Maungtau Township.

At the ceremony, Union Minister presented Ks100 million for construction of the centre and Ks325 million for construction of houses for ethnic people. At the ceremony, Israeli Ambassador Mr. Daniel Zonshine handed over four water purifiers donated by UEHRD and CITF to Chief Minister U Nyi Pu.—MNA ■

MR, ROK train companies seek ways to improve train services in Myanmar

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung held talks with Mr. Kim Tae Ho, Chief Executive Officer of Seoul Metro, at the company's head office in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, on 18 September over metro train services.

At the meeting, they sought prospects for cooperation in metro train services between Myanma Railways (MR) and Seoul Metro. The Union Minister visited the state-run KORAIL Company in Daejeon and met with Senior Vice President of KORAIL Mr. Chung In-Soo.

At the meeting, they sought ways for signing MoU on coop-



Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung holds talks with Mr. Kim Tae Ho, Chief Executive Officer of Seoul Metro. **PHOTO: MNA**

eration of train technology between Myanma Railways and KORAIL and upgrading Man-

dalay-Myitkyina railroad section with loan from the ROK.—MNA ■

Union Attorney-General receives Danish Ambassador

UNION Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo received Ambassador of Denmark to Myanmar H.E. Mr. John Nielsen at the guest hall of Union Attorney-General's Office yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, matters related to implementing rule of law and human rights work under MoU (memorandum of understanding) signed between Embassy of Denmark and Union Attorney-General office, status of transforming legal frameworks related to eco-

nomie sector to create a good investment environment, sharing experience for legal sector development, future cooperation works, research works conducted by Union Attorney-General Office and work processes for human resources development were discussed.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint, Permanent Secretary Daw Nu Nu Yin and Director General Daw Khin Cho Ohn.—MNA ■



Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo receives Danish Ambassador Mr. John Nielsen yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Buddhist organisations to contact Int. Affairs Cluster for assistance

WITH the aim of perpetuation and propagation of Theravada Sasana not only in the country but abroad as well the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee had formed an International Affairs Cluster under Education Sub Group on 1 November 2016.

Buddhist organisations and individuals in foreign countries and Sanghas sent abroad by State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee can contact International Affairs Cluster if any assistance is required for international affairs at www.mahana.org.mm (both in My-

anmar and English languages) or contact email tharwi2016@gmail.com, International Affairs Cluster Assistant Director Daw Moe Moe San, at telephone no. 09-255981857, 09-73132302 and International Affairs Cluster office phone and fax 01-661746.—MNA ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

DEPUTY CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.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

COMPUTER TEAMTun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Thein Htwe**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01)8604529,
Fax - (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
www.facebook.com/TheGNLMTHE GLOBAL
NEW LIGHT OF
MYANMAR

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Write for usWe appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

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

Yangon Expo, Thai Products Fair launched in Yangon

YANGON Expo and Thai Products Fair was launched on Friday, 21 September, at Tatmadaw Exhibition Hall in Yangon, with the aim of promoting bilateral relations and trade between Myanmar and Thailand.

During the four-day expo, a wide variety of commodities from international countries, including computers and related accessories, electronic components, fashion products, medicine and furniture, are being displayed for sale through over 150 booths, between 9 am and 6 pm daily.

The trade fair will last until 24 September, showcasing electrical devices, clothing, medicine and related products used in agriculture and livestock industry, construction equipment, kitchen utensils, foodstuff and other miscellaneous items.

Thailand is one of the top investors and partner trading countries of Myanmar. In its



Yangon Expo and Thai Products Fair being launched at Tatmadaw Exhibition Hall in Yangon.

PHOTO: KHIN MAUNG WIN

trade report, the Ministry of Commerce stated that Myanmar imported Thai products valued at over US\$800 million in the first four months of the pres-

ent six-month financial period.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, Thailand's new investment in Myanmar

reached US\$45.5 million at the end of this August. It's investment in Myanmar in the previous 2017-2018 fiscal year was \$123 million in total.—Ko Htet ■

Ks6 million project aims to upgrade maternity building, toilets

A PROJECT to construct a new rural maternity building and new toilets has been implemented in Khawtaw Village, Reinbo Village-tract, Mabein Township, Momeik District, Shan State (North), with the use of over Ks6 million budget.

This is a part of the first year

people-centered development project, implemented by Rural Development Department with the assistance of World Bank to enable rural communities to benefit from improved access to and use of basic infrastructure and services through a people-centered approach.

Under the project, villagers themselves are participating in building a 27ft x 12ft x 10ft maternity clinic plus two toilets, which will be 10 feet long, five feet wide and five feet high, respectively, starting on 14 September, with the assistance of technicians from the people-centered pro-

ject.

Currently, there are about 137 households in Khawtaw Village. The establishment of new health facilities is mainly aimed at offering better health-care services to the residents than before.—Min Myintmo (Ngazun) ■

Fire in Myitnge, no death reported

A fire occurred at a two-storey house in Uyindaw Village, Myitnge Town, Amarapura Township in Mandalay Region, on early Friday morning, according to a police report.

Due to a problem in house wiring, the flame started at

around 1 am at the 20ft x 30ft wooden house, owned by U Myo Min Soe, located beside road between Sagaing and Myitnge towns on 21 September, damaging the upper storey of the house. However, nobody is believed to have been injured

in the fire, according to investigators.

Over 80 firefighters put out the blaze with the use of eight fire engines. The flame was brought under control within 25 minutes, thanks to the assistance of residents and police.

The township fire service department calculated that the losses incurred in the fire were worth approximately Ks1.4 million. The house owner has been charged for his negligence under the existing law.—Maung Maung Soe (Myitnge) ■

Yaba worth over Ks 8.9 million seized in Mansi Township

AUTHORITIES seized Yaba tablets, opium/raw opium and heroin worth Ks 89,440,000 on Han Htet-Mantha-Si U road in Mansi Township, Kachin State, on 20 September.

According to an investigation, a combined team comprising officers and staff stopped and searched a motorbike heading for Han Htet village

from Mantha driven by Kyaw Zin Lat (alias) Ei Kyar, 32, and found 42,900 Yaba tablets worth Ks 85,800,000, opium/raw opium weighing 400 grams worth Ks 600,000 and heroin weighing 38 grams worth Ks 3,040,000. Police have filed charges against him under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Township IPRD ■



Suspect Kyaw Zin Lat (alias) Ei Kyar. **PHOTO: TOWNSHIP IPRD**

Viet Nam-Myanmar Trade & Investment Promotion event held

By May Thet Hnin

VIET NAM and Myanmar counterparts discussed trade and investment promotion, and opportunities and challenges between the two countries, at an event held yesterday at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) office.

This event was jointly organized by the UMFCCI and Viet Nam-ASEAN Economic Development Cooperation Association, with 50 Vietnamese businesspersons in attendance.

Most of them are engaged primarily in construction equipment manufacturing, real estate service, teaching aids production, health care service, traditional medicine, heavy construction, finance, painting and coating, urban electric supply, purified water production, edible bird nest industry, agriculture and agro-based food production, vegetable production and rubber production. At the event, officials from UMFCCI explained investment opportunities in Myanmar, under Myanmar Investment Law and Myanmar Special Economic Zone Law, prioritized



Viet Nam-Myanmar Trade & Investment Promotion event being held at UMFCCI in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

export/import items and foreign investment sectors in Myanmar.

Investors can make investments in agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries, urbanization, tourism and hospitality, electric power, manufacturing, infrastructure development, extractive industries (minerals, oil and gas) and forestry-based industries.

“Myanmar has managed to facilitate business procedures, ensuring no delay. I hope this event will bring those respective businesspersons from two countries together to discuss

their challenges and cooperate in trade promotion to keep up with trade values in the previous fiscal years”, said U Kyaw Dewa, Joint Secretary General of UMFCCI.

Ms. Vo Thi Ngoc Diep, Commercial Counselor from Viet Nam Embassy in Myanmar, said that bilateral trade grew by over 50 per cent in the late 2017. Myanmar has infrastructure difficulties, such as electricity, transportation, but its human resource is appealing to investors.

Viet Nam and Myanmar have close diplomatic relations for over 70 years. I believe this

discussion will bring about bilateral economic development. We invite Myanmar companies to make a business tour to Viet Nam, said Mr. Nguyen Thanh Hoan, vice president of Viet Nam-ASEAN Economic Development Cooperation Association.

At present, construction equipment, motorcycle spare parts, machines, and plastic products are primarily imported from Viet Nam. Myanmar’s import surpassed export in trading with Viet Nam. Bilateral trade was recorded at US\$494 million in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, with

export worth \$88 million and import valued \$405.7 million. In the 2017-2018 FY, export was estimated at \$127.5 million, while import was valued \$587 million, totaling \$714.8 million. Between April and July in the mini-budget period, trade values were \$274 million, comprising \$84 million in export and \$190 million in import.

There are 20 Vietnamese corporations permitted by Myanmar Investment Commission, including Viettel Group, the Association of Vietnamese Business Investors in Myanmar (AVIM) with 33 Vietnamese businessmen, Zamil Steel, Hoang Anh Gia Lai Group, DHG Pharmaceutical JSC, FPT, the Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam (BIDV), Bac Viet Steel Group, Golden Wealth and Universal Link Services and Golden Export Import Consultancy and Trade.

Since 1988, 20 Vietnamese enterprises have brought US\$2.1 billion into the country. Viet Nam is placed seventh on the list of foreign investment of permitted enterprises, constituting 2.74 per cent of overall foreign investment. ■

Bilateral trade with Thailand worth \$1.7 billion

THE value of trade between Myanmar and the neighbouring country Thailand reached US\$1.7 billion, comprising export worth \$967 million and import valued \$803.7 million, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Thailand tops on regional trade line-up with the largest trade value. Myanmar primarily exports fishery products, such as crab, fish and shrimp, as well as onions, sesame, dry tea leaves, coconut and turmeric, while consumer goods, cosmetic machinery,

food products, agricultural equipment and track cars are imported into the country from Thailand.

Bilateral trade was registered at \$5 billion in the 2017-2018 FY, \$4.28 billion in the 2016-2017 FY, \$4.86 billion in the 2015-16 FY, \$5.7 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, \$5.6 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, \$4.68 billion in the 2012-2013 FY and \$4.5 billion in the 2011-2012 FY.

There are 75 existing Thailand-listed enterprises in Myanmar, with capitals estimated at \$3.94 billion. — GNLM ■

No state-owned business organisations run with Yangon Region budget: Minister

By Nyein Nyein

THERE are no state-owned business organisations that are run with Yangon Region fund, said Yangon Region Minister for Planning and Finance U Myint Thuang.

The minister was responding to a question raised by U Thawdar Aung of Sangyoung Township constituency 2, during the seventh regular meeting of Second Yangon Region Hluttaw on 22 September.

The question was whether there are any state-owned business organisations that were operated with Yangon Region budget and if yes, how many organisations there are, and what type of businesses are being conducted.

Minister U Myint Thuang said “Beginning from fiscal year 2016-2017, there are no state-owned business organisations that are running with Yangon Region fund. In his second question, Hluttaw representative U Thawdar Aung asked if there were any special cases/works

in Yangon Region that were being conducted with Union fund, support and loan. The minister replied that there are some works that are being conducted with Union fund in fiscal year 2015-2016 and they were rural development and poverty reduction programme, township development and management support works and farmland creation for landless farmers. In his third question, U Thawdar Aung asked if any foreign aid were received from fiscal year 2016-2017 to date, and if yes, the amount and where it was used.

To this, the minister replied that from FY 2013-2014 to FY 2016-2017, Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) has received Yen 1,900 million (Ks 19,730.930 million) to implement a project for urgent improvement, of water supply system in Yangon City under grant aid agreement, in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The minister added that since FY 2017-2018, no foreign aid was received.

However, YCDC received ODA loan from JICA amounting to Ks 3,025.773 million in FY 2016-2017, Ks 21,662.757 million in FY 2017-2018, Ks 41,425.000 million in April to September 2018 and estimated Ks 77,593.000 million in FY 2018-2019 for Lagunpyin water supply project, consultant fee for MY-P5 project, water distribution pipes with meters and chlorination system in Zone 7 Dagon Myothit (east and north) and Zone 8 Dagon Myothit (Seikkan and south).

In addition to this, YCDC is also hiring consultant, constructing Kokkowa River water treatment plant (60 MGD), installing pumps at pumping stations, connecting water distribution pipes, constructing zone-wise metered water distribution system in Zone 1, conducting water collection tank work and associated work for Kokkowa water distribution MY-P19 project. For these works, YCDC has received ODA loans Ks 4,012.5 million in April to September 2018 and estimated Ks 20,000 million in FY 2018-2019. ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Trade Mark Ads

Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355, 09974424848

Union Farmer-Labour Force Party presents policy, stance and work program



Chairman U Min Thu.

CHAIRMAN U Min Thu of Union Farmer-Labour Force Party presented the party's policy, stance and work program on radio and TV on 21 September.

Following is a translation of the presentation:

Esteemed farmers and workers,
I wish you all happiness.

I am, U Min Thu, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Union Farmer-Labour Force Party.

First, I would like to thank the chair of the Union Election Commission, the President of the Union, the MRTV staff of the Ministry of Information for allowing us to present the definition of our emblem and our policy, stance and work program and the people watching the TV or listening to the radio for allowing youths to brilliantly take part in politics. As the chair of the party, I thank farmers for providing us our staple food.

The Union Farmer-Labour Force Party applied for party formation on 29 April 2015. We were permitted to set up the party under registration No. 99 on 4 August 2015. Our central executive committee is formed with true farmers and workers, three lawyers and legal experts.

As an acknowledgment to the gratitude we owe to farmers and blue and white collar workers, and to express their strength globally, our flag bears the image of a farmer harvesting the field with a sickle and the pinion, the symbol of workers.

Voters and the people,

The name of our party shall be called "Union Farmer-Labour Force Party" in English. The party is named and formed to harmoniously strive together with successive governments for the emergence of a discipline-flourishing democratic state for ensuring peace and tranquility of the entire farmers and workers and for them to enjoy global notice and respect.

The meaning of the party flag and emblem is:

- (a) The red flag has 14 stars in equal size and a pinion bearing the picture of an active and smiling farmer harvesting his

field in its green centre.

(b) The red colour stands for the courage of farmers and workers and the loyalty towards the country. The 14 stars represent the 14 regions and states, and the equality of all the national brethren without any discrimination.

(c) The pinion stands for the entire nationalities of the country.

(d) The green colour represents peace, stability and progress of the nation through the force of farmers and workers.

(e) The smiling and active farmer represents the father's spirit to feed the children despite the hardships he is facing, and without letting his children know the hardships.

(f) The picture of harvesting the field with sickle means that efforts will be made through the force of farmers to ensure constant food safety for the country.

(g) The hands of the farmers holding sickles and workers stand for their national spirit to ward off any interference in the state's sovereignty together with the Tatmadaw.

The party uses the same picture for its flag and emblem.

Voters and the people,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is formed with 135 national races living in all 14 regions and states. So all the nationalities own the country based on equality, liberty, justice, unity. The party was formed to develop the social lives of rural farmers through the development of mechanized farming and to develop the industries for the progress of workers in building a peaceful and modern Union.

Farmers and workers are the great majority of the agro-based country. So, taking the combined force of farmers and workers, we have established our party for harmoniously joining hands with the successive governments in accord with the Section 21(a) of Chapter I, which states "Every citizen shall enjoy the right of equality, the right of liberty and the right of justice, as prescribed in this Constitution" and the Section 347 of Chapter VIII which states, "The

Union shall guarantee any person to enjoy equal rights before the law and shall equally provide legal protection" in view of the peace and progress of the Union.

Voters and the people,

We have the following policy:

(a) Farmers and workers serving the interest of the 51 million people is always ready to join hands with the Tatmadaw in safeguarding the Republic of Union of Myanmar if there is any intrusion of its sovereignty.

(b) Our stance is to transfer the sovereign power to the people as the Republic of Union of Myanmar is based on independent sovereign democratic system for transparent human community.

(c) We will find an answer to end the conflicts we have faced since the country regained independence for the national reconciliation through peaceful dialogue based on national outlook, and will always safeguard the national interest with the strength of farmers and workers of the Union without betraying the national cause.

(d) We seriously stand for fulfilling the aspiration of the people that is the Union formed with the states of the national races which have equality and self-determination.

(e) In accordance with the right to form transparent organizations representing the masses and classes, we support and make way for the formation of:

- (i) organizations representing the farmers,
- (ii) organizations representing the workers,
- (iii) organizations representing the nationality entrepreneurs,
- (iv) women and youth organizations,
- (v) student union.

As regards the judicial policy, legislation plays the main role in ensuring peace and stability. So no one should be above the law. There will be the rule of law only if the government and the entire people observe it on equal terms.

There must be land ownership law for the farmers, and the seizure of any farm should be in accord with the respective law. A law must be enacted for workers to enjoy a decent wage. There must be the Ministry of Labour that accepts the responsibility and the accountability under law for providing due compensation for farmers who are injured or lost limbs in the worksite. In accord with the 2008 Constitution, all must support the rule of law and fully enjoy the legal protection.

Health is the main concern for poor farmers and workers. So we need a lot of health staff. Currently fewer number of health staff arrives at villages where transport is poor. We will seriously deal with the matter.

As for the economic policy, we are an agro-based country where



Party logo.

the population of poor farmers and workers is high. The nation will develop and stand tall only if the situation of grassroots improves. So we will give priority to stabilizing the rice prices and market for ensuring a better economic situation for farmers and workers. We will also make contacts between nationality entrepreneurs and foreign investors.

As regards the education policy, education is the main requirement for the country to stand shoulder to shoulder with its foreign counterparts. So the education standard must be high. A large number of teachers is required in the rural areas. Knowledge plays the main role in changing from manual to mechanized farming. Farmers need knowledge to learn technology and systematically use farm equipment provided by cooperative societies and companies under installment system. In this way, we can pave the way for development of mechanized farming.

There are less schools and teachers in places where transportation is poor. Till now, village heads from those areas are hiring daily-wage teachers under and monthly paid system. As those teachers are not systematically trained at the education colleges, there is no development as expected. We will solve this problem.

Voters and the people,

The party took part in the general election held on 8 November 2015, as well as the by-election held on 1 April 2011. But the voters failed to put our candidates into the parliament. So the demonstrations calling for help will produce no results, except tarnishing the image of the government elected by the people. So we will take part in the coming by-election from Thabeikyin Township constituency, PyinOoLwin District, Mandalay Region, to present at the parliament, matters in connection with the weakness in providing legal protection for farmers and workers.

Voters and the people,

In our programs, in the interest of farmers and workers, during the post-by-election period, we will look into some of the weaknesses they are facing throughout the past successive years in the parliament and outside the parliament.

The party is rendering help to farmers at various places in accord with the law. In some instances, farmers were jailed for mistaken land ownership registration numbers. Although farmers got back their seized land under the current government, only temporary per-

mits are issued for them. They are facing a lot of difficulties to obtain permanent permits. We will coordinate with the relevant ministry to solve the matter.

We will work

- (i) to ensure that agricultural loans reach the real farmers;
- (ii) for enacting a law that guarantees responsibility and accountability by entrepreneurs and merchants in distributing quality seeds;
- (iii) for providing chemical fertilizers at reasonable prices;
- (iv) for fixing favourable prices and establishing markets for the crops;
- (v) for conducting training to transform to mechanized farming;
- (vi) for the real farmers to get loans based on the acres they are growing;
- (vii) for issuing permanent permits only to real farmers;
- (viii) for building production roads in every village;
- (ix) coordinating with the government in office to protect the farm where crops are actually cultivated from any seizures;
- (x) handing back over the seized farms to original owners under consultation with the government and the Ministry of Home Affairs for the happiness of farmers;
- (xi) coordinating with the government and the relevant ministries for opening special welfare shops for poor workers and for entrepreneurs and companies to guarantee responsibility and accountability for the rights of workers for the farmers and worker to stand tall

Voters and the people,

Our country is built with sincere farmers and workers. They are like the stars in the sky. Stars can give light only when the sky is clear. Only if the President, the State Counsellor and the speakers of the three Hluttaws make efforts to develop farmers and workers with sunshine-like goodwill, they can produce back light to the country. Our flag bears the image of a farmer representing his counterparts and the pinion representing the workers. So farmers and workers should not misunderstand our message. We urge them to elect the candidates who will boldly present matters in their interest at the parliament. May your dreams come true and may you be happy.

Thank you.

Translated by TMT

Myanmar-Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrol

A COORDINATED patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted at the border mile posts 51 to 51/5 from 9:15 am to 11:45 am on 20 September.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Sub-inspector Myint Maung from No.5 Border Police sub-division (Aung Thabyae), Area 1, Maungtau Township, and the Bangladesh patrol was led by NaibSubedar Md. Salim Mlah of No. 11 Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB).

Similarly, on the same day, another coordinated patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted at the border mile posts 39 to 40 from 8:30 am to 12:40 pm.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Inspector Kyaw Zaw Oo from No.1 Border Police sub-division (TaungPyo), Area 3, Maungtau Township, and the Bangladesh patrol was led by Subedar Md. Delowar



Police officials from Myanmar and Bangladesh conducting the coordinated patrol. **PHOTO: MYANMAR POLICE FORCE**

Hassain of No. 34 BGB.

Likewise, on the same day at 10:10 am, a troop of border police led by Police Captain Maung Maung Yin of No.2 Border Police sub-division (N-gakhuya) station conducted a coordinated patrol with two water crafts along the Naf River.

The troop in the two water crafts met with Bangladesh's troop led by SubedarAbRazzak of BGB 2 in two water crafts at the middle of the Naf River and patrolled together along the river at 10:30 am, according to the Police Information Department. — Myanmar Police Force ■

Inaugural ASEAN Prize seeks nomination

THE ASEAN Secretariat is calling for nominations for the first ASEAN Prize, which aims to recognize inspiring achievements and contributions of an individual or organization that foster the ASEAN identify, promote the ASEAN spirit, and champion the ASEAN way in designated focus areas such as:

- (a) collaboration between ASEAN Member States;
- (b) collaboration between ASEAN and the world;
- (c) people-to-people engagement among ASEAN Member States;
- (d) economic integration and promotion of standards between Member States, or
- (e) outstanding contributions towards ASEAN Community Building

A judging committee, consisting of incumbent and past Secretaries-General of ASEAN, will select the eventual winner, who will be awarded a cash prize of US\$ 20,000. The inaugural prize will be presented at the ASEAN Leaders Summit in November 2018.

To be eligible, the nominee must be a citizen or an organization in any ASEAN Member States. The nominee must demonstrate verifiable achievements for the period of April 2017 to March 2018. The nominee should also share their future plans in continuing the work after winning the prize.

Submissions are open from now until 27-9-2018 and the nominee can submit his/her or the organization's information and achievements to the ASEAN Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office No.9, Nay Pyi Taw or dgasean@gmail.com.

For further information, please visit <http://asean.org/?stat-icpost-asean-prize-2018>. ■

World Business

Hot tech sector prompts shakeup in S&P 500 stock indexes

NEW YORK — The hot and rapidly changing tech sector has prompted the S&P 500 stock index to reshuffle its components, opening up more chances to invest in Google, Netflix, Facebook and other stars after Friday's trading session.

Facebook did not yet exist and flip phones were cutting edge in 1999 when the industry classification system was launched, but much has changed in tech, telecommunications and media. The reorganization of the industry groupings, the biggest in the history of the system, affects three of the 11 sectors within the S&P 500. A new "communication services" group has been created that will be bigger and more growth-oriented than the sleepy "telecommunication services" sector it is replacing.

The change will split some the five "FAANG" behemoths associated with the stock market's surge into different groups, allowing investors to have more exposure to the

companies.

The shift comes only weeks after Apple and Amazon eclipsed \$1 trillion in market capitalization and shows again how technology companies are moving into ever-expanding economic terrain.

"The ways in which people communicate and seek information have transformed," S&P Dow Jones Indices said.

"Integration between telecommunications, media, and internet companies in terms of both infrastructure and content have advanced the communication industry into a much broader field as evidenced by the convergence between telecom and cable companies."

The rejiggering of the groups will lead to a shifting of billions of dollars of shares in these companies, especially through exchange-traded funds that are linked to S&P sectors.

While analysts do not expect a pickup in volatility because the move was announced last year, further investment in technology is likely because

there will now be two groups heavily weighted to the sector instead of one.

"Because some portfolio managers might have a restriction on how much they can go in, if they want more exposure on the technology, this will be one way to do it," said Quincy Krosby, chief market strategist at Prudential Financial.

The change will leave Apple as the only "FAANG" member in the "information technology" group.

Facebook and Google — through its parent Alphabet — were shifted to the new communication services group from information technology, while Netflix, another FAANG member, was moved into the new group from the consumer discretionary sector. The fifth FAANG member, Amazon, will remain in the consumer discretionary group. Other prominent companies moved into communication services include Disney, Comcast, Twenty-First Century Fox, eBay, Twitter and CBS.—AFP ■

Expired food burnt by officials in Gangaw



Expired and inappropriate foods being burnt under the arrangement of the Gangaw District FDA. **PHOTO: KYAW THAN SWE**

EXPIRED and inappropriate foods were burnt under the arrangement of the Gangaw District Food and Administration Department (FDA).

The burning of expired and inappropriate foods was conducted three times in Gangaw Township, four times in Htilin Township and one time in Kyaukhtu Town, according to Gangaw District FDA. The burning was conducted in the compounds of a school in Gangaw. Informative talks on food safety were conducted, following the burning of the

expired and inappropriate foods, by the students and teachers of the schools, said Daw Soe Yu Swe, head of Gangaw Township FDA.

U Myint Oo, an official from Pakokku consumer affairs department, also gave a talk about inappropriate foods. The ceremony was attended by departmental officials, students and teachers from schools. Burnt foods include expired and inappropriate foods and also beverages confiscated from food shops in Kyaukhtu Town it is learnt. — Kyaw Than Swe ■

Human Rights Council on wrong side of history over Rakhine issue

THE Myanmar delegation has rejected the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (IFFM) on Myanmar since its establishment by the Human Rights Council in March 2017, saying it would not contribute to Myanmar's efforts to bring national reconciliation, peace, and inclusive and sustainable development in Rakhine State.

The Government has therefore made it clear that it would not be able to accept its mandate and the results of its findings.

There are many obvious reasons to question the impartiality and objectivity of the IFFM's report.

The way the report portrayed about the national races of Myanmar is misleading.

Unilateral criticism or exerting pressure is actually not helpful in resolving the complex issues with historical, religious and ethnic backgrounds.

Again, the report turned a deaf ear to terrorist attacks in Rakhine State.

The danger of terrorist activities, which was the initial cause of events leading to the humanitarian crisis in Rakhine, remains real and present today.

Regarding the repatriation of displaced people, we hope to work with Bangladesh to conduct the voluntary, safe and dignified return of displaced people from northern Rakhine. Myanmar was ready to receive returnees since Jan 23. But Bangladesh will have to decide how quickly it wants the process to be completed and should take an example from how Myanmar and Thailand are working together to amicably resolve the issue of four million Myanmar migrant workers and displaced people in Thailand.

Myanmar has implemented 81 out of its 88 recommendations taking a pragmatic approach to finding a long-term solution to the Rakhine issue.

But, the challenges are multi-faceted and require multi-tasking. We also recognize the crucial role of the United Nations in addressing an issue of this nature. The government of Myanmar has also signed an MOU with UNDP and UNHCR that aims at assisting speedy and efficient resettlement and rehabilitation.

The implementation of the MOU has been commenced and the UN teams are now on the ground carrying out the first phase of their assessment.

It is time for the international community to be a part of the Myanmar government's efforts to solve the Rakhine issue.

No country can replace Myanmar in resolving the Rakhine issue. The Human Rights Council should take Myanmar's actual situation into consideration, instead of intimidating it.

We established the Independent Commission of Enquiry to make an inquiry into the alleged accusations of human rights violations.

IFFM's report is based on interviews with selected groups of displaced people in Cox's Bazar and information gathered from some NGOs, INGOs and human right groups. They did not even bother to interview non-Muslims displaced people staying in Cox's Bazaar.

Their accusations are based on the stories told by those alleged victims living under continuous threat and influence of the ARSA terrorist group and not supported by concrete evidence.

Unless it ends its silence about the appalling crimes against non-Muslim ethnic minorities in Rakhine State, the UN Human Rights Council will be left on the wrong side of history.

National Unity Party paper read at 2018 International Day of Democracy ceremony

GREETINGS and well wishes to honourable Hluttaw Speakers, Union Election Commission Chairman, Union Ministers, Hluttaw Representatives, representatives from political parties, diplomats and special guests,

I am Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Jayyaw Gu of Kachin State constituency 1. The title of the paper I will read on the occasion of International Day of Democracy is, "Let's all over-sight." Here in this ceremony, I am going to present the National Unity Party's opinion and stance in the process of democratization.

Esteemed democracy admirers,

Democracy, in general, is a system in which people themselves can take part in the administration sector for the people. We have formed Hluttaws, consisting of elected representatives, chosen by people in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2008) and are striving with our



U Jayyaw Gu

strenuous efforts to become a successful modern democratic nation. In the implementation process of modern democracy,

we have made cooperation by performing our duties conscientiously. In adopting a democratic system, minorities should respect decisions made by the majority, and the majority should rule with respect to the wishes of the minority. In essence, we call it, "One for all, all for one."

Our motherland being composed of a variety of ethnic races, all the nationalities are entitled (1) to have equal rights among the ethnic races; (2) to have self-determination; (3) to have right to live as a race; (4) to have equal rights for development as the other races. Our party assumes that they should have guarantees to get equal rights and privileges for the interests of our country. The presentation I would like to make is that we need to work together in carrying out the implementation process that can shape the development of the regions and the states. Efforts are needed to make significant progress in the entire nation, aiming to get benefits and interests for one's own race as

well as for all the other entire ethnic races.

Esteemed democracy admirers,

As people who deserve to enjoy the essence of democracy, the country should be free, and as a sovereign state, it should stand tall as a peaceful and dignified country in the world. Although we have achieved our independence through the collective strength and unity of the people, we experienced armed conflicts soon after becoming independent, and as a consequence, that hampered the development and democratization process to some extent. We have witnessed all ethnic races undergoing a lot of sufferings due to the longstanding armed conflicts. As for our people and union, it is of great importance to end the conflicts that occurred across the country, and to bring about everlasting and sustainable peace among the states and regions. Therefore, these are fundamental needs of our Union that can

pave the way for the ethnic races to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). Also, we all have to share the challenge of the Rakhine State issue. This is our national duty. We have to stand with the Rakhine locals. Or else, it can become the most dangerous issue for the entire country. We have to be vigilant about it!

Esteemed democracy admirers,

The 21st century Panglong Conference is being held with the aim of maintaining the sovereignty of the state and gaining everlasting peace for the entire people and the country. In order to gain success, our party will actively participate in this peace process. We can call it, "All Inclusive Active Participatory". I would like to conclude my paper by urging all of you to contribute to a thriving democratization process.

Thank you.

(Unofficial translation)

Wa Democratic Party paper read at 2018 International Day of Democracy ceremony

GREETINGS and well wishes for health and prosperity to Union-level officials, representatives from international organizations and political parties and special guests.

I am U Kyin Won, Pyithu Hluttaw representative from Hapan Township constituency. First, I would like to express my thanks to all of you for allowing me to present my paper titled, "Assisting for a sustainable democracy", on behalf of Wa Democratic Party, on the occasion of 2018 International Day of Democracy. The title of my paper is very important and it plays an important role in the democratization for our ethnic country.

Our country is striving to implement the democracy process, in accordance with the 2008 Con-

stitution. The pillars of democratic government include legislative, administrative, judiciary powers that can check and balance one another. Hluttaw is regarded as one of the key roles in running the democratization process with its legislative power. As long as the legislative Hluttaw is strong with high capacity and democratic standards, democracy system will be established. Therefore, as Hluttaw Representatives, we need to make check and balance in order for our democratic system to thrive.

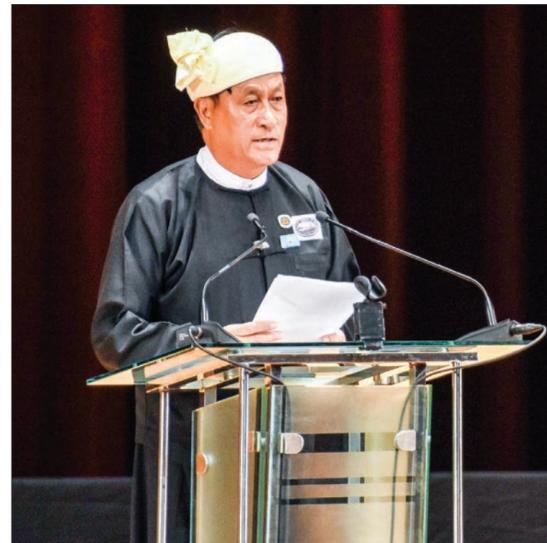
The essence of democracy is that people themselves are entitled to take part in the process, because democracy is a system where they have the right to elect their government.

All democratic countries are

in need of flourishing democratic culture, and only if we can firmly practice a democratic system, will we enjoy a democratic society.

In order to become strong in the democratic practices of our society, we should widely conduct educative programmes that can make these practices strong. Everyone should be aware of responsibility and accountability, and cooperation is needed to do so. All are needed to make checks and balances to establish a flourishing democracy. In doing so, we need to make counterchecks person to person, policy to policy, and action to action.

If we can take part in the process of utilizing democratic values, we can enjoy the fruitful results of democracy. Democratic system can be strong and



U Kyin Won

flourished as long as the new generations abide by human rights, rule of law and gender equality.

According to the principles of democratic norms, people can safeguard democracy by adopting its principles. Only then our democracy will strongly flourish, and a system of democracy will emerge, based on equality and mutual respect for entire ethnic races.

Therefore, I would like to conclude my paper by urging all citizens to actively participate in the democratization process in accordance with the theme of the 2018 International Day of Democracy. By working together, we can build a democratic federal union together!

Thank you.

(Unofficial translation)

Cyclone Warning

According to the observations at (05:30)hrs M.S.T today, the Cyclonic Storm "DAYE" over Northwest Bay of Bengal has crossed Andhra Pradesh coast near Gopalpur (India). It is forecast to move West-Northwestwards and weakened gradually into deep depression.

Storm DAYE makes landfall after crossing Odisha Coast

ACCORDING to the observations yesterday, the Cyclonic Storm "DAYE" over Northwest Bay of Bengal has crossed Andhra Pradesh coast near Gopalpur (India) on Thursday night. It moved West-Northwestwards and weakened gradually into deep depression.

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 22nd September, 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State, scattered in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Chin, Rakhine and Kayah States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavy falls in Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate to rough off and along Rakhine Coasts and slight to moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (9-11)feet off and along Rakhine Coasts and about (4-7)feet off and along Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama and off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of thundery conditions in Central Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd September, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd September, 2018: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd September, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Region and scattered in Yangon Region.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).—
Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

At least 44 dead in Tanzania as ferry capsizes in Lake Victoria



Capsizes — often caused by overloading — are not uncommon in Victoria, Africa's largest lake. **PHOTO: AFP**

NAIROBI — At least 44 people died and scores were feared missing after a ferry capsized in Victoria, Africa's largest lake, with a desperate search for survivors set to resume in Tanzania on Friday.

There were "more than a hundred passengers" on board the vessel when it sank Thursday afternoon near Ukara Island in the southeast of the vast lake, which also extends into Uganda and Kenya, a local official said.

"It is feared that a significant number have lost their lives," said George Nyamaha, the head of Ukerewe district council of which the island is a part.

Regional governor John Mongella said late Thursday the toll had reached 44 while 37

others had been rescued, though some of the survivors were in "a very bad condition".

He added that rescue operations had been suspended and would continue on Friday morning.

A statement from Tanzania's Electrical, Mechanical and Services Agency said it was unknown how many passengers were aboard the MV Nyerere.

The ferry was also carrying cargo, including sacks of maize and cement, when it overturned close to the dock.

The cause of the accident was not immediately clear, but overloading is frequently to blame for such incidents.

President John Magufuli's spokesman Gerson Msigwa also

said on state television TBC 1 that the death toll stood at more than 40.

With a surface area of 70,000 square kilometres (27,000 square miles), oval-shaped Lake Victoria is roughly the size of Ireland.

Capsizes are not uncommon in the massive lake, and the number of fatalities is often high due to a shortage of life jackets and the fact that many people in the region cannot swim.

The deadliest such accident in recent decades was in May 1996, when around 800 people died after their ferry sank on its way to Mwanza in Tanzania.

Waters in the lake can be rough and boats are frequently poorly maintained, while ferry operators often fail to record the number of passengers on board.

Around 20 people were killed in December 2016 when their boat overturned in Lake Victoria as it was carrying passengers to Uganda's mainland for Christmas holidays. And in March 2012, only two survivors were found after a boat believed to be carrying around 60 people capsized on the lake in Uganda.

Lake Victoria is the source of the White Nile, one of the main two tributaries of the Nile, which stretches north over nearly 6,700 kilometres into Sudan and Egypt. —AFP ■

South Sudan to source power from neighboring countries to promote growth

JUBA — South Sudan will harness power connection from neighboring countries and build additional hydro power dams to boost its development and growth.

Dhieu Mathok, the minister of dams and electricity, told Xinhua on Thursday that the government will implement deals on power extension previously signed with Ethiopia and Uganda besides working with China to fund the construction of the 1,080-megawatt Fula hydro dam located at Nimule border town with Uganda.

"We are prioritizing electricity and roads. We are currently erecting and rehabilitating electricity network in Juba and the surrounding states. The medium term goal is to connect South Sudan to the region. We are extending electricity from Sudan to Malakal," he said in Juba.

He disclosed that President Salva Kiir's recent visit to Beijing during the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit resulted into the two countries signing an agreement on developing the nascent energy sector in the world's youngest nation which has been disrupted by over four years of conflict.

"We are going to prepare feasibility study and we are going to approach China to see how we can start work on the Fula dam," he said.

The Fula project was supposed to have taken off with support from Norway under Public-private partnership but stalled due to outbreak of conflict in late 2013.

Last year, South Sudan and Ethiopia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which will see Addis Ababa extend electricity to the Eastern parts of South Sudan.

In October 2017, South Sudan reached agreement with neighboring Uganda to extend 15 KV of electricity to the three border areas of Kaya, Nimule and Kajo Keji.

South Sudan is largely a generator-driven economy with continued electricity blackout in the wake of the collapse of the generator power plant operated by the South Sudan Electricity Corporation (SSEC) in 2013.

Mathok also said that the ongoing work on rehabilitating and upgrading the power distribution system in Juba by Power China Company will end by November and will extend to the regions. —Xinhua ■

EU seeks closer North African ties to fight migrant smugglers

SALZBURG (Austria) — EU leaders called Thursday for more intense talks with Egypt and other North African countries to take further steps against illegal migration to Europe, particularly by fighting those who smuggle and traffic them.

Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said leaders meeting in the Austrian city of Salzburg backed the plan and noted that Egypt, at least, is "ready to intensify talks with the European Union".

"I believe that this will be an important further step in the fight against illegal migration, but above all also in the fight against the business of traffickers," Kurz told reporters.

Egypt's foreign ministry confirmed Thursday it has proposed hosting a joint summit of EU and Arab leaders to tackle a range of

issues, including migration.

EU sources said the summit could be held in February. The Cairo-based Arab League includes North African countries Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco as well as those in the Middle East and Gulf.

The EU has previously struck cooperation deals with Turkey and Libya that helped to cut migration to Europe sharply since a 2015 peak, but the bloc wants to expand work with all north African countries.

The 28-nation bloc is increasingly focusing on less controversial plans to bolster its external borders as sharp divisions persist over redistributing asylum seekers who make it to Europe.

Summit host Kurz said the leaders proposed during an opening dinner on Wednesday "that talks be opened with Egypt but

also with other North African states."

"This proposal has been supported by all," Kurz added.

Kurz, whose country holds the EU's six-month rotating presidency, said he and Donald Tusk, the European Council president who chairs summits, will now reach out to the north African countries. He said the signs were encouraging from Egypt, which EU officials said Kurz and Tusk visited on Sunday to discuss deeper cooperation.

Following his return to Brussels, Tusk called for a summit of EU and Arab League leaders.

Migration 'political crisis'

Kurz said Egypt has been "efficient" in the last two years in preventing boats from leaving its shores or forcing them back when they did.



Kurz said the EU leaders meeting in Salzburg had backed the plan. **PHOTO: AFP**

EU sources told reporters that Egypt has set an example in fighting traffickers and smugglers, which could be followed by other North African countries.

They said Tusk will meet for more talks on fighting illegal migration with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York later this month.

Tusk called the informal summit in a bid to defuse sim-

mering tensions over migration.

Since the summer, Italy has repeatedly turned away rescue ships carrying hundreds of African migrants to force other EU member countries to share responsibility for them.

The migrants were finally relocated to member states and non-member Albania on an ad-hoc basis, but EU countries have so far found an overall solution elusive. —AFP ■

'Worst nightmare': Dutch rail collision kills 4 children

THE HAGUE — Four young children from a Dutch daycare centre were killed on Thursday when a train smashed into their electric cart at a crossing, in an accident described as the "worst nightmare of any parent".

Another child and the woman driving the vehicle were critically injured in the accident in Oss, a town near the German border around 110 kilometres (65 miles) southeast of the capital Amsterdam.

Police said they were investigating reports that the brakes had failed on the wagon, which was taking children from daycare to school, as it approached the level crossing.

Two of the children who were killed were aged four, while the others were aged six and eight, ANP news agency said. Two of the dead youngsters and the injured child, who is 11, come from the same family. "Today, every family is hit, and the accident leaves a big gap in families, the daycare centre and school," said Wobine Buijs, the mayor of Oss.

The electric cart, known as a Stint, features a Segway-type standing area for the driver at the back and a large plastic box



Members of the emergency services investigate the scene of the disaster in Oss. PHOTO: AFP

at the front where children sit. **'Screamed for help'**

Reports in Dutch media said the 32-year-old woman driving the wagon had screamed for help after somehow ending up between the closed barriers of the level crossing, and that children's rucksacks could be seen flying in the air when it was hit by the train.

The cart had just dropped some children off at a local school and was on its way to another when the crash happened.

Local police chief Dianne van Gammeren refused to confirm that the driver had tried to

stop but the brakes did not work, saying: "I cannot comment on that at the moment, which is part of the inquiry".

Edwin Renzen, the founder of the Renzen company that makes the Stint wagons, was quoted by NOS broadcaster as saying that "this is the worst nightmare of any parent."

"This is incomprehensible. We are parents and spent years developing the Stints ourselves. I don't know what I can do, but I just have to go to Oss," he was also quoted as saying by the ANP news agency. Around 3,000 Stints are in use throughout the Nether-

lands to transport around 60,000 children weekly, according to Renzen. They are used by many daycare centres to ferry children around towns in the Netherlands, which has a huge network of bicycle paths that they can take.

Officials had earlier said that the children were on a cargo bike, which is similar but smaller and relies on pedal power.

The train, which was carrying 57 passengers from the eastern town of Nijmegen to nearby Den Bosch, was equipped with a front-mounted video camera that will be used in the investigation, officials said.

'Heavy loss'

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte tweeted from an EU summit that he was "deeply affected by the incredibly sad news from Oss where four young children have died in a horrible accident."

"I wish everyone involved much strength with this heavy loss," Rutte said. Queen Maxima of the Netherlands said she and King Willem-Alexander "have no words" and that their "thoughts go out to all families who have lost their children" The head of the Dutch rail infrastructure firm Pro Rail said it was a "day of mourning and sadness."

"This is a rare blow. There will be a thorough investigation, and we will do our utmost to never let this happen again."

It was the sixth such accident at the crossing since 1975, ANP said. In July the Dutch safety board OVV slammed as "unacceptable" the fact that 11 people die in accidents on level crossings every year on average.

It said that "the Netherlands is the only country in Europe with a high volume of train traffic and a large number of level crossings — two features that do not go well together." —AFP ■

Belgian probe implicates Britain in phone spying

BRUSSELS — A confidential report by Belgian investigators confirms that British intelligence services hacked state-owned Belgian telecom giant Belgacom on behalf of Washington, an official said Thursday.

The admission by Belgium is one of the consequences of the myriad revelations made in 2013 by whistleblower Edward Snowden and risks fraying ties between the close allies.

The report, which summarises a five-year judicial inquiry,

is almost complete and was submitted to the office of Justice Minister Koen Geens, a source close to the case told AFP, confirming Belgian press reports.

Snowden, a former contractor for the US National Security Agency, spectacularly uncovered the extent of snooping by the US intelligence services and has been living in exile ever since.

Snowden's trove of data also exposed the NSA's close cooperation with other agencies, such as Britain's GCHQ, which is re-

sponsible for collecting electronic intelligence.

The Belgian probe focused on GCHQ thanks to about twenty slides among Snowden's document trove that expose the targets of GCHQ's hacking.

These include the Belgian company's BICS unit, which handles huge volumes of phone and data traffic in Africa and the Middle East, as well as European customers that included European Union institutions.

The matter will now be discussed within Belgium's National Security Council, which includes the Belgian Prime Minister with top security ministers and officials.

Contacted by AFP, the Belgian Federal Prosecutor's Office and the cabinet of Minister Geens refused to comment.

In the summer of 2013, when the scandal broke, Flemish newspaper *De Standaard* said BICS was central to the spying operation in order to access communications with phone numbers from Middle Eastern countries, including Syria and Yemen. —AFP ■



The "Vox Patris" bell weighs 55 tons and is four metres in height and 4.5 metres in diameter. PHOTO: AFP

One of world's largest bells unveiled in Poland

WARSAW — One of the largest swinging bells in the world, weighing 55 tons (7,850 stone), was unveiled in the Polish city of Krakow on Thursday ahead of being installed at a major pilgrimage site in Brazil.

The "Vox Patris" bell, four metres (13 feet) in height and 4.5 metres in diameter, will eventually be housed in the Basilica of the Eternal Father in the city of Trindade in central Brazil, owner Piotr Olszewski said.

Made from copper and tin, it will be activated by four engines, and once installed will be part of a

tower 100 metres high, he added.

"The preparations and tests lasted almost four years," Olszewski told reporters, acknowledging that the first casting at the Metalodlew foundry in Krakow had been a failure.

"The mold did not hold, micro-cracks appeared which caused leaks," he explained. "It was necessary to start all over again, but the second attempt was successful."

The challenge now is to transport the giant bell to Brazil by boat — a journey expected to take a year. —AFP ■



State-owned telecom giant Belgacom, whose headquarters are seen in Brussels in 2014, was hacked by British intelligence on behalf of the US, according to a confidential report. PHOTO: AFP

Afghan journalists dying in record numbers to report the war

KABUL — Moments after Afghan journalist Samim-Faramarz wrapped up his live report on the latest suicide attack in Kabul, a car bomb exploded just metres away, killing him and his cameraman RamizAhmadi.

Their colleagues at Tolo News choked back tears as they reported the deaths live on air — cracking open a divisive debate on how Afghan journalists should operate in such a dangerous environment.

The deaths of Faramarz and Ahmadi on September 5 took the number of journalists and media workers killed in Afghanistan this year to 14, making the country the deadliest in the world for the media.

Among the dead were

13 journalists — the highest number killed in Afghanistan in a single year since the start of the war.

The losses have devastated the tight-knit community that faces the real prospect of tragedy every time they go to work. “When we leave our homes we don’t know whether we will go back alive,” said 1TV reporter Hamid Haidary, who keeps a photo shrine of fallen journalists on a shelf above his desk. Haidary had gone to the scene of the explosion that killed Faramarz and Ahmadi, but returned to his office minutes before the second bomb detonated. “It is already too much for us,” agreed Lotfullah Najafizada, director of Tolo, which

is Afghanistan’s largest private broadcaster.

As security in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate, the fear and anxiety is ever-present, he added.

“It is not just about the blast site, it is going to a province, it is coming to the office or being in the office — they all are attached to risks and it is difficult sometimes to minimise all of them to zero.” Sixty journalists and media workers have been killed in Afghanistan since the US-led invasion in 2001 that toppled the Taliban regime and enabled independent media to blossom in its wake — an average of around three a year, according to Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

Afghan media support group NAI gave an even

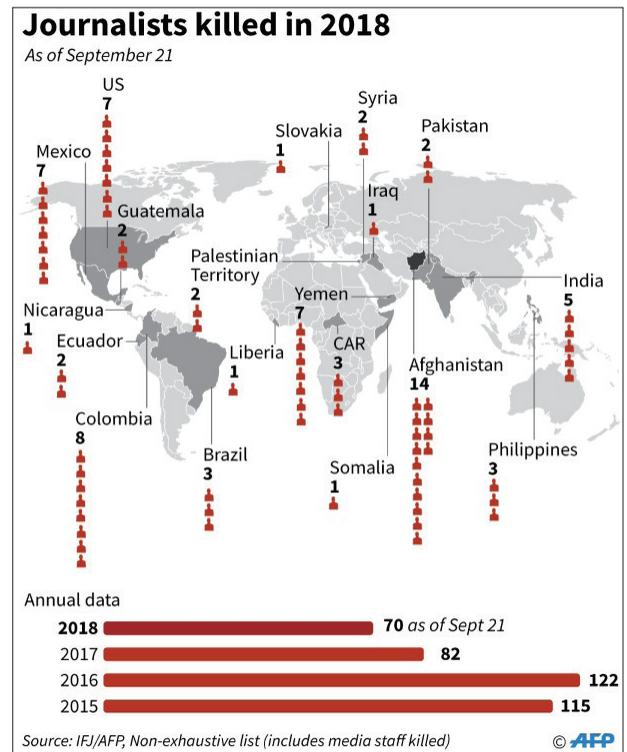
higher toll of 95.

But the departure of NATO combat troops at the end of 2014 marked a turning point, RSF figures show: 39 journalists and media workers — over half of the total — have been killed since then as a resurgent Taliban and the newly-emerged Islamic State group terrorise the country.

Media outlets have already scaled back coverage on the battlefield. But until this year, suicide attacks in urban centres remained a staple for newsrooms.

A double bomb attack in the Afghan capital on April 30 changed that.

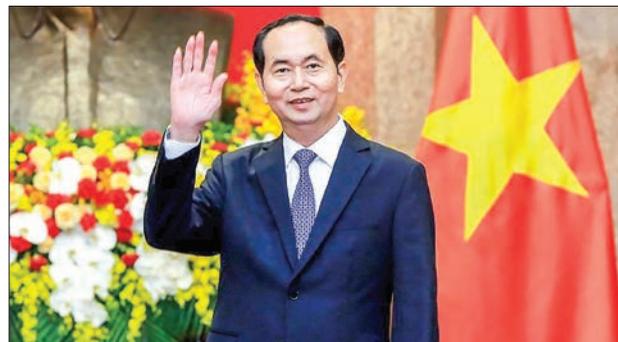
Nine journalists, including Agence France-Presse chief photographer Shah Marai, were killed in



Journalists killed in 2018. PHOTO: AFP

the twin blasts — the most lethal attack on the media since the fall of the Taliban. —AFP ■

Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang dead at 61



Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang. PHOTO: AFP

HANOI — Viet Nam’s President Tran Dai Quang died Friday at age 61 after a prolonged and serious illness, state media reported.

He passed away from a “serious illness despite devoted treatment by professors and doctors” both in Viet Nam and abroad, the official Viet Nam News Agency said.

In office as president since April 2016 after more than four decades at the powerful Ministry of Public Security, Quang had a reputation as a tough leader with little tolerance for dissent.

Though he held one of the country’s top four positions and was officially the head of state, his role as president was seen as largely ceremonial, greet-

ing visiting leaders and hosting diplomatic events in a bid to boost Vietnam’s profile on the world stage.

Quang had appeared thin and pale in public, and was unstable on his feet last week when he hosted a welcoming ceremony for Indonesian President Joko Widodo in Hanoi last week.

His last public appearance was just two days ago, at a meeting with visiting Chinese politicians and foreign dignitaries in Hanoi. Quang, a member of the Politburo, had a reputation as tough and influential in the inner circles of the communist party, though often appeared uncomfortable in the public eye and lacked the charisma of some of his peers in the upper echelons of the party. —AFP ■

This Announcement is made for M.D., HAGL Myanmar Co.,Ltd situated at No.192, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Bahan Township, Yangon Region and the Public

As directed by my good friend U Thein Tun Aung (Legal representative of Daw Su Wai Htun) residing at Building A 7, Room (201), ShweKabar Housing Mindhama Road, Mayangone Township, Yangon Region the announcement is made as below;

On the date of (18.9.2015), Daw Su Wai Htun had bought an apartment of Residential Unit Tower-2, No-15-09 at the Condominium which was going to be built on No.192, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township by HAGL Myanmar Co.Ltd.by the agreement deed namely “Primary Sublease Agreement for the Residential Unit of Lake Suites”. In accordance with this agreement, the buyer, Daw Su Wai Htun has paid without any delay every payment due on the agreed value of the so-mentioned apartment. Thus final amounting to 90% of the total cost of USD 287520.30 with commercial tax 5% of USD 14376.01, total of USD 301896.31 has been paid timely. Leaving thus only 10% of the agreed value, and that is why the buyer has done her side of duties.

However, M.D of HAGL Myanmar Co.Ltd.Mr.Cao Duy Thinh has failed to fulfill the duties of the seller as per the said agreement by failure to hand-over the apartment due on (31.12.2017). Moreover, the actual status of construction so far has not been able to complete even the infrastructure stage.

Mr. Cao Duy Thinh sent an E-mail dated 28.11.2017 to Daw Su Wai Htun where-by he notified that the construction period will be delayed for 2 years and that the apartment will be handed over to the buyer on (31.12.2019) as the last date.

Daw Su Wai Htun clearly stated that she could not agree such term in order to make an additional agreement at the mutual meeting on (5.4.2018) and thus meeting minutes was issued accordingly.

According to this meeting minutes dated 5.4.2018, HAGL Myanmar Co.Ltd. has delivered a draft agreement in which, by the article 1.2, it stated that he will do his best to be able to handover the apartment by the date of (31.12.2019) and in response to it, Daw Su Wai Htun has again requested to mention in the additional agreement that handing over of the apartment must be no later than (31.12.2019), and should there be failure to do so, the double amount of the original purchase value must be refunded by sending a notice. But her request was denied but confirmed that only the facts agreed in the draft of additional agreement will be approved via a return correspondence.

Thus, hereby announcing to acknowledge M.D, Mr. Cao Duy Thinh of HAGL Myanmar Co.Ltd. and the public with a second and firm request to mention this condition in the phrase as “To handover the said apartment on later than (30.12.2019) and should there be failure to do so, Mr. Cao Duy Thinh must refund the double the paid amount of USD 301896.31 as the penalty for a breach in the upcoming additional contract which is to be made and signed no later than 30th Sept 2018”.

If, however, about mention request is ignored of fail to fulfill, here-by acknowledge you that you will be sued according to the existing laws of Myanmar.

Authorized and Directed by,

U Thein Tun Aung
9/MaMaNa(N)013347
Ph - 09 5054640

As per direction,

Daw Thein Thein Nyunt BA(Law)L.L.B.
License No (7590/2008)

Daw Htoo Htoo Ngwe BA (Law)L.LB
License No (4120/1987)

Advocates

No. (37), Ground Floor, 50th Street, BotahtaungTsp, Yangon. Ph - 09 5121522

Propping up glaciers to avoid cataclysmic sea level rise



This NASA picture shows part of the Thwaites glacier, in Antarctica, which is the size of Britain. PHOTO: AFP

PARIS — As global warming outpaces efforts to tame it, scientists have proposed building massive underwater structures to prevent an Antarctic glacier the size of Britain from sliding into the sea and lifting the world's oceans by several metres.

The more modest of two engineering schemes — which is still on the scale of a Panama or Suez Canal — to shore up Thwaites Glacier would require the construction of Eiffel Tower-sized columns resting on the seabed to support the glacier's ocean-facing edge, or ice shelf.

Option Two is a 100-metre tall underwater wall, or berm, running 80-100 kilometres (55-60 miles) beneath the ice shelf to block bottom-flowing warm water that erodes the glacier's underbelly, rendering it unstable. The ambitious projects, detailed Thursday in the European

Geophysical Union journal *The Cryosphere*, reflect a gathering awareness that slashing planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions — while essential — may not happen quickly enough to avoid catastrophic climate change impacts.

"Thwaites could easily trigger a runaway ice sheet collapse that would ultimately raise global sea levels by about three metres," said lead author Michael Wolovick, a researcher at Princeton University's Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory.

Nor will reducing carbon pollution be enough: any credible pathway to a world in which global warming is capped below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels (3.6 degree Celsius) — the target enshrined in the 2015 Paris climate treaty — depends on sucking large quantities of CO₂ out of the air.

As a result, geoen-

gineering schemes once dismissed as impractical, unnecessary or outright dangerous — injecting particles into space to deflect the sun, storing CO₂ in the ground, planting millions of square kilometres in biofuels — have rapidly moved from the margins toward the centre of scientific and policy discussion.

But none of these schemes address sea level rise, which is likely to cause more human misery than any other climate impact: by century's end, it could swamp dozens of island states and densely populated river deltas, especially in Asia and Africa.

Runaway collapse

"The scientific community should carefully investigate the possibility of glacial geoengineering," said Wolovick.

"There are hundreds of millions of people who live within a few metres of

sea level."

Until recently, sea level rise was caused mainly by ocean water expanding under the influence of global warming. Today, the biggest driver is run off from ice sheets sitting atop the island of Greenland and the continent of Antarctica.

Taken together, Greenland and West Antarctica — more vulnerable to global warming than East Antarctica — contain enough frozen water to lift the ocean watermark by about 12 metres.

For Thwaites, there is an added sense of urgency.

"It may already have passed the tipping point, we won't know for sure for a decade or two," said co-author John Moore, chief scientist at the College of Global Change and Earth System Science at Beijing Normal University.

"But the acceleration starts slowly, so we will have a century or so to prevent runaway collapse."

Wolovick and Moore ran computer models to test their geoengineering schemes, taking into account the known variables influencing glacier-ocean dynamics.

The underwater towers — which could be built with material dredged from the continental shelf or quarried from exposed rock — stood a 30 percent change of significantly slowing the glacier's disintegration.—AFP ■



Under a new law, California restaurants will no longer be offering patrons plastic straws unless they specifically ask for them. PHOTO: AFP

California to limit use of plastic straws in restaurants

LOS ANGELES — California restaurants will soon stop providing plastic straws unless customers explicitly ask for them, under a new law signed on Thursday by the state's environment-friendly governor.

Governor Jerry Brown said he hoped the measure — which goes into effect next year and is the first of its kind nationwide — would spur people to "pause and think" about an alternative before requesting a straw. "It is a very small step to make a customer who wants a plastic straw ask for it," Brown said in a statement.

"But one thing is clear — we must find ways to reduce and eventually eliminate single-use plastic products," added the governor, a fierce environmentalist who has been a leading US voice in the battle to fight climate change. Under the new law, restaurants that don't

comply will get two warnings before being fined a maximum of \$300 a year. Brown warned that plastics in all forms were "choking our planet" and pointed to the huge amount of plastic products dumped into the oceans every year, killing off marine life. "Plastic has helped advance innovation in our society, but our infatuation with single-use convenience has led to disastrous consequences," he said. The new law comes amid increased awareness worldwide about the global plastic waste crisis. The European Union in May proposed a bloc-wide ban on single-use plastics such as straws, cutlery and cotton buds while urging the collection of most plastic drink bottles by 2025. France plans to introduce a penalty system next year that would increase the costs of consumer goods made of plastic, including plates, cups and utensils.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V NINOS VOY. NO. (1091 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NINOS VOY. NO. (1091 S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUZURAN VOY. NO. (015N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ALS SUZURAN VOY. NO. (015N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22-9-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (184W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (184W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22-9-2018 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA
SHIPPING

Phone No: 2301185

Disney admits Dark Side for 'Star Wars', plans release 'slowdown'

LOS ANGELES — There is a disturbance in the Force.

After the lackluster performance of the latest installment in the wildly popular "Star Wars" saga, Disney is tapping the brakes on the franchise — an acknowledgment that there can be too much of a good thing.

In an interview published Thursday, CEO Bob Iger told *The Hollywood Reporter* that Disney plans to slow down the "Star Wars" release schedule, admitting that it had been a mistake to shuttle a new film into theaters every year.

"I made the timing decision, and as I look back, I think the mistake that I made — I take the

blame — was a little too much, too fast," Iger said. "You can expect some slowdown, but that doesn't mean we're not going to make films." Disney — which paid \$4 billion for Lucasfilm in 2012 — had promised a new "Star Wars" movie every year after the hotly-anticipated 2015 release of "The Force Awakens": news they believed would delight fans around the world. After all, "The Force Awakens" picked up 30 years after the events of 1983's "Return of the Jedi" — and came a decade after the previous "Star Wars" movie of any kind.

But Disney, whose initial plan was to alternate releases between chapters in the main

series launched in the late 1970s and one-off films expanding the "Star Wars" universe, seems to have learned that anticipation is part of the equation.

Earlier this year, the standalone "Solo: A Star Wars Story" earned \$400 million worldwide — a stellar result for most movies, but a mediocre return for a "Star Wars" film, leading many industry observers to speculate about franchise fatigue.

In contrast, "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," which was released just six months before in late 2017, earned more than \$1.3 billion worldwide. The next film — "Episode IX," announced as the last installment in the main Skywalker saga, and directed by JJ Abrams — is due for release in December 2019.

"Star Wars' became a global phenomenon, of course, as a rare and infrequently-served delicacy," said Robert Thompson, a professor of pop culture at Syracuse University. "Star Wars' movies were like locusts, or blue moons: impressive but not often. That's all changed and Iger is probably right in his assessment," Thompson told AFP. But he added: "The franchise may be beginning to show its age, but 'slowdown' or no slowdown, I expect to see lots more attempts to squeeze it for all it's worth." —AFP ■



Disney CEO Bob Iger — shown here with "Solo: A Star Wars Story" star Donald Glover at the film's Hollywood premiere in May 2018 — has said it will slow down its release schedule for the franchise. PHOTO: AFP



Singer Carrie Underwood said "belief" was the key to her success as she received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. PHOTO: AFP

Singer Carrie Underwood gets star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

LOS ANGELES — Pop-country superstar Carrie Underwood on Thursday got a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame — the latest honor for the Grammy-winning onetime champion of TV reality show "American Idol."

The 35-year-old Underwood, who is pregnant with her second child, is on a roll after suffering a nasty fall at her home late last year that required her to get dozens of stitches in her face.

She has since released a smash hit album, "Cry Pretty," recorded a new theme song for the National Football League's flagship Sunday broadcast and will head out on a major tour in the United States and Canada in 2019 after giving birth.

"How is this my life?" a tearful Underwood told the crowd outside the Capitol Records building in Los Angeles. "How

does a girl from Checotah, Oklahoma end up with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame?"

Singer Brad Paisley compared Underwood to legend Dolly Parton, saying: "Carrie Underwood is really in many ways this generation's Dolly — the person that the world looks at as Miss Country Music."

"I just don't think we could ask for a better ambassador," he added.

Simon Cowell, who was part of the judging panel that propelled Underwood to fame on "American Idol" in 2005, said he "couldn't be more proud" of her.

Underwood is part of a small group of superstars produced by the reality show, along with Oscar winner Jennifer Hudson, pop singer Kelly Clarkson and Adam Lambert, who now tours with Queen. —AFP ■

British rockers Wolf Alice upset odds to win Mercury Prize

LONDON — Rockers Wolf Alice defied the odds to win Britain's prestigious Mercury Prize on Thursday for their second album "Visions of a Life", beating off competition from heavyweights Arctic Monkeys and Noel Gallagher.

"This means so much," said visibly-stunned frontwoman Ellie Rowsell as she picked up the £25,000 (\$33,000, 28,000 euros) prize, which is presented annually for the best album released by a British or Irish artist, according to a panel of judges.

The 26-year-old later said she "now knows what overwhelmed feels like", having missed out after being nominated in 2015 for their debut album "My Love is Cool." It is the first time a rock band has won the award in six years, with bookmakers making post-punk singer Nadine Shah and jazz group Sons of Kemet



Standing beside presenter Annie Mac (2nd l), Joff Oddie, Ellie Rowsell, Theo Ellis and Joel Amey of Wolf Alice collect their award as winners of the 2018 Mercury Music prize. PHOTO: AFP

the pre-ceremony favourites. The north London four-piece join past winners including Primal Scream, Franz Ferdinand, PJ Harvey, The xx and grime star Skepta. The band, whose critically-acclaimed album charted at number two in Britain on its release in September, closed out the show with a celebratory, bare-foot performance of album track "Don't Delete the Kisses".

Rowsell and guitarist Joff Oddie got together as a two-piece folk band in 2010, taking a heavier rock turn soon after when they added a bassist and a drummer.

The ceremony, held at the Hammersmith Apollo theatre in London, opened with a powerful performance by Florence + The Machine of "Hunger", the second single from album "High as Hope," before Sons of Kemet brought the crowd to its feet with an electrifying live jam. —AFP ■

China's doctor shortage prompts rush for artificial intelligence health care

SHANGHAI — Qu Jianguo, 64, had a futuristic medical visit in Shanghai as he put his wrist through an automated pulse-taking machine and received the result within two minutes on a mobile phone — without a doctor present.

The small device, which has a half-open clasp that records the heartbeat, is one of the technologies developed by hi-tech firms aiming to help China offset its shortage of physicians by combining big data and artificial intelligence (AI).

The machine made by Ping An Good Doctor was shown off at the 2018 World AI Expo in Shanghai at a time when Chinese policymakers are making a major push to turn the country into a global tech leader.

"I came here to see how Chinese-style medical treatment could be done without a doctor. That would be really convenient," said Qu, a retired IT worker attending the expo.

China had less than 12 million health workers in 2017 in a population of almost 1.4 billion, according to the National Health Commission.

Ping An Good Doctor, which

recently listed in Hong Kong, has one of China's largest online healthcare platforms with 228 million registered patients.

Bi Ge, a company spokesman, said the company receives 500,000 online consultation requests daily.

The pulse-taking machine is part of Ping An Good Doctor's AI-assisted medical consultation system, which allows patients to do quick preliminary checks and get prescriptions without having to go to the hospital or pharmacy.

Ping An's services include a mobile app in which patients enter their personal data, medical history and describe their symptoms to an AI-assisted "receptionist" that transfers the information to a real-life doctor for a diagnosis.

"It can definitely ease China's doctor shortage problem... With the assistance of AI, it can relieve doctors from doing the mundane, simple, and repetitive work," said Liu Kang, a former doctor at Peking Union Medical College Hospital.

"But China's overall AI development in medical fields is still at the catching-up phase," Liu added.

'Still need real doctor'

US and European companies, startups and researchers have also been harnessing AI to apply the technology to various health care needs.

Chinese companies have been learning from other countries to develop and implement AI-assisted care such as medical imaging diagnosis, robot surgical systems, and drug research and development.

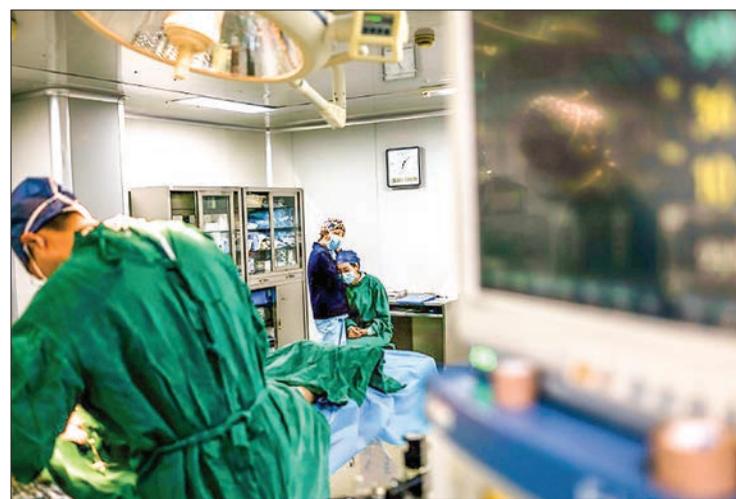
Good doctors in China are highly sought-after, but the supply is low and not equally distributed.

Less than 10 percent of China's hospitals are considered high-level facilities, but they treat half of the country's patients, according to a 2017 State Information Center report.

Big data and AI-assisted services and remote communication offered by companies such as Ping An allow patients from second- and third-tier cities to access professional advice from qualified doctors based in big cities.

"We are imitating and duplicating the skills of qualified doctors, the ones from tertiary-level (highest-level) hospitals, and spread it to smaller cities and local counties," said Fang Qu, CTO of Proxima, a health care technology company focusing on AI-assisted medical imaging diagnosis.

Traditional Chinese methods of medical assessment — including pulse taking, which Qu experienced at the AI expo — are still popular among the elderly, although some might prefer a more human touch. "It doesn't feel the same as a doctor yet. I also don't understand what the result means," said Qu. "I'd still need a real doctor." —AFP ■



China has less than 12 million health workers, prompting a drive for AI technology in the country of almost 1.4 billion people. PHOTO: AFP

Stanford researchers identify human skeletal stem cells

WASHINGTON — A study published on Thursday in the journal *Cell* showed that human skeletal stem cells that become bone, cartilage, or stroma cells have been isolated from fetal and adult bones.

This is the first time that skeletal stem cells, which had been observed in rodent models, have been identified in humans, according to researchers at Stanford University School of Medicine.

The researchers were able to derive the skeletal stem cells from human induced pluripotent stem cells, opening up new therapeutic possibilities.

"Identifying this human skeletal stem cell and elucidating its lineage map will enable the molecular diagnosis and treatment of skeletal diseases," said senior study author Michael Longaker at Stanford University.

Bones in mice and humans can recover from small- to mod-

erate-sized defects, but adult cartilage tissues possess little to no regenerative ability. Also, both mice and humans display severe age-related degeneration of skeletal tissues over time. In the new study, Longaker and his collaborators found that those self-renewing and multipotent cells were present in both fetal and adult human bone marrow tissues and could be derived from induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs). —Xinhua ■



This undated image, courtesy of the Australian National University, shows an organically preserved "Dickinsonia" fossil, which researchers in Australia say is the Earth's earliest known animal. PHOTO: AFP

'Fat' traces confirm weird fossils were earliest animals

WASHINGTON — A strange fossil that looks a bit like a giant leaf, or a fingerprint the size of a coffee table, has intrigued scientists for decades.

Thousands of the fossils have been found over the past seven decades, revealing that it lived at the bottom of the ocean, without a mouth, intestines or anus, half a billion years ago.

Was it a mossy plant? A giant single-celled amoeba? A failed experiment of evolution? Or the earliest animal on Earth?

After digging one of these fossils off a cliff in Russia and analyzing its contents, researchers discovered molecules of cholesterol, a type of fat.

This confirms that the creature, known as Dickinsonia, is the Earth's earliest known animal, said the report Thursday in the journal *Science*.

"Scientists have been fighting for more than 75 years" over the nature of these "bizarre fossils," said associate professor Jochen Brocks from the Australian National University Research School of Earth Sciences.

"The fossil fat now confirms Dickinsonia as the oldest known animal fossil, solving a decades-old mystery that has been the Holy Grail of paleontology."

Edge of cliff

Dickinsonia contained rib-like segments the length of its oval-shaped body, which came in a variety of sizes and could grow as large as 4.6 feet (1.4 meters).

The analysis showed the animals were abundant 558 million years ago, millions of years earlier than previously thought, according to Brocks.

The creature was part of the Ediacara Biota that lived on Earth during a time when

bacteria reigned, 542-635 million years ago. The Ediacaran Period was about 20 million years prior to emergence of modern animal life — a period known as the Cambrian explosion.

"The question has been, is that real? Is that an event that happened in Earth history? Or have we just not found the older fossils?" David Gold, geobiologist and assistant professor at the University of California, told AFP.

"This paper is another really good line of evidence to support the idea that it is in fact an animal, and that animals are much older than the Cambrian."

Dickinsonia could be an ancestor of "many forms of animal life today" including worms and insects, added Gold, who was not part of the current study.

Scientists had a difficult time finding Dickinsonia fossils with organic matter still attached.

Many of the known fossils were in Australia, and had been exposed to too many elements over many millions of years.

The fossil for the current study came from cliffs near the White Sea in the northwest of Russia. "I took a helicopter to reach this very remote part of the world -- home to bears and mosquitoes -- where I could find Dickinsonia fossils with organic matter still intact," said Ilya Bobrovskiy, a doctoral researcher at ANU.

"These fossils were located in the middle of cliffs of the White Sea that are 60 to 100 meters high. I had to hang over the edge of a cliff on ropes and dig out huge blocks of sandstone, throw them down, wash the sandstone and repeat this process until I found the fossils I was after." —AFP ■

Tearful Ronaldo picks himself up for Juve trip to Frosinone

MILAN — Cristiano Ronaldo picks himself up and gets back to business in Serie A against promoted Frosinone on Sunday after his return to Spain in the Champions League ended in a tearful sending off against Valencia.

The former Real Madrid star collapsed dramatically on the pitch after being handed a controversial red card just days after his first goals for Juventus saw the champions keep their 100 percent record to pull three points clear at the top of the Serie A table.

Juventus beat Valencia anyway thanks to two Miralem Pjanic penalties.

And after securing a winning start to the European campaign which is their focus this season, the Turin giants look to keep their quest for an eighth straight domestic title on track with a trip to Frosinone.

Coach Massimiliano Allegri is confident that Ronaldo, 33, will be back to business against a side from outside Rome who are second from bottom of the league with one point.

"He was upset and he needs time to calm down. He needs to rise above it and focus on Sun-

day, even if these things leave a bitter taste in the mouth," said the coach.

The champions will be without German midfielder Sami Khedira who suffered a thigh muscle injury in Spain.

Douglas Costa also suffered an adductor injury, but the Brazilian would have missed Sunday's league game as he sits out a four-match ban for spitting last weekend.

"He's picked up an adductor injury from virtually his first sprint," said Allegri.

"Unfortunately I was expecting this because the last few days have been draining for him mentally.

"When these things happen, the risk of injury is very high. It was a tactical decision that he would only come on for the last 20 minutes, but that was still enough for him to get injured."

'Self-belief'

Inter Milan also return from Champions League duty on a high after a last-gasp 2-1 win over Tottenham in their return to Europe for the first time since 2012.

But Roma fell 3-0 to holders Real Madrid in Spain with Napoli playing out a goalless draw at Red

Star Belgrade.

Luciano Spalletti's Inter scored two goals in a seven-minute spell, sparked by captain Mauro Icardi who scored his first goal of the season on his Champions League debut.

Inter — floundering in 15th in Serie A with just four points from four games — head to fourth-placed Sampdoria looking for just their second win in the fifth round of action.

"This result gives us self-belief around the work we are doing. Getting players like Icardi to break their ducks is fundamental, as we need his goals," said Spalletti.

"We have many great players, though and sometimes we must learn how to win even without Mauro. We can't have the same XI in every game."

Roma — last year's Champions League semi-finalists — are reeling from their defeat to Real Madrid.

Eusebio Di Francesco's side have not won since their opening game against Torino in August, and travel Sunday to Bologna.

"I'm concerned but I'm not pessimistic," said Roma sporting director Monchi.

"I remain confident that the

coach will find the right path."

Serie A runners-up Napoli, three points behind Juventus, visit Torino after a lacklustre European stalemate in Belgrade.

"It's a tie that leaves us bitter, but there's no reason to be dramatic, there are another five games to go," said Napoli coach Carlo Ancelotti.

Lazio host Genoa after their Europa League win over Apollon Limassol at the Stadio Olimpico, with AC Milan hosting Atalanta

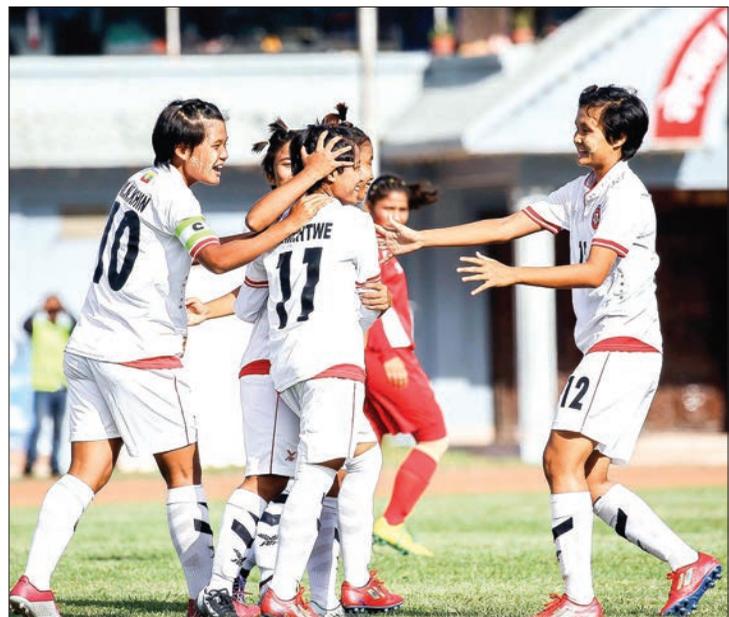
after Gonzalo Higuain scored the only goal against Dudelange in Luxembourg.

SPAL — who are three points behind Juventus in second — host Fiorentina, with Sassuolo, in sixth, hosting Empoli in Friday's early match. — AFP ■



"Bitter taste": Cristiano Ronaldo returns to Serie A action against minnows Frosinone after his red card against Valencia. PHOTO: AFP

Myanmar beat Nepal 11-1 in AFC U-16 Women Championship Qualifiers



Myanmar U-16 players celebrating the victory after beating Nepal U-16 11-1 in yesterday's AFC U-16 Women Championship Qualifiers 2019. PHOTO: MFF

MYANMAR U-16 national women football team trounced Nepal U-16 women team by 11-1 in AFC U-16 Women Championship Qualifiers 2019 in Nepal yesterday.

Half of the scoring in the game came from Myanmar stars Swe Mar Aung and Myat Noe Khin.

Myanmar showed their prowess from the start as they

scored the opening goal at the 4th minute by Zin Mar Htwe.

A minute later, using speedy play, Swe Mar Aung scored the second goal at 5th minute.

Taking advantage of the opportunities of a porous Nepal defence, Swe Mar Aung scored more goals at 7th, 18th, 21st and 38th minutes, Wai Phoo Eain at 31st minute, while Myat Noe Khin scored her goals at 10th, 29th and 33rd minutes.

Players from Nepal team, apparently better in the second half, improved their defensive alignment.

However, Myanmar scored the 11th goal at 62nd minute by Pont Pont Pyae Maung.

Taking advantage of the error from the Myanmar keeper, Nepal made a single consolation at 74th minute. — Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Barcelona model inspires British billionaire's sports dream

BRISTOL (England) — When British billionaire Steve Lansdown got fed up with his home town of Bristol being treated as a sporting joke he set out to put that right — modelling his vision on mighty Barcelona.

The 66-year-old, who made his fortune in financial services, said his main motivation for buying football club Bristol City, rugby side Bristol Bears and basketball outfit Bristol Flyers was that he was fed up with the teams being ridiculed even by the locals.

But Lansdown has an even more ambitious long-term plan — hoping that sporting success can enable the city in southwest England to compete with major provincial hubs further north.

Bristol slipped down the pecking order as a trading and business centre during the Industrial Revolution and the sporting achievements of cities such as Liverpool and Manchester have enabled them, as Lansdown puts it, to stay in another "league". — AFP ■



Bristol City, managed by Lee Johnson, reached the League Cup semi-finals in 2017-18. PHOTO: AFP