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President U Win Myint leaves for Indonesia to attend ASEAN Leaders' Gathering

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President U Win Myint addresses ASEAN Leaders' Gathering



President U Win Myint delivers an address at the ASEAN Leaders' Gathering in Bali, Indonesia yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT U Win Myint left from Nay Pyi Taw on a special flight yesterday morning and arrived in Bali, Indonesia at 1:30 pm local standard time.

The delegation led by President U Win Myint was welcomed by Indonesia Minister for Industry H.E. Mr. Airlangga Hartarto, Myanmar Ambassador to Indonesia Daw Ei Ei Khin Aye, Permanent Representative of Myanmar to ASEAN U Min Lwin, senior officials from Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

other officials at Ngurah Rai International Airport in Bali.

The President and delegation then went to The Patra Bali Resort where they'll be residing while in Bali.

Later in the evening, President U Win Myint attended and addressed the ASEAN Leaders' Gathering held at Sofitel Bali Nusa Dua Beach Resort in Bali Island.

President U Win Myint and ASEAN leaders attending the ASEAN Leaders' Gathering were warmly welcomed by

Indonesia President Mr. Joko Widodo and then posed for a commemorative group photo.

The President was accompanied to the Gathering by Union Ministers Dr. Than Myint and U Soe Win, Myanmar Ambassador to Indonesia Daw Ei Ei Khin Aye and Permanent Representative of Myanmar to ASEAN U Min Lwin.

At the Gathering, Indonesia President Mr. Joko Widodo delivered an opening speech.

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Press Release on State Counsellor's working visit to Japan

AT the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, paid a working visit to Japan to hold bilateral talks and attend the 10th Mekong-Japan Summit, held in Tokyo from 8 to 9 October 2018, and arrived back Yangon on 10 October. The State Counsellor was accompanied by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Deputy Minister for the Office of the President U Min Thu, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Set Aung.

State Counsellor attended the Welcome Dinner hosted by Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, on 8 October at the Residence of Prime Minister, in honour of the Heads of Delegation from Mekong countries attending the Mekong-Japan Summit.

State Counsellor together with leaders of other Mekong countries attended the Breakfast Meeting hosted by Japan-Mekong Parliamentary Friendship Association at the New Otani Hotel on 9 October. Afterwards, State Counsellor attended the 10th Mekong-Japan Summit held at the State Guesthouse. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, and attended by H.E. Mr. Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Prime Minister of Lao PDR, H.E. Mr. Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand and H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Viet Nam.

At the Summit, State Counsellor delivered a statement and reviewed the achievements of Mekong-Japan Cooperation under the New Tokyo Strategy 2015 which has been implemented throughout

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President U Win Myint addresses ASEAN Leaders' Gathering

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Next the Gathering was continued under the theme of "Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Overcoming Development Gap through Regional and Global Collaborative Actions" and ASEAN Secretary-General H.E. Mr. Dato Lim Jock Hoi and UN Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres delivered opening remarks while Indonesia President Mr. Joko Widodo, Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Muizzaddin Waddaulah, Cambodia Prime Minister Mr. Samdech Hun Sen, Lao Prime Minister Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Malaysia Prime Minister Mr. Mahathir Mohamad, Republic of Union of Myanmar President U Win Myint, Philippines President Mr. Rodrigo Duterte, Singapore Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Thailand Prime Minister Mr. Prayut Chan-o-cha and Viet Nam Prime Minister Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc delivered speeches on country wise sustainable development goals. In his address, President U Win Myint joined the ASEAN Leaders in expressing appreciation to Indonesia President Mr. Joko Widodo for hosting the ASEAN Leaders' Gathering in Bali. He also expressed his personal thanks to the Government and the people of the Republic of Indonesia, especially the friendly people of Bali for the warm welcome and courtesies accorded since arriving to the beautiful island.

The President also expressed heartfelt sympathies and deep condolences to the government and the people of the Republic of Indonesia at this time of grief for the tragic loss of lives and properties caused by the earthquake and tsunami that struck Central Sulawesi on 28 September. It is an honour to participate in this gathering between the ASEAN Leaders and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the World Bank President and the IMF Managing Director for the purpose of promoting prosperity and achieving Sustainable Development Goals in a more rigorous, comprehensive and effective manner, said the President.

The President said he will share his views and perspectives on overcoming the challenges faced to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and equitable development among the nations and also touches upon Myanmar's endeavours to achieve equitable and inclusive economic and financial growth for

the benefit of the people of Myanmar. We firmly believe that it is as important to share prosperity and equitable distribution of benefits among the citizens of a particular country as it is important among the nations in the global community said the President.

The President continued that as the SDGs' Goal Number 10 reflected the need to "Reduce inequality within and among countries" the concept of growth with equity, equitable development and sustainable development has become a crucial challenge for all of us.

We need to create 'win-win' strategies from the prevailing world economic system through our regional economic integration endeavor so that the benefits of international economic integration can be widely shared among us.

We must also adopt different strategies to improve our cooperation to create a sense of ASEAN Community among the nations of the world. We also see the importance of a more comprehensive and effective collaboration with international organisations, including the United Nations, the World Bank and the IMF.

There are many opportunities as well as challenges in today's global economic agenda. It is therefore imperative that we grab the opportunities while we address the challenges collectively. According to the Global Economic Report, the advanced Western nations have clearly noticed the rise of economic power and competitiveness of the East Asian nations. In the same vein, the rise of international organizations such as APEC, G20, BRICS and SCO further contributed to the role of the East Asian nations.

East Asian nations will remain the brightest spot in the global economy and stand as a role model for the developing countries. At the same time, we must strengthen our cooperation to face global challenges, including climate change, energy sufficiency, food security, infrastructure development and enhanced regional connectivity.

We, ASEAN, recognize the need to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared equitably among our peoples. We also believe that better regional cooperation and integration will support greater market access and transfer of advanced technologies. We therefore need to address common challenges in order to produce good results and positive achievements.



President U Win Myint warmly welcomed by Indonesian President Mr. Joko Widodo at ASEAN Leaders' Gathering in Bali. **PHOTO: MNA**

To achieve equitable development in our region, we need to create an environment which is conducive to sustainable development. It would be better if ASEAN initiates the promotion of green products to complement the Green Growth for the long-term development of our region.

As a participant in the Rio 20 Summit, Myanmar is committed to implement and strengthen green growth strategies. Nowadays, we are raising awareness to promote the concept of green growth. As a land bridge between Southeast Asia and South Asia due to its strategic geographic location, Myanmar can contribute to enhanced regional connectivity if our basic infrastructure needs are well supported.

The transformation and reforms in her economic and political systems have placed Myanmar in a position to cooperate with the international community to address global challenges.

As an agro-based nation, Myanmar can contribute considerably to regional food security by improving its agricultural sector and enhancing agricultural productivity. We therefore need support and collaboration from international organisations and international financial organisations in our endeavours.

I wish to inform you of the steps taken by my government to meet the Sustainable Development Goals during the 2 years of our administration. Indeed our

endeavour to address the SDGs complements the theme of our gathering, "Achieving SDGs and Overcoming Development Gap through Regional and Global Collaborative Actions."

Earlier this year, Myanmar launched a new Development Assistance Policy, which highlights how the SDGs, are progressively integrated into Myanmar's planning, budgeting and monitoring frameworks. The Government also released a new Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP) to serve as our national development vision that complements the global sustainable development agenda.

I wish to reiterate that Myanmar is fully committed to a development trajectory that advances SDG achievements through the combined implementation of our Development Assistance Policy and the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan. Allow me to briefly touch upon the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP). MSDP represents the integration and distillation of existing plans and priorities, mediating between local development needs and the global sustainable development agenda.

The identification of specific MSDP Pillars, Goals and Strategies has allowed us to localize and contextualize Myanmar's SDG commitments, and to better coordinate these commitments with those associated with the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), the

GMS and other important regional initiatives. One of the key focuses of MSDP is the development of the regions within and beyond Myanmar. We are therefore strengthening social, economic and physical connectivity in the regions which are over-populated and under-developed.

This will facilitate greater access to markets and much needed technological inputs, and unlock Myanmar's ability to participate in regional cooperation such as regional agriculture value chains.

Furthermore, we believe that MSDP will stimulate greater foreign and domestic investments, increase better access to finance, strengthen existing partnerships, and forge new linkages with regional and global partners.

Trade facilitation plays a critical role in supporting a more inclusive and connected Myanmar. In this regard, Myanmar is committed to improve connectivity through clear domestic regulations and procedures, improved customs, trade and logistical services and use of more advanced IT and database system.

In conclusion I would like to say that we will continue our cooperation with the global community. I also wish to reiterate Myanmar's commitment to overcoming domestic development gaps that all our people might prosper. We will continue to cooperate closely with fellow ASEAN Member States for the emergence of a prosperous peaceful and democratic Myanmar. We also appreciate the support of our global partners including the IMF and the World Bank for their substantial contribution towards the emergence of a prosperous, peaceful transition to democracy in Myanmar. I believe that our exchange of views and thoughts will greatly assist us to identify new and innovative approaches that will lead to the expansion of our social and economic cooperation for the benefit of our people and our region, said the President.

Next International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Mdm. Christine Lagarde and World Bank Chairman Dr. Jim Yong Kim discussed about cooperation in sustainable development matters between IMF, World Bank and ASEAN and ASEAN leaders reviewed and discussed on the discussions made.

Later in the evening, President U Win Myint and ASEAN leaders attended a dinner hosted by Indonesia President Mr. Joko Widodo.—MNA ■

Press Release on State Counsellor's working visit to Japan

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the period from 2015 and 2018. She also discussed future directions of the Mekong-Japan Cooperation, in particular the improvement of regional connectivity infrastructure including transport and energy sectors, the enhancement of industrial connectivity between Mekong and Japan, the creation of People-Centered Society, ITC and human resources development and regional and international issues. The Summit adopted the "Tokyo Strategy 2018 (2019-2021)" as a guiding framework for Mekong-Japan Cooperation for the next 3 years.

Myanmar has implemented over 60 bilateral projects and has benefitted from over 100 multilateral projects implemented together with other Mekong countries under the "Tokyo Strategy 2015". The new strategy, "Tokyo Strategy 2018", is comprised of three main pillars; Vibrant and Effective Connectivity, People-Centered Society and the Realization of a Green Mekong.

Myanmar will continue its sectoral cooperation under the new strategy. After the Summit, State Counsellor together with other leaders of the Mekong countries attended the Joint Press Conference and gave her comments on the outcome of the Summit.

Mekong-Japan Cooperation was established in 2009 by Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan. The main objective of Mekong-Japan cooperation is to achieve socio-economic developments and promote connectivity in the Mekong region through the Japan Development Assistance Fund.

On 9 October 2018, State



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addresses the Japan-Mekong Business Forum in Tokyo, Japan.
PHOTO: MNA

Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held bilateral talks with H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, at the State Guesthouse.

During the talks, the two leaders cordially and frankly discussed matters pertaining to the promotion of Myanmar-Japan bilateral relations and cooperation, Japan's continued support in Myanmar's democratization process, peace and national reconciliation process, confirmation of two development projects for Yangon with the assistance of 70 billion Yen such as reduction of traffic congestion, improvement of drainage system and sewerage system, rural development projects, cooperation in development of Small and Medium Size Enterprises, construction of houses for the displaced persons from

Rakhine State, and improvement of transport, water and electricity distribution system in Rakhine State.

Then, State Counsellor and Japanese Prime Minister held the joint press briefing. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe hosted dinner to State Counsellor and Myanmar delegation at the State Guesthouse.

While in Tokyo, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi gave an interview to NHK News Agency on 6 October 2018, and explained the latest developments on Myanmar-Japan bilateral relations, Mekong-Japan cooperation mechanisms, outcomes from the 10th Mekong-Japan Summit, the situation in Rakhine State and other issues.

In the evening, State Coun-

sellor met with officials and family members of Myanmar Embassy, Tokyo and the Military Attache Office in the New Otani Hotel and gave guidance to the staff to exert efforts to further promote Myanmar-Japan bilateral relations, to promote trade and investment from Japan and to protect the interests of Myanmar society living in Japan.

On 7 October 2018, State Counsellor and Myanmar delegation visited Izumizaki model village in Fukuoka Prefecture, to learn the practices, production and distribution of agricultural products.

On 8 October 2018, State Counsellor received Mr. Natsuo Yamaguchi, leader of New Komeito Party and Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of Nippon Foundation

on separate occasions at the New Otani Hotel. During the meeting with Mr. Yamaguchi, matters pertaining to the promotion of Myanmar-Japan bilateral relations, Japan's continued assistance in the democratic transition, sustainable development and human resources development of Myanmar were discussed.

During the meeting with Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, they discussed matters on Myanmar's peace process and national reconciliation efforts, efforts on elimination of leprosy and construction of schools in Rakhine State.

In the afternoon, State Counsellor attended Myanmar Silk Promotion Event held at the ASEAN-Japan Centre and cut the ribbons to launch the event together with Mr. Hiroto Izumi, Special Advisor of Japanese Prime Minister and Secretary-General of the ASEAN-Japan Centre.

In the afternoon, State Counsellor received Mr. Hiroyuki Ishige, CEO of JETRO at the Meiji Kinenkan, and discussed matters on attracting more Japanese businessmen to invest in Myanmar. Afterwards, State Counsellor attended and delivered the opening address at the Myanmar Investment Conference held with the theme of "Strengthening the Bond between Myanmar and Japan". The Conference was attended by more than 400 Japanese businessmen.

In the afternoon, State Counsellor received Mrs. Akie Abe, wife of Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe at the New Otani Hotel.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw
Dated: 11 October 2018



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Vice President calls for advancing eco-tourism, biodiversity conservation

VICE President U Myint Swe called for stepping up efforts for developing eco-tourism and conservation of biodiversity in his visit to Wingabaw Elephant Camp and Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary in Bago yesterday.

The Vice President first visited the Wingabaw Elephant Camp located 14 miles from Bago and he was welcomed there by Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein.

At the briefing hall, Managing Director of the Myanma Timber Enterprise U Saw John Shwe Ba reported on establishing the camp and conservation of elephants and arrival of visitors to the camp.

After hearing the report, Vice President U Myint Swe stressed the need to conserve the elephants in region as part of efforts to ensure that the elephant population does not decline.

He also urged the forest police force and authorities to work together for stepping up efforts for fighting wild elephant poaching.

Following the meeting, Vice President U Myint Swe visited the elephant camp.

Wingabaw Elephant Camp



Vice President U Myint Swe feeding an elephant at Wingabaw Elephant Camp in Bago. PHOTO: MNA

The Wingabaw Elephant Camp was established in 2016 and is located 14 miles from Bago City. The camp is 86 acres wide and houses adult elephants, orphaned wild elephants and orphaned baby elephants.

Myanma Timber Enterprise suspended timber extraction in Bago Yoma and established elephant camps for public recrea-

tion, namely, Wingabaw Elephant Camp in Payagyi, Phokyar Elephant Camp in Toungoo, and Hmawsayargyi Elephant Camp and Myainghaywun Elephant Camp near Mile Post 105 on Yangon-Mandalay Highway.

Visit to Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary

Vice President U Myint Swe,

accompanied by Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein, visited the Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary, which was listed in the Ramsar Convention in 2004, situated about 70 miles north of Yangon by the Yangon-Mandalay highway in Waw Township, Bago Region. Officials concerned conducted the Vice President around the taxidermy birds which are

found in the wetland.

The Vice President also visited the habitats of migrant birds being sheltered in the wetland to escape from severe winter in their original areas.

Officials also reported on measures taken for conservation of biodiversity and the wetlands.

Dr. Myo Thet, Managing Director of Shwe Pyi Aye Co., Ltd., reported on eco-tourism in the wildlife sanctuary.

Vice President U Myint Swe called for making systematic arrangement for turning the Moeyungyi Wetland to a model wetland of Myanmar's wetlands.

He also urged the authorities to conduct vocational training courses and to promote community-based tourism while organizing the local people to participate in conservation of biodiversity in the wetland. Since 1988, the government has designated the 25,600-acre wide Moeyungyi Wetland a wildlife sanctuary, on which about 17 villages rely on for their daily survival. Promoting the tourism industry is one of the government's priorities to reduce poverty by implementing community-based tourism businesses across the country.—MNA ■

Confiscated land returned to farmers in An, Rakhine State: Vice President

OVER 300 acres of farmland released by the Ministry of Defence were returned to 41 farmers in An, Rakhine State, yesterday in the presence of Vice President U Henry Van Thio.

At the ceremony held at the Shwe An Taung Hall in An, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, in his capacity as Chairman of the Central Committee for Rescrutinizing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands, expressed thanks to the Ministry of Defence, Rakhine State Government and departments concerned for returning the farmland to the small farmers. He also said that the Union Government is committed to promoting rights and socio-economic life of farmers, pledging to bring about sufficiency of food and to find new overseas markets for agricultural produce.

At the ceremony, a representative of the Ministry of Defence handed over the release documents for the farmlands to the Kyaukpyu District Deputy Commissioner. The central committee adopted 52-point processes and has been implementing



Vice President U Henry Van Thio meets with farmers at the ceremony to return confiscated land to farmers in An, Rakhine State. PHOTO: MNA

them to solve the complicated land confiscation issues demanding paper documents, evidences and legal matters. "We need to take time to solve such complicated issues correctly and we are doing our best to solve the land confiscation issues with compassion and fairness, in accordance

with the State Counsellor's instruction," said Vice President U Henry Van Thio.

Being directly related with promotion of socio economy of the people, land management issue should be carried out correctly in accordance with the rules and regulations of the laws

and procedures," said the Vice President. "Land management issues should be implemented in fairness, compassion and free from malpractices," said the Vice President. Small farmers are relying on agriculture and livestock breeding on their farmland for their livelihood. Therefore, the

Union government is making efforts by placing great emphasis on returning confiscated farmland and land use rights to original farmers and extended reclamation of farmland. The National Land Use Council is reviewing the existing laws related to land management as part of efforts for drafting the national land use law which can guarantee benefits for the entire mass of the people, said the Vice President.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pyu presented temporary land use permit Form-3 to 15 farmers from Linpanya Village; Rakhine State Agriculture, Livestock, Forest and Mining U Kyaw Lwin to 15 farmers and Brig-Gen Kyaw Hoe, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, to 11 farmers. After the ceremony, Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspected construction of Darlat Bridge on the Sittway-An Road, which saw 85 per cent completion. The work on construction of the bridge started on 20 August, 2016, and on completion, the bridge which would be 960 feet long can withstand 75 tons of load.—MNA ■

Three objectives of the State Government

(Government Mission)

- (1) Ensuring the rule of law and promoting socio-economic development;
- (2) National reconciliation and internal peace; and,
- (3) Amending the Constitution, which is the basic foundation for building a Democratic Federal Union.

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

President U Win Myint leaves for Indonesia to attend ASEAN Leaders' Gathering

PRESIDENT U Win Myint left for Indonesia on a special flight from Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning at the invitation of Indonesian President Mr. Joko Widodo to attend the ASEAN Leaders' Gathering.

The delegation led by the President was seen off at the airport by Vice President U Myint Swe, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung, Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Maw, U Min Thu, Deputy Minister from the Office of the President, Nay Pyi Taw Council member Col. Min Naung, Chief of Myanmar Police Force, Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo, Indonesian Ambassa-

dor to Myanmar H.E. Prof. Dr. Iza Fadri and wife and officials.

The President was accompanied by Union Minister for Commerce Dr. Than Myint, Permanent Secretaries U Khin Latt, U Myint Thu and U Tun Tun Naing, high ranking officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and officials.

Another member of the delegation Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win had left for Indonesia earlier on 10 October to attend the International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meetings, it is learnt. — MNA ■

President U Win Myint is seen off by Vice President U Myint Swe at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Meeting between Government, Tatmadaw, EAO leaders moved to Nay Pyi Taw

By Ye Gaung Nyunt

THE second day meeting of the Peace Process Steering Team (PPST) of ethnic armed organisations (EAOs) that had signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand yesterday morning.

The meeting discussed holding a meeting between the Government, Tatmadaw and leaders of ten EAOs that had signed the NCA, and after the meeting PPST issued a joint announcement.

The announcement said that “to overcome the bottlenecks occurring at the various levels of political discussions, the Government, Tatmadaw and leaders of EAOs agreed to hold a meeting between the Government, Tatmadaw and leaders of EAOs in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 October 2018 in order to resolve the matter through negotiation.”

Leaders of Government

and Tatmadaw are meeting with leaders of ten EAOs that had signed the NCA in a 10+10 Meeting on the third anniversary of signing the NCA that falls on 15 October. Earlier, the meeting was planned to be held near the foot of Mount Popa but due to the request of the EAOs,

it was moved to Nay Pyi Taw, it is learnt.

After the two-day meeting of PPST, ABSDF Chairman Yebaw (comrade) Than Khe and Chin National Front (CNF) Chairman Pu Zing Cung met with the media and responded to questions raised.

Yebaw Than Khe said “Government, Tatmadaw, Hluttaw and leaders of ethnic nationals conducted preliminary meetings to overcome the bottlenecks occurring at the various levels of political discussion. At those meetings it was agreed to discuss the time and place

of the meeting in the PPST meeting. The basic understanding was to discuss and make a joint declaration after the meeting.

The government proposed Popa and we proposed Yangon. After further discussion, it was agreed to be held in Nay Pyi Taw that is accessible for both the Government and Tatmadaw leaders. But meeting of the leaders is more important than the meeting place itself. Nay Pyi Taw was agreed by both sides after discussion.”

The meeting of the leaders will be attended by PPST leader Saw Mutu Say Poe, deputy leader U Yawd Serk and other top leaders of other EAOs.

The meeting between the leaders of Government, Tatmadaw and EAOs are scheduled to be held from 15 to 18 October and officials from the Government and Tatmadaw were said to have revert back and discuss it is learnt. ■



The second day meeting of the Peace Process Steering Team of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement held in Chiang Mai, Thailand. **PHOTO: EPRN**

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Senior General calls on President of Lao People's Democratic Republic

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing who is in Laos at the invitation of Minister of National Defence of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) Lt-Gen Chansamone Chanyalath called on the President of Lao People's Democratic Republic H.E. Mr. Bounnhang Vorachith at the Presidential Palace in Vientiane yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, the President said that the bilateral relations and the relations between the two armed forces were improving and progressing and was expected that the existing friendship and cooperation would increase further.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing then expressed his appreciation to the President for receiving him. The Senior General added that Myanmar President had also passed on his good wishes for increasing bilateral friendship and during this trip views were exchanged



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing shakes hands with President of Lao People's Democratic Republic Mr. Bounnhang Vorachith in Vientiane. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

with LPDR Minister of National Defence and many agreements achieved on mutual cooperation between the two armed forces and security cooperation.

Matters relating to peace and stability in the border regions of the two countries, increasing border relations and trade to regional trade, eradicating drug trade and illegal

trade between the two countries were also discussed and views exchanged according to the news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA ■



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun meets with Norwegian Ambassador Mrs. Tone Tinnes in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Deputy Minister for Information receives Norwegian Ambassador

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun received Norwegian Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mrs. Tone Tinnes at the guest hall of Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they cordially and openly discussed about cooperating to increase media development in Myanmar.—MNA ■

Deputy Minister for Information grants exclusive interview to RFA

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun granted an exclusive interview to Bureau Chief of Radio Free Asia (RFA) U Kyaw Min Htun at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the exclusive interview, RFA asked about the status of press freedom in Myanmar, difficulties faced in reporting in conflict areas, actions being taken against journalists, survival and development of private media, and the Deputy Minister answered about press releases

made by the government and the ministries and sending of media group to conflict areas.

Through the interview with RFA, the Deputy Minister also urged all participants in the Myanmar media sector to cooperate for Myanmar media to become independent and self-controlled and nurture talented and outstanding media personnel in Myanmar who will provide the international community with accurate and effective news.—MNA ■



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun interviewed by Bureau Chief of RFA U Kyaw Min Htun in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Vice Senior General Soe Win receives UNSG Special Envoy on Myanmar

DEPUTY Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win received the United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener yesterday afternoon at Bayintnaung Guest House in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, matters relating to works conducted on establishing truth in Rakhine State issue by forming an Independent Commission of Enquiry and informing internationally, latest contact and work conducted with UN on child soldiers, Rakhine State development works conducted by Central

Committee for the Implementation of Peace and Development in Rakhine State led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, security situation in northern part of Rakhine State after the events of August 2017, present and future situation of Rakhine State were discussed and views exchanged. United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy on Myanmar then explained and discussed about working together towards making the international (audience) know about the true situation in Rakhine State, according to the news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief. — MNA



Vice Senior General Soe Win holds talks with UNSG Special Envoy Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

Myanmar, Morocco commemorate 40th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations

A RECEPTION commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and Morocco was held at Ayeyarwady Hall of M-Gallery Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on 12 October 2018. U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation of Myanmar and His Excellency Mr. Abdelilah El Housni, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Myanmar, attended the reception together with other invited guests. At the ceremony, artistes from Myanmar and Morocco performed the traditional dances and music.—MNA



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

Myanmar, Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrol

A COORDINATED patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted at border posts 36 to 38 from 8:30 am to 11:10 am on 10 October.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police lieutenant Myat

Zaw Oo from Border Police sub-division Taungpyo (right), Area 3, Maungtau Township, and the Bangladesh patrol was led by Naib Subedar Md. Rafiqul Islam of No. 34 Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB).—Police Information

Authorities negotiate with container truck protestors, traffic police clear traffic congestion

AUTHORITIES have entered negotiations with the container truck drivers protesting over the change in their hours of operation, and a troop of a hundred traffic police cleared the congestion from the protest, according to Police Captain Aung Naing Oo from Kyimyindine Township Traffic Police Division No.40.

The protests began at 8pm on 10 October at the junction of Home Street and Kannar Road in Kyimyindine Tsp. The protests were the result of dissatisfaction over the change of operating hours for container trucks from 8pm-6am to 9pm-6am and the subsequent arrests related to it.

About two hundred truck drivers and their assistants blocked half of the road from Home Street and Kyimyindine Kannar Road junction that reached to the New Thirimingalar Market on Bayinnaung Road, as of yesterday morning.

Police Captain Aung Naing Oo said after the operating hours were changed the truck drivers refused to leave at the new departure time of 9pm. He said negotiations lasted until 7am and achieved a degree of success, by which traffic police began clearing the congestion along the road. He added that the remaining demands will be discussed with the Traffic Rules Enforcement Supervisory Committee.

U Ye Kaung, an executive member of the Myanmar Container Trucks Association, said he views the protest as a united demonstration and not one of instigation. He said officials

from the association will submit the truck drivers' demands to the government. He said the demands include clearing traffic congestions at Thirimingalar Market and Sanpya Fish Market, clearing double parked cars and five to six other points. The main concern is the drop in their income, said U Ye Kaung.

Ko Pyae Sone, a truck driver, said the restriction in operating hours can cause traffic accidents as drivers struggle to reach their destinations on time and can reduce their income too. He said the operating hours should be increased.

Ko Tun Lin Aung, another truck driver, said cargo inspections begin in the morning and can end at 3-4pm the earliest or 7-8pm at the latest, with another hour spent on lining up the trucks for deployment. He said the restrictions are unsuitable for them.

The Yangon Region Government restricted the routes

and operating hours of container trucks on 1 November 2016 to ensure less congestion in public traffic.

The original schedule allowed for container trucks from Kyimyindine Kannar Road to pass through the inner city to Insein between 8pm to 6am. Some exceptions were made to allow trucks to operate from 1pm to 2pm and for trucks traveling from Insein to Kyimyindine to operate from 11am to 12pm.

The results from yesterday's negotiations tell that operating hours will resume from 8pm to 6am as before, and trucks traveling from Hlinethaya Township to Shwepyitha Township will be allowed to operate from 11am to 3pm, although no official announcement has been made as of yet. There are approximately 15,000 container trucks operating in the Yangon Region with 5,000 registered in the Container Trucks Association.—Zaw Gyi



Container trucks drive past a cargo container yard at a port in Yangon. PHOTO: PE ZAW

Intellectual property copyright

INTELLECTUAL property copyright refers to an assurance when someone's creation and innovation generates a sort of beneficial business model that benefits the original creator. This intellectual copyright is also one of the foundations for development in a market economy. Myanmar is also working to successfully establish this foundation for her development.

The Right to Intellectual Property Copyright Registration Act was enacted in 1909 and Myanmar Copyright Act was enacted in 1914, along with other related Acts, to safeguard intellectual property in the present age. But just these laws are not sufficient to fulfill the current needs of the country; which is why the Hluttaw is discussing four proposed bills to aid in this venture. Namely, bills for invention patents, trademark copyright, literature

“ The current reality is that without adequate laws to protect innovators, local entrepreneurs and bright-minded individuals do not have a safety net for their ideas and creations.

and arts copyright and industrial design copyright. The good news is the Pyithu Hluttaw has approved all four bills. It is only left to the Amyotha Hluttaw to discuss them and take a suitable course of action.

If the four aforementioned bills are passed by the legislature then they will be of much help to the nation's economic development. The current reality is that without adequate laws to protect innovators, local entrepreneurs and bright-minded individuals do not have a safety net for their ideas and creations. On a related topic, foreign brands entering the country do not have protection of their images and trademarks as well. This is a major deterrent to foreign investment in Myanmar and is consequently a hindrance to both domestic and external businesses.

But there is hope for the Hluttaw representatives are hard at work debating and discussing to overcome this obstacle and it would not be long now until the much-needed laws are enacted. Once these laws are enacted, a relevant office for handling intellectual property copyrights will emerge as well and will offer protection in accordance with the set rules and regulations. Thus, the arrival of laws to safeguard intellectual property is greatly welcomed with deep respect and full support.

A glimpse of the Myanmar Postal Service

By Kham (Sein Lone Kabar)

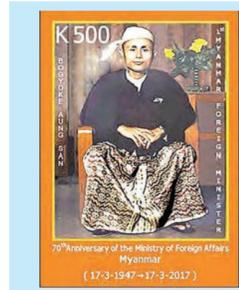
MYANMAR Post was launched on 1 April of 2015. Under the new scheme, permission was granted to 102 government officials and 5,818 government employees to render postal services in the country. A total of 51 government officials and 4564 government employees have been appointed to extend the postal services up to the rural areas of the country. Services include: 1. Sales of stamps; 2. receiving, distributing ordinary mail from domestic, overseas; 3. receiving, distributing registered mails from domestic, overseas; 4. accepting, distributing parcels from domestic, overseas 5. accepting, distributing printed materials from domestic, overseas; 6. domestic express accepting, distributing; 7. receiving, distributing domestic ordinary money order; 8. rent of post box; 9. other postal services.

Myanmar's postal services

Service provider

After several decades of monopoly in the postal service, invitations and announcements were made in the Myanma Alinn and the Kyemon Daily newspapers, published on 28 June 2016, aiming to expand the postal services offering domestic or overseas postal services, including registration system and to collect money that has been transferred, and share and collect money for online shopping and to act as a bank

1. MNA Airline ticketing businesses - 794 offices
2. My Kyat - 640 offices
3. @ Post - 447 offices
4. domestic express money order - 418 offices
5. domestic Express Mat Service - 307 offices
6. Online shopper - 289 people
7. OK\$ - 189 offices
8. CB Bank - 136 offices
9. International express mail services - 102 countries.



K 500 special commemorative stamp with Bogyoke Aung San portrait



K 1000 special commemorative stamp



Representatives from ASEAN regional and economic partner countries at the 23rd Postal Services meeting.

Myanmar hosted the 23rd ASEAN Postal Business Meeting held at the Novotel Yangon Max Hotel from 21 to 23 November 2016. The Myanmar Posts has issued two sets of stamps valued at Ks100 and Ks500 to mark the commemoration of this meeting. Moreover, stamps bearing the likeness of Bogyoke Aung San had been issued

by the Myanmar Posts on 17 March 2017, as a memorial of the 70th anniversary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was also learnt that the Myanmar Post had issued Ks1000 stamp on 11 November 2017 as a 50th Anniversary of ASEAN.

Starting on 1 January 1997, the Myanmar Post has cooperated with Myanmar DHL Limited as joint venture investment for the sake of sustainable benefits. The Myanmar Post holds 51 per cent shares and Myanmar DHL Limited contributed 49 per cent, respectively. The DHL head office is situated at No. 220, Insein Road, Hline Township, Yangon and another branch office is being opened at No. 58, Wadan Street, Lanmadaw Township in Yangon. Moreover, plans are under way to open other branch offices situated at No. 652, Hotel Mandalay compound and at Central Post Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

As for users, they can check www.myanmarpost.com whether their parcel has arrived or not, using information technology such as device phone (smart phone), online monitoring and delivery monitoring system. Deputy Minister

for Transport and Communications U Thar Oo attended the ceremony of donating machinery and equipment for the general office that took place on 2 July 2018, at the Mandalay General Post Office. During the ceremony, the Deputy Minister received the counter desk donated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), Queuing Machine donated by Japan Post and Digital Signage Player do-

son of Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) Daw Moe Moe Lwin, officials from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), The Japanese government Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), Japan Post, Postcode Ambassador Mr. Morisaki Win, philatelists, Managing Director and officials of the Myanmar Post.

Officials explained the process of postal system and shared the knowledge of postal signs. With the aim of focusing on the improvement of reading skills, the officials of the Myanmar Post have made relentless efforts for the public to deliver the donation of books, with free of charge, to the public libraries founded by the Ministry of Information. The customers can enjoy discount prices with low charges for regular customers starting from 1 October, 2018. According to the data, it is found that the Myanmar Post has made significant improvements due to the gaining of customer trusts and cooperation of the office staff. As for the Myanmar Post, efforts are being made to render better services for the people and to streamline the cooperation process for modernization and improvement of Myanmar post, turning itself into a quality and reliable service. That's why plans are being laid down for Portal transportation network and operations. For the information of the customers, the authorities concerned had made necessary arrangements for inquiry regarding the postal services, and the customers who are unhappy with the services can make a complaint through the customer service of the Nay Pyi Taw Central Post Office, phone: 067-3420888 and www.facebook.com/Myanmar-Post Service.

The Yangon General Post Office, where modern structures are taking the place of historical edifices, celebrated its 110th Birthday at the General Post Office in Yangon. To commemorate this celebration, a set of stamps valued each at Ks 200, four types of postcards and card folders were issued on 20 September 2018, and these items were sold at the post offices in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay.

Attending the ceremony were Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Yangon Region Minister for Electricity, Industry, Road and Communications Daw Nilar Kyaw, Deputy Ministers U Kyaw Myo, U Thar Oo, Managing Directors, Directors General, Vice Chairper-

အပြည်ပြည်ဆိုင်ရာသဘာဝဘေးလျော့ပါးရေးနေ့
"REDUCING ECONOMIC LOSSES FROM DISASTERS HAS THE POWER TO TRANSFORM LIVES"
"ပြည်သူ့ဘဝ တိုးတက်ပြောင်းလဲဖို့၊ ဘေးဒဏ်ကြောင့် စီးပွားဆုံးရှုံးမှု လျော့ချဖို့"
၂၀၁၈ ခုနှစ်၊ အောက်တိုဘာလ ၁၃ ရက်



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 11 October 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (13:30)hrs MST today, the Severe Cyclonic Storm "TITLI" still persists as a Cyclonic Storm over land. It is forecast to move Northeastwards and weaken gradually. Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and cloudy over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF 12 October 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw and Taninthayi Region and widespread in the remaining regions and states with regionally heavy falls in Rakhine State and isolated heavy falls in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions, Chin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) mph. Sea will be moderate to rough elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (9 - 12) feet Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts and about (6-9) feet Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Kachin, Chin and Rakhine States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 12 October 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 12 October 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 12 October 2018: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Cyclonic Storm News 19:00 MST, 11 October 2018

Severe Cyclonic Storm
According to the observations at (13:30)hrs MST today, the Severe Cyclonic Storm "TITLI" still persists as a Cyclonic Storm over land. It is forecast to move Northeastwards and weaken gradually.

General caution
Due to the Cyclonic Storm over land, rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread to widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin and Rakhine states with isolated to regionally heavy falls within next (24)hrs. Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) mph. Sea will be moderate to rough elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (9 - 12) feet Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts and about (6-9)feet Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

Advisory
People should be aware trawlers, vessels and ships off and along Myanmar Coasts.

Translated by
Win Ko Ko Aung



Union Minister and departmental officials at the entrance of the Yangon General Post Office on its 100th anniversary event.

Three journalists from Eleven Journal face charges for public distrust motives, defaming Yangon Region government

By Honey

YANGON Region government has sued three journalists from the Eleven Media for writing and publishing an article with incorrect information for causing public distrust against the regional government, according to the statement released by the Yangon Region government.

Phyo Wai Win, writer of the article, Chief Editor Kyaw Zaw Lin and Editor In-charge Na Yi Min, are facing charges under legal section 505(b) at the Tamway Township Court.

The article titled "Shutting down refilling stations which are always running at loss, school buses with unknown borrower and public shares under the name of individual" published by the Eleven Journal on 8 October includes incorrect information which defame and cause distrust to the Yangon Region government, according to the statement.

In the statement, Yangon Region government said some facts in the article are not correct and Yangon Region Planning and Finance Minister U Myint Thaung is a representative of the Yangon Region government to Yangon Metropolitan Development Public Co Ltd.

Yangon Region government refuted the allegations in the article, saying that the public company did not buy shares under its name by spending the public funds nor kept the shares under the name of U

Myint Thaung.

Yangon Metropolitan Development Public Co., Ltd. was established on 8 March 2017 in accordance with the 1914 Myanmar Companies Act and the 1950 Special Companies Act, with 539,500 shares by Yangon Region government and 48,600 shares by Myanmar Construction and Development Co., Ltd.

The article stated "Such kind of problem in which companies are established by spending public funds, then shares were kept under the name of individuals, and later the funds of the country are belonged to those individuals. 639,500 shares owned by the K54-billion worth Yangon Metropolitan Public Company should be kept under the title of "Yangon Region Government's Planning and Finance Minister", and should not be kept under individual name U Myint Thaung. Only then, whoever becomes the Yangon Region Government's Planning and Finance Minister, will the public funds remain under the official title. It is a wrong procedure that the government with a term of five years has not kept the public funds under the official title but kept under the name of U Myint Thaung".

The article with incorrect information has caused panic and worries for the shareholders of the public company and has defamed the Yangon Region government, said the statement. Myanmar has experienced such kind of problem where a company that was built

up by spending the public funds and then the shares from that company were then turned into shares owned by individuals who later led to the property of the State belonging to those individuals. It should, in reality, be all of the 639,500 shares within the K 54 billion-worth Yangon Metropolitan Development Public Company under the title of "Yangon Region Minister for Planning and Finance". That would mean that no matter who is the individual that gets appointed as the Yangon Region Minister for Planning and Finance, the public funds should be kept safe under the official title. I would like to summarize this week's economic reviews by saying that a government with a term of 5 years should not keep the public funds under the name of "Yangon Region Minister for Planning and Finance" but keeping the public funds under the name of "Myint Thaung" is not the correct procedure."

The three accused: Phyo Wai (a) Phyo Wai Win, 31, Chief Editor Kyaw Zaw Lin, 39, and Editor In-Charge Na Yi Min (a) Dr. Min Lwin, 50, handed themselves over to Tamway Police Station on 9 October afternoon. They were then taken to the Tamway Township Court for seeking remand.

The Tamway Township Court ordered the journalists to remain in custody and they were taken to Insein prison.

The next hearing in the case will be on 17 October. ■

Industrial & Infrastructure event to be held in Yangon

MEGA Industrial & Infrastructure event will take place for the first time in Myanmar from 11 to 13 October at Yangon Convention Centre (YCC). This event is organised by UBM Asia, Gold sponsors by Prominent and Supreme Group of Companies and supported by leading industry associations, including the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), Myanmar Industries Association (MIA), Myanmar Federation of Mining Association (MFMA), Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Association (MCEA),

Myanmar Engineering Society (MES), Renewable Energy Association of Myanmar (REAM), Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation (YESC), Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC), Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Myanmar and strongly acknowledged by the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Electricity and Energy, and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation. This event was held with an aim to have opportunities to network with international manufacturing suppliers, as

well as exchange knowledge and views with experts in the field. Myanmar remains one of the fastest-growing economies in Southeast Asia. The manufacturing sector absorbed foreign direct investments (FDIs) worth US\$275.6 million through 19 projects in the past three months, according to statistics provided by the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC). The MIC targeted FDIs worth \$3 billion during the six-month interim period from April to September, prior to the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

The entrance fee for the exhibition is free of charge.—

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission

Notification No. (153/2018)
2nd Waxing of Thadingyut (11 October 2018)

Notification on election campaign and assembly

1. Union Election Commission has already announced on 24.8.2018 with Notification No (121/2018) that Hluttaw candidates involved in the by-election, which will be held on 3 November 2018, can campaign for votes from 3.9.2018, 6:00 am until 1.11.2018, 12 midnight.
2. Electoral assembly and speeches must be stopped from 1.11.2018 12 midnight to 3.11.2018 until the by-election is held, to ensure stability, successful holding of the elections and for voters to vote freely for a candidate.
3. Campaign posters must be removed before the last day allowed for campaigning, 1.11.2018 12 midnight. If the campaign posters are not removed on the specified date and time, Township Sub-Commissions will arrange with respective city development committees to remove the campaign posters. It is notified that the respective Hluttaw candidates must pay for the cost of removing the posters.

(Hla Thein)

Chairman

Union Election Commission

New Mingalar cinema opens near North Okkalapa intersection



New Mingalar Cinema opened in Yangon. PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT

MINGALAR Cinemas has opened a new cinema that can house 500 viewers on Thudamar Street near North Okkalapa intersection in Yangon yesterday.

As the opening event, the Myanmar movie 'A Way Chit' directed by Director Ko Zaw (Ar Yone Oo) and the foreign movie 'VENOM' will be shown starting from 12 October.

The cinema will alternate between Myanmar movies and foreign movies, with Cinema-1 containing 260 seats and Cinema-2 containing 285 seats. The ticket prices range from Ks1,500, Ks2,500, Ks3,000, Ks4,500 for 2D movies and Ks2,000, Ks3,000, Ks3,500, Ks5,000 for 3D movies. Show times start from anywhere between 10am to 9:30pm with five showtimes per day.

The cinema opened yesterday is the 25th cinema of Mingalar Company and the next will be opened in Tamway Township

soon. The Ministry of Information has conducted renovation projects for film studios and has opened a Film Development Centre where professional filmmaking skills and technology can be discussed. The centre holds monthly workshops and discussions concerned with screenplay and also conducts training programs and consultations for the development of the film industry.

There were 9 films produced in 2014, 32 films in 2015, 98 films in 2016, 158 films in 2017, and 120 films in 2018 as of this month. New cinemas will be opened and changed to a digital system to show these films. There are plans to open cinemas in the other regions and states by connecting with the Ministry of Information. There were 19 cinemas with 19 screens opened in 2013, which has since been increased to 113 cinemas with 127 screens. —Win Win ■

Trump demands Saudis explain missing journalist

WASHINGTON (United States) — US President Donald Trump on Wednesday demanded Saudi Arabia provide answers over the disappearance of journalist and US resident Jamal Khashoggi, whom Turkish officials suspect was murdered after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

The Trump administration sharply upped the pressure, reversing an initially low-key response after *Washington Post* contributor Khashoggi vanished on 2 October.

Trump said he had talked “more than once” and “at the highest levels” to partners in Saudi Arabia, which is one of Washington’s closest allies and a key market for the US weapons industry.

“We’re demanding everything,” Trump told reporters. “We cannot let this happen, to reporters, to anybody.”

“We are very disappointed to see what’s going on. We don’t like it and we’re going to get to the bottom of it,” he added.

Twenty-two senators wrote to Trump invoking the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which requires the president to open an investigation and determine whether sanctions should be imposed.

The act is used in cases of suspected “extrajudicial killing, torture, or other gross violation of internationally recognized human rights against an individual exercising freedom of expression,” the senators said.

Trump spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said National Security



Jamal Khashoggi, a former Saudi government advisor, had been living in the United States since last year, fearing possible arrest. PHOTO: AFP

Advisor John Bolton, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Trump’s close aide and son-in-law Jared Kushner had all spoken to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman over the past two days.

The United States has not confirmed Turkish claims that Khashoggi, a US resident and one of the more outspoken critics of the regime of King Salman and his son Prince Mohammed, had been lured to the Istanbul consulate and murdered by a team of 15 government operatives sent by Riyadh to Istanbul.

But *The Washington Post* reported Wednesday that Prince Mohammed himself had ordered an operation targeting Khashoggi. Saudi officials were heard discussing a plan to lure Khashoggi from the US state of Virginia, where he resided, and detain him, the newspaper said, citing unnamed US officials discussing

intelligence intercepts.

The case has sparked outrage from human rights and journalism groups.

In the calls by Bolton, Kushner and Pompeo, Sanders said, “they asked for more details and for the Saudi government to be transparent in the investigation process.” Trump also said he was looking into a meeting in the White House with Khashoggi’s fiancée Hatice Cengiz.

Critic of Saudi regime

US peace activists Code Pink mounted a protest in front of the Saudi Embassy in Washington Wednesday, brandishing signs saying “Where is Jamal Khashoggi?” and “Khashoggi: Another Victim of Saudi Violence.”

“We are very very disturbed” by Khashoggi’s disappearance, said Code Pink founder Meda Benjamin.

“We think that there is very little hope that Jamal is still alive.”

The Washington Post, where Khashoggi has been a regular contributor over the past year, also called for answers.

“Reports about Jamal’s fate have suggested he was a victim of state-sponsored, cold-blooded murder,” said *Post* publisher and chief executive Fred Ryan.

“Silence, denials and delays are not acceptable. We demand to know the truth,” he added.

Khashoggi, 59, is a longtime leading Saudi journalist and former government advisor who went into exile last year after 33-year-old Prince Mohammed rose to power under his father the king. He has been critical of the monarchy’s continued arrest of critics on both the left and right, despite its professed reforms.

He has also repeatedly assailed Riyadh’s role leading the war against Yemen’s Huthi rebels, a campaign closely identified with Prince Mohammed that has resulted in thousands of civilian deaths and generated a major humanitarian disaster.

Khashoggi was last seen entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul to obtain papers for his pending marriage to Cengiz, who is Turkish. In his last interview three days before his disappearance, he said he did not think he would return to Saudi Arabia.

“When I hear of the arrest of a friend who did nothing that (deserved being) arrested, it makes me feel I shouldn’t go,” he told the BBC.— AFP ■

Brief in News

Iran summons German envoy over extradition of ‘bomb plot’ diplomat

TEHRAN — Tehran summoned the German ambassador on Wednesday to protest the extradition of one of its diplomats to Belgium over his alleged role in a bomb plot.

“The German ambassador to Tehran was summoned today to protest against the extradition... of one of our diplomats to Belgium,” foreign ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi said in a statement.

The head of the ministry’s European desk told the ambassador that the arrest and extradition were “caused by a fabricated conspiracy by enemies of Iran and European relations” and called for his swift release, the statement added. The Iranian diplomat, who had been based in Vienna, was taken into custody in Belgium earlier on Wednesday on suspicion of involvement in an alleged plot to bomb an Iranian opposition rally in France.—AFP ■

More Americans say US “mostly failed” in Afghanistan: survey

WASHINGTON — Seventeen years into war in Afghanistan, Americans remain pessimistic about US involvement in the war-torn country, according to a recent survey by research center Pew.

About 49 per cent of the US adults say the United States has “mostly failed” to achieve its goals, according to the report released on Pew’s website last week.

The poll also showed that about 35 per cent of respondents said it has mostly succeeded. In surveys conducted in 2014 and 2015, opinions about the mission were similarly more negative than positive, said Pew. The Washington-based research center also revealed that between 2009 and 2011, when asked whether the United States will succeed or fail to achieve its goals, majorities said the United States would be successful. Meanwhile, fewer Americans feel confident today that it was a right decision to use military force in Afghanistan. The poll showed that 45 per cent of people say it’s a right decision, down sharply from 69 per cent in 2006.—AFP ■

Germany open to selling arms to Saudis despite Yemen war

BERLIN (Germany) — Germany’s government has left the door open to exporting arms to Saudi Arabia and its allies in the Yemen conflict, the news weekly *Der Spiegel* reported Wednesday, seemingly in spite of a deal within the country’s

ruling coalition.

There would be no German arms embargo on countries taking part in the Yemen conflict, which has left 10,000 people dead since 2015, the news weekly said on its website. It cited a letter to that effect sent by

the economy ministry to Social Democratic Party (SPD) MP Thomas Hitschler.

But part of a March coalition deal between Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conservative CSU party and the centre-left SPD appeared to rule out arms exports to countries “directly involved” in the conflict.

The letter to Hitschler, however, said that export licences will be granted on a case by case basis, *Der Spiegel* reported.

The issue provoked a sharp dispute within the SPD’s parliamentary group, the news weekly said, with several deputies accusing Foreign Minister Heiko Maas — himself a SPD member — of kowtowing to the Saudis. Merkel’s coalition is already

fragile, with its third member, the Bavarian conservative CSU, agitating for a migration crackdown as well as facing regional polls on Sunday.

The *Der Spiegel* report also comes amid mounting international scrutiny of the disappearance of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, last seen by his fiancée entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul last week.

Turkish police say they think he was killed by a 15-strong team sent to Istanbul, an accusation strongly denied by the Saudis.

The authorities in Turkey have released security camera footage showing a man thought to be Khashoggi entering the consulate.— AFP ■



The devastating conflict in Yemen has left 10,000 people dead since March 2015. PHOTO: AFP

IMF chief defends rate hikes after Trump slams 'crazy' Fed

NUSA DUA (Indonesia) — Central bank rate hikes were a “necessary development”, International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde said Thursday, a day after Donald Trump sent global markets tumbling by calling Fed increases “crazy”.

“It is clearly a necessary development for those economies that are showing much improved growth, inflation that is picking up... unemployment that is extremely low,” Lagarde told a press briefing at the IMF’s annual meeting in Bali.

“It’s inevitable that central



“Clearly as a result of (rate hikes)... we see and we will continue to see capital flow movements,” Lagarde said. PHOTO: AFP

banks make the decisions that they make.”

Trump’s comments Wednesday triggered a sell-off on Wall Street, with Asian markets opening sharply lower on Thursday in response.

“I think the Fed is making a mistake. It’s so tight. I think the Fed has gone crazy,” the US president said.

But Lagarde added that uncoordinated developed-country rate hikes were contributing to destabilising capital outflows from emerging markets.

The financial outlook, com-

bined with global uncertainty over trade tensions between Washington and trading partners like China, has created “a bit of an unprecedented situation” for the world economy, said Lagarde.

“Clearly as a result of (rate hikes)... we see and we will continue to see capital flow movements,” she added.

“The fact that large central banks of advanced economies are not exactly all moving at the same pace is also probably accelerating that phenomenon.”

—AFP ■

N Korea celebrates key party anniversary, calls for solidarity

PYONGYANG — North Korea marked the 73rd anniversary of the founding of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea on Wednesday, calling for solidarity.

Although no major events, such as a military parade, were seen, party flags and placards were placed along major streets of Pyongyang in celebration of the anniversary.

Many citizens and military personnel visited Mansu Hill in the city’s center, as they do every year, to lay flowers in front of giant bronze statues of state founder Kim Il Sung and his son Kim Jong Il, the second leader of North Korea.

Young people also gath-

ered at squares across the capital of North Korea to dance and otherwise celebrate the anniversary.

North Korea’s leading newspaper, *Rodong Sinmun*, said in an editorial on Wednesday that the Workers’ Party of Korea “has always emerged victorious in carving out the path ahead of the country and the revolution under the unfurled banner of single-minded unity.”

The ruling party, which held its first congress in 36 years in May 2016, has been aiming to strengthen its function in recent years.

While it is unknown whether officials are visiting Pyong-

yang from abroad on the occasion of the anniversary, North Korea has been stepping up diplomatic efforts ahead of a potential second summit between leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump.

On Monday, North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui, who handles nuclear weapons issues and negotiations with the United States, met with her Chinese and Russian counterparts in Moscow.

Speculation has been also growing that Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit North Korea and Kim will make a trip to Russia in the near future.

—Kyodo News ■



Fishermen in India’s east coast were advised not to go out to sea as Cyclone Titli approached. PHOTO: AFP

Cyclone batters eastern India, 300,000 evacuated

NEW DELHI (India) — A cyclone packing winds of over 125 kilometres (80 miles) per hour and heavy rains hit eastern India early Thursday, local media reported, with over 300,000 people evacuated from low-lying areas.

Cyclone Titli, which intensified into a “very severe cyclonic storm” over the Bay of Bengal, made landfall near Gopalpur on India’s east coast, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported.

The Odisha state government evacuated more than 300,000 people from five coastal districts on Wednesday while local schools, colleges

and childcare centres were ordered closed and fishermen advised not to go out to sea.

“We have already evacuated three lakh (300,000) people and more may be shifted to safer places in view of the very severe cyclone,” PTI quoted Odisha’s Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik as saying.

There were no deaths reported but trees and electricity poles were uprooted, officials told PTI, with roads and makeshift mud-brick houses also damaged. The weather system was expected to curve to the northeast and weaken gradually, India’s weather bureau said.—AFP ■



People dance in Pyongyang on 10 October, 2018 in celebration of the 73rd anniversary of the founding of the ruling Workers’ Party of Korea. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

'Carbon sink' Bhutan counts cost of plans for green future

PUNAKHA (Bhutan)—The gentle whirring of the wind turbine speaks volumes of Bhutan's record as the world's only carbon negative country, but major challenges stand in the way of the Himalayan kingdom's decision to follow a green path over rampant economic expansion.

The mountainous state, holding only its third election on October 18, absorbs three times more CO₂ than it emits, thanks mainly to the lush forests covering 72 per cent of its land.

Famed as the "last Shangri-La" for using happiness as a measure of success, Switzerland-sized Bhutan has been careful to keep its environment pristine, often by sacrificing profits.

The nation of 800,000 has restricted tourist numbers with a daily fee of \$250 per visitor in high season, helping keep at



Bhutan is the only carbon negative country in the world but major obstacles stand in the way of the Himalayan kingdom's decision to follow a green path over rampant economic expansion. PHOTO: AFP

buy the kind of boom that has ravaged other scenic hotspots.

In May, Bhutan opted out of an India-backed regional road connectivity project mainly over concerns that trucks coming in from other countries will pollute its air.

"There was a great temptation to dig into

our forest wealth but we thought of the longer term,' says Dasho Paljor Dorji from Bhutan's National Environment Commission+6.

"There was a great temptation to dig into our forest wealth but we thought of the longer

term,' says Dasho Paljor Dorji from Bhutan's Na-

tional Environment Commission

The constitution stipulates that at least 60 per cent of Bhutan must be covered in forest, putting a brake on farming and a potentially lucrative timber industry.

"There was a great temptation to dig into our forest wealth but

we thought of the longer term," said Dasho Paljor Dorji from Bhutan's National Environment Commission.

Five-year plan

Under its 11th five-year-plan, Bhutan aims to reduce "substantially" its forest fuel imports by 2020. It has just 100 electric cars so far but wants to increase numbers and plans to introduce a nationwide network of charging stations. In 2016 it installed its first wind turbines.

A walk through spick and span Thimpu -- Asia's only capital city with no traffic lights -- gives a glimpse of Bhutan's green commitment.

A rare sight in South Asia, heavy road-cleaning vehicles sweep the streets in slow circular motions, while trucks collect organic waste from households.

Just two hours away

in Punakha district earthmovers and bulldozers are chugging away at a hydropower project.

It is one of the 10 the country aims to build as part of its plan to remain carbon neutral.

All existing and future hydropower projects are financed by its friend and biggest partner India.

Hydropower was also Bhutan's largest export in 2016, accounting for 32.4 per cent of the country's total exports and eight per cent of its GDP, according to the Asian Development Bank.

All of the energy currently goes to India but there are plans to export also to Bangladesh.

But concerns have been growing over the impact of dams on biodiversity especially as Bhutan shifts from low-impact "run-of-the-river" dams, which do not require large reservoirs, to larger-scale barriers that do.—AFP ■

Florida girds for 'extremely dangerous' category four hurricane

PANAMA CITY (United States) — Hurricane Michael closed in on Florida's Gulf Coast on Wednesday as an "extremely dangerous" category four storm packing winds of up to 140 mph (220 kph) and a huge sea surge, the National Hurricane Centre said.

Forecasters were calling it an "unprecedented" weather event for the area.

The center said the storm could grow and is expected to slam ashore later in the day in Florida as a "life-threatening event."

As outer rainbands from the storm lashed the coast, it said a storm surge of up to 13 feet (four meters) was expected in some areas. Some 375,000 people in more than 20 counties were ordered or advised to evacuate, news reports said. The National Weather Service office in the state capital Tallahassee issued a dramatic appeal for people to comply with evacuation orders. "Hurri-

cane Michael is an unprecedented event and cannot be compared to any of our previous events. Do not risk your life, leave NOW if you were told to do so," it said.

Disaster warnings

The storm was forecast to make landfall somewhere along the Florida Panhandle -- a finger-shaped strip of land in the Gulf of Mexico.

It was expected to bring hurricane force winds and heavy rainfall, the Miami-based NHC said.

It will then move across the southeastern US for another day or so as it heads toward the Atlantic. The NWS office in Tallahassee said it had found no record of any previous category four hurricanes that made landfall in the panhandle or the "Big Bend" coastal region.

"This situation has NEVER happened before," it said on Twitter.

Category four is the second highest level on the Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale. Governor Rick Scott has activated 2,500 members of the National Guard.

He warned Michael could be the most destructive storm to hit the Florida Panhandle in decades.

—AFP ■

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Tokyo named world's best city for third year in US magazine poll

NEW YORK—Tokyo has been chosen as the world's best big city outside the United States for the third year in a row, the U.S. travel magazine *Condé Nast Traveler* said Tuesday.

More than 420,000 readers cast votes for their favorite cities in the 2018 poll, the magazine said, with Japan's ancient capital Kyoto climbing the ranking to second from third the previous year and the country's second-largest city of Osaka placing 12th.

Japan was the only country that had three cities in the top 20 list. "Topping our list of world cities yet again, Tokyo continues to thrill with its contradictions: ultramodern, neon-lit skyscrapers and tranquil temples, unmatched street style and centuries-old etiquette," the magazine said. Turning to Kyoto, it said the western Japan city is "still one of the most well-preserved cities in Japan" but pointed to new attractions.



Kyodo News helicopter on New Year's Day in 2013 shows central Tokyo, with Mt. Fuji in the background and Tokyo Skytree in the front. **PHOTO: Kyodo**

"Now the city's leafy, machiya-lined streets are draws for their specialty crafts shops and chic concept stores," it said, referring to traditional Kyoto townhouses.

The magazine said Osaka

in western Japan is "one of the best food cities in all of Japan—must-eat regional specialties include takoyaki (battered, fried octopus balls) and okonomiyaki (grilled savory pancakes with a variety of additions)."

Australia's Melbourne was third, followed by Vienna in Austria and Germany's Hamburg. Other Asian cities that made the list were Singapore at seventh and Seoul at 16th.—Kyodo News ■

Gaga, Serena Williams, Styles and Gucci star to host Met gala

NEW YORK (United States)—Lady Gaga, Serena Williams, Harry Styles and Gucci's star designer Alessandro Michele will co-chair next year's Met Gala with Anna Wintour, museum officials said Tuesday.

Organized every year by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Gala is a fundraising dinner for its Costume Institute. It is run by Wintour, editor-in-chief of *Vogue* magazine, whose influence is such that the space dedicated to the Costume Institute since 2014 has been called the Anna Wintour Costume Center.

Trading shrewdly on her name, the high priestess of fashion has managed to turn the event into a can't-miss collision of the creative world from fashion to film to theater to TV to sport—and anyone ready to pay for the 30,000-dollar ticket.—AFP ■

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Hydrogen can replace fossil fuels: Australia's top scientist

CANBERRA—Australia's chief scientist Alan Finkel has called for hydrogen to replace fossil fuels as an everyday source of power.

The United Nations' landmark Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report released on Monday called for coal-fired power generation to be phased out by 2050 and identified hydrogen as a fuel option that must be developed to mitigate global warming. Melissa Price, Australia's minister for the Environment, on Tuesday rejected the key findings of

the report despite not having read the whole thing. Much of Australia's reluctance to move away from coal stems from the nation's economy relying on coal exports.

However, Finkel said on Wednesday that Australia had an excellent opportunity to become a world-leader in hydrogen exports, saying doing so would "contribute very significantly to the global endeavour" to lower carbon emissions. "We would be helping Japan, Korea and other countries make their contribution

... from a global point of view it's very significant," he told media on Wednesday.

Australia's peak scientific body, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), in August opened the door for hydrogen exports by producing high purity hydrogen that can be safely transported and used for mass-energy production. CSIRO researchers developed a unique membrane that allowed hydrogen that was turned into ammonia for safe

transport to be turned back into hydrogen, which was then used to fuel a car, once it reached its destination. Up until the breakthrough, the transport of hydrogen was considered extremely dangerous because of its high flammability.

"This is a watershed moment for energy, and we look forward to applying CSIRO innovation to enable this exciting renewably-sourced fuel and energy storage medium a smoother path to market," CSIRO chief executive Larry Marshall said at the time.—Xinhua ■

Myopia linked to gene changes, giving new clue to drug development

WASHINGTON—A study published on Tuesday in the journal PLOS Biology showed that near-sightedness and far-sightedness develop through different molecular pathways.

The findings provides a new understanding of myopia, which is expected to affect nearly half the world's population in the next three decades, and opens the way for development of drugs to prevent it.

Myopia occurs when the eye grows too long, increasing the distance between lens and retina such that the image produced by the lens comes into focus at a point in front of, rather than on, the retina. In hyperopia, the opposite occurs. The eye is too short, and the focal point is behind the retina.

Researchers from Columbia University induced either myopia or hyperopia in marmosets, by placing lenses in front of their eyes.

When marmosets were exposed to defocus of either type in one eye for up to five weeks, the activity of genes in the exposed retina changed compared to the non-exposed retina.

But they found that the molecular pathways affected were for the most part different between the two types of defocus.

While both types of defocus induced changes in important cellular signaling pathways, with the scores of genes affected in each case, only a small handful were affected by both types of defocus, according to the study. There were also gene activity differences over time in each type, with little overlap between those affected within the first 10 days and those affected after five weeks. They found that 29 of the genes whose activity changed in response to defocus were localized within chromosomal regions (called quantitative trait loci) previously associated with human myopia in large-scale genetic studies.

The findings suggested that variations in the expression of genes involved in the normal regulation of eye shape in response to defocus contribute to nearsightedness, according to the researchers.—Xinhua ■

Jupiter's moon may be covered by ice blades, making alien life search difficult

LONDON—Jupiter's ocean moon Europa is probably covered with blades of ice up to 15 meters tall at its equatorial regions, researchers from Cardiff University in Wales suggests.

The potentially life-supporting Europa has been studied by NASA, whose work has become more difficult due to the ice towers. "Clearly, the paper suggests very strongly that the tropics of Europa are going to be spiky,

and it would be unwise to plan to land there without a specially adapted lander," said Dan Hobley, lead author of the study and a lecturer in the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences at Cardiff University.

Jagged ice towers could also be found on Earth, especially in high, dry and cold tropical regions like the Chilean Andes. These ice towers are named "penitentes," Spanish for "penitent," because

they often look like people kneeling in penance. Scientists found that penitentes on Europa could be up to 15 meters tall, spaced about seven meters apart, while on Earth their heights usually range from one to five meters.

"The Europa penitentes grow much slower than the Earth examples, but on Earth they might be restricted to a season or maybe two until they melt in summer or get covered in more

snow, but on Europa, they are sat out in the sun growing for 50 million years," Hobley explained.

NASA plans to launch a mission called Europa Clipper in 2020s. At a cost of 2 billion U.S. dollars, the mission will "perform repeated close flybys of the icy moon from a long, looping orbit around Jupiter," assess the possible landing site on Europa and try to seek out signs of life on the moon.—Xinhua ■

China launches new remote sensing satellites

JIUQUAN—Two remote sensing satellites were successfully sent into space Tuesday from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.

The satellites, both part of the Yaogan-32 family, were launched by a Long March-2C rocket with an attached upper stage at 10:43 a.m. Beijing time. The satellites have entered their planned orbits and will be used for electromagnetic environment surveys and other related technology tests. This was the first flight of the upper stage named Yuanzheng-1S, or Expedition-1S. It cooperated well with the Long March-2C rocket and significantly improved the carrying capacity of the rocket, according to the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology.

Upper stages are independent spacecraft installed on the carrier rocket that are capable of restarting their engines multiple times in space to allow them to send different payloads into varying orbits. They are also referred to as space shuttles.



Two remote sensing satellites, both part of the Yaogan-32 family, are launched by a Long March-2C rocket with an attached upper stage named Yuanzheng-1S, or Expedition-1S, at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Jiuquan, northwest China's Gansu Province on 9 October, 2018. PHOTO: Xinhua

In February this year, the Yuanzheng-1 rocket upper stage helped send two satellites into orbit on a single carrier rocket for China's BeiDou Navigation Satellite System.

The Yuanzheng-1S, a simplified version of the Yuanzheng-1,

is designed for short flights, and will be mainly used for commercial launches, said Cui Zhaoyun, deputy chief designer of the upper stage. Previously, the Long March-2C rocket was capable of sending payloads of about 1.2 tonnes into the sun-synchronous

orbit. Installed with the Yuanzheng-1S upper stage, the carrying capacity of the rocket has been increased to two tonnes, according to Cui.

Tuesday's launch was the 286th mission of the Long March rocket series.—Xinhua ■

Manchester United in trouble and could lose Pogba, says Deschamps



"Dream on," France coach Didier Deschamps tells Juventus fans of signing Paul Pogba. **PHOTO: AFP**

MILAN (Italy)—Manchester United are in trouble and fans of Italian champions Juventus are right to dream of signing Paul Pogba, France's World Cup-winning coach Didier Deschamps said on Wednesday.

"All of Manchester United are in trouble. Pogba is still the same and is one of the best midfielders in the world," Deschamps told Italian newspaper *Gazzetta Dello Sport* of the tensions between Pogba and United boss Jose Mourinho.

"However, I'll never comment on relationships between players and coaches."

Pogba has been linked with a return to Juventus, whom he joined for free in 2012 after walking out of United after the club failed to tie him to a new contract.

He then returned to United in 2016 on a five-year contract for a then-record transfer fee of 105m euros (£89.3 million).

Deschamps suggested the prospect of Pogba once again quitting United for Juventus was

not so far-fetched.

"Dreams are a part of life," he added. "Maybe the fans hadn't dreamed of Cristiano Ronaldo, who ended up signing."

"Sometimes dreams come true, but compared to a few years ago it would cost Juve a lot more to buy Pogba now."

Deschamps managed Juventus in the mid-2000s after the club were demoted from Serie A amid a match-fixing scandal, having played for five years with the club until 1999.

"Today's Juve is as strong the one with which I won the Champions League in 1996," said the 49-year-old of the Italian champions' last European triumph. "The difference is also down to details. This Juventus has the means to be among the favourites. "Cristiano Ronaldo makes Champions League victory almost obligatory."

"With him, Juventus have guaranteed a player who can be decisive in important moments. He is a great professional," Deschamps said.— AFP ■

Aung La N Sang to defend middleweight title against Karaki

THE ONE middleweight championship: Pursuit of Greatness, which will take place at the Thunna Indoor Stadium, Yangon, on 26 October, when One Championship middleweight and light heavyweight champion Aung La N Sang will defend his middleweight title against undefeated Mohammad Karaki.

Aung La N Sang claimed the

middleweight title in 2017 June, successfully defending it against Ken Hasegawa a year later. In between those fights, "The Burmese Python" went 2-0 at light heavyweight, defeating Alexandre Machado in under a minute in February to become a two-division champion. Karaki was also a two-division titleholder under the

Desert Force banner, capturing

the middleweight and light heavyweight belts. "O Lutador" makes his first appearance inside the ONE cage after racking up a perfect 9-0 record that includes eight first-round finishes, according to One Championship.

The One Championship has released a variety of bouts for the Championship day event, while Myanmar star fighters will be in three bouts that includes Aung La N Sang vs. Mohammad Karaki, Phoe Thaw vs. Keanu Subba and Ye Thway Ne vs. Mite Yine.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



One Championship two-division champion Aung La N Sang seen at a media conference. **PHOTO: Phoe Thaw Zin**

Giggs plays down fears over Bale injury ahead of Wales v Spain clash

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Ryan Giggs has played down fears over the fitness of Real Madrid forward Gareth Bale despite ruling the Wales forward out of Thursday's friendly with Spain.

Bale has been troubled by a groin injury in recent weeks and was forced off in the closing stages of Real's defeat at Alaves on Saturday. But Wales boss Giggs is still hopeful that Bale will make the Nations League tie away to the Ireland on Tuesday, and predicted that he would be fit for Real's next game against Levante.

"Gareth has got a little bit of muscle fatigue and he won't be involved against Spain," Giggs said. "We don't want to take any risks and we are monitoring it every day. I would say he is 50-50 at the minute for the Ireland game. "He feels good but we have to weigh up the risk whether he can be part of the game on Tuesday." Bale, the all-time top scorer for Wales, scored three goals in his first three league appearances for Real this season.

But the injuries that have become a common theme of his stay in Spain soon struck again,

and Giggs said Bale had been scanned in Madrid a few weeks ago. "We rescanned it and have done everything we can to get as much information," Giggs said at his pre-match press conference. "There was a little bit on both scans—but there's always something. "We're treating the symptoms but it's nothing to worry about. Either way, I expect him to be fit for Madrid's next game." Former Manchester United winger Giggs said Spain, under new boss Luis Enrique, would be tough opponents. Spain, who had a disappointing World Cup, beat England 2-1 in their Nations League opener last month before thumping Croatia 6-0. "They've got a new manager and they were very impressive last month against both England and Croatia," Giggs said.

"To score six goals against the World Cup finalists Croatia is something special and gives the chance for our lads to play against some of the best players in the world."— AFP ■

'Forget about me', Benzema asks French football president



Karim Benzema has not appeared for France since coming off in the 81st minute just after scoring his second goal against Armenia in Nice in October 2015. **PHOTO: AFP**

MADRID (Spain)—Karim Benzema made clear on Wednesday that he wishes Noel Le Graet, the president of the French football association (FFF), would stop talking about him.

"Monsieur Le Graet, I ask you to forget about me," the Real Madrid striker, who has not played for France since 2015, tweeted. Le Graet had said in an interview with French newspapers that the 30-year-old Benzema's time with Les Bleus "was finished." Benzema's answering tweet went on: "France are world champions and that's the essential thing, the rest is just futile. Thankyou," before adding the French and English hashtags: "CaSuffit" ("That will do") and "GiveMeABreak". Benzema, who has 21 goals and 81 caps for France, was not selected for the World Cup and has not figured in a national squad since he was charged for his alleged role in the blackmail of fellow international Mathieu Valbuena. "I have nothing against Karim," said Le Graet. "He has always carried himself well in the French team, but I think Les Bleus are over for him, especially since he may be less fit than before."

In May, after Le Graet said in an interview with AFP that the striker was "ancient history", Benzema again responded on Twitter: "Monsieur Le Graet, with all the respect that I owe you, you have missed an opportunity to shut up," he wrote.— AFP ■