

NATIONAL

Message extended by President U Htin Kyaw to the 7th International Day of Democracy

PAGE-7**NATIONAL**

Hluttaw to work with Government, Tatmadaw for Maungdaw stability

PAGE-3**NATIONAL**

Six IEDs planted by ARSA terrorists defused

PAGE-6**NATIONAL**

Thai court approves Ks71 million for 14 Myanmar workers

PAGE-2**NATIONAL**

Displaced Hindus provided with traditional medicine health care

PAGE-2

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IV, No. 151, 10th Waning of Tawthalin 1379 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Friday, 15 September 2017

‘Rights not achieved through terrorism’: Muslim villager

By Tin Maung Lwin & Min Htet Aung

JOURNALISTS who travelled to Maungdaw on 6 September spoke with Muslim residents who described the events of 25 August, when the most recent terrorist attacks occurred, and life in Rakhine since then.

Villagers from conflict areas are currently being housed in several shelters throughout Maungdaw.

Reporters also met with Colonel Phone Tint, Rakhine State Minister for Security and Border Affairs, who said that they were able to calm the situation in two days after the attacks on 25 August. He said that leaders of Islamic villages who guaranteed they had no affiliation with terrorists peacefully let the security troops perform inspections of their communities. Rakhine and Hindu ethnics who are taking refuge from ARSA extremist terrorists' attacks were placed in eight temporary shelters throughout Maungdaw. U Ye Htut, Maungdaw District Deputy Commissioner, told members of the media that temporary shelters will be set up for Islamic villagers who can guarantee they are in no way connected to the terrorists.

Currently the Islamic villages of Shwe Zar, Maung Ni and



U Rawshi Ahmed of Gonenar Village.



U Taw Rud, Kanyintan ward, Maungdaw Myoma

Myomaka Nyindan wards have been left untouched by ARSA terrorists. Members of the media met with some Muslim villagers to ask for their perspective on the current situation.

U Maw Ni Ahmed, 54, Of-



U Maw Ni Ahmed, officer in-charge of Kappakaung Village, Shwezar village-tract, interviewed by journalists. **PHOTO: MAUNG HMWE**

ficer in-charge of Kappa-kaung Village, Shwezar village-tract

Q: Was your village included in any terrorist attacks?

A: No, nothing of the sort happened here in 2012 or 2016 either. However, a month before

these recent attacks, some terrorist members came into our village and killed four villagers because they said we collaborated with the government.

Q: What is the situation in the village like after the attacks on 25 August? **SEE PAGE-7**

US senator: Do not attack the State Counsellor

WASHINGTON — US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said yesterday that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's position in the government was “exceedingly difficult” and that as a civilian, she had virtually no authority over the military. He warned that weakening her could interfere with the country's transition from decades of military rule.

McConnell said he expected a briefing soon from Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's office and that she was “trying very hard to improve conditions” for the Muslim community.

“Burma's path to representative government is not at all certain and is certainly not over. And attacking the single political leader who has worked to further democracy within Burma is likely to hinder the objective over the long run,” McConnell concluded.

Mr. McConnell, the head of the Senate, equivalent to the upper house of parliament, had spoken with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday and that she said she was working to get aid to the Muslim areas in Rakhine State that were affected by violence from terrorists.

SEE PAGE-6

သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်



Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung provides cash assistance to ethnic nationals who fled from attacks by ARSA terrorists at Yadana Beikman Monastery relief camp in Sittway. **PHOTO: MNA**

Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and group provide cash assistance in Sittway

Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and party accompanied by Rakhine State Minister for Social Affairs Dr Chan Thar, Rakhine State Minister for Electricity, Industry and Transportation U Aung Kyaw Zan and officials went to temporary relief camps in Sittway and provided cash assistance to ethnic nationals who fled from attacks by ARSA extremist terrorists.

First, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and party pay homage to

Lawkanandar Pagoda in Sittway and donated money.

Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and party then went to Ngasarine Chaung monastery relief camp and Satyonesu Ward 1 Yadana Beikman Monastery relief camp and provided cash assistance. Next, Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Saw Moe Myint provided the cash donated by Aungmyinthu and Online Family.

Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung told the ethnic nationals from

villages in Maungtau region who were in the relief camp in Sittway that government and Tatmadaw is working together for Maungtau region security and rule of law. He also told the local ethnic nationals of working to ensure work opportunities, acquire electricity, improve transportation and once the region is stable, to return to their own places. Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and party left Sittway Airport in the evening for Yangon it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

Displaced Hindus provided with traditional medicine health care

Hindus displaced by the attack of ARSA extremist terrorists staying in the Kyaungtatlan ward relief camp in Sittway, Rakhine State, were provided with health care by the State Department of Traditional Medicine yesterday morning.

Daw Thein Thein Oo, the head of the traditional medicine department, said treatment, medicine and consultation were being provided.

“We are helping with our traditional medicine expertise. The head office is also providing medicines to conduct site visit treatment.

Health care will continue to be provided to the relief camps in Sittway. Most health problems are diarrhea, headache, insomnia, knee pain and back ache, while for children cough and asthma were the most treated.”



Traditional practitioners give health care to Hindus displaced by the attack of ARSA terrorists at a relief camp in Sittway. **PHOTO: MNA**

U Maung Maung Aye, a Hindu who was displaced from Ward 4, Maungtau, said he was thankful for receiving treatment by traditional medicine, as it is very effective for aches in the knee, back and

joints. A total of 107 Hindus in the Kyaungtatlan ward relief camp were treated by the State Department of Traditional Medicine department head Daw Thein Thein Oo and staff. —Tin Tun IPRD ■



Thura U Shwe Mann holds talk with Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar Mr. Tateshi Higuchi yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar

THE chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann received the Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Tateshi Higuchi yesterday morning at the Hluttaw Affairs Building in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, matters relating to bilateral relations and cooperation, economic development of Myanmar, peace and stability in Myanmar, and assistance from Japan on socio-economic development in Rakhine State were discussed. —Myanmar News Agency

Thai court approves Ks71 million for 14 Myanmar migrant workers

The Supreme Court of Thailand yesterday approved compensation of Ks70,948,067.49 (US\$52,000) in a landmark test case for 14 Myanmar migrant workers who endured forced labour and other rights violations at the Thammakaset Chicken Farm in central Thailand.

The Supreme Court, upholding a previous decision of a labour court to award the compensation, rejected Thammakaset's appeal against the compensation order for the final time. The 14 worker's own litigation, claiming US\$1.25m in damages and compensation for abuses suffered and filed against Betagro, a major Thai food exporter, Thammakaset and Lopburi Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW) officials remains pending a final ruling of the Supreme Court expected later this year. The workers say the DLPW order doesn't award them adequate compensation for up to 5 years of abusive work conditions.

The workers alleged grueling working days stretching up to 20 hours and forced overtime including sleeping in chicken rearing areas overnight. Further, the workers alleged unlawful deduction of salaries, threats of further deductions, confiscation of personal identity documents and limited freedom of movement.

The test case has attracted considerable international atten-

tion, including online campaigns that have garnered more than 70,000 signatures.

The Thammakaset case comes at a time when Thailand's migrant worker management and protection policies as well as human trafficking record are under increased global scrutiny.

Thailand's poultry export industry has already come under serious scrutiny for its poor labour conditions in reports published by corporate social responsibility watchdog groups Finnwatch and Swedwatch.

Thailand is the world's 4th largest poultry exporter, often for use in processed or ready-made meals, and mostly to European Union and Japanese markets.

A human rights activist who endured similar litigation and was forced to leave Thailand said yesterday's ruling was significant, but stressed the fight was not over.

“This is a very important ruling by the Supreme Court to award much deserved compensation to the 14 migrant workers,” said Andy Hall, a prominent British rights activist in both Thailand and Myanmar.

“Of much concern, however, is the ongoing judicial harassment of the workers, who are now facing criminal defamation and theft charges, as well as the additional criminal charges against me.” —GNLM ■

Hluttaw to work with Government, Tatmadaw for Maungta stability

Remarks of Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung

By Tin Maung Lwin, Min Htet Aung

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung together with Rakhine Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and State Minister for Social Affairs Dr Chan Thar visited the Maungta region on 12 and 13 September and provided cash and rice to families of security personnel and ethnic nationals killed in the attacks by ARSA extremist terrorists. They also encouraged and provided rice bags to ethnic nationals who remain in their respective villages.

Below are the remarks of the Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Hluttaw representatives who made the trip.

U Aye Tha Aung (Deputy Speaker, Amyotha Hluttaw)

"Of the violence and terrorist attacks that occurred thrice in Maungta region in 2012, 2016, 2017, this is the worst. The number of armed attackers and supporters is quite high, according to relevant authorities. This is dangerous and of serious concern for the security forces, local people and the nation's sovereignty.

When the latest attacks occurred, we came along with Shan, Kayin, Kachin and Rakhine ethnic national Hluttaw representatives to find out how the Hluttaw can support from its side with the Hluttaw representative observing the situation first-hand. To find out what can be done immediately and what is to be done for the long run. This is why we came.

In this trip, we provided cash donations to the best of our ability. Cash donations from the Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker family and my family as well as those who came along with me were di-



U Aye Tha Aung

vided into two parts. We donated cash to families of the Tatmadaw and Police Force personnel killed. We also donated cash to families of the ethnic nationals killed. Of the remaining, we bought food, mostly rice and donated this.

The rice was donated as a priority to villagers who were fearful but resolutely remained in their respective villages instead of going to temporary relief camps. We also donated rice bags to relief camps in Sittway. There is a lot need to be done for the fear felt by the ethnic nationals we met throughout the trip. For now, I would like to thank the Tatmadaw, Police Force and public servants who are defending the region.

This time, it (the attack) was done with a specific aim. They are planning to take over the region if there are no police posts and security forces. It had reached the stage of attacking the sovereignty of the country.

Meanwhile, some countries and media are supporting and inciting terrorist organisations by describing the incident in many ways. Whoever says whatever, we could not forgive and turned a blind eye on the attack on the sovereignty of our country. The current work is the responsibility and duty to protect the local



U Nyi Pu

ethnic national people's life and property. Locals dare to stay only if there is security. They said they dare not stay behind if the security forces leave.

Therefore, security posts need to be in place. For the long run, transportation infrastructure needs to be good and for regional development, peace and stability, our hluttaw will do our part to work together with and support the government and Tatmadaw".

UNyi Pu (Rakhine State Chief Minister)

"Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and ethnic national hluttaw representatives bought rice with their own money and provided this in person and encouraged the ethnic nationals who remain resolutely in their respective villages. It is strengthening these ethnic nationals who remain determinedly in their villages.

Ethnic nationals were surprised and appreciated the Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker came in person and provided support. There were invitations to come again. I also saw indications that if we provide more adequate security arrangements, they will stay on and maintain their own places without fleeing from it".



U Saw Moe Myint

U Saw Moe Myint (Amyotha Hluttaw representative)

"I didn't expect ethnic nationals to steadfastly stay on in their respective places, but I'm glad to see this. I greatly respect and honour such endeavours. These people do not want aggressors and interlopers taking over the lands of their forefathers and will stay on in their own places. I'm happy for this. The government needs to reconstruct their lives. Plans need to be thought out for them to live on forever through agriculture and livestock breeding and for their sons and daughters to have sustainable economic activities.

For now, support and assistance need to be provided for agricultures and livestock breeding. Another is transportation. Transportation needs to be improved so that there is no recurrence of terrorist activities and to effectively and quickly defend and remove terrorist activities if it occurs again. Fake and untrue news were seen to be distributed by some countries. There is a responsibility to say that these are not true. We will continue to do so. This region is very good for agriculture and livestock breeding. That is why they will come back.

When they come, responsible persons should ensure that



U Soe Thein @ U Maung Soe

administrative and judicial sectors are in place".

U Soe Thein @ U Maung Soe (Amyotha Hluttaw representative)

"In this trip, we went deeply into villages with the Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and found ethnic nationals who stayed behind in some villages to have fears and worries. They fear for their lives more than they worry for their livelihood. Providing aid is a temporary resolution of current difficulties. I think the Hluttaw should decide on reconstructing their lives with the union budget.

I consider the terrorist acts on these ethnic nationals as a terrorist act against the union. I felt quite badly for these terrorist acts. As it is visibly obvious, I think this needs to be handled on the union level. Priority should be given to use the union budget for Maungta region development. The government needs to think of setting up aims and plans to rebuild the damaged and destroyed villages, to have a regular income and for long-term economic development. Our Hluttaw sector will also do so. It is important for ethnic nationals to live on in their region and land where their forefathers had lived. ■

Graduates from NYRDDCs donate money to displaced nationals

Graduates of the Nationalities Youth Resource Development Degree Colleges (Yangon, Mandalay and Sagaing) gave monetary subsidies to displaced local nationals now in the Sittway

rescue camp, due to the attack of extremist terrorist attacks, it was learnt.

The NYRDDC graduates donated Ks1 million to U Kyaw Hla Tun, State Advocate and

Chairman of Donation Acceptance and Distribution Committee, Rakhine State Cabinet on Wednesday morning.

"NYRDDC graduates from Sittway organised our fellow

graduates who are now in different departments and regions to contribute to the fund as much as possible, for the displaced nationals in Maungta region, who are greatly in trouble."

Tomorrow, graduates from NYRDDCs will go to rescue camps in Buthidaung and Maungta to offer donations to local nationals, it was learnt.— Myanmar News Agency ■

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marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the Global New
Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at
No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan
Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light
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Trucks must register within 4 months



Trucks seen at Strand Road in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR

YANGON Region Transport Authority (YRTA) has announced that all trucks must register within four months, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Trucks need to register at the truck section of YRTA in Lanmadaw township between September and December. Cargo truck owners need to present copies of their vehicle license. Registration enforcement is intended to prevent smuggling and to determine the exact number of trucks, said Dr Maung Aung, the secretary of the YRTA.

Trucks weighing two tons or more with "A" license will also have to register. If the trucks owners fail to do so, the authorities will take legal action against operators or owners. Authorities will also inspect overloaded trucks as they can cause damages to the road, he added.— GNLM ■

Yaba seized in Myitkyina

A combined team comprising officers and staff from anti-narcotic force unit-2 Myitkyina stopped a vehicle en route to Myitkyina from Namtu driven by Naw Sai Maw with Jarli Aung Myat on board at 21 mile on 12 September. Then, they found 114 Yaba tablets, a pistol and bullets and Ks 15 million from the vehicle.

Acting on a tip-off, the police searched a house owned by Naw Sai Maw at Myothitgyi ward, Myitkyina town on 13 September and found 6,400 Yaba tablets and heroin weigh-

ing 0.02 kilos.

On the same day, the police also searched a house of Ladi alias Khaung Taung at Tatkon Yar Dar Kaung (B) ward, Myitkyina and found heroin 2.557 kilos and 39,600 Yaba tablets, a mobile phone, Ks 500,000 and one vehicle.

Similarly, a combined team comprising officers and staff from Ban Yin police station searched a house owned by U Nyunt at Nam Hu Taung village, Hse Sai township on 12 September and found 46,300 Yaba tablets. Zaw Htoo was

found together with the host.

On 13 September, a combined team comprising officers and staff from anti-narcotic force unit-24 Lashio stopped a motorbike driven by Wai Lin Zaw with Aung Hlan Wai alias Aung Naing Oo on board at milepost 80/4, Muse- Mandalay Pyihtuangsung road, Nawnghio township and found 5,850 Yaba tablets and two mobile phones.

Police have filed charges against all suspects under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Laws.— GNLM ■

Vehicles collided on Yangon-Mandalay highway

A Mazda Demio collided head on with a Canter between milepost 356/7 and 357/0 on Yangon-Mandalay highway yesterday.

According to the investigation, the Mazda Demio vehicle en route to Mandalay from Nay Pyi Taw driven by Ma Su Moh Moh Pyat crashed into the Canter being driven by U Myint Htay when the former lost control. The damage of Mazada Demio costs Ks 500,000 while that of Canter, Ks 100,000. No one was injured in the accident. Ma Su Moh Moh Pyat has been charged by the police.—Than Oo (Laymyinthnar) ■

Israelis made reverie cruise along Chindwin River

There are many beautiful natural scenes, eco-tourism sites and archeological sites in Myanmar. Besides, there is now culture-based tourism by which tourists can observe the culture of ethnic people. With such new, attractive arrangements, more tourists are visiting Myanmar these days.

The tourists are visiting Myanmar by air, sea and road.

Moreover, tourists also visit Myanmar through border gates by vehicles, motorbikes and bicycles.

A tour group comprising 48 Israelis made a reverie cruise along the Chindwin River with the arrangement of Myanmar Cruises Co., Ltd and under the supervision of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. They have arrived Myanmar on 2 Septem-



ber by air and have toured along the Chindwin River by R.V Orcaella cruise ship on 2nd- 9th September.

The tourists conducted Yangon-Homalin-Nant Maw Leik -

Sittaung - Maw Lite - Elephant camp - Maw Lite - Ma Sein - Kyi Taung Oo - Min Kin - Kani - Motehtaw - Monywa - Bagan - Popa - Bagan - Yangon trips.— Myanmar News Agency ■

More parking lots to be built on Yangon-Mandalay Highway



PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Authorities are choosing the plots of land to construct international-standard parking lots on Yangon-Mandalay highway, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The rest camps will be constructed with an aim for travelers to take a rest in their ride and to reduce traffic accidents. The authorities are planning to

build at least two parking lots at the suitable mileposts. The spacious parking lots will include restaurants and convenient stores.

“Currently, there are not enough parking lots. So, the vehicles have to park on the road side, which can cause the road accidents. So, we are planning to construct more parking lots,”

said U Aung Ko Oo, the assistant director of highway maintenance office. Each parking lot can accommodate ten express buses and 35 home-use cars. A temporary parking lots which was constructed by the ministry of construction was opened at milepost No. 76 on Yangon-Mandalay Highway road on 26 August.—GNLM

Border trade amounting to US\$ 2.9 billion as of 1st September

THE value of border trade from 1st April to 1st September this fiscal was down by US\$ 95.4 million when compared to that in the same point of last fiscal.

Border trade from 1st April to 1st September this fiscal hit US\$ 2.95 billion_ US\$ 1.78 billion in export and US\$ 1.17 billion in import, according to the official statistics of the ministry of commerce.

Myanmar is trading with her neighboring countries_ China, India, Bangladesh and Thailand. Sino-Myanmar border trade is carried out through

Muse, Lweje, Kanpikete, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung gates while Myanmar is carrying out border trade with India via Tamu and Reed.

The country's border trade gates with Bangladesh are Sitway and Maungtau.

The border trade value as of 1st September in the current FY was US\$ 2.02 billion in Muse, US\$ 88.9 million in Lweje, US\$ 236.1 million in Chin Shwe Haw, US\$ 54.1 million in Kanpikete, US\$ 0.64 million in Kengtung, US\$30.6 million in Tachilek, US\$3493.8 million

in Myawady, US\$62.75 million in Kawthaung, US\$68.27 million in Myeik, US\$2.47 million in HteeKhee, US\$2.1 million in Mawtaung, US\$0.24 million in Maese, US\$2.57 million in Sitway, US\$5.15 million in Maungtau, US\$13.05 million in Tamu and US\$16.14 million in Reed.

Myanmar export agricultural products, forest products, animal products, minerals, fishery products, manufactured goods and other products while capital goods, raw industrial materials and consumer products are imported into the country.—GNLM

India cotton cultivation successful in Myingyan

Agriculture in Myanmar is the main industry in the country. Currently, the local farmers are happy with successful cultivation of the India cotton species in Myingyan Township in Mandalay. “The local farmers from Myingyan cultivate the Ngwechichauk cotton and 666 species of India cotton. One to one and a half pack of cotton seeds, which can cultivate one

acre of land, cost Ks 30,000. The cotton was started to cultivate in July. Cultivation of an acre of cotton costs over Ks 150,000. The cotton can be harvested after 180 days. But we have to spray the insecticide three or four times. The per acre yield of cotton is 800 to 900 viss. Most of the villages around our village grow the cotton. The cotton from our region is being sold

mainly in Myingyan and Mandalay towns. Last year, the price of cotton was Ks 1,300 per viss,” said Daw Mar Mar Aye, a local farmer from Phet Yin village, Myingyan Township.

Myingyan, which is located in the central part of Myanmar, is growing mainly onion, sesame, cotton, pigeon pea, corn, gram, mung bean and watermelon.—Than Zaw Min (IPRD)

Cooperative Association building to be rented by the government

THE Yangon Region government has rented the old Cooperative Association Building located at the corner of Saya San Road and University Avenue Road for US\$15 per square meter for 50 years, said U Han

Tun, Yangon region minister for agriculture, livestock, forestry and energy.

The rental period can be extended at least twice for one to as many as 10 years.—Myanmar News Agency

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Survey on recommendations for Rakhine to be completed in two weeks

A committee on implementing recommendations on Rakhine State announced that it will complete its ministry-wise survey about the situation on the ground in Rakhine State within two weeks.

“On the advice of the Advisory Commission’s recommendations and the Investigation Commission on Maungdaw region, the committee is obliged

to implement the advice which ensure benefits to the people and which are acceptable to the actual ground situation, setting priority levels to the outcomes of the survey,” Dr Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, said in his capacity as the chairman of the committee at the meeting.

The meeting becomes the first discussion of the committee

which formed on 12 September by the President. U Nyi Pu, Rakhine State Chief Minister and co-chairman of the committee, stressed the need to find “possible things” and “pragmatic works for the long-run in order to bring change to the works”. “Security and the rule of law should also be considered when implementing the advices,” said U Nyi Pu. Members of the imple-

mentation committee on recommendations on Rakhine State are permanent secretaries of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Religion and Culture, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Sports

and acting directors-general of the Office of the President and Ministry of Planning and Finance.

The final report of the Advisory Commission released on 24th August puts forward recommendations to surmount the political, socio-economic and humanitarian challenges that currently face Rakhine State.—Myanmar News Agency ■

CLMV forestry sector investment conference

A conference on forestry sector investment attended by representative from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV), jointly hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation and the Korea Mekong Forest Cooperation Center (KM FCC), was held in the Grand Amara Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At yesterday’s conference, U Khin Maung Yi, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of

Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, said “Today’s conference was held with an aim for CLMV countries to understand the present forestry sector investment situation and to share investment opportunities and information to people related to the forestry sector. Myanmar plans to continuously manage Myanmar forestry resources, and the status of long-term finances and investment in the forestry sector is impor-



U Khin Maung Yi addresses at the conference on forestry sector investment in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

tant. As such, the government is not doing this on its own, but cooperating with the private sector and international organisations.” Those attending the conference discussed views on forestry sector investment. The

conference was attended by officials of Forestry Department, forestry sector representatives from CLMV countries, INGO/NGOs and private organisations.—Myanmar News Agency ■

U.S. senator: Do not attack the State Counsellor

FROM PAGE-1

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi “agreed with the need for immediate and improved access of humanitarian assistance to the region, particularly by the International Red Cross, and she conveyed that she is working toward that end,” McConnell said on the Senate floor.

McConnell, whose Republicans control majorities in both houses of Congress, repeated earlier criticism of a resolution introduced in the U.S. Senate urging the State Counsellor to do more for members of the Muslim community in northern Rakhine, and lessening the chance that any such measure could pass.

McConnell has had close ties to the State Counsellor for years. He said Daw Aung San Suu Kyi told him when they spoke on Wednesday that allegations of violations of human rights would need to be addressed.

Attacks by terrorists from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on security posts last month triggered an army operation that has killed more than 400 terrorists.

The State Counsellor has since faced criticism from fellow Nobel laureates and religious leaders.

The United Nations appealed yesterday for massive help for the nearly 400,000 who fled to Bangladesh, amid concern the number could keep rising.—Reuters ■

Six IEDs planted by ARSA terrorists defused

SIX improvised explosive devices allegedly planted by Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) terrorists were defused in a conflict area in Maungdaw in northern Rakhine on Wednesday.

Security forces found the IEDs on their way back to their base after delivering aid to a village in Maungdaw Township.

“The security forces saw piece of plastic in the ground near Auknan Village, dug out the area and found six home-made mines around 3:10 pm,” a statement released by the information committee of the government said. The IEDs included two home-made mines made of car pistons and four mines made of iron pipe, according to

the statement.

One day before the discovery of the mines, security forces delivered aid including rice and dry fish to 100 members of the Muslim community from 11 families in Ngayantchaung Village in Maungdaw Township. Extremists from ARSA began the latest wave of violence on 25 August, when the terrorists

conducted violent surprise attacks on over 30 police outposts in the Maungdaw region.

Due to these attacks, local authorities said, over 400 civilians, security forces, civil service personnel, Rakhine nationals, Hindus, Daingnet, Mro ethnic people and Muslims were killed and many more injured.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Arrest and investigation of suspicious person

THE village administrative office of Letwedatpyinshay Village in Buthidaung Township reported detaining a man in his twenties suspected of being involved in terrorist activity. Security forces went to arrest the suspicious man on 13 September afternoon. He was found to have come through the Inphauk mountain pass route and as he entered Letwedatpyinshay Vil-

lage, he was unable to tell local ethnic nationals his name and address and was detained in order to investigate whether he was involved in terrorist activities.

Between 6 and 13 September, engagement between security forces and ARSA extremist terrorists declined and stability was regained while displaced persons were being sent back

to their home villages. Escorted back to their homes were 4,228 persons from 15 villages and wards/villages in Maungdaw Township, four villages in Buthidaung Township and six villages from Yathedaung Township, officials said.

As security forces were able to dominate the area, displaced ethnic personnel returned to their places of origin.

Starting from the early morning of 25 August, ARSA extremist terrorists launched simultaneous attacks on more than 30 border police posts in Maungdaw region, killing and wounding security forces, civil servants, Rakhine ethnic nationals, Muslims, Hindus, Dinets, and Mro ethnic nationals and displacing ethnic nationals.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Message Extended by U Htin Kyaw, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, to the 7th International Day of Democracy

15 September 2017

My fellow citizens,

First of all, I extend my wishes to all citizens of Myanmar to enjoy the essence of democracy fully on this auspicious occasion of International Day of Democracy which falls on today.

This year marks the seventh anniversary of celebrating the International Day of Democracy in Myanmar. Today, Myanmar is striving to reach goals such as transition to democracy, peace and prosperity. These goals are interconnected as well as interdependent with one another. Although we are moving step by step along the track of democracy, building democracy is a long journey that is also time consuming. It can be said that Myanmar is just beginning to see the light of democracy which had been deprived of for many decades.

The people of Myanmar will have to continue to work with perseverance for the emergence of a firm and sustainable democratic system and for a successful and smooth transition throughout the journey.

My fellow citizens,

In practicing the democratic system, the priority is to fulfill aspirations and desires of the majority of the people, and in doing so, we will need to consider the interests of the minority as well. It is crucial to fulfill hopes of people in accordance with the norms of democracy such as justice, equality, freedom and transparency.

The progress of democracy will be different in shapes and approaches, based not only on a country's history, society, culture and values, but also on its politics, social and economic activities. However, the maturity, thoughtfulness and discipline of the people are key elements in bringing about the successful achievement of democracy.

Myanmar is a country where different national races reside with the coexistences of diverse cultures and religions. Establishing harmony and unity among diversities is very important. In doing so, the emergence of a Federal Union that is acceptable by all is essential. Building a Federal Union is directly associated with the success of the national reconciliation and peace process.

The Government of Myanmar is working hand in hand with the people for the emergence of a democratic Federal Union, and at the same time, is endeavouring to achieve an enduring peace and national development.

My fellow citizens,

At the second session of the Union Peace Conference 21st Century Panglong, held recently, representatives from different ethnic groups and organizations held discussions on how to realize dreams from which the people have had for many decades.

The authority of a democratic Federal Union derives from its entire people. In addition, a democratic system allows every ethnic group to enjoy equal rights not only of politics and ethnicity but also in preserving their language, culture, customs and traditions. To achieve sustainable development in building democracy, our society must be nurtured to become a peaceful and all-inclusive one. Furthermore, trustworthy and inclusive institutions should be constructed at every single level to ensure that justice is exercised in a fair and just manner for everyone,

A united society with consolidated democracy can be established if internal peace based on people's aspiration for peace, along with mutual understanding, respect and faith in each other among all forces emerge.

In the national peace process, a democratic Federal Union that all people have been longing for could be built if all participants are working together with perseverance.

Thus, on this auspicious occasion of the International Day of Democracy, I solemnly urge each and every citizen to take an active part in successfully building a democratic Federal Union with the democracy spirit, "Together with the people."

'Rights not achieved through terrorism': Muslim villager

FROM PAGE-1

A: We heard a lot of gunshots around 2 am on the first day of the attacks. Then we heard terrorists had attacked the police outposts, but our village is still devoid of conflict. We can't travel to Maungtaung yet but I heard we might soon be able to. I was born here in Shwezar and it has about 15,000 people in it.

Q: We heard there was a fire here on 5 September. How did it happen?

A: The fire was in Gonenyar village and it burned 38 houses. It was rumoured that terrorists lived there. That village is a bit far from our village. There are twelve villages in Shwezar village-tract. There is one village of Rakhine ethnics, one village of Hindu people and ten villages of Islamic villagers. Nine of the villages have made an agreement with the region's authorities, but Gonenyar village is not included. We told them to contact us if there is no terrorism.

Q: What kinds of agreements were made with the authorities?

A: Our village leaders have guaranteed the authorities that there are no terrorists in our village. We have taken measures to prevent any sort of problems from arising. We contacted the authorities on 27 August and the border security forces in the area have given us protection. This is the agreement we have made for the villagers to live in peace. There are 16 mosques in the village, and we are allowed to use them, plus we also have a market.

U Rawshi Ahmed, 59, from Gonenar Village

Q: What is the village's current situation?

A: It's peaceful, although we heard there was some commotion in Gonenyar and a fire broke out there. Gonenyar is part of Shwezar, but we don't know who started the fire.

Q: Is there any uneasiness living in this village?

A: We don't leave our houses after 6 pm, and the village leaders tell us there is nothing to worry about. They told us to stay in our homes and I stay with my 12 family members.

Q: Are there any villagers who have fled this village?

A: There's none in our part of the village, but some villagers from the other villages have fled. Some fled because they were scared, but I don't know why the rest fled. Perhaps there are people in those villages who want to start terrorism, but there are none of those in our village.

Q: Were there any attempts by terrorists to recruit people here?

A: There have been no incidents like that in our village yet. There have been no incidences of terrorism and we don't have people from other villages coming here.

Q: How long have you lived in this village?

A: My family has been living here since my parent's time. I was born here and now I'm 59 years old. There are about 15,000 people in Shwezar village-tract. Some people are farmers, some are traders, some are merchants and there are many others. The

attacks happened far from where we live. I think stability will return to the region if we can freely come and go and do business. We used to live together with Rakhine and Hindu villagers.

U Taw Rud, 59, Kanyintan ward, Maung-taw Myoma

Q: When and why was Kanyintan market closed?

A: On the day when the event of the terrorist attack took place, the market was closed. Just about one week after the attack, the market was temporarily opened. Just a little bit. When groceries ran short, it was closed. Outside the market as well, there were sales and purchases, as seen by now.

Q: Let me know about the event as far as you know.

A: As it took place at night, we did not know exactly where it happened. To put it simply, we never expected such an event would happen. And, we did not know as to how it started. On our site, there were not any arson crimes, but in Kanyintan Myoma ward, behind the District Office. We heard these extremist terrorists committed arson crimes to destroy the place. On our part, nothing happened. Formerly there were some 15,000 populace in the village, but now there would be over 10,000 left, in estimation. Some fled to Bangladesh, with some to nearby villages, for fear of danger and worries.

Q: Why are they worried?

A: Security forces are launching area clearance operations against terrorism. They would be worried whether they would become victims in the operations or they would be arrested. Those who had not been involved in it as well were worried. In my opinion, I assume that we from here need not be worried for that, as we were not involved with it. But people are greatly worried for hearing that there will be more battles here.

Q: Have markets in Maungtaung been officially permitted to be reopened?

A: I heard so. According to my friend, several shops nearby the tower clock at the junction of the town entrance gate reopened yesterday. He is running a pharmacy, opening for two hours as it was less crowded. People seem not to go outside out of fear. I overheard villagers whisper to each other not to go outside.

Q: What else do you want to say about terrorist attacks?

A: Concerning this, we felt sorrowful. Rights cannot be achieved through terrorism. It will be the best way to peacefully solve. But I think that they had launched terrorist attacks at the thought that it would probably bring about the result. They would have claimed that they did it for the sake of their rights. For doing so, opportunity will be far away from them. There will be not one iota of good results. If and when some problems occur, people will be greatly harmed. Why did they do so? One side makes terrorist attacks and the other side will surely launch clearance operations. Then, people will be in trouble. ■

We must safeguard peace and stability collectively

Khin Maung Oo

In strategic major areas including big cities, border towns, junction cities and coastal places, security measures are being carried out, for terrorist attacks not to emerge in any way. As care and alertness are essential for all of us to pay attention, we are all individually responsible to keep constant watch in our vicinities and immediate vicinities not to cause security breach. Simultaneously, we need to be careful for unnecessary events not to emerge on account of excessive worries and fears. Destructive elements can create riots and violence

which can disturb peace and stability of the area by taking advantage over excessive worries and fears.

According to Pyu History, we have noted that rumours caused panic among the people and destruction of the city. In this modern age when cutting-edge communications and digital technologies are developing day by day, rumours and false news are spreading across the world non-stop. Agitations, hate speech and words of instigation are being created by cunning groups, hence the need for us not to be easily deceived, with our wise judgment.

The present time is of great

importance for our country. It must be said that we are passing through an extremely important period, in every phase of peace building, national development, national reconciliation and national security. External forces desirous of hiding the cruelty and aggression of terrorists, who were indoctrinated with the spirit of religion and racialism stereotypes, are making conspiracies. Over these, we must take care of ourselves not to retort angrily. In other words, we need not dance to the accompaniment of tunes and music created by trick makers.

Every individual who wants to live under the protection of rule of law

must live in unity and mutual understanding, regardless of race and religion. It is necessary to divide a line between terrorists, terrorist groups and those who love to live in peace according to law. Authorities concerned are carrying out security measures with combined forces in villages, towns and regions, for rule of law, security and peace and stability. For unnecessary violence, riots and terrorist attacks not to emerge, people must cooperate with the government and security forces. At the same time, we need to avoid the tricks of destructive elements waiting to take advantage of our excessive fear and worries. ■

International Democracy Day

By Htun Tin Htun



Integrity is of paramount importance for Democracy and integrity means the quality of being honest, moral. "No one is above the law" is of utmost importance for the growth, progress and development of democracy. Those who know the essential to be essential and the unessential to be unessential, dwelling in right thoughts, do arrive at the essential. Equity, empowerment, environment and employ-

ment need to be thought for human development. Right understanding, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration must be practiced by the people in their daily way of life. Nothing is impossible to one with wish-to-do, work hard, will and wisdom. Always be active, brave, creative, disciplined, earnest, firm, gentlemanly, healthy, impartial, judicious, knowledgeable, legitimate, meditative, negotiable, obliging, patient, qualified, resourceful, satis-

fying, teetotal, united, valiant, willing, extrovert, youthful, zealous. To one ever eager to revere and serve the elders, those four blessings accrue: long life and beauty, happiness and power. Impatience and impeachment are the barriers for building and development of democracy. One for all and all for one is a good maxim for the strength of democracy. National reconciliation process needs the concerted efforts and supports from the people throughout the nation. Ambition, attitude, audacity, appearance, altruism and authority are the qualities of a great leader for democracy. Love to live, live to learn and learn to live in longevity, leave a good legacy is the inborn duties of the people in this planet.

Discipline (morality/character) is the power for building democracy. Enduring patience is the highest austerity. Man matters most and mindset matters most. One truly is the protector of oneself; who else could the protector be? Concern for community and caring the people is the foundation of democracy. Right man in the right place is good practice for democratic reform. Accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness and participatory are fundamentals for good governance and democratic management. Cooperation, coordination, collaboration and compromising are important works for achieving the democratic goal. Your thought, speech, action and livelihood are of importance for building and development of democracy.

Difficult, indeed, is self-control and do not be heedless. A worse taint than these is ignorance, the worst of all taints; destroy this one taint and become taintless. You yourselves must strive and observing and strictly keeping the five precepts, great charity, can help the people in this planet secure, stable and develop the love, peace, joy and democracy. ■



Thura U Shwe Mann donates money to Rakhine people

To aid the IDPs in Rakhine State, Thura U Shwe Mann, Chairman of the Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission of the Assembly of the Union, and members of the commission held a ceremony for donations at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday.

At the ceremony, the Chairman congratulated and recognized the efforts of the staff members of the Ministry. He also said that everyone needs to work to show the international community the real situation and history of current affairs in Rakhine. He said the minister needs to be the first to arrive at the scene of the incidents so that the public is more aware of the workings of



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye accepts cash donated by Thura U Shwe Mann at the ceremony for donations to aid the IDPs in Rakhine State yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

the ministry.

The chairman congratulated the ministry on providing security and humanitarian aid to the IDPs and noted that measures are being taken to prevent similar incidents from happening again in the future. He also said that it is the re-

sponsibility of everyone to work for peace and national security without working for individual profit. He said it is important to strengthen the border fence but also equally important is the national spirit that will guide to true national stability and progress.

The chairman and other members of the commission donated Ks 5 million to the ministry which were accepted by Dr Win Myat Aye, the Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Hong Kong Chief Executive Mrs. Carrie Lam and party arrive in Nay Pyi Taw

A delegation led by Hong Kong Chief Executive Mrs. Carrie Lam arrived in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening 6:35 p.m.

Hong Kong Chief Executive and party

were welcomed at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and officials.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Hong Kong Chief Executive Mrs. Carrie Lam welcomed by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and officials in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Provisions continue for displaced in Sittway

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement gave subsidies yesterday to displaced people who are now in Sittwe rescue camps due to fear of ARSA extremist terrorist attacks.

U Kyaw Min, director of the Rakhine State office, said, "The Ministry is now providing subsidies to all rescue camps in Sittway — rice, cooking oil, beans and salt for the adequacy of provisions. Most people from Maung-

taw rescue camps are returning home, while in Sittway most are coming from nearby villages and distant areas to take shelter here.

So, the Ministry is supporting subsidies to rescue camps again.

Due to the 25 August ARSA extremist terrorist attacks in Maungtaw, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is supporting necessary subsidies to the camps. Yesterday evening, the

Ministry continued to support the remaining portion left to be donated, to 1,053 people from 315 families.

The donation included 77 rice bags, 157 viss of cooking oil and 75 viss of salt. The team included U Kyaw Min, director of the Rakhine State office, U Aye Min Thu, principal of Myanmar Natural Disaster Training School, and responsible personnel from the Ministry.—Myanmar News Agency ■



U Kyaw Min, director of the Rakhine State office provides aid to displaced people at a rescue camps in Sittway. **PHOTO: MNA**



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German wage talks to include new focus: reduced working hours

FRANKFURT/BERLIN — The trade union powerhouse that won the 35-hour work week for Germans more than two decades ago is mobilising for a new campaign to reduce working hours at annual wage negotiations about to kick off nationwide.

IG Metall, Germany's biggest union with 2.3 million workers mainly in the car and manufacturing industries, says shorter hours will help shift workers and those who need to care for children or elderly relatives, with wide implications for how German society evolves in the 21st

century. If the union's gambit is successful, economists counting on strong wage rises will be watching to see if there are deflationary effects as domestic consumption overtakes exports as the driver of the euro zone's biggest economy.

The union begins internal discussions at the local level on Thursday, just as campaigning in Germany's parliamentary election enters its final phase, with issues of work and family high on the agenda.

"The timing could have been made to order for a wage

round in which our issues will have great support from society," IG Metall President Joerg Hofmann told a union conference in late June, as he launched the initiative.

"The value of time and the value of money will carry equal weight," Hofmann told journalists last week. IG Metall will release its national list of demands at the end of October. Negotiations with employers begin in November. Buoyed by record employment, a shortage of skilled labour and a strong economy, it is in its strongest

bargaining position for years.

Employers are rattled.

"Working time is our number one concern," Oliver Zander, chief executive of the Gesamtmetall umbrella association of employers that mirrors IG Metall, told reporters last week. "We need more hours to be worked." Reducing working hours now could be problematic, particularly for small companies, he said, and argued productivity gains were not keeping up with unit labour costs.

"We have a very tough wage round ahead of us." —Reuters ■

WORLD BRIEFS

One dead, 18 injured in attacks in southern Thailand

BANGKOK — One Thai ranger was killed and 18 others injured after three bombs were detonated in southern Thai province of Yala on Thursday morning.

The first bomb went off at a power pole at about 1:30 am local time and caused no injuries.

The incident was reported to local police. An Explosive Ordnance Disposal team was sent to examine the scene. They were hit by a second bomb and also attacked by insurgents, according to reports by the Bangkok Post.

Later, the third bomb was detonated while officers were inspecting the scene. Latest reports said a total of 19 officers were sent to hospitals, and one of them was pronounced dead. —Xinhua ■

Boat capsizes in India, killing at least 22

NEW DELHI -- At least 22 people drowned Thursday after the boat they were travelling in capsized in a river in India's northern state of Uttar Pradesh, according to media reports.

The accident happened in the state's Baghpat district, nearly 50 kilometers from the capital New Delhi, in the morning. A total of 60 people were aboard the ill-fated boat, which was being used to cross the Yamuna River. —Kyodo News ■

Russian submarines fire seven cruise missiles at vital IS targets in Syria

MOSCOW — Two Russian submarines fired seven Kalibr sea-based cruise missiles at crucial facilities of the Islamic State (IS) in Syria from underwater position in the eastern Mediterranean, the Russian Defence Ministry said Thursday.

The diesel-electric attack submarines Veliky Novgorod and Kolpino struck control points, communication centers, and weapons and ammunition depots in IS-controlled areas southeast of the city of Deir ez-Zor located in northeastern Syria from a distance of 500-670 km, the ministry said in a statement. —Xinhua ■

Trump says rich might pay more in taxes, talks with Democrats

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that taxes on rich Americans might rise, as he pursues a tax code overhaul and reaches out to both Democrats and Republicans in a push to win support for a plan still far from complete.

Trump met with the two top congressional Democrats over dinner at the White House in a search for common ground that could make it easier to get a tax-cut package through Congress.

Both sides said the meeting, which covered an array of legislative issues, was productive.

Earlier, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said tax reductions would be paid for by faster economic growth.

The White House and the Republican-led Congress have yet to put forth a detailed tax plan, despite months of high-level talks that had until recent days excluded Democrats.

House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan said an outline of a plan would be unveiled during the work week beginning 25 September, with congressional tax-writing committees crafting detailed legislation in the subsequent weeks.

Mnuchin told Fox News Channel the Trump adminis-



US President Donald Trump meets with a bipartisan group of members of Congress, including US Representative Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) (L) and Representative Tom Reed (R-NY) (R), at the White House in Washington, US, on 13 September 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

tration would use its own economic assumptions to gauge the impact of its tax cuts on the federal budget deficit and the \$20 trillion national debt, a key issue in Washington's intensifying tax debate.

"It will be revenue neutral under our growth assumptions," Mnuchin said. "So, we can pay for these tax cuts with economic growth."

The administration believes tax cuts will lead to much faster growth than do congressional analysts or most private forecasters, a likely fault line in the debate ahead. As for taxing the rich, Trump said during a meeting with a bipartisan group of

lawmakers — his second in as many days — that the wealthy "will not be gaining at all with this plan. ... If they have to go higher, they'll go higher, frankly."

In a phone call with a small group of reporters, Marc Short, Trump's legislative affairs director, said the president was not talking about higher tax rates, but that other changes in the tax code could affect the wealthy and how much they pay, the publication Roll Call reported.

Democrats have criticized Republican tax overhaul efforts as benefiting mainly the wealthiest Americans and corporations.

Tax experts said Trump could raise taxes on high-income

people by lowering the cap on mortgages eligible for interest deductions to \$500,000 from \$1 million. Another step might be to close a loophole that lets Wall Street fund managers pay low taxes on much of their income, analysts said.

Trump might also propose eliminating the deduction for state and local taxes, then use the revenue raised to fund tax cuts for the middle class, leaving top earners with a higher effective tax bill. There has also been talk in the Senate about increasing tax rates on capital gains and dividends.

But even with those changes, analysts said it was not clear top earners would end up paying more overall, partly because Trump has also proposed cutting the top individual tax rate.

Steven Rosenthal, a senior fellow at the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center think tank in Washington, said Trump was unlikely to raise taxes on investment income.

Instead, he said, Trump could close a loophole that largely benefits super-rich financiers, although they may be able to find other ways to avoid taxes.

"That's what I would expect him to do, take a symbolic but ineffective step," Rosenthal said. —Reuters ■

Soldiers on Europe's streets dent NATO's defence edge

BRUSSELS — The use of armed soldiers to patrol alongside pavement cafes and selfie-snapping tourists in European cities since jihadi attacks risks compromising deployments overseas, military leaders say.

Belgium and major military power France, both active in EU and NATO missions, have cut back training to free up troops and NATO planners fear that over time armies may get better at guarding railway stations and airports than fighting wars.

Some of the more than 15,000 soldiers serving at home in Europe say tramping the streets is a far cry from the foreign adventures they signed up for and that they feel powerless to defend against militants.

"We are standing around like flowers pots, just waiting to be smashed," said an officer just returned from Afghanistan for guard duty in Belgium, which, like France, has more troops deployed at home than in any single mission abroad. Security personnel have been targeted in both countries but patrols begun as a temporary measure after Islamic State attacks in 2015 have become permanent fixtures as opinion polls show that people are reassured by soldiers on show at home. Italy has had soldiers on the streets since 2008, Britain used them briefly this year and,



Belgian soldiers patrol near European Union institutions in Brussels, Belgium, on 5 September 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

along with Spain, is prepared for deployments if threat levels rise. Despite their painful history, Germany and Austria have debated having military patrols at home for the first time since World War Two. Across Europe, political debate is shifting from whether, to how to adapt the armed forces to a homeland role, a concern for military leaders eyeing budgets, morale and training.

France's former military chief, who quit in July, said it had overstretched the army, while

the head of Belgium's land forces told Reuters the domestic deployment was taking its toll.

"I see a lot of people who leave our defence forces because of the operation," General Marc Thys, the commander of Belgium's land forces, said in an interview, without giving numbers.

Not everyone agrees. A defence ministry source in Italy said its domestic patrols had "absolutely no impact on overseas missions or on training".

But some in NATO worry

protracted domestic operations will make key members of the 29-strong transatlantic alliance less ready to deploy to Afghanistan or eastern European borders with Russia.

"It is popular with the public, it is cheaper than the police," a senior NATO source said. "But if the requirement came to send a lot of forces to reinforce our eastern allies ... would the government be willing to pull its soldiers off the street to do that, could it?"—Reuters ■

Brazil's Lula denies corruption accusation by former minister

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil's former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Wednesday criticized his former Finance Minister Antonio Palocci, who recently turned in evidence and told the court that Lula was deeply involved in corruption.

The former president gave a long testimony earlier on Wednesday to Judge Sergio Moro, who is in charge of the corruption cases investigated by the Federal Police's Operation Carwash. He commented on the accusations made against him by his former ally, denying any involvement in corruption and other alleged crimes.

After a long investigation, Palocci decided to provide information on Lula in exchange for a lenience deal. He said the former president had close ties with the construction company Odebrecht, which is at the center of the corruption scandal involving contracts with oil giant Petrobras, and received millions of dollars in bribes from Odebrecht.

"Nothing in his testimony is true. The only true thing he said was that he is only making the accusations because he wants the benefits of the lenience deal," Lula said. —Xinhua ■

Shkreli to be jailed after online bounty on Hillary Clinton's hair

NEW YORK — A US judge on Wednesday ordered Martin Shkreli to be jailed while he awaits sentencing for securities fraud, citing a Facebook post in which the former drug company executive offered a \$5,000 (3,787 pounds) reward for a strand of Hillary Clinton's hair.

Shkreli, 34, dubbed the "pharma bro" for exploits that include jacking up the price of a life-saving drug by 5,000 percent, was silent and stony-faced as US marshals led him out of a Brooklyn courtroom. He had been free on a \$5 million bail since his December 2015 arrest.

US District Judge Kiyo Matsumoto ruled that Shkreli's 4 September post, made shortly before Clinton embarked on a book tour,

showed he posed a danger to the public. The post prompted an investigation by the US Secret Service, which is charged with protecting the former Democratic presidential candidate.

The judge rejected arguments by Shkreli's lawyer, Benjamin Brafman, that the post was protected free speech, saying one of Shkreli's Facebook followers — who number more than 93,000 — could take it seriously.

"This is a solicitation of assault in exchange for money," the judge said. "That is not protected by the First Amendment."

Shkreli was convicted in August of defrauding investors of two hedge funds he ran. Matsumoto on Wednesday scheduled his sentencing for 16 January.



Former drug company executive Martin Shkreli stands with his attorney Benjamin Brafman after exiting US District Court upon being convicted of securities fraud, in the Brooklyn borough of New York City, US, on 4 August 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Shkreli said in a letter to Matsumoto on Tuesday that his Facebook post was meant as satire.

Brafman repeated that argument on Wednesday, but Matsumoto was not convinced.

"What's funny about that?" she demanded.

Matsumoto, who was visibly angry throughout the hearing, also pointed to a post by Shkreli in July crudely saying he would have sex with a female journalist, Lauren Duca, as part of a pattern of threatening behaviour.

Shkreli was banned from the social media platform Twitter in January for harassing Duca after she rebuffed his invitation to attend Trump's inauguration.

After Matsumoto announced her decision, Brafman pleaded with her repeatedly to reconsider sending Shkreli to what he said would be a maximum security jail, or at least give him until Monday to prove he was not a danger.—Reuters ■

Abe, Modi agree to maximize pressure on North Korea

GANDHINAGAR, (India) — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on Thursday condemned North Korea for its nuclear and ballistic missile tests and called for international efforts to maximize pressure on Pyongyang.

Abe and Modi, who held talks in Gandhinagar, western India, also agreed to promote bilateral defence and maritime security cooperation amid China's assertive activities in the Asia-Pacific region.

In a statement released after their 10th summit in three years, the two prime ministers urged North Korea to "abandon nuclear and ballistic missile development and restrain from any provocative act" after it conducted

its sixth nuclear test on 3 September following its launch of a ballistic missile that flew over Japan in late August.

The Japanese and Indian leaders also called on the North to honour UN Security Council sanctions resolutions and other international agreements.

"Strengthened Japan-India ties are the basis to underpin the regional order," Abe said at a joint press appearance, stressing he will work together with Modi to take the lead toward peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

Abe said he and Modi agreed on the need to "make (North Korea) change its policies."

The UN body on Monday adopted its latest resolution that imposes



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (L) and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi shake hands ahead of their talks in Gandhinagar, western India, on 14 September 2017. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

the first restrictions on exports of crude oil and petroleum products to the North.

In a show of unity in tackling another security challenge faced by both countries, Abe and Modi

reaffirmed the significance of "the freedom of navigation at sea, overflight and unobstructed trade based

on international law," apparently in reference to China's expansionary activities in the South China Sea.

They agreed to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of defence equipment and technology as well as continue to bolster trilateral collaboration also involving the United States through joint maritime drills.

In the statement, Abe and Modi said they will keep discussing the possible export to India of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force's US-2 amphibious aircraft for search and rescue purposes.

But its high price tag has been preventing the two countries from reaching a deal, Japanese officials said.—Kyodo News ■

INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER (4/2017) [TENDER NO. MPPE / HSD / T / 1 (2017 – 2018)]

1. Open Tender is invited for the Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise, Ministry of Electricity and Energy for the supply of High Speed Diesel (658,000 ± 10% Barrels)
2. Tender Closing Date & Time - 12 - 10 - 2017, 12:00 Hrs
3. Tender Opening Date & Time - 12 - 10 - 2017, 13:00 Hrs
4. Delivery Time - November 2017 to March 2018
5. Tender documents and details information are available at the Department of Finance, Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise, Nay Pyi Taw, during our office hours commencing 15 - 9 - 2017 on payment of Myanmar Kyat One Hundred Thousand (Kyats 100,000.) per set.
6. Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender document officially from Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director
Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
No(6) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw

Contact Phone No.
067-411487/411486/411280

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV UNI-AMPLE VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UNI-AMPLE VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.9.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Inquiry promises to uncover truth about London fire that killed 80

LONDON — A public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire in London that killed at least 80 people in June held its first session on Thursday with its chairman promising to explain the causes of what he called "a tragedy unprecedented in modern times". The 24-storey social housing block, home to a poor, multi-ethnic community, was destroyed in an inferno that started in a fourth-floor apartment in the middle of the night and quickly engulfed the building.

The session started with a minute's silence to honor the victims, whose exact number remains unknown because of the devastation inside the tower.

"(The inquiry) can and will provide answers to the pressing questions of how a disaster of this kind could occur in 21st century London, and thereby I hope provide a small measure of solace," the inquiry's chairman, retired judge Martin Moore-Bick, said in his



Demonstrators gather outside the Grenfell Tower public Inquiry in central London, Britain, on 14 September 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

opening statement.

Grenfell Tower was part of a deprived housing estate in Kensington and Chelsea, one of the richest boroughs in London, and the disaster has prompted a national debate about social inequalities and the neglect of poor communities.

The inquiry will examine the cause and spread of the fire, the design, construction and refurbishment of the tower, whether fire regulations relating to high-rise buildings are adequate, whether they were complied with at Grenfell Tower, and the actions of

the authorities before and after the tragedy.

But it has faced criticism from survivors of the fire and relatives of the dead, as well as from opposition politicians and campaign groups, who say its remit fails to address the social and political issues underlying the tragedy.

Many of those affected have also expressed disquiet about the fact that Moore-Bick and the other lawyers appointed to run the inquiry are all white and from establishment backgrounds, whereas the Grenfell community is

largely made up of people from ethnic minorities and immigrant backgrounds.

"The experience of many residents of that tower is that they were ignored because of their immigration status, because they were not really British, whatever that means," lawyer Jolyon Maughan, who is advising some residents, told the BBC.

"We need someone on the inquiry team that can speak to that experience and at the moment on the panel we have a bunch of white privileged barristers," he said.—Reuters ■

Japan refuels US missile defence ships under new security laws

TOKYO — The Maritime Self-Defence Force has refueled US ships patrolling to counter North Korean missile launches under new security laws that took effect last year, a Japanese government source said Thursday.

The refueling missions to US Aegis ships sailing in the Sea of Japan were conducted multiple times since April, making them the second instance in which Japanese Self-Defence Forces were known to have performed their expanded roles under the security legislation.

The legislation has loosened the constraints of Japan's war-renouncing postwar Constitution imposed on the activities of the defence forces, setting the stage for US and Japanese troops to work more closely than ever.

Top government spokesman Yoshihide



A US Aegis ship is refueled by a Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force oiler in this file photo taken on the Arabian Sea in March 2004 under special antiterrorism measures following the 11 September terrorist attacks in 2001 on the United States. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Suga said the SDF personnel are engaging in activities to provide supplies to the US military based on the legislation, but refrained from acknowledg-

ing specific operations.

"I cannot comment on the issue because it will unveil the details of the operations of the SDF and the US military," the

chief Cabinet secretary said at a regular press conference.

In May, the MSDF engaged in a mission to protect a US Navy vessel

off Japan for the first time under the legislation, although Tokyo has also not officially confirmed that operation to avoid impacting US military activities and bilateral relations.

According to the government source, the MSDF carried out the replenishment operations after a revised Japan-US agreement on logistical cooperation between their forces took effect in April, reflecting the changes brought by Japan's legislation.

Japan's MSDF and US Aegis ships equipped with ballistic missile defence systems are engaging in patrolling activities around the clock to keep watch on North Korea, which has repeatedly test-fired missiles.

Japan had conducted refueling missions to its key ally also in the past, but they were only possible through the enactment

of a special law or certain occasions such as during Japan-US joint exercises.

For about eight years after the 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the SDF refueled ships assisting US-led antiterrorism operations in the Indian Ocean near Afghanistan under a special measures law.

Under the new security legislation, however, the SDF can provide oil and other supplies more flexibly than before, such as to US ships involved in operations to intercept ballistic missiles and counter-piracy activities.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said the legislation is intended to let Japan more actively contribute to peace and stability of the region, but it has remained controversial among members of the public who think it undermines Japan's postwar pacifism.—Kyodo News ■

UK terrorism arrests soar to record level after attacks this year

LONDON — The number of people arrested in Britain on suspicion of terrorism offences rocketed by 68 per cent in the last year to the highest figure on record during a period when the country suffered four deadly attacks, figures showed on Thursday.

Statistics from the Home Office (interior ministry) showed there were 379 arrests in the year to June, up from 226 from the 12 previous months, and the most since 2001 when the data began to be collected.

Britain is on its second-highest threat level, "severe", meaning an attack is highly likely and 36 people were killed in terrorist incidents in the first six months of 2017.

Among the arrests, 12 came after an attack in March on London's Westminster Bridge when a

man drove a car into pedestrians killing four, before he stabbed a policeman to death outside parliament.

Another 23 followed a suicide bombing at a pop concert in Manchester in May, and the following month police arrested 21 suspects after three Islamist militants drove into pedestrians on London Bridge before stabbing people at nearby restaurants and bars, killing eight.

One arrest followed an attack in north London when a van was driven into worshippers near a mosque which left one man dead. Britain's most senior counter-terrorism officer Mark Rowley has said police have been arresting a suspect every day. He said this week that there had been a shift in the threat level rather than an isolated spike.—Reuters ■

Student opens fire at Washington state school, killing classmate

WASHINGTON — A student carrying two guns opened fire at his high school near Spokane, Washington on Wednesday, killing one classmate and injuring three others before he was apprehended by a staff member, the local sheriff said.

The slain student was trying to convince the shooter, whose first gun had jammed, not to carry out the morning rampage

when he was shot dead, Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich told reporters.

The gunman then fired on three other students in a second-floor hallway of Freeman High School in Rockford, Washington, Knezovich said. The surviving victims, who were in their mid-teens, were listed in stable condition, a local hospital said.

Knezovich declined

to identify the suspect or discuss what may have motivated the gun violence in detail but said: "It sounds like a case of a bullying-type of situation."

He said that a member of the staff at Freeman who he described as "very courageous" was able to capture the gunman before police officers arrived on scene to take him into custody. He was being held at Spokane County juvenile

jail. "Fortunately that one (gun) jammed. This would have been a lot worse if it didn't," Knezovich said. "These are senseless, tragic events that really don't need to happen and I don't really understand them."

"But we need to figure out what's gone wrong with our society that our children decide that they need to take weapons to deal with the issues that they're facing," he said.—Reuters ■

Samsung to create 300-mln-USD fund for autonomous driving, connected car

SEOUL — Samsung Electronics, South Korea's tech behemoth, said Thursday that it will create a fund of 300 million US dollars to invest in technologies of autonomous driving and connected car.

The Samsung Automotive Innovation Fund will be formed to strengthen

the business of electronic parts used for automobiles, Samsung said in a press release. The fund will focus on investment in technologies of driverless driving and connected car, including smart sensors, artificial intelligence, connectivity solution and security. It will make its first strategic in-

vestment of 75 million euros (90 million US dollars) into TTTech, a global leader in technologies of autonomous driving platform and the advanced driver-assistance system (ADAS) technology. Separately, Harman International Industries, acquired by Samsung earlier this year, established a

strategic business unit to focus on the development of autonomous driving and ADAS technologies.

Samsung recently secured licenses for on-road testing of driverless driving software and hardware in South Korea and California of the United States.—Xinhua ■



Models present creations from Marchesa SS 2018 collection during New York Fashion Week in New York City, US, on 13 September 2017.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Dressmaker Marchesa evokes Japanese gardens for spring, summer

NEW YORK — American label Marchesa transported New York Fashion Week to a Japanese garden on Wednesday with tulle and silk satin gowns graced with golden leaves, rose swirls and 3D petals.

For their spring-summer collection, Marchesa designers Georgina Chapman and Keren Craig paid tribute to Bohemian world traveler Aimee Crocker who spent years exploring the Far East a century ago.

“You will see a lot of cherry

blossoms,” said Chapman. “You are going to see a lot of sort of obi tie bows but also evoking the romance of the Edwardian era too, so sort of pulling the two together.”

Actress Nina Dobrev, model Shanina Shaik and Fox News host Kimberly Guilfoyle watched as models paraded the runway to Canadian singer Drake’s “Passionfruit.” Shoulder-baring cocktail dresses came in silver and ivory tones as well as hues like pale pink and lilac. Corseted

gowns sprouted ostrich feathers and pearl strands draped around plunging necklines.

The dressmakers stayed true to their feminine, romantic style, showing delicate gowns with dramatic bows and heavy embroidering.

But the showstopper was an unexpected shoulder-baring ballgown that took hundreds of hours to make.

“That’s being worked on for so long, I can’t even tell you,” Chapman said. “We dyed all the

petals ourselves then we had them stamped, then we had to thread them, and then we were looking at all different colors.”

But the message is far tougher than the fabric as Chapman and Craig, both working mothers, seek to empower women.

“We really believe in the transformative power of dressing,” Craig said. “That when you put something on that you feel amazing in, then you are even kick-ass.”—Reuters ■

China tells music companies to stick to online copyright rules

BEIJING — China’s National Copyright Administration (NCAC) has told music companies to stick to market rules and international practice to widen licensing and spread online music.

Companies must work together to avoid giving exclusive music copyright to online music providers, the NCAC said in a talk with over 20 major music companies from home and abroad on Thursday. The administration underlined the laws and international conventions on copyright, warning companies against any infringement.

Music companies must not allow online music providers to bid up licensing prices, and must support the work of copyright organizations to protect the rights of copyright holders, especially lyricists and songwriters.

They should also set up a more effective framework for licensing, cooperation and operation of online music copyright to improve order and for the industry to prosper, the NCAC said.

With the support of music companies in tasks such as preventing copyright infringement, a NCAC campaign started in 2015 to regulate online music copyright has been effective, according to the administration.

However, problems including the unreasonable vying for exclusive copyrights, bidding up licensing prices and using music without permission have emerged, requiring further effort from all parties involved.
—Xinhua ■

YuMi the robot conducts Verdi with Italian orchestra

PISA, (Italy) — YuMi the humanoid robot showed no signs of nerves on Tuesday night as it raised its baton to conduct the Lucca Philharmonic orchestra alongside Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli. The two-armed robot, designed by Swiss firm ABB, made its debut at Pisa’s Verdi Theatre to mark the First International Festival of Robotics in the Tuscan city.

“We basically had to find

time to understand his movements. When we found the way, everything was pretty easy,” said the orchestra’s resident conductor, Andrea Colombini.

“It is absolutely fantastic. And the technicians were fantastic just to make everything perfect, especially in the length and in the speed of the gesture, which is very important,” he said.

YuMi, whose name is derived from the phrase ‘you and me’,

was taught all the movements by Colombini, who held its arms in rehearsals so the computer could memorise the correct gestures. The robot is not able to improvise and any unexpected change in tempo from the musicians would have been ruinous. The robot conducted three of the 18 pieces performed on Tuesday night, including the famous aria *La Donna e’ Mobile*, from Verdi’s opera *Rigoletto*.—Reuters ■



Humanoid robot YuMi conducts the Lucca Philharmonic Orchestra performing a concert alongside Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli at the Verdi Theatre in Pisa, Italy. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Film Festival in honour of Democracy Day kicks off



A scene in “The Great Myanmar”, one of the five films to be shown during Myanmar Democracy Day on 15 September, is based on the history of Buddhism and Buddhist culture in the Bagan era. The film took more than five years to complete. A 3-D version of the film will be shown to Myanmar audiences, while foreigners will see a 2-D version. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**



The special film “Glittering With Gold in the Sunlight,” was shown. The film was based on the story “The Gardener the Flower” written by National Literary Award winner Ledwinthar Saw Chit. It was made into a film by director Zaw Myint Oo, assistant director Aung Aw Bar, and script writer Hsu Myet Chai. The production company Mingalar Film Production cast Kyaw Htet Aung and Aye Myat Thu as the main characters. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Film Festival

Thara Saw Hti
Dimo Yat-Kwet
Blue Sky Day

Glittering With Gold in the Sunlight
The Great Myanmar

The five films will be shown at the cinemas nationwide.

Date - (15-9-2017) to (21-9-2017)
Time - Schedule at Cinemas
Place - Designated Cinemas



Performing Art Entertainment

Film, Music and Performing Art
Prominent artistes will perform

Date - (18-9-2017) to (19-9-2017)
Time - 7:00 pm
Place - National Theatre

Anyeint Contest

Khitthit Kyeemon
Lu-Nge Star
Shwe-Nyar-Myae-Ye Kyae-Pwint-Myar
Phue-Thit Kyae-Sin
Zwe
Mann Star
Sagawah Myay
Model Har

Anyeint 8 Troupes will compete in the Contest



Date - (20-9-2017) to (21-9-2017)
Time - 6 pm
Place - National Theatre

Young Muscovite group risks life and limb to scale tall buildings

MOSCOW — A handful of young Muscovites spend their spare time braving the risk of arrest, injury and even death to scale tall buildings. Their motivation is simple: to feel more alive.

The group consists of four Russians and one Frenchman who visits Moscow and they call their team ‘Rudex’, which stands for

“roof and decay exploration.” Their passion has taken them to the top of some of the city’s best known landmarks and also, on occasion, to detention by police. None has been injured since the group was founded in 2008.

What they do mirrors the Western craze for ‘urbex’, or the urban exploration of man-made structures. —Reuters ■

Cruise de Bagan changes port

The Cruise de Bagan will change its port of departure to Taungbi Port this year while offering the same relaxing and beautiful sunset of Bagan City along the mighty Ayeyarwaddy River.

The river cruise has been running for three years and used to depart from Tharyarwaddy Port in NyaungOo City but has changed to Taungbi Port this year.

The cruise will run daily during the tourist season



Cruise de Bagan with beautiful sunset of Bagan along the mighty Ayeyarwaddy River.

and individual tickets will cost Ks 16,000. The menu has been changed from a buffet style to a-la-carte,

so that guests may pay for only what they order from the menu. The cruise will depart

at 5 pm and return to the port around 6 pm and the kitchen will be open till 10 pm.—MDN ■

Myanmar, Malaysia in AFF U-18 semifinal match today

Kyaw Zin Lin

The U-18 team of host Myanmar will play an important semifinal match against Malaysia today 6pm at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon.

In Group B's last match played between Myanmar and Vietnam on Wednesday, Myanmar was the victor thanks to second-half goals by Lwin Moe Aung and Myat Kaung Khant. The win advanced Myanmar to today's semifinal contest.

Today's match is important for Myanmar because the semifinal is the knockout stage, with only the winning teams advancing to the final.

In today's match, Myanmar will likely use its star players including Win Naing Tun, Myat Kaung Khant and Pyae Sone Naing.

Myanmar fans are also hoping to watch Myanmar's innovative game tactics.

In the knockout stage, extra time and a penalty shoot-out are used to decide the winner, if necessary.

In the other semifinal match, Indonesia will play Thailand at 3pm today at Thuwunna Stadium.

The two winners from the semifinal matches will face each other in the final match on Sunday. ■



Myanmar U-18 football players singing Naitonal Anthem of Myanmar before playing a AFF U-18 Group B football match against Brunei at Thuwunna Stadium. **PHOTO: MYANMAR FOOTBALL FEDERATION**

England want FIFA to decide Alli's punishment before Slovenia game

LONDON — The English FA has asked FIFA to decide on Dele Alli's punishment before next month's World Cup qualifier against Slovenia to reduce the chance that he will be banned for matches at next year's finals.

Alli was caught on camera raising a middle finger in the direction of French referee Clement Turpin in England's qualifier against Slovakia earlier this month and faces a four-game ban.

The Football Association wants any ban to include qualifiers against Slovenia (5 October) and Lithuania (8 October).

"We have today responded to FIFA and understand the case will be reviewed by the discipli-



Tottenham Hotspur's Dele Alli. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

nary committee before the end of the month," British media quoted an FA spokesperson as saying on Wednesday. The 21-year-old Tottenham Hotspur midfielder said the gesture was made in jest

towards team mate Kyle Walker.

England, who are on top of Group F in European qualifying with 20 points from eight games, are in a strong position to make it to the World Cup.—Reuters ■

Improving ASEAN football standard through AFF U18

Better quality of ASEAN football teams was seen at the matches of ASEAN football AFF U-18 2017 Championship matches being played in Yangon, Myanmar starting from 4 September.

In playing AFF U-18 2017 Championship, keen competition were seen in all matches and football skills and tactics of Brunei, Cambodia and Timor Leste are incredibly improving this year. Three ASEAN star teams – Viet Nam, Indonesia and Myanmar – were struggling to get berth into the semifinals of the tournament this year.

However Vietnam clearly in the driver seat after sever-

al marvelous performances in the earlier matches, failed to overcome Myanmar for semi-final place. Myanmar's favourite players Myat Kaung Khant and Lwin Moe Aung gave Myanmar a fabulous unexpected victory to push the several thousand fans to their feet.

The incredible win for Myanmar has pushed Myanmar up to the semi-finals after beating Vietnam by head to head result with goal difference and amount of goals scored were the same. Unquestionably, all the teams took part in the tourney with serious expectations and that is better for the future of ASEAN football.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■

Shell-shocked Feyenoord admit they were out of their depth

ROTTERDAM — Feyenoord's return to the Champions League after an absence of 15 years was something of a shock, coach Giovanni van Bronckhorst admitted while bemoaning the difference in quality after a 3-0 thrashing by Manchester City on Wednesday.

Just over 24 hours after suggesting in his pre-match press conference there was no reason why the Dutch champions could not win their opening Group F encounter, Van Bronckhorst admitted his side were largely out of their depth. "It was getting acquainted with the highest of

levels," he said after the home defeat in De Kuip. They played with such comfort, incredible movement off the ball.

"City are one of the top teams in the world and to beat them you have to have a really good day. And to make sure you do not start like we did. The difference was too great."

The inexperienced Feyenoord were a goal down after just two minutes and 3-0 behind at the 25-minute mark.

"It was too much for a number of the players at this highest level," added Van Bronckhorst.

"But you also have to grow in the game and get some confidence. But going behind after two minutes was a real hefty blow for my team.

"I thought it was because of nerves. But you don't need to have any sympathy with us. I'm glad we are competing in the Champions League but you can see how big the difference is."

The next group assignment for Feyenoord, winners of the old European Cup in 1970, was not expected to get any easier with an away match at Napoli on 26 September.—Reuters ■



Feyenoord's Tonny Vilhena, Jean-Paul Boetius and Miquel Nelom look dejected at the end of the match at De Kuip, Rotterdam, Netherlands, on 13 September. **PHOTO: REUTERS**