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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Donald Trump addresses the 72nd United Nations General Assembly at UN Headquarters in New York City yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

China to UN: We support Myanmar's efforts for stability

China supports efforts by the Myanmar government to protect its national security and opposes the recent violent attacks in northern Rakhine State, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The military response to insurgent attacks last month by

the ARSA extremist terrorists, which has been described as a terrorist group, sent more than thousands of Muslims fleeing to neighbouring Bangladesh and thousands of ethnic people to temporary camps in southern Rakhine.

Myanmar's government says about 400 people have

been killed in the fighting. Britain, France and Australia urged Myanmar leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on Monday to push for an end to military operation. Her national security adviser said those who had fled could return, but the process had to be discussed.

Wang told Guterres at

a meeting at the United Nations on Monday that China "understands and supports" Myanmar's efforts to protect its security in Rakhine and hopes the "fire of war" can soon be extinguished, China's Foreign Ministry said in a statement released on Tuesday.

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Tatmadaw: 'We will never again send trainees to Britain'

IN response to Britain's recent suspension of its training programme in England for Myanmar soldiers due to the violence in Rakhine State, the Tatmadaw said yesterday it would recall the officers as soon as possible and will "never send any trainees to Britain, including trainees agreed on previously".

"In this multi-party democratic era, the Tatmadaw is constantly striving for cooperating in friendly ways with armies from neighbouring countries, regional ones and international countries.

"Accordingly, five Myanmar military trainees are attending training in Britain. But due to the demand of Britain parliamentarians concerning the events which took place in Rakhine State, the military officials will be deported".

The five Myanmar soldiers arrived at the Myanmar military attachés office in London on Wednesday.

The Tatmadaw will recall them as soon as possible and said they will "never, ever send any trainees to Britain (in the future)", according to a statement released yesterday by the Tatmadaw True News Information Committee. —GNLM ■



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Myanmar delegation led by Vice President U Henry Van Thio attends 72nd session of UN General Assembly in New York, US. **PHOTO: MNA**

Vice-President U Henry Van Thio attends UN General Assembly opening ceremony

A Myanmar delegation led by Vice-President U Henry Van Thio attended the opening ceremony of the UN General Assembly's 72nd session on Tuesday at UN Headquarters in New York, together with Heads of States from UN member countries and Heads of Government.

At the ceremony, Mr. Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary General, shared highlights from an annual report of UN performances, with the general debate then opened by His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajcak, Minister of

Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia and president of the 72nd Session of UN General Assembly.

The theme of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly is "Focusing on People — Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for all on a Sustainable Planet."

At yesterday's opening ceremony, Heads of State and Heads of Government from 37 nations were in attendance, including US President Donald Trump and Brazilian President Michel Temer.—Myanmar News Agency ■

MMCWA (Central) provides cash and supplies for displaced people

THE Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (Central) provided cash and supplies for the displaced people in Maungtau, Buthidaung and Yathedaung townships in Rakhine State yesterday.

Ks5 million was provided to the reception and division of donation committee in Rakhine State government office at 10am and accepted by U Kyaw

Aye Thein, the Rakhine State Minister of Finance, Revenue, Planning and Economy, U Aung Kyaw Zan, Rakhine State Minister of Electricity, Industry and Transport, U Kyaw Hla Tun, the Advocate General of Rakhine State and officials who gave certificates of honour to the donors.

In the afternoon, 86 bags including 21 types of utensils

were provided to 86 families in the rescue camp of Mani Yadanar monastery in Sittway Township. Thirty-two bags containing 21 types of utensils were provided to 32 families in the rescue camp of Nga Zin Yaing Chaung monastery and additional provisions for nine pregnant women at this camp were also provided. —Win Min Soe (IPRD) ■

Three explosions happened on road in Minbya, Rakhine State

THREE explosions occurred on a road in Minbya, Rakhine State, yesterday, but there was no report of casualty nor injuries in the incident.

The incident happened on the road linking two villages while a truck, which is en-route from Yangon to Sittway, and

a passenger car, which is en-route from Sittway to Yangon, were passing on it.

The blasts damaged four mirrors of the passenger bus. A mine squad is clearing the area, according to local authorities.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Minister meets departmental staff in Nay Pyi Taw

THE meeting between the Union Minister for Information and staff from the state-run newspapers of the News and Periodicals Enterprise and Nay Pyi Taw Printing Press under the Printing and Publishing Department was held yesterday at Bo Waziya Hall, Kyemon Press, in Zeyar Thiri township in Nay Pyi Taw.

Following the meeting, the Union minister also met with staff from MRTV at 1 pm at the MRTV auditorium in Tatkon.

At the meeting at Bo Waziya Hall, Dr. Pe Myint said, "Personnel from the News and Periodical Enterprise need to strive for issuing your articles into prestigious papers which can stand on its own in accord with journalism ethics and for describing voices of the people and national brethren, the government's stance and performances. Being a non-stop

routine, stress can occur to the staff. As newspapers are being issued daily to keep pace with the time, mistakes can be made occasionally. So, it must be co-operated collectively to be free from errors."

The Union Minister added, "Staff under the Printing and Publishing Department need to strive for making high-quality productions and publishing and for upgrading production level by competing with outside businesses. Sarpay Beikman under the Printing and Publishing department is continuously making performances for the development of the literary world. Very soon, it will hold seminars in cooperation with the organisation of publishing house-owners."

Afterward, U Kyaw Soe, Managing Director of News and Periodicals Enterprise and U

Aung Myo Myint, Director-General of the Printing and Publishing Department, clarified the situations of accomplishment over the submissions of the staff. Following that, the Union Minister made a closing address.

At the meeting at the MRTV Auditorium, the Union Minister said, "Formerly, MRTV stood as the sole national television in the country. But starting from a century ago, two private media were granted to run the television industry. MRTV needs to change in accord with the changing times after careful consideration, by studying international techniques. I want our media to firmly stand as a national media.

Discussions are under way as to whether it will stand as public-orientated media or it will stand as a government media. The present meeting is designed



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint meeting with staff from the two state-run dailies and Printing and Publishing Department. **PHOTO: MNA**

for making present performances convenient." Officials and staff then submitted advantages and disadvantages experienced in performing the tasks, and U

Myint Htwe, Director-General of MRTV, explained the tasks to be implemented presently and the tasks to be performed in the future.—Myanmar News Agency

Gov't to accelerate environmental conservation efforts

THE National-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee held its fourth work coordination meeting yesterday, stressing the need to speed up enforcement of the rules on sustainability of natural resources nationwide.

The meeting was held in Nay Pyi Taw to decide priorities to be implemented by the committee and to revitalise the current and future works of the committee.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice President U Myint Swe, in his capacity as the patron of the committee, delivered an opening address, said plans are underway to adopt a policy, strategy and work plans with regard to the environmental conservation and climate change.

Out of 54 decisions made in previous meetings, 14 have been implemented, 36 are underway and four have not yet been implemented, according to the meeting.

The decisions mainly include drawing up a policy on climate change impacts in My-



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the National-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO:MNA



anmar, a strategy and works plans, organising region/state/district/township-level supervisory committees, carry out educative activities on climate change and sustainable use of natural resources and to upgrade the technologies for civil management. The chairman also expressed his satisfaction on environmental conservation

awareness campaigns carried out by the Ministry of Information, calling on other ministries to accelerate their current tasks and cooperation with ministries concerned.

"Ministries need to speed up their cooperation and coordination with others so as to effectively implement works of the central committee in regions and

states," said the Vice President.

He also urged the participants of the meeting to discuss priorities to be given by the central committee and drafting short-term and long-term plans for environmental conservation in regions and states.

Following his remarks, U Ohn Win, Chairman of the central committee and Union Minister

for Environmental Conservation and Forestry, clarified the process of drafting a policy, strategies and works plans of the central committee, arrangement for releasing the National Environment Policy and national-level strategies for climate change, green economy and priorities for environmental conservation.— Myanmar News Agency ■

Implementation Committee for recommendations on Rakhine Issue meets

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, Joint-Chairman of the Implementation Committee for recommendations on Rakhine Issue and members held a coordination meeting at the State Government Guest House yesterday.

The chief minister of Rakhine State said the committee would assess the situation on the ground and suggest effective means for rehabilitation and resettlement of displaced residents.

"The Implementation Committee is required to implement on the ground situation. We have already seen and listened to feelings and sufferings they had faced. As we have concluded these situations in general, it is necessary to prioritise resettlement including rehabilitation of the national people. Had the findings been implemented generally, the tasks of the committee could have been accomplished successfully. Committee members need to submit the findings of the trips collectively," said the Chief Minister of Rakhine State



Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Nyi Pu delivers the address at the coordination meeting for suggestions on Rakhine Issue. PHOTO:MNA

and Joint-Chairman of Implementation Committee.

"In accord with the duty assignment in respective departments over those findings, matters on resettlement, transportation, electricity and communications urgently need to be performed.

In doing so, there are the tasks to be performed urgently and the others which are to

be implemented in the long run included." At the coordination meeting, surveys made in Buthidaung, Kyauktaw and Maungtaw on 19 and 20 September, committee members discussed the tasks to be implemented by respective departments. The ministers of Rakhine State Government participated in the discussion.— Myanmar News Agency ■

China to UN: We support Myanmar's efforts for stability

FROM PAGE-1

China expresses sympathy with those who have fled into Bangladesh and will send humanitarian aid to Bangladesh, Wang said.

"China advocates Myanmar and Bangladesh resolving the problem via dialogue and consultation," the Foreign Ministry cited Wang as saying.

"China is willing to continue promoting peace talks in its own way, and hopes the international community can play a constructive role to ease the situation and promote dialogue," he said.

Mr. Wang Yi also told his Indonesian counterpart there should be understanding of the Myanmar government's efforts to protect social stability and that "violent incidents" in Rakhine state are unacceptable, state media said.

The two met on the sidelines of a United Nations meeting on Tuesday, state news agency Xinhua said on Wednesday.

China and Myanmar have close economic and diplomatic

ties and China has defied expectations that democratisation in Myanmar could lead to weaker relations between the two countries.

The meeting between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres came one day after State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi called on the world community to help find peace for Myanmar at a diplomatic briefing in Nay Pyi Taw.

In reaction to her address, diplomats in Myanmar acknowledged that her address contains a very positive message.

"There is no evidence of ethnic cleansing in Rakhine, only a constructive approach can solve the Rakhine issue, which is complicated," said Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Nikolay A. Listopadov.

"The Chinese government's position is very clear. We support the Myanmar government in its efforts for restoring peace and stability in Rakhine," said Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Hong Liang.— GNLM/ Reuters ■

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

One of the most precious geographical treasures of Myanmar, Kyone Hta Waterfall, consists of emerald waters and rocks in Kayin State. **PHOTO: THWE THWE TUN**

Tourists arrivals increase in Kayin State

PEACE is the reason why there is increase in the number of tourist arrival in Kayin State, officials said. Kayin State is located in southeastern Myanmar with residents primarily descended from the Kayin race and other minority ethnic groups.

Progress in the peace process has led to regional stability as well as better roads and communication, officials said.

With the increasing number of tourists, businessmen are more interested to invest in hotels and guest houses this year compared to the last year.

In 2016, Kayin State received a total of 159,000 tourists and over 574,000 local visitors. As of August 2017, a total

of 156,000 tourists and over 374,000 local visitors visited Kayin State, according to the deputy director of the Hpa-an branch office of the Hotels and Tourism Department.

In 2016, there were only 20 hotels in Hpa-an Township. With the increasing number of tourists, the number of hotels has climbed up to 23. Kayin State is one of the famous states in Myanmar because of its scenic beauty, the hospitality of the local people and their unique culture. Hpa-an has become one of the popular destination.

There are many natural caves and waterfalls lying on the western bank of Thanlwin river that attract nature-loving tourists. Tourists visit Hpa-an

from Yangon and can return in one day trip, said an official from the Hotels and Tourism Department.

Tourists who visited Kayin State were mostly from France, the Netherlands and Germany. But since implementation of the Greater Mekong East-West Economic Corridor project in 2016 to boost economic growth, more and more Chinese have been visiting Kayin State.

The Hotels and Tourism Department has already provided capacity-building training courses to 1,150 employees who are working in the hotel industry — 15 courses in Hpa-an, three in Myawady and one in Thandaung town. —Min Thu/Tun Tun Htway (Hpa-an) ■

Myanmar's sterculia sold at lower prices for its poor quality

Myanmar's sterculia gum fetches only one-third of the price compared to other types in the international market because of poor quality and low processing technology, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Currently, the price of sterculia gum is between Ks30,000 and Ks80,000 per viss, depending on the quality, much less than that in the international market. Local growers are cultivating Myanmar's sterculia gum on a commercial scale. The agricultural department and the land records department will conduct a survey to find out the exact acreage and yield per acre of sterculia gum farming. "Although we can get a higher price for sterculia gum, we still lack the quality and technology. Therefore, our sterculia gum price is lower than that in the international market. We cannot export it legally now. But if we can export it legally, we will get new markets and Myanmar's sterculia gum will fetch a better price", said U Ohn Myint, a local sterculia gum grower in Magway Region.

Myanmar's sterculia gum is mainly grown in Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway and Bago regions, it is learnt.—GNLM ■

Two accidents, three deaths on Myawady-Kawkareik Road

TWO fatal accidents that resulted in three deaths occurred near the Nat Sin curve on Asia Road between Myawady and Kawkareik townships on Tuesday. A blue 12-wheeled vehicle, 6E/....., driven by Min Aung, failed in brake system and crashed into two vehicles, a FAW and the Probox that were driving in the same direction at about 11am. The 12-wheeled vehicle hit the left door of the FAW vehicle, Sa/, and crashed into the back of white Probox, 2K/..... driven by Saw Kyi Lin, 48, of Kawkareik Township.

The twelve-wheeled vehicle and Probox vehicle went down into an ravine to a depth of 20 feet. Of five people in twelve-wheel vehicle, three people in-

cluding the driver Min Aung and Min Min were killed.

Two other people who received minor injuries were sent to Kawkareik Hospital. Saw Kyi Lin, his wife Daw Moe San Oo and their son Myat Kyaw Hein, 8, were injured and were sent to Myawady Hospital. A lawsuit was filed against the driver at Kawkareik Myoma Police Station. At approximately the same place, a blue 12-wheeled vehicle, a Mitsubishi Fuso, 7G/3189 lost control and overturned at 10:30pm. The vehicle damage was estimated to cost at about Ks5 million. The driver, who ran away, had a lawsuit filed against him by police at Kawkareik Myoma Police Station.—Htain Lin Aung (IPRD) ■

**PHOTO: HTAIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)**



Bamboo binds are sorted beside the road for sale in Mawlamyinyun Township. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Bamboo annually earns US\$5 million

MYANMAR'S bamboo annually earns US\$5 million, said U Ohn Win, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

The Union Minister made the remarks at a World Bamboo Day event held at the Excel River View Hotel on Monday in Thanlyin Township.

Myanmar's income from bamboo is less than that of China and Thailand. China's bamboo production fetches US\$36 billion, he said. There are over 1.7 million hectares of bamboo in Bago Yoma Mountain, Rakhine Yoma Mountain and Taninthayi Region. Myanmar is still endeavoring to systematically manage bamboo farms to be able to produce marketable bamboo products. Myanmar's bamboo products are exported to Pakistan, Bangladesh, Singapore and South Korea. Myanmar initiated the Sustainable Development Project for Bamboo Resources in cooperation with the Thailand International Cooperation Agency in 2016. The project will be implemented up to 2018.

Some bamboo products—bamboo charcoal, bamboo fishing rods, and bamboo shoots cannot be exported due to a lack of packaging techniques. If suitable packing methods can be upgraded, large volumes of bamboo shoots can be shipped because there is adequate demand, the ministry said. But industrial development is required to improve the bamboo market. Currently, only bamboo baskets are exported, said U Kyaw Thu, the chairman of Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association. Natural bamboo forests also need to be preserved, and a bamboo farming zone should be established, officials said. To keep up with Thailand's and China's bamboo exports, building a factory for bamboo products is a must, he continued.—GNLM■

be upgraded, large volumes of bamboo shoots can be shipped because there is adequate demand, the ministry said. But industrial development is required to improve the bamboo market. Currently, only bamboo baskets are exported, said U Kyaw Thu, the chairman of Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association. Natural bamboo forests also need to be preserved, and a bamboo farming zone should be established, officials said. To keep up with Thailand's and China's bamboo exports, building a factory for bamboo products is a must, he continued.—GNLM■

Advanced purchases using bank deposits smooth trade flow

ADVANCED purchase and sale of vegetables have been put into practice in commodity depots by making a deposit of 10 per cent of the goods' value from both sellers and buyers at Myanmar Citizens Bank, facilitating trade flow and minimizing fraud, according to a report of Myanma Alin.

This system of trading in advance with a deposit of 10 per cent of the total value has been performed in international countries, officials said. Advanced purchase and sales without use of a bank have a risk of fraud. Therefore, the new system with deposits made at a bank was begun at the Bayintnaung commodity depot in 2015.

U Myo Thu, director of the Trade Promotion section of the Commerce of Ministry said that trading in trust does not make sense in external trade. Contracts are a must in international trade, in accord with trade rules and regulations. However, it does

not mean a bank guarantee or pledge is a must to put up at the bank.

Even though there were more than 50 commodity depots in Myanmar as of last year, only a small number of depots has steady trade. There will be 13 commodity depots which will be opened. Panel discussions, courses and education talks are needed to effectuate the development in the depots.

Commodity depots need to control quality assurance of the goods. The trade system with 10 per cent deposit will be effective in export, said U Myint Ngwe, a merchant.

Each individual member of the Bayintnaung commodity depot will have to open an account at Myanmar Citizens Bank. If sellers and buyers want to make transaction with a pledge, both of them need to pay in 10 per cent of the total value and a code number will be issued by the bank.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA)■

Watermelon planned to enter more export markets

MYANMAR'S watermelons will soon penetrate the markets of the UAE and Russia, according to a report yesterday in City News.

The Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Growers and Exporters Association plans to introduce Myanmar's watermelon and muskmelon to foreign merchants at a fruit fair which will be held in Dubai

in February. More than 60,000 tons of watermelon were exported to foreign trade partners during the last fiscal year, officials said. Continued efforts are being exerted to boost the volume of exports. Myanmar's watermelon harvest period is different from other countries, and can this extend into more markets, said an official.

Currently, watermelon

growers are receiving watermelon growing methods to produce higher-quality watermelon, allowing them to earn more as they enter new markets, said a watermelon grower. Apart from Kayah and Chin states, watermelon is cultivated across the country. Watermelon can be grown throughout the year with systematic ways of irrigation.—GNLM■

Japan purchases five Myanmar's products at a high price

JAPAN, trading partner with Myanmar, primarily purchases shrimp, sesame seeds, green gram, pearl and natural rubber at a high price, according to a report of Myanma Alinn. Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has discussed matters relating to boosting export of those five

items to Japan's market, upgrade agro production technology and improve distribution channels. Myanmar mainly sells to Japan various shrimps which are naturally caught. Myanmar is the single market of Japan for sesame seeds. Myanmar's green gram is also exported to Japan, said U Yan Naing Tun, the director-general of Commerce

Ministry.

Myanmar's natural catch and traditional farming method limits shrimp production. If farming methods is upgraded, there is likely to be an increase of about 10 per cent against traditional farming. Market competition in export market needs to be always considered.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA)■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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| ● Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road) | ● City Mart (Junction Maw Tin) |
| ● Market Place by City Mart (Junction City) | ● City Mart (Sule Square) |
| ● City Mart (Aung San Stadium) | ● City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin) |
| ● City Mart (47th street) | ● City Mart (Waizayandar) |
| ● City Mart (Yankin) | ● City Mart (Hledan) |
| ● City Mart (China Town) | ● City Mart (Myanmar Plaza) |
| ● City Mart (Myay Ni Gone) | ● City Mart (Junction 8) |
| ● City Mart (FMI) | ● City Mart (St. John) |
| | ● Ocean North Point (9 mile) |
| | ● Ocean Shwegonedine |

12th meeting of Union Level JMC-U held

By Ye Khaung Nyunt

Standard operating procedure set by Union Level Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U) are to be observed as they are the life blood of the Peace Process

CHAIRMAN of the Union Level Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U), Lt-Gen Yar Pyae said at the 12th meeting of JMC-U held at National Reconciliation and Peace Center in Yangon that Standard Operating Procedures and Terms of Reference set and approved by Union Level Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U) are to be strictly observed as they are the lifeblood of the Peace Process and only when SoP and ToR are respected will the peace process be achieved.

The JMC-U has already set the policy and SoP to be employed in the difficult situations, engagements and conflict that are encountered.

The 12th regular meeting



Peace makers participate in the 12th regular meeting of JMC-U. PHOTO: PHOE HTAUNG

of the JMC-U is being held for three days from 20-22 September. In the meeting, the discussion regarding organising local civilian monitors, holding workshops for the placement of the armed groups in order to avoid engagement, acquiring policy to review the SoP and ToR which

had already been approved will be conducted, it is learnt.

JMC-U Vice Chairman 1 Saw Isaac Po from the ethnic armed groups stressed that mutual trust is very important and both parties need to observe the provisions dictated in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

In addition to acknowledging equality and mutual respect, it is also essential to implement the JMC-U agreements. It is known that JMC-U civilian members are conducting the programme to elevate the inclusion of civilians and promote capacity-building tasks. Only when the civilians

stand smart as intermediary and monitor without bias between the two armed groups, will the JMC tasks be accomplished. Then, the grassroots people need to understand the NCA and it needs to build trust of people on the JMC works. The civilians have been suffering from the scourge of wars and they should be included in JMC as bold and resolute players, Saw Isaac Po added.

“I like to remark that JMC has been activated to some extent due to our effort and participation. Civilian monitors becomes important players now and the people are interested in and inclined to help JMC’s works,” explained the Vice Chairman 2, Saw Matthew Aye of JMC-U.

Yesterday’s meeting was attended by government representatives, members of JMC-U, representatives from ethnic armed groups of NCA signatories and civilian representatives. ■



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Multi-Agricultural and Poultry Farming. PHOTO: MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing arrives in Rakhine State

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services, accompanied by Union Ministers Lt General Kyaw Swe, Lt General Ye Aung, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Khin Aung Myint and responsible officials visited Sittway Multi-Agricultural and Poultry Farming yesterday morning, inspecting mobogiene brown laying egg hens and DYL swine breeding and paddy plantation on one-acre plots of reclaimed land. In the afternoon,

Senior General and party left Sittway for Buthidaung by express motor boats from Shwe Min Gan port, arriving at Buthidaung in the evening.

Then, they arrived at Taung Bazar village in Buthidaung, meeting cordially with Tatmadaw men and their families. After the meeting, C-in-C of Defence Services and wife gave foods and fund for Maternal and Child Care Association, greeting them cordially. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Meeting for access to water in rural areas held

The coordination meeting for the implementation of strategy and investing for the access of water resources in rural areas was held yesterday morning at U Ottama Hall in Sittway Township. Present at the meeting were State Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Minister of State Development Committee, State Hluttaw rep-

resentatives, departmental officials and officials from UNICEF.

U Min Aung, State Minister for Rakhine State Development Committee, said that the procedures to access water resource in schools and hospitals and the strategy and investing in personal hygiene and environment was released in February. The

meeting was held to draw up a budget for implementation of these procedures. The respective departments were also urged to cooperate in drawing budgets. U Tin Myint, Head of State planning department and officials discussed the basic facts for allocated budgets. —Tin Tun (IPRD) ■

Vice-Senior General meets General Koji Yamazaki of Japan

Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Deputy C-in-C of Defence Services and C-in-C (Army) met with General Koji Yamazaki, chief of staff of The Japan Ground Self-Defence Force, yesterday morning at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Seoul, South Korea.

In the meeting, Vice-Senior General Soe Win spoke of the friendship and military cooperation between the two armies, the Tatmadaw’s participation in Myanmar’s democratic transition



Vice-Senior General Soe Win holds talks with General Koji Yamazaki. PHOTO: MNA

period, continued co-operation in the sphere of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and the situations currently happening in Rakhine State.

General Koji Yamazaki said that Japan will cooperate with Myanmar, being a close friend

of Japan. Afterward, Vice-Senior General Soe Win attended a luncheon hosted by Mr. Lee Nak Yeon, Prime Minister of Republic of Korea to Asia-Pacific C-in-C (armies) at Namsam Hall of the Grand Hyatt Hotel. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Japan PM Abe to delay timing of achieving budget balance target

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is set to delay the timing for balancing a primary budget from the current fiscal 2020 to later in the decade, sources told Reuters on Wednesday, calling the government's fiscal discipline into question.

Abe will unveil the decision on Monday at a news conference at which he is expected to announce a snap election, the government sources said on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to media.

Abe is expected to call the general election for 22 October to take advantage of a rebound in his damaged approval ratings and disarray in the opposition, ruling party and government sources said. The government has vowed to achieve the ambitious target of returning to a primary budget surplus in the fiscal year ending in March 2021, as a crucial step to rein in the world's heaviest public debt burden at twice the size of Japan's economy. Now, Abe plans to push back the timing to sometime in 2020s while prioritizing spending

on education, innovation on human resources and productivity, the sources said, confirming an earlier report by the Nikkei daily and other domestic media.

A primary budget balance, which excludes new bond sales and debt servicing costs, is a key gauge of measuring how spending on policy measures is financed without relying on debt.

Some analysts say the loss of fiscal discipline could cause the government to pile pressure on the Bank of Japan to prolong monetary stimulus to keep borrowing costs ultra-low, which effectively help finance government debt.

That would further delay an exit from the BOJ's quantitative easing, at a time when other major central banks — US Federal Reserve and European Central Bank — are shifting towards normalizing monetary policy.

But with massive government bond purchases by the central bank under its yield curve control policy, the bond market has already lost its price-setting mechanism that should serve as warning against weakening of



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe attends the World Leaders for Universal Health Coverage event held at UN headquarters in New York, US on 18 September, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

fiscal discipline, they say.

"Japan's fiscal discipline appears to be loosening steadily, which is worrying, while harmful rises in bond yields are unlikely to happen," Yasunari Ueno, chief market economist at Mizuho Securities, noted in a report.

"Some academics are even floating an idea that bonds held by the BOJ should be replaced with perpetual bonds, which would pave the way to virtually give up on repaying the principal of government debt," he added.

Analysts polled by Reuters earlier this month had expected the BOJ would not start scaling back stimulus anyway until late 2018 at the earliest as inflation remains stubbornly weak despite an improving economy.

Abe has told reporters he will make a decision on the snap election after he returns from the United States on 22 September.

Abe wants to go ahead with a planned rise in the nation's sales tax to 10 per cent from 8 per cent in 2019 and use some of the rev-

enue to create a "social security system for all generations", which would invest in education while decreasing the proportion of sales tax revenue used to pay down government debt, other sources have said. Using less tax revenue to pay down debt, however, would make it more difficult to balance the budget. "We have to maintain fiscal discipline, regardless," Finance Minister Taro Aso told reporters on Monday when asked about reports of such a shift. —Reuters ■

Japan's biggest bank sells off stake in Malaysia's CIMB Group

TOKYO — The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Japan's largest bank, announced Wednesday that it has sold its entire 4.6 per cent stake in Malaysia's CIMB Group Holdings Berhad, Malaysia's second largest financial services provider.

The bank, owned by Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc, cited tightened international financial regulations and other changes in business environment as the reason for its divestment. It sold its 412,506,345 shares in CIMB for approximately 2.56 billion ringgit (about 68 billion yen) as part of MUFJ's "re-imagining strategy" released in May, which included a review of overseas investments.

The Japanese bank has had close relations with CIMB for more than 40 years, ever since one of its predecessors, Sanwa Bank, invested in one of CIMB's predecessor banks in 1974.

It said that despite its divestment in CIMB, the two banks will continue collaborating in broad-ranging areas and the Malaysian bank will remain one of its alliance partners in South-east Asia.

The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ has its regional headquarters in Singapore. It has majority-ownership in one of Thailand's major banks, the Bank of Ayudhya, or Krungsri, with nearly 700 branches. The CIMB Group, headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, has the most extensive retail branch network in Southeast Asia, with around 900 branches, and its investment banking arm is also one of the Asia-Pacific region's largest investment banks. The two banks have collaborated to date in such areas as Islamic finance, trade finance and infrastructure projects.—Kyodo News ■

Planting method for hydroponic vegetables seen in N China's Hebei



A working staff checks the hydroponic vegetables at Donghong Xinnong Agricultural Demonstration Garden in Dacheng County, north China's Hebei Province on 20 September, 2017. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Potential prospects for Myanmar's future

Khin Maung Oo

THE State Counsellor gave a speech regarding efforts made by the Government for national reconciliation and the peace process, at the Myanmar International Convention Center 2 in Nay Pyi Taw at 10 am on 19 September 2017. All diplomats accredited to Myanmar were present at the ceremony as well as Union Ministers and senior government officials. Myanmar citizens all over the country watched and listened to the State Counsellor's speech which was broadcast live on national television as well as on FM radio stations.

The speech delivered in English seemed to have been designed to make our people and those from the international community well convinced of the actualities regarding Myanmar affairs. And, it was very encouraging and heart-warming to have seen our people listen to her speech enthusiastically.

In her address, the State Counsellor

emphasized that the ultimate goal of all Myanmar citizens was peace and stability of the nation, peaceful democratic transition and national development. She made an appeal to international community and all friends of Myanmar to understand and take heart-felt consideration for the national aims and the problems that the country was now facing. She disclosed that constructive new ways and means were urgently needed to be sought for national peace and stability. These are the facts and suggestions of great importance to be implemented.

At present, the most important thing is the affairs in the Rakhine State. The government is dealing strictly with humanitarian matters which are now being discussed by the international community, in accordance with the law. The State Counsellor invited the diplomats to come and see the actual situations on the ground, adding that displaced people who fled to Bangladesh would be accept-

ed after scrutinizing their documents, in accord with the 1993 Agreement.

The nationwide address made by the State Counsellor will surely reduce worries of the international community, because it can point out constructively to accept genuine facts, without pessimistic views on Myanmar, and simultaneously it can make the world know the government's actual performance in dealing with Rakhine Affairs and peace and stability of the Rakhine State.

In building up the nation, Myanmar is presently facing many challenges and difficulties, and the Union Government is solving them in a systematic way.

If and when any nation or any community wants Myanmar's well-being they need to willingly and actively participate in Myanmar affairs with optimistic minds.

It seems that the international community views Rakhine State affairs only from the narrow perspective of human rights and the rights of only one particu-

lar type of people professing a particular religious belief. They seem to have forgotten or have chosen to ignore that fact that many other people live in the Rakhine State such as Hindus and some other ethnic national races which have been equally affected by the recent attacks of the ARSA terrorists. The events in the Rakhine State are important and urgent no doubt, but peace and stability in other parts of Myanmar are equally important for the stability and prosperity of the whole country.

To sum it up, the speech made by the State Counsellor provided a good summary of the events in the Rakhine State and the opinions and positions of the Union Government on the recent events. So, we firmly believe that it would go a long way to clear up any existing misunderstandings over Myanmar, thus bringing about effective co-operation from the part of the international community in general and the diplomatic corps in particular. ■

In Myanmar, Nature Can Help Communities Face Climate Challenges

Ryan Bartlett

Senior Specialist, Climate Resilience, World Wildlife Fund

THE impacts of climate change are becoming an ever starker reality around the world, with 2016 on pace to be the hottest year in human history - topping the previous record set just last year. While the Paris Agreement represents significant progress toward addressing this global challenge, international leaders need to further accelerate emissions reductions to keep global temperature rise "well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and aiming for 1.5 degrees Celsius," as called for in the landmark agreement.

And that need is more urgent than ever. With current greenhouse gas emissions levels, we are tracking toward a much more severe scenario: a planet that is 3 to 5°C degrees warmer by the end of the century and potentially much sooner. As we have already experienced with increasingly extreme and variable weather around the world—from unprecedented heat waves to increasingly frequent and intense "1,000 year" floods occurring year after year — even just 1 degree Celsius of warming yields devastating impacts on humans and wildlife.

Building resilience to these increasing extremes and many more unavoidable effects of warming is imperative. It is especially important in developing countries like Myanmar, where millions of subsistence farmers with limited access to services and poor infrastructure are disproportionately vulnerable. By some



A Myanmar fisherman paddles with his foot while setting a new net at Inle Lake, where local villages on stilts have perfectly adapted livelihoods to living and relying on the numerous benefits provided by the surrounding ecosystem, from fish to weaving materials and ever-increasing tourism dollars. These livelihoods are increasingly vulnerable to climate change, as higher temperatures increase droughts and lower water levels to new lows. **PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE**

metrics, Myanmar is the second most vulnerable country to extreme hazards like floods and extreme storms. I have seen this first hand through our engagement with local communities in the dry zone town of Pakokku, where changing rainfall patterns have already made farming in an arid region even more difficult, forcing people to move to the capital as climate refugees.

As we are increasingly seeing around the world, one of the best ways to help communities like these adapt to such changes by working with nature to increase resilience, from providing coastal

defenses against storms to reducing flood risk for millions of people downstream. Today, Myanmar is in a unique position to do exactly this: it is transitioning to democracy and rapidly growing its economy after decades of military rule - which effectively limited economic growth and exploitation of its natural resources for the past 50 years. As a result, the country now has an opportunity in its development trajectory to increase prosperity for millions while also "baking in" climate resilience from the start, in part through protecting its abundant natural wealth. That's wonderful news for conservationists worldwide

as Myanmar is home to some of the last truly pristine, healthy ecosystems and rich biodiversity on our planet.

When other nations faced critical decision points like these in the past, a deficit of information about the value in preserving nature often contributed to unsustainable development outcomes that also contributed to increased vulnerability to climate change. The economic benefits of natural resource exploitation through carbon intensive and extractive industries like timber, mining, and oil and gas have always been well understood. Yet, those associated with protecting and conserving ecosystems and biodiversity and enhancing climate resilience — clean air, water, carbon sequestration, local climate control, flood retention, or coastal defenses against extreme storms — have been more obscure.

But now we have the power (and the data) to change that dynamic. Now common technological tools, like geospatial information systems (GIS), which make use of high-quality satellite imagery, are being used in ever more innovative ways to help us put prices on these benefits. As a result, today conservation scientists can produce comparable, "apples to apples" assessments of the economic values provided by intact, healthy ecosystems. And every year, we are learning new ways to conserve nature as new research and studies add to our understanding of how benefits from on-the-ground preservation can outweigh those from extraction and exploitation.

SEE PAGE 9

Police break up riots who disturb shipping aid to IDPs

Police dispersed a crowd who disturbed a boat carrying aid under the program of Red Cross Movement in Sittway yesterday, detaining eight for interrogation, according to local authorities.

The police in riot gear broke up the crowd comprising about 300 people and controlled the situation around 11 pm, according to a statement of the Information Committee of the government.

Some police were injured in the incident but they are not in critical condition.

The riot began when about fifty people forced an in-charge of the ICRC to unload the aid from a boat at a jetty in Sittway and prevented the boat from leaving while U Naing Wai Lin, the in-charge of ICRC is loading aid including solar lamps, sanitary towels, clothes, blankets, tarpaulin, water buckets, mosquitoes nets and kitchen utensils weighing about 50 tons in total.

Local authorities and Buddhist monks tried to leave the boat by negotiation.

However, people gathered to see the situation reaching the number about 300 at 8 pm and some threw stones and Molotov at the riot police. About 200 police used 20 12-bolt greeners and water cannons to disperse the crowd. Some people from the crowd threw homemade arrows, locally called 'Jingali' with the use catapults. Currently, security forces are stationed in Sittway providing security to local people and the situation under control.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Local authorities arrive at the boat loaded with aid as they arrange for negotiation with the crowd. **PHOTO:INFORMATION COMMITTEE**

Nepalese National Day held in Yangon

UNION Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint and wife were welcomed by Nepalese Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Bhim K. UDAS and wife at a ceremony to mark the Nepalese National Day which was held in Melia Hotel in Yangon on 20 September.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Hong Kong in fourth place for FDI in Myanmar

Hong Kong placed fourth in the foreign direct investment sector in Myanmar with five Hong Kong enterprises in the hotel sector, according to a report in Tuesday's City News.

The statistic was revealed during a visit to Myanmar by a delegation led by Hong Kong Chief Executive Mrs. Carrie Lam on Friday following an invitation of Vice President U Myint Swe. The delegation arrived at Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday and met with Union Minister U Ohn Maung, who said that Hong Kong has invested in five projects in Myanmar's hotel industry and welcomed further investment from Hong Kong.

The Union Minister said the country also needs human resource development aid from Hong Kong. Myanmar is rich in tourist sites, and so there are

many chances to attract Hong Kong travellers. Hong Kong investors are expanding their businesses and are interested to invest in the hotel sector, the Union Minister said.

At the same meeting on Friday, Mrs. Carrie Lam said they are planning to make Hong Kong into training hub and offer scholarships to ASEAN countries for human resource development.

The Hong Kong chief executive and the Union Minister also exchanged ideas to preserve historical buildings and come on with a plan to introduce cultural heritage and promote bilateral tourism, including ocean cruises. Since 1988, 156 Hong Kong enterprises with a total estimated investment of US\$7.7 billion have been made in Myanmar, according to statistics of the Myanmar Investment Commission.—GNLM■

In Myanmar, Nature Can Help Communities Face...

FROM PAGE 8

We have much more to learn, especially from a largely understudied element of this growing field: how exactly can intact ecosystems help us adapt to our changing climate? That's why I'm here at the IUCN World Conservation Congress this week. I'm here to talk with conservation practitioners and leaders from around the world about our efforts to develop this kind of new information for decision-makers in Myanmar.

WWF is working with diverse partners and the national government to create nationwide maps of Myanmar's ecosystem services and explain how these natural systems - mangroves, forests, watersheds — buffer against both immediate and longer term climate change impacts. Our

analysis shows how Myanmar's intact inland forests provide clean water by reducing soil runoff into rivers and streams, reduce flooding by retaining and slowing down water flows, and how its coastal mangroves and reefs provide key protection against increasingly extreme storms. With this improved understanding of the services these natural systems provide, Myanmar can make progress toward its goal of developing a green, resilient economy. And, it can become a model for how to leapfrog over standard brown development and manage the ever increasing impacts of climate change in the 21st century.

WWF will continue working with our partners in Myanmar and around the world to provide information on the enormous benefits nature pro-

vides to local livelihoods and national economies. In this way, we can help governments around the world make similar investment and planning decisions that reduce the difficult trade-offs between economic growth and ecosystem conservation, all while building resilience to the effects of our changing climate.

This post is part of a series on the World Conservation Congress taking place this week. Held every four years, it brings together about 6,000 people, including heads of state, government officials, business leaders, representatives from indigenous groups, scientists, academics, influencers, educators, artists and NGOs, from all over the world to discuss and decide on solutions to the world's most pressing environmental challenges. ■

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Appointment of Head of service organization

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed Police Brig-Gen Aung Win Oo, Deputy Chief of the Myanmar Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs as Chief of the Myanmar Police Force on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

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

At UN, Britain to push internet firms to remove extremist content quicker

UNITED NATIONS — The leaders of Britain, France and Italy will push social media companies on Wednesday to remove “terrorist content” from the internet within one to two hours of it appearing because they say that is the period when most material is spread.

British Prime Minister Theresa May, French President Emmanuel Macron and Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni will raise the issue at an event on the sidelines of the annual gathering of world leaders at the United Nations.

Internet companies including Facebook Inc (FB.O), Microsoft Corp (MSFT.O) Alphabet Inc’s (GOOGL.O) Google said they will attend the meeting.

Google will be represented by general counsel Kent Walker, who will also speak on behalf of a recently formed industry group called the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism.

Facebook is sending Monika Bickert, head of global policy management, who is expected to make remarks reiterating the companies’ commitment to combating online extremism.

Microsoft is sending Dave Heiner, a senior policy advisor.

The European Union has threatened legislation if internet companies do not step up efforts to police what is available on the web.

The British UN mission said May will welcome progress, but urge companies



British Prime Minister Theresa May speaks during a meeting on action to end modern slavery and human trafficking on the sidelines of the 72nd United Nations General Assembly at UN Headquarters in Manhattan, New York, US on 19 September, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

to go “further and faster” to stop groups like Islamic State spreading material that promotes extremism or shows how to make bombs or attack pedestrians with vehicles.

“Terrorist groups are aware that links to their propaganda are being removed more quickly, and are placing a greater emphasis on disseminating content at speed in order to stay ahead,” May plans to tell the event.

“Industry needs to go further and faster in automating

the detection and removal of terrorist content online, and developing technological solutions which prevent it being uploaded in the first place,” she will say.

Responding to pressure from governments in Europe and the United States after a spate of militant attacks, key firms created the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism in June to share technical solutions for removing extremist content and work more with counter-terrorism experts.

Twitter said it had removed

299,649 accounts in the first half of this year for the “promotion of terrorism”, a 20 per cent decline from the previous six months, although it gave no reason for the drop. Three-quarters of those accounts were suspended before posting their first tweet.

May said ahead of Wednesday’s event: “We need a fundamental shift in the scale and nature of our response — both from industry and governments — if we are to match the evolving nature of terrorists’ use of the internet.” —Reuters ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Police arrest two more men over London train bomb attack

LONDON — British police said they had arrested two more men on Wednesday in connection with the bombing of a commuter train in London last week which injured 30 people, bringing the total in custody to five.

The men, aged 48 and 30, were held under terrorism laws in Newport in south Wales. Another man was arrested in Newport on Tuesday night while two others, an 18-year-old and a 21-year-old, were held by counter-terrorism officers on Saturday. —Reuters ■

China calls on countries to stick to Paris climate accord goals

BEIJING — China called on the international community to stick to Paris climate accord goals and unswervingly work together to tackle climate change, the official news agency Xinhua reported on Wednesday, citing Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

On the sidelines of a United Nations meeting, Wang Yi also called on transformation of global energy industry and further development of green and renewable energy, Xinhua reported. —Reuters ■

Brazil ex-president Lula charged with bribe-taking in automotive sector

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil’s Federal Court accepted on Tuesday a denouncement against former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and one of his former Minister for bribe-taking in exchange for extending incentives of automobile industry.

The denouncement was presented by the Federal Prosecution Office. With the decision, Lula and his former cabinet

minister Gilberto Carvalho officially become defendants in the new corruption charge.

According to the prosecutors, Lula, Carvalho and other five are accused of favoring vehicle manufacturers through presidential decrees.

The prosecution office states that manufacturers Mitsubishi and Caa promised bribes of 6 million reais (1.9 mil-

lion US dollars) to Lula and Carvalho in exchange for benefits of the automobile industry.

Lula denied all the accusations. “Former President Lula’s innocence will be acknowledged in this case as well, because he did not participate in any illicit acts. The Prosecution’s charges are immaterial,” said his lawyer, Cristiano Zanin.

The former president

stands accused in at least five cases of corruption and was found guilty in keeping a fancy apartment bought with bribe money off the books. Lula denied the ownership of the apartment. His lawyers appealed to a superior court.

Lula intends to run for presidency again next year. His legal situation may block his way as planned. —Xinhua ■

Hurricane Maria makes landfall in Puerto Rico — NHC

MIAMI — Hurricane Maria has made landfall near Yabucoa, Puerto Rico, the US National Hurricane Centre (NHC) said on Wednesday.

The hurricane is about 35 miles (55 km) southeast of San Juan, Puerto Rico with maximum sustained winds of 155 miles per hour (250 km per hour), the NHC said, adding that it is moving in a north-westerly direction at 10 mph (17 km/h). —Reuters ■



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Erdogan says Turkey to consider sanctions over Kurdish independence vote — Anadolu

ANKARA — Turkey will consider imposing sanctions on Kurdish northern Iraq over its planned independence referendum, President Tayyip Erdogan was cited by state-run Anadolu news agency as saying. Turkey escalated its opposition to the Kurdish referendum on Tuesday, training tank guns and rocket launchers across the southern border and saying the break-up of its neighbours could lead to

global conflict. Erdogan, who is attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York, told world leaders on Tuesday that the referendum in northern Iraq could lead to fresh conflicts in the Middle East.

Speaking to reporters outside his hotel, Erdogan said Turkey's national security council and cabinet would discuss potential sanctions on northern Iraq when they meet on Friday. "As

the national security council, we will advise the government on our decision.

With it, the cabinet will meet and discuss this. It will both evaluate this and put forth their own stance on what kind of sanctions we can impose, or if we will, but these will not be ordinary," Erdogan was quoted by Anadolu as saying.

Turkey has strong trade ties with northern Iraq's Kurdish

Regional Government, which pumps hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil per day through Turkey and has approved plans for Russian oil major Rosneft to invest in pipelines to export gas to Turkey and Europe. "We will announce our final thoughts on the issue with the cabinet meeting and national security council decision," Erdogan said. "I think it would be better if they saw this."—Reuters ■

Austria checking indications nine foreigners abducted in Libya in 2015 are dead

VIENNA — Austria said on Wednesday it had some evidence that nine foreign oilfield workers abducted by Islamist militants in Libya in 2015 were killed the same year, though it was still trying to verify the information. The four Filipinos, two Bangladeshis, one Austrian, one Czech and one Ghanaian worked at the al-Ghani oilfield for equipment firm VAOS, which specialises in Libya and has offices in Austria and Malta.

An Austrian Foreign Ministry spokesman said a crisis team was trying to verify information from a militant Islamist website suggesting that all or some of the hostages may have been killed in 2015. They were seized in March of that year. "We have some evidence that the worst is to be feared. We are working on verifying the information. It is still unclear what happened exactly to whom," the spokesman said. Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz had contacted the family of the Austrian man. "Even if it turns out that the evidence is correct it will be extremely difficult to retrieve bodies from the area where fighting continues," the spokesman said. The Derna Mujahideen Shura Council, a group based in the eastern Libyan city of Derna, said this week that it had recovered the bodies of five of the workers in May 2015 during clashes with rival militants from Islamic State. It said it had handed the bodies over to Libya's Red Crescent.—Reuters ■

Kenya Supreme Court criticises election board in verdict on polls

NAIROBI — Kenya's Supreme Court on Wednesday criticised the election board for failing to verify official results of last month's presidential election before announcing them but stopped short of saying there was rigging.

The court was offering a detailed ruling as to why it annulled the 8 August election and ordered a fresh presidential vote within 60 days. The 1 September decision was the first of its kind in Africa.

Election board officials had said incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta won the contest by 1.4 million votes. Opposition leader Raila Odinga rejected that result and said he had won. He has also said the previous two elections were stolen from him.

Kenya has the region's richest economy and is a diplomatic, trade and security hub for East Africa so the court's ruling, as well as the fresh election currently scheduled for 17 October, is being closely watched.

On Monday, the French technology company supporting the election said it would be nearly impossible to be ready for that date.

The court on 1 September identified some procedural problems in a brief ruling but the key finding against the election board on Wednesday was that officials had announced results before being able to verify them.

Kenya used two parallel systems: a quick electronic tally vulnerable to typos and a slower paper system designed as a verifiable, definitive back-up. The official results were based on the electronic tally before the paper results were fully collated, the judges said.



Police seal off roads near Kenya's Supreme Court in Nairobi, Kenya on 20 September, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

The system was designed that way after a disputed 2007 presidential vote sparked violence that killed around 1,200 people and displaced around 600,000 more.

But the board overseeing the 2017 vote did not have all the tally forms when they announced official results, and some forms lacked security features like water marks, signatures or serial numbers, calling their authenticity into question, the court said.

"Not every irregularity, not every infraction of the law is enough to nullify an election. Were it so, there would not be any election in this country, or even the world, that would withstand judicial scrutiny," said Chief Justice David Maraga.

But, he said, "these discrepancies were widespread ... the election did not meet the simple test ... we are unable to validate the result." Judge Philomena Mwili said the forms should have been quickly available for

inspection, noting officials said thousands of forms from polling stations were still unavailable four days after the official results were announced.

"The (board) cannot therefore be said to have verified the results," she said. "It is an inexcusable contravention ... of the election act."

She also censured the board's refusal to comply with court orders to open its computer servers, saying it meant that opposition claims of hacking or manipulation could be true.

"Noncompliance or failure by the board to do as ordered must be held against it," she said.

But although the tallying process was questioned, voter registration, identification and voting all appeared to be "conducted in accordance with the law," she said.

Opposition claims against Kenyatta were largely dismissed. Maraga said the opposition had failed to show evidence Kenyat-

ta had campaigned using state resources or undue influence.

As judges spoke, police also used tear gas to disperse groups of rival political supporters holding demonstrations outside the Supreme Court.

The election re-run has divided Kenya, with many opposition supporters celebrating it and the president and some members of the ruling party criticising it harshly. On Tuesday evening, Deputy President William Ruto tweeted: "So has CJ taken sides? Listening to the tone, language & drift of (Chief Justice David) Maraga's lecture the only phrase missing is NASA HAO! TIBIN! & TIALALA!" — phrases that are a rallying call for the opposition coalition.

Earlier, the chief justice told a news conference that judges were getting death threats and the police were not offering adequate protection, an allegation that the chief of police denied.—Reuters ■

Desperate night search for children in Mexico school ruins after quake

MEXICO CITY — Desperate parents and rescue workers pulled through rubble in a floodlit search on Wednesday for dozens of young children feared buried under a Mexico City school destroyed by the country's most lethal earthquake in a generation.

The magnitude 7.1 shock killed at least 216 people, nearly half of them in the capital, 32 years to the day after a devastating 1985 quake and less than two weeks after a powerful tremor killed nearly 100 people in the south of the country.

Among the twisted concrete and steel ruin of the Enrique Rebsamen school, soldiers and firefighters found 22 dead children and two adults, while another 30 children and 12 adults were missing, President Enrique Peña Nieto said. There were chaotic scenes at the school as parents clung to hope their children had survived. "They keep pulling kids out, but we know nothing of my daughter," said 32-year-old Adriana D'Fargo, her eyes red after hours waiting for news of her seven-year-old. Three survivors were found at around midnight.

"Relatives of Fatima Navarro," one soldier shouted through cupped hands at the school the Coapa district in the south of the city. "Fatima is alive!" The earthquake toppled dozens of buildings, broke gas mains and sparked fires across the city and other towns in central Mexico. Falling rubble and billboards crushed cars. Parts of colonial-era churches crumbled in the state of Puebla, to the south of the capital, where the US Geological Survey (USGS) located the



Rescuers work at the site of a collapsed building after an earthquake in Mexico City, Mexico on 20 September, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

quake's epicenter. As the earth shook, Mexico's Popocatepetl volcano, visible from the capital on a clear day, had a small eruption. On its slopes, a church in Atzitzihuacan collapsed during mass, killing 15 people, Puebla Governor Jose Antonio Gali said. US President Donald Trump mentioned the earthquake in a tweet, saying: "God bless the people of Mexico City. We are with you and will be there for you."

After night fall in Mexico City, a metropolitan region of some 20 million, people prepared to sleep in the streets while authorities and volunteers set up tented collection centers to distribute food and water. Volunteers, soldiers and firefighters formed human chains and dug with hammers and picks to find dust-covered survivors and dead bodies in the remains of apartment buildings, schools and a factory.

With power out in much of the city, the work was carried out in the dark or with flashlights and generators. Rescue workers requested silence as they listened for signs of life. Emergency personnel and equipment were being deployed across affected areas so that "throughout the night we can continue aiding the population and eventually find people beneath the rubble," Peña Nieto said in a video posted on Facebook earlier on Tuesday evening.

In Obrera, central Mexico City, people applauded when rescuers managed to retrieve four people alive, with cheers of "si se puede" — "yes we can" — ringing out. Volunteers continued arriving throughout the night, following calls from the civil protection agency, the Red Cross and firefighters.

The quake had killed 86 people in the capital by early

Wednesday morning, according to Civil Protection chief Luis Felipe Puente — fewer than he had previously estimated. In Morelos State, just to the south, 71 people were killed, with 43 in Puebla.

Another 16 people were reported killed in the states of Mexico, Guerrero and Oaxaca.

As many as 4.6 million homes, businesses and other facilities had lost electricity, according to national power company Comisión Federal de Electricidad, including 40 percent of homes in Mexico City.

Moises Amador Mejia, a 44-year-old employee of the civil protection agency, was working late into the night to rescue people trapped in a collapsed building in Mexico City's bohemian Condesa neighborhood.

"The idea is to stay here until we find who is inside. Day and night." —Reuters ■

New diesel cars no better for environment than petrol cars — report

BERLIN — New diesel cars do not produce less of the environmentally damaging carbon dioxide than petrol cars, a group of newspapers cited the German Transport Ministry as saying on Wednesday, in a potential further headache for the auto sector. The car industry is Germany's biggest exporter and employs more than 800,000 people. It was plunged into crisis two years ago when Volkswagen admitted to cheating US diesel emissions tests. The Funke group of newspapers cited an answer from the Transport Ministry to an enquiry from the opposition Greens as saying diesel cars registered in 2016 emitted 128 grams of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per kilometre on average compared with 129 grams from new petrol cars. The emissions difference has been similar for ten years but the amount of CO₂ has fallen, it said, adding that one reason the carbon dioxide values were almost identical was because diesel cars were heavier and had higher power.

The Transport Ministry did not immediately respond when contacted by Reuters.

"It's a myth that diesel helps protect the climate," Stephan Kuehn, transport expert for the Greens in Germany's lower house of parliament, told the Funke newspapers.

"Diesel motors squander the theoretical advantages they could bring for the environment by often being built into heavy, high-powered cars," he added. —Reuters ■

London's Parliament Square to get its first statue of a woman

LONDON — A century after she successfully campaigned to win women the right to vote, British suffragette Millicent Fawcett will become to first women honoured with a statue in London's Parliament Square.

Plans to erect the bronze monument next to those of Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela and nine other historic male figures received the final go ahead on Tuesday, London City Hall said. Authorities hoped to unveil the "long overdue" statue in time for the centenary of the

1918 Representation of the People Act, which gave some women the right to vote for the first time, said London's mayor, Sadiq Khan.

"We want this statue to depict the strength and determination of the women who dedicated their lives to the fight for women's suffrage and to inspire many generations to come," Khan said in a statement. Fawcett, who formed the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in 1897, spent decades advocating for equal rights for women, including voting rights and access to higher

education. The idea for the statue gained momentum following an online petition which garnered more than 80,000 signatures and was backed by Harry Potter author JK Rowling and actress Emma Watson. The contemporary monument will depict Fawcett at the age of 50 holding a placard reading "courage calls to courage everywhere" — a quote from a speech she gave following the death of fellow suffragette, Emily Davison, who died after running out in front of the king's horse at the 1913 Epsom Derby.

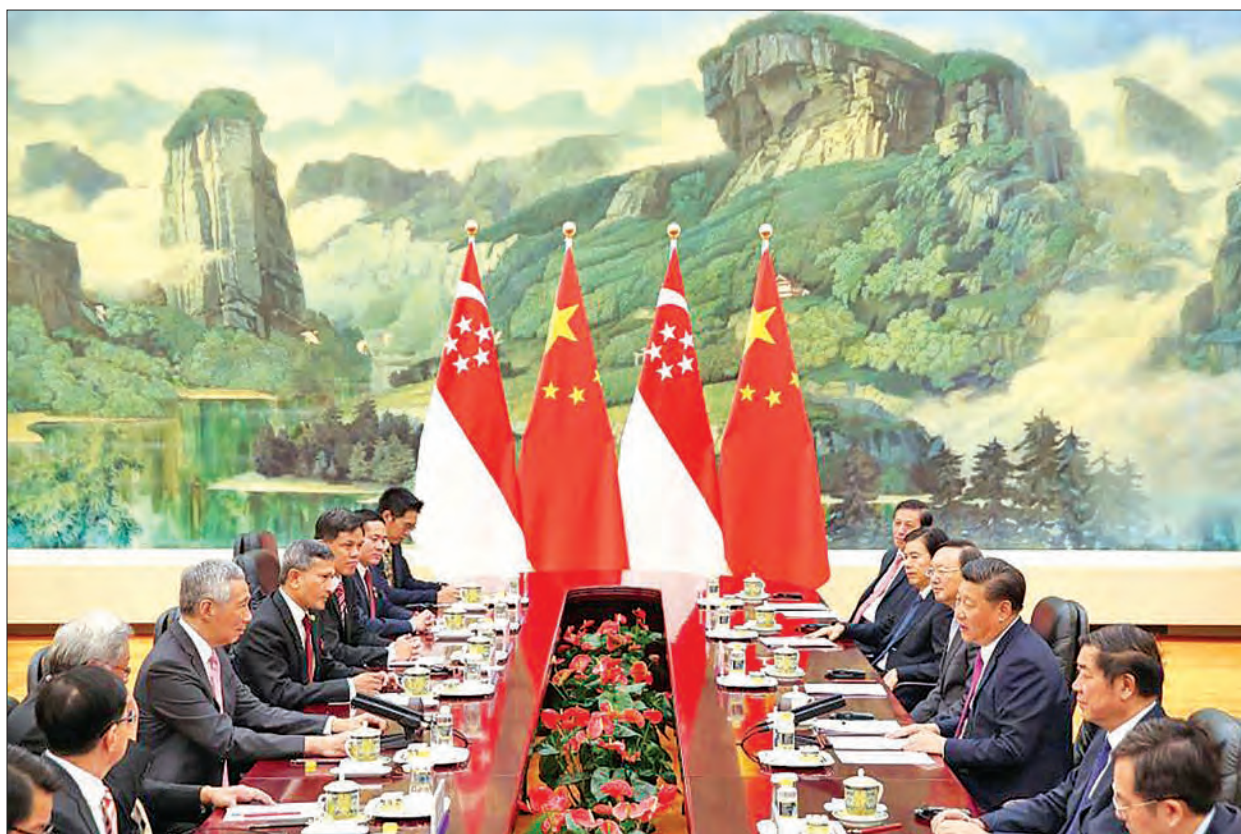
Designed by Turner Prize-winning artist Gillian Wearing it will be the first created by a woman to adorn the iconic square in front of Britain's houses of parliament. "I am really delighted that planning has been granted, now Millicent Fawcett's statue can stand as an equal amongst male statues in Parliament Square," said Wearing.

Fawcett led a peaceful campaign for equal rights including petitions, lobbying members of parliament and non-violent protests. The movement gave rise

to the more radical suffragettes, whose tactics included hunger strikes, arson and bomb attacks.

"We need statues of women in all our town squares and major cities. Who we commemorate and celebrate says a great deal about who and what we value," said Sam Smethers, chief executive of the Fawcett Society which campaigns for women's rights.

Britain granted some women the right to vote in 1918, but it wasn't until 1928 that all women had the same voting rights as men. —Reuters ■



Singapore Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong attends a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at The Great Hall Of The People in Beijing, China on 20 September, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

China, Singapore look to put difficulties behind them

BELJING— China and Singapore on Tuesday sought to put recent difficulties in their relationship over Taiwan and the disputed South China Sea behind them as Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong began a trip to Beijing.

Singapore is not a claimant to any disputed part of the South China Sea but is home to the biggest port in Southeast Asia, and has made clear its open economy depends on continued free navigation in the area.

China is also suspicious of Singapore's good military relations with the United States and self-ruled Taiwan.

Meeting in the Great Hall of the People, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang told Lee that China and Singapore had maintained mu-

tual respect.

Singapore, Li said, is an important member of the Association of South-east Asian Nations, and next year will be rotating chair of ASEAN.

"I trust this will inject new energy into not just China-Singapore relations but also China-ASEAN relations," he said.

China is worried it could face fresh criticism over its actions in the South China Sea when Singapore becomes ASEAN's chair, and is putting pressure on the city-state to make sure that doesn't happen, people familiar with the situation have told Reuters.

Lee said he was grateful for the attention to the bilateral relationship but also for the "opportunity to discuss how to work together in the regional

context and with ASEAN."

Singapore hopes it will be able to bring China and ASEAN closer together, Lee added.

The visit of Lee so close to the opening of next month's Communist Party Congress demonstrates the maintenance of high level visits between the two countries, said Bai Tian, the vice director of the Asian department at the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

"This is an important political signal," Bai said.

Overall development of bilateral ties was fairing well, and both leaders agreed to "strengthen co-ordination and cooperation on international and regional matters", according to a readout of the meeting provided by the Chinese foreign ministry.

The United States and

Singapore announced an enhanced defence relationship in late 2015, which included deployments of long range P-8 surveillance planes out of Singapore - aircraft which frequently track Chinese submarines.

Singapore also has close though unofficial ties with self-ruled Taiwan, which Beijing regards as a Chinese province.

Tensions between the two countries burst into the open last November when Hong Kong port authorities impounded nine Singaporean armoured military vehicles being shipped home from training grounds in Taiwan. Hong Kong released the vehicles earlier this year amid rare open debates in both Singapore and China about a deteriorating relationship. —Reuters ■

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CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV OCEAN HERO VOY. NO (25)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV OCEAN HERO VOY. NO (25) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.9.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S TOKO KAIUN KAISHA LTD.**

Phone No: 2301191, 2301178

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV ANAN BHUM VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ANAN BHUM VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.9.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP 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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Blast inside fireworks godown kills 4 in northern India

NEW DELHI — At least four people were killed and five others injured after a blast went off inside a fireworks godown in northern Indian state of Punjab, police said on Wednesday.

The blast took place at Sular Gharat in Sangrur district, about 137 km southwest of Chandigarh, the capital city of Punjab.

"Four people were killed and five others injured after a blast triggered inside fireworks godown," a police official said.

"The blast took place at around 9:30 pm (local time) yesterday."

The blast triggered fire inside the godown. Authorities rushed fire

tenders and rescue teams to the spot, following the blast.

Officials said several laborers were present inside the godown at the time of blast.

Some houses in the vicinity were also damaged in the incident, reports said.

Accidental explosions

are common at Indian fireworks factories and shops.

Chances of fire in Indian factories and buildings are often high as owners usually ignore safety standards vis-a-vis fire.

Firecrackers are set off during festivals, weddings and other merry-making ceremonies in India.—Xinhua ■

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Singer Avril Lavigne. PHOTO: REUTERS

Avril Lavigne, Bruno Mars named 'most dangerous' in online searches

LOS ANGELES — Pop singers Avril Lavigne and Bruno Mars topped a list of celebrities on Tuesday ranked the most dangerous to search for online because of results that could expose

fans to malicious websites.

Cyber security company McAfee said singers Carly Rae Jepsen, Zayn Malik and Celine Dion were also in the top five of their annual list because searches for their names can lead fans to click on suspicious links that expose them to malware.

It said that searching for "Avril Lavigne free mp3" results in a 22 per cent chance of landing on a malicious website.

Lavigne, 32, who found

fame in 2002 with the hit single "Complicated," has been off the celebrity scene for a number of years because of Lyme disease which she has said left her bed-ridden.

However, she said in 2016 that she is planning to release a new album in 2017 — her first in four years — apparently leading to increased searches for news about her music.

The 2017 McAfee study was dominated by musicians but ac-

tors who made the top 25 list included "Pitch Perfect" star Anna Kendrick, Jennifer Lopez and rising star Hailee Steinfeld.

"In today's digital world, we want the latest hit albums, videos, movies and more immediately available on our devices," Gary Davis, McAfee's vice president of global consumer marketing, said in a statement.

He said consumers should slow down and consider the risks. —Reuters ■

Tommy Hilfiger closes out London Fashion Week with 'rock circus' show

LONDON — US designer Tommy Hilfiger closed out London Fashion Week with a rock-themed show held at a venue famous for classic rock concerts, featuring model and social media star Gigi Hadid as the centerpiece of the event.

The show — dubbed "TommyNow" — represented Hilfiger's third collaboration with Hadid, with whom he designed the "TommyxGigi" collection that was on display at Tuesday's event, in addition to the Hilfiger label's spring/summer 2018 styles.

The collection was a rock and grunge-infused take on the traditional "preppy" styles — clothing associated with upmarket US schools and universities — that have come to be associated with Hilfiger.

These included cheerleader skirts and letterman jackets, offset with studded leather shoes and thigh-high socks, as well as T-shirts and woolly hats reminiscent of 1980s rock band tour merchandise.

"TommyNow continues to put the consumer at the heart of the event, fusing fashion, pop culture and entertainment, and connecting with our global fans in an authentic way," Hilfiger told Vogue magazine before the show.

Hadid, who has over 35 million Instagram followers, was one of the highest-profile models to grace the London Fashion Week catwalks this season.

She was joined by her sister Bella and brother Anwar, in a show that saw models walk through the audience as well as on the runway which ran through the center of the venue's 'in the round' stage.

Hilfiger's show was a "see

now, buy now" event - a recent trend in the fashion industry that sees labels make outfits displayed in catwalk shows available to consumers to purchase immediately.

Viewers watching the event live online were able to click on any outfit they chose and purchase the items right away.

Held in London's Roundhouse concert venue, which over the years has played host to the likes of Jimi Hendrix, The Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd, the show was the latest incarnation of the pop-up carnivals Hilfiger has staged during the last two seasons.

Hilfiger's autumn 2016 "Tommy Pier" show in New York featured a Ferris wheel and a range of fun-park amusements, while "TommyLand," the spring show held in Los Angeles this year featured roller skaters, skate boarders, acoustic mu-

sicians and fire-breathing performers.

Hilfiger is one of the best-known names in the U.S. apparel business, with over 1,600 retail outlets in the Americas, Europe and Asia. The company, which is now owned by clothing giant PVH, reported global retail sales of \$6.6 billion in 2016.

Hilfiger, along with Italian label Emporio Armani, were the most prominent international brands that chose to forego showing collections at other fashion weeks — New York and Milan respectively — to participate in the London event this season.

Their participation gave the event a boost, as Britain's fashion industry — which experts say contributes £28 billion (\$37 billion) to the country's economy — faces uncertainty as the UK negotiates its exit from the European Union. —Reuters ■



Tommy Hilfiger and model Gigi Hadid thank guests at the end of the Tommy Hilfiger Spring/Summer 2018 show at London Fashion Week, in London, Britain on 19 September, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS



Singer Taylor Swift. PHOTO: REUTERS

Taylor Swift shakes off copyright lawsuit as 'ridiculous'

LOS ANGELES — Representatives for Taylor Swift on Tuesday rejected a copyright infringement lawsuit filed on Monday by two songwriters over Swift's hit song "Shake It Off" as a "ridiculous claim."

Songwriters Sean Hall and Nathan Butler said in a lawsuit filed in US federal court in Los Angeles that Swift's song used the phrase "players, they gonna play, and haters, they gonna hate," that they had coined for a 2001 song "Playas Gon' Play" by R&B girl group 3LW.

Swift's lyric from her 2014 hit "Shake It Off" is: "the players gonna play, play, play, play, play, and the haters gonna hate, hate, hate, hate, hate."

"This is a ridiculous claim and nothing more than a money grab," Swift's representatives said in a statement. "The law is simple and clear. They do not have a case."

Hall and Butler are seeking unspecified damages and a jury trial. Hall, a songwriter and producer for artists such as Justin

Bieber and Maroon 5, and Butler, who has worked with artists such as Backstreet Boys and Luther Vandross, claimed that the combination of playas or players with hatas or haters was unique to its use in 3LW's "Playas Gon' Play."

"In 2001 it was completely original and unique. Indeed, the combination had not been used in popular culture prior," the lawsuit said.

Hall and Butler said the phrase accounts for about 20 percent of the lyrics of "Shake It Off." They claimed that Swift and her team "undoubtedly had access to 'Playas Gon' Play'" before writing and releasing her song.

"Defendant Swift has admitted that she watched MTV's TRL which promoted 'Playas Gon' Play,'" the lawsuit said.

It said "Playas Gon' Play" debuted at No 7 on MTV's Total Request Live in March 2001 and that 3LW's debut album sold more than 1 million copies. —Reuters ■

Final Anyeint contest of Myanmar Democracy Festival held in National Theater

Zaw Gyi (Panita)

The first day of final Anyeint contest of Myanmar Democracy Festival sponsored by Ministry of Information was held yesterday 6pm at National Theater, Dagon Township in Yangon.

The final Anyeint contest of Myanmar Democracy Festival is entertained on 20 and 21 September at National Theater (Yangon). Phoo Thit Kyal Sin (Aung Thu Hein Myanmar musical troupe), Shwe Nyar Myay Yae Kyal Pwint Myar (Gita Weitzar Aung One Two Myanmar musical troupe), Model Har (Thar Gyi Tin Aung Win Myanmar musical troupe) and Khit Thit Kyae Hmone (Yangon Duwun Mingalar Myanmar musical troupe) have entertained yesterday.

"I extremely like the competition as total 34 troupes competed at the first stage. Senior performers are also included, however, they couldn't advance to the final competition. Of eight troupes in final stage, seven are new generation troupes and their Anyeint songs are also very good. This contest is a biggest Anyeint contest in Myanmar. Therefore, public are invited to enjoy. I want to invite the public to come not only to entertain themselves but also to convey the norms of democracy in the audiences' hearts" said U Thura (U Zakana) an organizer of the contest.

"The democracy songs and the jokes reflected the current



The final Anyeint contest of Myanmar Democracy Festival is performed at National Theater in Yangon on 20 and 21 September. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI (PANITA)**

situations are also very well. Voting cards are arranged to vote the troupe that we like. The ferries arranged are very suitable for the visitors. We came on our own arrangement, but, we will return by the ferries to the nearest place" said Daw Thidar Win an audience of Anyeint competition from Hlainethaya Township.

Saga Wah Myay (Shwe Nyi Ko Aung Zaw Bo Myanmar musical troupe), Mann Star (Paing

Aung Myanmar musical troupe), Zwe (Myanmar Pyithar Lay-Bo Bo Sint Myanmar musical troupe) and Youth Star (U Aung One Two Myanmar musical troupe) compete today. After the competition tonight, first prize, second prize, third prize and special troupe prize, the best comedian troupe prize, the best Myanmar orchestra prize, the best actress prize, the best new generation prize, the best

song prize and the best troupe prize chosen by audiences will be awarded.

Judges for the competition are professional in Myanmar Orchestra Mon State U Ko Ko Naing, song composer U Nyunt Hlaing Hlaing, Literacy expert U Nyein Min, Comedian U Paw Sein (Mandalay), U Moe Dee, Dancer Daw Ohnn Yee and Daw Nan Khin Mwe.

The first stage of the compe-

tition was held at the last week of August. Of 21 troupes competed in Yangon, five troupes were selected and of 13 troupes competed in Mandalay, three troupes were selected to advance to the final competition.

Anyeint contest is shown to public free of charge and Yangon Region Cabinet has made arrangement for audience providing free ferry service to Anyeint free of charge. ■



Troupes are competing with their Anyeint songs at the final Anyeint contest of Myanmar Democracy Festival at National Theater in Yangon. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI (PANITA)**

Myanmar, Thailand friendly to be played in Mandalay

Kyaw Zin Lin

IN preparation for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup qualifications, the Myanmar national football team will play a friendly match against Thailand at the Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay at 6:30 pm on 5 October, according to the Myanmar Football Federation web site.

Previously, officials had

scheduled to hold this friendly match in Yangon, but the match was rescheduled to play in Mandalay, giving fans in upper Myanmar the chance to enjoy an international friendly football match.

As Thailand is one of the best football teams in Southeast Asia, there will be anticipation for an entertaining game in Mandalay, said a Myanmar football fan.

Myanmar will also play against Kyrgyzstan as one of the qualifying matches of the 2019 AFC Asian Cup in Yangon on 10 October. The friendly with Thailand will give needed experience for Myanmar in both game tactics and stamina. Myanmar has collected three points with one win and one loss in the 2019 AFC Asian Cup qualifiers. ■

Township Football Federations to be established soon

Kyaw Zin Lin

TOWNSHIP Football Federations across Myanmar will be established within a few months, according to the Myanmar Football Federation. The plan has already been agreed upon by all the officials of the Myanmar Football Federation at the meeting of executive committee members held on Sunday.

“Because of some weaknesses seen in our football at the previous championships and at international matches,

we shall promote young new players from almost each and every township along with maintaining the sustainable development of our football”, said an MFF official.

Special training and internships for local football coaches will also be needed in Myanmar, he added. If the township federations will come out, the physical and intellectual manners of Myanmar youth will be developed, and Myanmar football quality will likely be changed to international standards. ■

Russia's Sorokin elected to FIFA Council

GENEVA — Russia, host of the 2018 World Cup, regained its place on the FIFA Council when Alexei Sorokin was elected as one of the decision-making panel's European members on Wednesday.

Sorokin, the chief executive of the organising committee for next year's tournament, was elected by acclamation at an extraordinary UEFA Congress on Wednesday. He was the only candidate.

Russia had been without a representative on the global governing body's FIFA Council since May when Deputy Prime Minister Vitaly Mutko was barred from standing for re-election.—Retuers ■

West Brom have nothing to lose against City, says Pulis

LONDON — West Bromwich Albion will still be facing a formidable Manchester City line-up even if the Premier League pace setters rest some of their key players for Wednesday's League Cup clash at The Hawthorns, manager Tony Pulis has said.

“I don't think we've got anything to lose. City are on fire at the moment and everybody will expect them to be close to winning the Premier League title,” Pulis told British media.

City skipper Vincent Kompany, who returned to training last week from a calf injury, could make his return to the line-up and Pulis had no doubts about the depth of Pep Guardiola's squad.

“They are an exceptionally strong club in respect of depth so it's going to be a tough game, but an enjoyable one,” he said.

“They have players who can play at the top level – from 1-24 they are really top-class players. If he makes a few changes, the players coming in will still be exceptional players, so we'll have to be right on it,” he added.

The manager said he would field a strong team in the hope of pulling off an upset.

“It will be a tough game but we'll put out a strong team and going to have a go at it and give it the best we've got.”—Reuters ■

Messi leaves everybody but Valverde stunned in Eibar rout

MADRID — Lionel Messi's four-goal masterclass in the 6-1 demolition of Eibar on Tuesday was warmly welcomed by Ernesto Valverde but held little surprise for the Barcelona coach.

The clinical Argentine Messi now has 11 goals in his last five games in all competitions and with record signing Ousmane Dembele injured and Luis Suarez rested, he put on a sensational show at Camp Nou to extend Barcelona's La Liga lead.

“From a move where it looks like nothing is going to happen, he can create something good for us and bad for the opposition,” Valverde told reporters.

“Him scoring four goals isn't news anymore. He's done this time and time again, on many nights and in many games. He repeats it, he repeats it and he repeats it.”

Having coached Athletic Bilbao before joining Barcelona, Valverde has faced Messi multiple times, but for summer signing Nelson Semedo, experiencing the Argentine's magic live is a relatively new sensation.

“Game by game he surprises us, there are no words for him,” said the Portuguese right back, who won the penalty which Messi converted for his first goal of the night in the 21st minute.



Barcelona's Lionel Messi scores their fifth goal to complete his hat-trick at Camp Nou in Barcelona, Spain on 19 September, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Messi's second was a remarkably accurate finish inside Marko Dmitrovic's far post just before the hour mark, while Paulinho played him in to stab home his hat-trick just three minutes later.

Barcelona's rout was completed when Messi played a one-two with Aleix Vidal and tucked home in the 87th minute past the despairing Dmitrovic.

“He's one of the most intelligent players I've seen on a football pitch. He's extraordinary,”

Valverde added on Movistar.

Denis Suarez, who scored and set up Paulinho with a corner for Barcelona's second of the night, said: “Messi makes everything easy, he's the best in the world, nobody has any doubt of that. I hope we can have him for a lot of time.”

Despite losing Neymar in the summer to Paris St Germain, suffering frustration in the transfer market and seeing president Josep Maria Bartomeu's reign questioned, Mes-

si's virtuoso displays have kept Barcelona top of the table with a 100 per cent record. Cristiano Ronaldo is set to return for Real Madrid on Wednesday against Real Betis after his five-match domestic suspension, but Messi already heads the Pichichi chart of La Liga's top scorers with nine goals.

Like Real Madrid, who are seven points behind the Catalans having played one less game, Ronaldo has to follow the trail Messi is blazing.—Reuters ■