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Eight Hindu women arrive back Myanmar together with their children. **PHOTO: MNA**

## ‘This area is our territory’: ARSA extremist terrorists

Hindu women return from Bangladesh, recall horrific massacre

EIGHT Hindu women and eight children who were abducted by ARSA extremist terrorists to an IDP camp in Bangladesh were brought back to Myanmar yesterday and gave their accounts of a bloody massacre by Muslim terrorists that killed at least 45 Hindu men who ended up in mass graves, according to local

authorities.

The eight Hindu women who witnessed the killings of Hindu villagers from Yebawkya Village by extremist terrorists on 25<sup>th</sup> August were returned to Myanmar with a police escort following the government's demand to bring back them through diplomatic channels

during the visit to Bangladesh on 2 and 3 October of a delegation led by the Union Minister for the State Counsellor's Office.

The eight women – Rica, 25, Onnica, 20, Fawmila, 18, Gaungga 20, Gura Puni, also known as Rushila, 19, Bina Falar, 22, Puja alias Rabia, 18 and Raj Kumari, 15, recounted their experiences

on 25<sup>th</sup> August. A group of about 500 Muslims terrorists led by a foreigner in black clothing and Noru Lauk from Khamaungseik Village entered their homes in Yebawkya village at about 8 am on 25<sup>th</sup> August and attacked. They took away their belongings, jewellery and mobile phones.

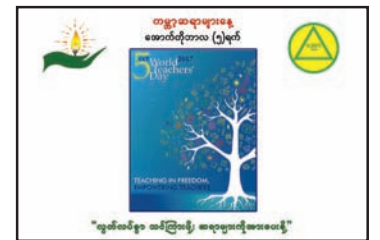
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## BEST BANK IN MYANMAR

Awarded by EUROMONEY 2017



## Rice, cash reach IDPs in northern Rakhine

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung delivered aid and cash assistance to villagers who fled their homes in northern Rakhine after the 25 August attacks by terrorists.

The delegation led by U Aye Tha Aung have been touring conflict areas since 30 September, providing bags of rice and cash to villagers at the IDP camps of Sittway, Punnagyun and Kyauktaw townships and at the villages in the conflict areas in Buthidaung and Maungtaung townships.

From 30<sup>th</sup> September to 4<sup>th</sup> October, more than 3,000 bags of rice and more than Ks7.5 million have been delivered to the IDPs so far, according to local authorities. The Tatmadaw and the Myanmar Police Force have

also provided Ks 2.5 million to the local ethnic villages during this visit.

Yesterday, the Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, donors and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement gave words of encouragement and provided 20 sacks of rice to 43 families in IDP camp of Lawka Manzain Pagoda (Ordination hall) in Punnagyun Township.

The delegation continued on to the IDP of Maha Kan Gyi Shin Pagoda in Kyauktaw Township. Fifty-one IDPs families were given words of encouragements and provided with 21 sacks of rice. The party praised the Maha Muni pagoda in Kyauktaw Township, for which cash was donated.



Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, centre, in white shirt, delivers cash assistance and rice to villagers yesterday after the 25 August attacks by terrorists in northern Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement also provided Ks23.05 million for 2,305 families who

remained in their villages, even though they were attacked by Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) extremist ter-

rorists. The respective administrators received the provided cash on behalf of the villagers. — Win Min Soe (IPRD) ■

## 14 Myanmar migrant workers alleging rights abuses indicted in Thailand

Mark Angeles

FOURTEEN Myanmar migrant workers were indicted and arrested on criminal defamation and false information charges brought by the owners of a poultry farm in Don Muang Magistrate's Court in Bangkok yesterday, less than three weeks after Thailand's Supreme Court dismissed the final appeal of the poultry farm that forced them to pay 1.7 million Thai baht (US\$52,000) in past wages to the same 14 workers who alleged brutal and abusive work conditions.

The workers, who pleaded not guilty yesterday, have been embroiled in a landmark case in which the workers alleged forced labour and other rights violations at Thammakaset 2 poultry farm in Central Thailand.

Thammakaset Company Ltd. filed criminal prosecutions against the 14 workers in October 2016, alleging offences of criminal defamation and also giving false information to public officials in relation to the worker's complaint in July 2016 to the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT). This complaint concerned alleged abuse at the farm and the worker's failure to receive adequate remedy. If found guilty of these two offenses, the workers could be imprisoned for up to one-and-a-half years and/or fined up to 21,000 Thai

Baht (US\$628).

In accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP on BHR), two Nordic poultry importers and a Thai poultry exporter will cover bail costs for the 14 workers up to €15,000 (588,000 Thai Baht). Following the arrest, indictment and pleas of not guilty at yesterday's court hearing, this contribution should ensure the workers are immediately released temporarily from detention on bail pending a full criminal trial, with potential additional conditions on freedom of movement overseas imposed by the Court. The full trial of the workers is expected to commence next month, according to Andy Hall, a migrant worker rights specialist.

On 14<sup>th</sup> September, Thailand's Supreme Court dismissed Thammakaset's second and final appeal requesting overturning of a 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016 compensation order by Lopburi Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW) requiring 1.7 million Thai baht (US\$52,000) in past wages be paid by the farm to the 14 workers concerning their alleged abuse. The workers will receive this compensation in the coming days.

The worker's own litigation filed in September 2016, claiming 44 million baht (US\$1.25m) in damages and compensation

for abuses suffered, remains pending a final ruling of the Supreme Court, expected later this year. Thammakaset 2 farm was previously contracted to supply poultry for export by Betagro

The workers have been embroiled in a landmark case in which they alleged forced labour and other rights violations.

Group, a major food processing company, and for this reason the worker's compensation claim was filed against both Thammakaset Farm, Betagro as well as Lopburi DLPW officials.

The 14 workers contend the 2016 DLPW order doesn't award them adequate compensation for up to 5 years of abusive work conditions at Thammakaset.

The workers alleged working days up to 20 hours and forced overtime including sleeping in

chicken rearing areas overnight. Further, the workers alleged unlawful deduction of salaries, threats of further deductions, unlawful confiscation of identity documents and limited freedom of movement.

Two of the workers were charged with multiple counts of theft from an employer, carrying up to seven years imprisonment if found guilty, following a police complaint filed by Thammakaset in June 2016. The complaint alleged time cards were removed from the employer's possession and given to DLPW officials as evidence of rights violations and long working hours. The case was recommended for prosecution by Lopburi Province police but was dropped following an order not to prosecute by the province's Public Prosecutor's Office. Thammakaset however recently revived the case by filing new private theft prosecutions against the two workers at Lopburi Court, thereby sidestepping public prosecution officials, Mr. Hall said. In November 2016, Thammakaset filed criminal defamation and computer crimes litigation against Mr. Hall, the former Migrant Worker Rights Network international affairs advisor, at Bangkok South Criminal Court concerning his social media campaigning on the case. Hall left Thailand days after the prosecution, citing inability to

work amidst increasing judicial harassment.

"The imminent arrest of the 14 workers in this case has attracted considerable international concern including a statement by the United Nations (UN) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and a joint open letter to the Thai Prime Minister by 87 businesses, civil society organisations, trade unions and members of the European Parliament," said Andy Hall.

On two separate occasions, five UN Special Rapporteurs on Human Rights and the UN Working Group on Human Rights and Transnational Corporations have officially sent letters of allegation to the Thai Government given the human rights implications of the case", Mr. Hall said yesterday.

The Thammakaset case continues at a time when Thailand's migrant worker management and protection policies as well as human trafficking record are under increased global scrutiny. Thailand is the world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest poultry exporter supplying chicken, often for use in processed or ready-made meals, mostly to European Union and Japanese markets. Thailand's poultry export industry has come under increasing scrutiny for its poor labour conditions since 2015 research reports published by watchdog groups Finnwatch and Swedwatch. ■



## Agro techniques, machinery and pedigree seeds for Maungtaw



Farmers planting seeds on the farming land in Maungtaw, Rakhine State.  
**PHOTO: A ONE SOE**

IN an effort to improve, modernise and increase the agricultural presence in the Rakhine State, State and Union governments will provide training, techniques, machinery and high-quality seeds, it was announced yesterday.

“Concerning the agricultural sector in all of Rakhine State, there are a total of 1.2 million acres of farming land. Now that the harvest season for monsoon paddy is coming soon, arrangements are being made for farmers in Maungtaw to acquire their needs — agro-techniques, pedigree seeds and machines for harvesting and winnowing,” said U Kyaw Lwin, the minister for agriculture, livestock, forestry and mining for Rakhine State.

“In the Maungtaw region,

there are over 72,000 acres of paddy plantation. So as to reap these, harvesting and winnowing machines had been carried from Yangon to Maungtaw. In reaping them, farmers will reap and winnow manually, with the government to provide farmers with machinery, seeds and techniques as much as they can.

For regional development, peace and stability is urgently needed. The Union Government, Tatmadaw, Hluttaw and State Cabinet are implementing national tranquility as the first priority, in combination with authorities concerned from management sectors. With the development of peace and stability, rule of law and creation of job opportunities will be brought about. Then, many people will come here to settle

down. And the fertile land will result in many benefits.” It has been learnt that the State Cabinet is making arrangements to provide local people in the Maungtaw with agricultural needs and for breeding freshwater and saltwater fish and prawns.

To operate the Maungtaw border trade zone, a budget allotment amounting to Ks1.5 billion has been passed. Use of the budget allotment was under suspension due to the terrorist attacks. This year, at the time when up-grading of the border trade zone was arranged, the events of the terrorist attacks took place. As soon as regional tranquility can be established, the suspended implementation scheme will be resumed. —Naing Lin Kyi ■

## Myanmar media meets to discuss northern Rakhine fake news

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint held talks with local journalists and foreign correspondents in Yangon yesterday over the issue of fake news disseminated in international communities on the issues in northern Rakhine State.

The Union minister called the Rakhine situation a “side issue” which emerged while the country was heading positively toward a federal democratic nation.

“When the conflicts occurred in Rakhine State, Muslims emigrated into Bangladesh and they returned when the situation returned to normalcy, and as a result, the population of ethnic Rakhine people has decreased and the population of Muslims has increased there”, he said.

By highlighting displaced people at IDP camps in Rakhine, international communities are putting pressure on Myanmar and accusing the country of oppressing minorities, he added.

With the 9 October attacks by terrorists on police outposts in 2016, the previous conflicts between the two communities in Rakhine State has turned

into terrorist attacks, which are meant to attract the world to see their movement, said Dr Pe Myint.

“The Rakhine issue can be considered an issue made with political aim by a group of people who want to occupy the area in northern Rakhine,” he said, highlighting the role of the media, which is being used by organisations as a weapon in the communication age.

“Some think that this is a media war, but I don’t think so. This is a political war in which international organisations and communities are intentionally involved with aims and objectives,” said Dr Pe Myint. “Their influence also reaches an international organisation like the United Nations putting pressure on Myanmar,” he added, “Because they who self-identified themselves as Rohingyas have conducted movements for decades in the international arena with the assistance of some organisations with their same faith.”

One year after the attacks of 9 October, 2016, the latest coordinated attacks on more than 30 police outposts by terrorists



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint discusses with local journalists and foreign correspondents in Yangon. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

happened with a huge intention. The latest attacks were not done to demand grievances, but to declaring themselves as terrorists, he said. “When the government did respond to the issue, the attack of the extremist terrorists on 30 police outposts was fading out while the cries of “genocide” and “ethnic cleansing” went up loudly in the world,” said Dr Pe Myint. “According to the previous situation and the latest situation in northern Rakhine, a group of people are attempting to occupy the area”, he said.

“They got involved in the aid provision programmes of international societies whose race and religion are the same with them. While working together with

them, they organised them and disclosed their affairs to them. In such a way, many people from the outside world accepted their account as true.” “They managed to spread their accounts across the world beforehand. As known by all, they managed to arouse furore among the public by inventing fabricated news whenever an affair happened. But powerful international leaders also applied the news knowing that they were false.”

“Just by seeing this, the spread of false news has great effect. But we firmly believe that people of politically influencing-show their contempt on us not due to the effect of those fake news. They know most of the

news are false, however, they themselves like things to happen in this way. That’s why they make themselves known as if they accept rampant news that are mostly false. What I mean is that we are in the midst of media world and we are attack by powerful media”.

“Their news influences a wide range. But our media can’t penetrate in the media world. From the political point of view, Rakhine ethnics are the minority in northern Rakhine State. Similarly, our country is a less strengthened nation, as known by all. Our nation is weak in every way. Likewise, we are still weak in making our affairs known to the world as well.” **SEE PAGE-7**



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# Hot air balloon competitions to be held at Taunggyi Tazaungdaing festival

THE famous hot-air balloon competitions of the Taunggyi Tazaungdaing festival will start on 26 October at the Awaiya hot-air balloon square in Taunggyi, southern Shan State, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

A total of 160 hot-air balloons will be part of the competition.

The balloons are of various shapes, designs, patterns and colours. Balloons featuring goblins are the most popular among the younger generations, organisers said.

At the Taunggyi Tazaungdaing hot-air balloon festival, the festival celebration committee does not allow the use of the pictures which can adversely affect national unity.

They also do not allow advertisements for beer other types of alcohol or cigarettes.



File photo shows a hot-air balloon lifts off in Taunggyi Tazaungdaing festival. **PHOTO: THIHA TUN**

Those who wish to participate in the hot-air balloon competition must register with the

competition convening committee not later than 13 October. The hot-air balloon competitions

attracts spectators from around the world, organisers said. – GNLM ■

## Pilot project to legalise export of cattle

A pilot project will be implemented for a period of one year to legally export cattle to China and Thailand, according to a report in the City News Daily yesterday.

The pilot project will be implemented with an aim to prevent breeders from exploitation, to ensure the export of the cattle legally under the livestock health and development law, to export the cattle legally via sea routes

and border trade camps, for the country to earn revenue from the commercial tax, and to contribute to the cattle breeding sector and to control infectious diseases of animals, officials said. The export of draft cattle via sea routes will be conducted from Thilawa Port, while the export via border trade will be conducted from Muse 105th mile trade zone and Myawady border camp during

the pilot project. To be able to continue to export when the pilot project period is over, the procedures for export of the cattle will be amended. The exporters have to buy the cattle first, then they have to undergo a health certificate issuance process. Only after obtaining health certificates from the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department can the exporters apply for an export li-

cense. Authorities will construct monitoring camps for export of the cattle. These monitoring camps will issue the certificates after they have performed all of the required examinations and verifications. As the last step, the customs department will issue an export declaration letter for the exporters to pay the tax. After this final step, exporters can export the cattle.—GNLM■

## Fall in global gold price affects local gold market

THE price of local gold decreased from over Ks 935,000 per tical to over Ks922,000 per tical on 3 October as the price on the global market fell, according to local gold market traders.

The gold price fell to US\$1,269 per ounce on 3rd October. Starting from 21 July, the price of local gold has reached up to Ks900,000 per tical. With the

increase in the global gold price, the price of local gold has also increased between August and September. On 15 September, the price of local gold reached a record-high price of Ks957,300 per tical. Although the price of gold had been stable above Ks950,000 per tical, the local gold price decreased to Ks947,900 on 19 September. On 20 September,

the price of local gold increased again to Ks951,000. However, the local gold price declined to Ks 942,500 per tical on 21 September; Ks 940,800 on 22 September; Ks 939,900 on 24 September and Ks 937,800 on 25 September. On 26 September, the price of local gold increased again to Ks947,400 per tical. Between 27 September and 2 October, the price of local gold

ranged between Ks930,000 and Ks935,000 per tical and Ks925,700 on 2 October and Ks922,100 on 3 October.

The global gold price, which began to increase in August, remains on the rise in September. The gold price fell to US\$1,290 per ounce on 21 September from US\$1356 per ounce on 8 September.—Zwe ■

## Hlawga Wildlife Park to be upgraded this year

Hlawga Wildlife Park will be upgraded this year. The natural environmental conservation education exhibition will also be renovated in co-ordination with the forestry department, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Authorities will conduct such upgrading activities as extension of DIY roads, upgrading of the concrete road, building and renovation of the new concourses, renovation of the bridges, building of the new bridges, renovation of the park

restaurants and, opening of the new coffee shops and animal feed shops.

The Hlawga Wildlife Park is a national park located in Mingaladon Township in Yangon. The 1,540-acre park includes an 818-acre wildlife

park, a 62-acre mini zoo and a 660-acre buffer zone.

First established as an environmental education centre in 1982, the national park is a popular day-trip destination for the Yangonites and eco-tourists. –GNLM■





Workers loading rice bags onto a ship at a Bothtaung jetty in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

## Rice exports in first half of this FY reached 1.7 million tons

RICE exports to foreign trade partners in the first half of this FY hit 1.7 million tons, according to Myanmar Rice Federation.

This figure is similar to that of the same period last year. Sea routes performed better than border trade in the current FY.

Myanmar expects to export 2 million tons of rice in this FY

and it is likely to reach its target.

Sixty per cent of Myanmar's rice exports goes to China. Myanmar's rice has penetrated 44 foreign markets of countries in Africa, Asia and Europe, including Spain, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore and Bangladesh.

Myanmar has already

signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Agreement with Bangladesh to export 300,000 tons of rice to Bangladesh under a government-to-government (G to G) system.

The country is currently endeavouring to export 200,000 tons to China via sea routes. — Ko Htet ■

## Stock trading on YSX still lackluster even after YSX expo

THE four companies listed on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) traded shares with an estimated value of Ks1.82 billion in September, which is about Ks462 million less than the previous month's trading value, according to data released by YSX.

Last month, stock trading value was estimated at Ks2.29 billion. With an aim at receiving publicity for merits of stock trading, the Yangon Stock Exchange Expo 2017 was held at the Park Royal Hotel in Yangon on 10 September, including panels of economic and legal experts, lucky draw events and quiz programmes.

Currently, four companies -- First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB) and First

Private Bank (FPB), are currently trading their shares on YSX. Last year, FMI traded shares worth over Ks24 billion on YSX in March and over Ks5.8 billion in April.

With MTSH entering the YSX on 20th May, stock trading values of FMI and MTSH were estimated Ks16 billion in May, over Ks6.8 billion in June and over Ks3.7 billion in July.

After MCB was listed on YSX, the monthly stock trading values of FMI, MTSH and MCB were estimated to be over Ks2.9 billion in August, over Ks 2.4 billion in September, over Ks 4 billion in October and over Ks 2.2 billion in November. The stock trading of the YSX reached a record low of only Ks1.5 billion in December.

With the debut of First Private Bank (FPB) on YSX, stock

trading of the four listed companies in January and February 2017 hit over Ks6 billion, and over Ks3.3 billion in March. April's stock trading on YSX hit an all-time low of over Ks1.2 billion. Stock trading in May increased a bit with an estimated value of Ks1.48 billion, and so did the stock trading in June with trading values of Ks1.54 billion, according to the monthly report of YSX.

Values of stock trading on Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) reached the second lowest in July since its establishment, trading more than 161,000 shares, which have estimated value of Ks1.37 billion, according to the statistics of YSX. A total of 5,340 shares were traded by four listed companies last Monday, with an estimated value of Ks35 million. — Ko Khant ■

## SME zones to be established in 12 townships of Yangon Region

SMALL and medium-sized enterprises zones will be set up in 12 townships of the Yangon Region, according to a report of City News last Tuesday.

The Yangon Region Chief Minister said at a recent regular meeting of Vice President U Myint Swe and respective businessmen from the private sector that there are also plans to expand industrial zones in 33 townships under the adminis-

tration of the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) and to set up small industrial zones in the 12 townships outside the purview of YCDC.

To implement the industrial zones, there are several obstacles and challenges such as infrastructure, squatter problems, transport and communication, power and water supply, wastewater management and trash disposal. —GNLM ■

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

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## Thailand discusses with Myanmar charitable organisations

High-ranking officials from Thailand's Department of Labour Protection and Welfare under the Ministry of Labour met with officials from the Thailand-based Myanmar migrants rights organisation Aid Alliance Committee (AAC) and another philanthropic organisation, Raks Thai, at the head office of the Ministry of Labour in Bangkok on Tuesday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to Myanmar workers' difficulties and decided to open a call centre in Thailand that would

provide assistance from charitable organisations and the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare.

At the end of the discussion, both parties agreed on an array of issues – to try and resolve disagreements between employers and workers, to implement measures ensuring against labour and human rights violations, and to carry out inspections of Thai-owned industries, according to a report on the website of the Aid Alliance Committee (AAC).—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)■



Thailand's Department of Labour Protection and Welfare officials and Myanmar philanthropic organisations hold a meeting in Bangkok, on 3 October 2017. **PHOTO: KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)**

### H.E. U Myint Swe presents Credentials to President of Mauritius

U Myint Swe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Mauritius, presented his Credentials to Her Excellency Mrs. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, G.C.S.K, C.S.K, PhD, DSc, President of the Republic of Mauritius on 28 September 2017, in Port Louis.

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

# No Education System Ever Exceeds the Quality of Teachers

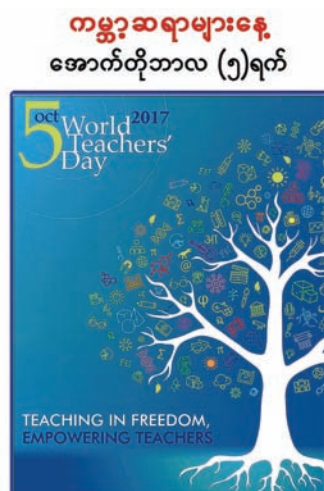
Dr Khine Mye  
(Department of Alternative Education)

It is well-accepted that quality of education vitally depends on the quality of teachers. Myanmar has around 390,000 teachers in Basic Education sector deployed at 46,500 state schools teaching to 9.2 million students.

After an intensive 2.5 year period of research and nation-wide stakeholder consultations, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) for 2016 to 2021 has been developed to prepare Myanmar teachers for high quality education. It prioritises Teacher Education as one of the strategic areas. The reforms in Teacher Education are linked to complementary and sequenced reforms in other sub-sectors, such as curriculum, classroom learning environment and student assessment.

In addition to the sound policy formulation and plans, practice in the classrooms itself is crucial as all reforms shall balance policy and practice. In Myanmar, teaching and learning processes are mainly based on rote learning and the assessment is not conducive to learning as most teachers teach to test. These lead to detrimental outcomes for both teachers' quality and learners' outcomes.

In relation to policy and practice, there was a study in Quality Basic Education Program (QBEP - 2011 to 2015) to find an evidence based remedy for



“လွတ်လပ်စွာ သင်ကြားဖို့၊ ဆရာများကိုအားပေးဖို့”



the issue. QBEP was supported by UNICEF and MDEF (Multi-Donor Education Fund) and prioritized teacher education to improve quality of teaching and raise student learning outcomes. Ministry of Education conducted a baseline evaluation using quasi-experimental design. It consisted of survey questionnaire and structured classroom observation schedule. The research work used stratified sample of 200 schools in 20 targeted townships in which 6 of the 20 townships formed a 'control group'.

The baseline findings in 2012 showed that teacher-fronted activities (e.g. closed questions, cued elicitations and use of the chalk/board) were most common teacher behaviours. More dialogic approaches (e.g. open questions, probing of pupil answers, use of paired/group work) were the least used. However, in 2014, the analysis showed an upward trend in the use of an interactive

pedagogy in intervention schools. For example in 2012 only 8% of observed teachers used an open question whereas in 2014 almost half of the teachers used them 2 or more times.

This study proves that Myanmar teachers are moving towards interactive pedagogy and need support to accelerate the process. Teachers should be enabled in the use of a variety to teaching methods to enhance their practice and students' achievements. The study advocates for interactive classrooms and the common features of Interactive Classrooms are identified as below.

- Active student participation in Learning
- Conceptual learning beyond factual learning
- A willingness by teachers to let go some of the old ideas
- An emphasis on problem-solving
- Continuous assessment

- Accountability for the results of teaching and learning
- Learning integrated across subject areas
- An emphasis on the whole learner
- Systematic use of valuable life experiences
- Sufficient curriculum time for teacher and student initiated activities
- Encouragement of creativity on the part of the learner
- Encouragement of trial and error learning
- Encouragement of choice
- Encourage of flexibility and balance- the teacher as guide or coach, not as expert
- All teachers and learners are both learners and teachers
- Peer teaching by students
- Stress on the joy of teaching and learning
- Patience on everyone's part
- Opportunity and time for small group work
- Mutual respect and cooperation of all teachers and learners

These findings were presented by Dr Khine Mye, Director General, Department of Myanmar Education Research (now Department of Alternative Education) at 13th International Conference on Education and Development Conference (UKFIET), Oxford University in September 2015. Dr Khine Mye emphasized that the competencies of teachers at all levels must be strengthened through quality pre-service, in-service and continuous profes-

sional development programmes to deliver high quality education for children with a wide range of abilities and backgrounds.

Dr Khine Mye also noted the Policy implications from this study as:

- School-based training linked to study materials, coaching, observation and feedback, helps teachers to explore their beliefs and classroom practices, enables teachers to try alternative pedagogic approaches, and is cost effective compared to college-based provision.
- Working at the school and cluster level ensures teacher education as part of a broader capacity development strategy supporting all actors in the education system, including head teachers, township officers and teacher educators.

In short, teachers whether they are from basic education or higher education need to be capable of motivating learners, facilitating learning, planning their own learning path and learners', thinking about the wider context and needs, and reflecting and evaluating to make decisions. This will definitely ensure the quality of education in Myanmar in meeting the international standards. As teachers are essential in nurturing new learning generations, I believe strongly in the concept of “No Education System Ever Exceeds the Quality of Teachers”. ■



# ‘This area is our territory’: ARSA extremist terrorists

## FROM PAGE-1

Members of the terrorist mob repeated, “This is not your village. It is our territory. We are the sole owners of this land. You all are same with the Myanmar Armed Forces and police members. We will murder Buddhists and all of you who worship the statues made of bricks and stones.

All Hindu villagers were then divided into two groups, according to gender. Their hands were tied and they were taken to Bawtala Village.

When they neared Bawtala Village, the women said they saw two pits, with a third pit being dug. The terrorists then killed all the Hindu men, slashing their throats, cutting them into pieces and throwing them into the mass graves.

The graves were discovered on 24 and 25 September after security forces received information about slaughtered Hindus who were buried in shallow graves.

The series of attacks on 25 August prompted some 30,000 Myanmar citizens in northern Rakhine to flee south to Mrauk U, Sittway, Kyauktaw, and Minbya, while hundreds of thousands of Muslims fled to Bangladesh border.

The surviving Hindu women said the lives of eight girls and women were saved because of their beauty, according to the eyewitnesses.

“Those girls are beautiful. We must force them into Islam”, Norulauk, the leader of the terrorists, allegedly said, according to the eyewitnesses. The females who were spared ranged in age from 15 to 25, the Hindu women said.

In the presence of the eight remaining Hindu girls who were spared, ARSA terrorists brutally killed the Hindu people from Yebaukkyia Village. One group was killed between 12 noon to 6 pm and buried in the pits. A second group of eight Hindu females and their children were taken to the cow ranch near Bawtalar Village and killed. A three-year-old boy named Phawlar, son of Ma Yi Kha, who was included in the group, saw his father’s throat slit with knife before he was killed.

The boy allegedly told others, “Pa Pa halar (my father was beheaded)”. Hindu girls and children were guarded by five Bengalis, while other Bengalis left to attack and torch police camps. The surviving Hindu women remembered that the remaining five Muslims were Rawphi and Phelrana from Bawtalar Village, Rulia, Mamud, Arlaung and Zubai from Yebaukkyia Village.

At about 12 pm, a number of Muslim terrorists returned and took eight Hindu women and young children to the house of Raw Phi in Bawtalar Village. Until 26 August, five people

guarded the house. Wielding their swords, the Muslim watchmen threatened them, saying: “This is our country. It is not of you ethnics. We will occupy this country.”

Even though the Hindu religion forbids them from eating meat, the Hindus were forced to eat meals of rice and beef. During their arrests, there were many Muslim Bengalis at the house and they were taught the lifestyle and behaviours of Muslim women. At

“Those girls are beautiful. We must force them into Islam”, said Norulauk, the leader of the terrorists.

about 3pm on 27 August, five watchmen led by Raw Phi took away the eight Hindu women and children. They arrived at the border fence at about 5pm and cut the barbed wire. As some Border Guard of Bangladesh (BGB) troops arrived there at that time, they went to a hill and spent the night. At about 6am on 28 August, they crossed the border into Bang-

ladesh and were taken by car to Kutuparlaung refugee camp. They reportedly arrived there at 11 am.

The Hindus were kept together with Muslims at the Kutuparlaung refugee camp and forced to wear burqas, the traditional dress of Muslim women. At about 1pm, foreign media (speaking in English) conducted interviews. The Hindus were told to tell the media that men and their families were killed by the army and ethnics. They had to flee fearing that they would be killed by the army troops. They were threatened that their children’s throats would be slashed unless they said as they were told.

The surviving women said a Hindu girl, 15-year-old Ma Raj Kumari, was being forced to marry a Muslim man, Barbu, who working at the camp. This was reported to Hindu leader Shaw Phaw Nam Shaw Mar Raw Ni living in Bangladesh, who learned that Hindus were being converted to Islam. The religious leader contacted a member of the BGB and immediately went to the camp. There, the eight Hindu women and children were found. The Muslim terrorists had fled.

The Hindu women and children were taken from Kutuparlaung Camp to a BGP Camp where they spent the night. A Hindu monk came and took them from the BGP Camp and sheltered them at his house

the following day. On 30 August, officials of the Bangladeshi government took them back to Kutuparlaung Camp, saying that they would provide relief supplies for them. The eight Hindu women and children were accommodated at a chicken farm inside the refugee camp, and a Bangladeshi Hindu man was assigned to guard them.

On 19 September, one of eight Hindu women was able to contact her brother-in-law in Maungtaw by phone and told him the location of the scene where Hindu followers, including her husband, were killed. On 26 September, she was able to contact Hindu religious leader U Ni Mal in Sittway, who suggested returning them to Myanmar with the assistance of Myanmar security forces.

The women consulted and left the camp on the pretext of visiting a Hindu religious festival. They arrived back in Myanmar safe and sound with the assistance of Myanmar security forces.

With the eight Hindu women and the children safely returned to Myanmar, authorities are providing them with necessary assistance, officials said. Because of their tragic accounts of the inhumane acts and brutal slaughtering by extremist Muslim terrorists, it is hoped that the motives and intentions of the attackers is exposed, authorities said.—GNLM ■

## Myanmar media meets to discuss northern Rakhine fake news

## FROM PAGE-3

“We have no intention of making lies with false news to the world. And, we will never encourage such a deed. But we assume that it is necessary to make true situations of the country known to international communities, being a problem that is concerned with global countries. We are making arrangements by considering ourselves so that news and information about us can spread.”

“On the other side, well-known friends from our friendly media circles gave advice to us that we should get advice and ideas from local media circles, for this is the national affairs of the country — as to what should be done and what they can give.

That is why we invite persons from the media circle to discuss the matter.”

“According to the first programme, your assumptions will be freely talked about. After that, results which will come out will be recorded after concluding exactly, it is hoped. Regarding false news, reasonable responses will be made by removing false news explaining how and why these are not true. We want to implement these. We will accept ideas and advice. It is necessary for us to make the UN, powerful countries and the ones fighting against us to ascertain the true situations of the problem.”

“On the other hand, we have countries of great power, India, China and Russia, which support and encourage us concerning

the Myanmar affairs. We need to make them trust us and our situations more than ever by informing them of our true situations. And we are required to inform true news and information to Bangladesh, our neighbour and the one which is directly related with this affair.”

“We assume that ASEAN countries need to be informed of true situations. Here, we must consider how they will be informed. The more important thing is that our citizens themselves need to be well convinced of the true situations, to know what kind of losses can affect the country, to rightly assess which are true or false, to decide wisely with broad-minded judgement and to perform the task of true facts and intellect.”

After the Union minister’s opening speech, those from news media organisations, locally-based news personnel and invited guests shared their personal views.

Present at the meeting were U Thiha Saw and U Kyaw Swa Min of Myanmar Press Council, U Ye Min Oo and Daw Ei Ei Tin of Myanmar Journalist Association, U Wunna and U Zaw Thet Htwe of Myanmar Journalists Union, U Myint Kyaw of Myanmar Journalists Network, Aupie Kyal and U Moe Htet Moe of Cartoonists Association, U Ko Ko and U Thihe Tun of Shwe Than Lwin Media Group, U Moe Kaung and U Khin Maung Htay of Forever Media Group, U Wai Phyoo of Eleven Media Group, U Zeya Thu and U Kyaw Min

Swe of the Voice Daily, U Nanda of 7 Day Media, U Sunny Swe of Frontier, U Thein Tun of Myanmar Times, U Soe Myint of Mizzima, U Toe Zaw Latt of DVB, U Kyaw Swa Moe of Irrawaddy, Scholars U Maw Lin and U Aye Maung Kyaw, U Myat Khaing of Snap Shot Journal, U Aung Soe Thu of the First Weekly, U Myo Yan Naung Thein, NLD central research bureau, U Min Ko Naing and U Mya Aye of 88 Generation Peace and Open Society, U Nay Phone Latt, Ko Wa, U Aung Myo Lwin and invited guests.

At the meeting, spreading true news and information at home and abroad and responding to false news spreading across the world were openly discussed. —Myanmar News Agency ■

# We Swear that We Always Say Truth

Khin Maung Oo

CONCERNING the issue in Rakhine State, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on Myanmar authorities to take three immediate steps. One of them is to end the security measures taken by security forces in northern Rakhine State. Here, it must be questioned as to whether UN Secretary-General Guterres will assure that further attacks of the ARSA extremist terrorists group will never take place in the region, for claiming that military operations be stopped. Evidently enough, he cannot do so. The Secretary-General Guterres is obviously behaving as if it need not be included a hint of the atrocious deeds of the ARSA extremist terrorist in his speeches. It must

be questioned to UN Secretary-General Guterres to show any kind of governments allowing terrorist attacks to its race or religion, in the world if ever. Every terrorist group always shouts aloud that they stand for their race and religion, but events happening around the world prove that they always perform for their personal benefits, on the wrong pretext of these claims.

Another urge made by Guterres is to allow unfettered access for humanitarian support. With regard to this, a question must be made to Guterres as to whether enthusiastic help of Myanmar Government is not needed for humanitarian aids to reach people really in need. And, it must also be questioned whether Guterres acknowledges that Myanmar is a sovereign state. It is only a matter of time before

they will come to be well convinced that it will be a foolish attempt to make effort to solve the problem of Rakhine State with the Myanmar Government excluded.

Thirdly, Guterres called for Myanmar authorities to ensure the safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable return of the refugees to their areas of origin. State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had definitely disclosed that refugees would be accepted after careful scrutiny in accord with the principles included in the 1993 Myanmar-Bangladesh Agreement.

Any sovereign nations do not accept any policy that anyone under the name of refugee will be accepted as citizen without any scrutiny. The statement that there was no one who illegally immigrated crossing the border line into Myanmar from Bang-

ladesh would be a nonsense in the history. Any countries and any governments will not exercise the kind of policy which will grant right of citizenship to every individual who illegally emigrates in this world. The government of the United States itself is making arrangements to expel illegal immigrants from Mexico from America. We have no alternative but to ask the global countries why they are doing opposite ways, in spite of the fact that State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is calling for all nations to co-operate with the Myanmar government.

In case someone claims that they know about Rakhine State problem more than Myanmar citizens, we will assert that the above-said person will be the one who says words of falsity shamelessly. ■

## The Significant and Noble Day of Abhidhamma (The Full Moon Day of Thadingyut, Mahapavarana Day)

Ba Sein (Religious Affairs)

THE Significant and Noble Day of Abhidhamma (the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut, Mahapavarana Day) falls on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2017.

In the fourth week, after attaining the enlightenment, the Omniscient Buddha began to contemplate and review the Dhamma (the truth). He had realized near the Bodhi tree. On His seventh Vassa (Seven Years) of enlightenment, the Omniscient Buddha, out of compassion for the Devas and Brahmas, went to the Tavatimsa Devaloka (Celestial abode) where he preached the Abhidhamma Pitaka (Basket of Ultimate things) for a full three months to His deceased mother who was reborn as Santusita Deva, and also to the other Devas and Brahmas assembled there, hoping to make them realize the four ultimate things for which a Knowledge of Abhidhamma is absolutely necessary because it deals with the highest and ultimate sense of things springing into being as facts as distinct from mere names.

After preaching Abhidhamma (Ultimate Truth) to His deceased mother, Santusita Deva and other Devas and Brahmas for a full three months, the Omniscient Buddha returned to the human abode on the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut. According to the Pali Text, three decorated stairways of silver, gold and ruby beginning from the top of the great Mount Meru to the gate of Sankassa town on earth were created as a token of paying deep homage to the Omniscient Buddha who returned to the human abode. The Omniscient Buddha took the middle stairway accompanied by Devas and Brahmas who took right stairway and left stairway. All Devas and

Brahmas from the Tavatimsa Devaloka (Celestial abode) paid deep homage to the Omniscient Buddha for a full three months from 1<sup>st</sup> Waning of Waso to Full Moon of Thadingyut. According to the Vinaya rules of the Omniscient Buddha, the period of a full three months from 1<sup>st</sup> Waning of Waso to Full Moon of Thadingyut (round about from mid-July to mid-October) is retreat-period of Buddhists. During retreat-period, all Buddhist monks must not have to go away from their residence (monasteries, temples) not more than seven days. Especially, they have to fulfill their religious duties (Ganthadhura and Vipassanadhura) during the retreat-period more than before. All Buddhist monks have followed and practiced the said Vinaya rules since over 2560 years ago.

When the Omniscient Buddha descended from Tavatimsa (Celestial abode), the Devas and Brahmas accompanied Him putting up white sacred umbrellas and fanning Him. At that time, because of unlimited miraculous powers, supernatural powers and glory of the Buddha, the whole earthlings could see the magnificent celestial abode, and also the Devas and Brahmas could see hundreds of thousands of millions of people greeting and paying deep homage to the Omniscient Buddha who descended at the gate of Sankassa Town of the human abode on the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut (Mahapavarana Day).

The Full Moon Day of Thadingyut (Mahapavarana Day) has been marked by Buddhists as the significant and noble day of Abhidhamma since then (over 2559 years ago). On the auspicious occasion of the Abhidhamma (Mahapavarana Day), in remembrance of the Omniscient Buddha, members of the Sangha recite Abhidham-

ma discourses, and multifarious Buddhist devotees offer lights, water, flowers, incense, fragrant scents, fruits and other offertories. And also, Dhamma talks about Abhidhamma (Mahapavarana) Day are held. On this noble day, most Buddhists keep nine-precepts for their meritorious deeds dedicating to the attainment of noble stage of Nibbana (supreme bliss).

The Pali term Abhidhamma is composed of Abhi which means subtle or ultimate, and Dhamma which means truth or doctrine. The Abhidhamma, therefore, means subtle or ultimate truth or doctrine. The Abhidhamma Pitaka consists of the four ultimate things, Mind (Citta), Psychicfactor (Cetasikas), Matter (Rupa) and Nibbana. It is the most important and most interesting to a deep thinker. It is subdivided into seven books.

When the Omniscient Buddha had preached Abhidhamma for a full three months to His deceased mother who was reborn as Santusita Deva and to other Devas and Brahmas at the celestial abode, He said to the king of the celestials that He would return to the human abode. Therefore, the king of the celestial created and arranged three stairways of silver, gold and ruby beginning from the top of the great Mount Meru to the gate of Sankassa Town of the human abode.

Sending forth the six coloured rays emanated from His body, the Omniscient Buddha descended by the middle stairway of ruby to the gate of Sankassa Town of the human abode (on earth). The Devas (Celestial beings) accompanied the Buddha from the right side stairway of gold playing musical instruments and fanning the Omniscient Buddha. The Brahmas (higher celestial beings) accompanied the

Omniscient Buddha from the left side stairway of silver putting up white umbrellas.

At the time, when the Omniscient Buddha returned from the celestial abode to the human abode, the highest Brahma realm, Ekamanta, the lowest Aviji (Apaya planes of miserable existences), the four cardinal points, the ten directions and thousands of worlds were clearly visible without any blockage and barrier because of unlimited miraculous powers, supernatural powers and glory of the Omniscient Buddha.

People could see the whole celestial abode, Devas and Brahmas, and all celestial beings in turn viewed more than hundreds of thousands of millions of people who were welcoming and paying deep homage to the Omniscient Buddha. There was no one that did not wish and pray to become a Buddha, the most noble wish after witnessing the most surpassing splendour.

Up to this day, we can visualize the most surpassing splendour and significant event of the Omniscient Buddha descending to the earth from the great Mount Meru accompanied by Devas and Brahmas to the gate of Sankassa, Town of the human abode.

On the full Moon Day of Thadingyut, we all Buddhists generously offer lights, water, flowers, scents, fruits, food and other various kinds of offertories to pagodas and monasteries and also pay respect to teachers, parents and elders.

These meritorious deeds dedicate to the attainment of the noble stage of Nibbana through the most surpassing splendour and significant event of the Omniscient Buddha descending to the human abode from the celestial abode on the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut. ■



# Abhidhamma Day and Buddha's Mother Day on Thadingyut Full Moon

Maha Saddhamma  
Jotika Dhaja,  
Sithu Dr. Khin Maung  
Nyunt

IN Buddhist culture, there are five categories called [အနန္တဘူတအနန္တဗျာဓိ] to whom you owe infinite gratitude. They are as follows:

1. The Buddha, the giver of truth, Dhamma
2. The Dhamma, his teachings
3. The Sangha, the order of monks who carry out the mission of the Dhamma
4. Parents, Mother and Father
5. Acariya, the teachers.

Abhidhamma is one of Tipitaka of Buddhism. Directly translated three Baskets of Dhamma or Three corpuses, of Buddhism. They are

1. Three Treatises of Suttas [discourses]
2. Five treatises of Vinaya or Disciplines for the Buddhist monks and
3. Seven Treatises of Abhidhamma. Abhidhamma is the ultimate truth behind all illusions.

Lord Buddha went up to the celestial Kingdom "Tavatimsa" where his mother Maha Maya, chief Queen of Emperor Sudhodana of Kapila Vittu Kingdom became Sandusitha deva, after her demise a week after she gave birth to baby boy Prince Sidhartha [Bodhisutha or Buddha to be] For carrying and keeping in her womb and giving birth to him and feeding him her breast milk the son owed indefinite gratitude to his mother. On becoming Buddha, the son was obliged to fulfill his filial gratitude to his mother. So the Buddha spent the whole Lent in Tavatimsa to deliver his Abhidhamma to his mother, now Santisitha deva in Tavatimsa celestial Kingdom. The delivery of Abhidhamma at Tavatimsa took the whole rain retreat of that year. All Brahmas and deities of the entire Universe gathered to listen to



Hundreds of people release lanterns into the sky in celebration of Thadingyut. PHOTO: MNA

the delivery of Abhidhamma.

Lord Gotama Buddha said that he gave that delivery of Abhidhamma to his previous mother as an obligation of returning his indefinite gratitude to her for bearing him, giving birth to him and feeding him with her breast milk. By his shining example he showed us that we owe boundless filial gratitude to our mothers for keeping us in their wombs, giving us births and feeding us with their breast milk. After finishing his delivery of Abhidhamma in Tavatimsa, the Buddha returned to Earth on full moon of Thadingyut [October].

Full moon of Thadingyut is therefore very sacred for the Buddhists. Traditionally Myanmar commemorate the Day as Abhidhamma Day and hold annually the Festival of Light of Thadingyut. It is also Buddha's Mother Day. We have many commemorative days marked by the United Nations Organization UNO such as UN Day for Peace, UN Day for Democracy, UN's Mother Day UN Father Day etc. etc. In fact Full moon of Thadingyut is Buddha's Mother Day which far preceded UN Mother Day. The

Full moon day of Thadingyut is commemorated as Abhidhamma Day. Here the writer humbly and rightly proposes that it should be marked as Buddha's Mother Day. Also three consecutive days of Thadingyut namely pre full moon day, Full moon day and the day after it are celebrated as festival of light in Thadingyut.

The background story of this light festival is that. Lord Buddha told Saka Deva [Thunder God of Tavatimsa] that he would return to Earth as he had finished preaching Abhidhamma.

So on full moon night of Thadingyut. Saka deva created three stair ways leading down to Earth. The middle stair way was built of rubies for the Buddha to step down.

The right side stair way was built of gold for the devas to step down and the left side stair way built of silver for the Brahmas to step down.

The returning Buddha was honoured by celestial regalia and ceremonies. Many deities accompanied the Lord Buddha. Panca Thinkha deva with five hair knots on the right played the Veluva harp in praise of Lord Buddha. Matalideva on

the left carried flowers and fragrances to honour Lord Buddha. Suyama deva carried the yaktail fly whisk, Santusitha deva held the rubystudded gold fan and Saka deva blew the Vizayuttara conch shell to celebrate the occasion. All deities dwelling in the whole of Universe gathered to pay homage to Lord Buddha as best they could. The three stair ways, being illuminated by the lights radiated from the deities led to the gateway of the city of Sankassa on earth. When Lord Buddha set foot upon the earth, the crowd awaited at the city gate all paid obeisance to Lord Buddha and a grand ceremony was held to welcome and honour him.

To commemorate this great event in the lifetime of Lord Buddha which took place on the full moon of Thadingyut. Myanmar Kings and people held and still holding today "Tawetaintha [Tavatimsa] Festival, or Myint Moe Pwe because Tavatimsa is said to be located on the summit of Mt. Meru. Fantastic replicas of Mt. Meru were constructed each with three stair ways with statues of Lord Buddha and other respective Brahmas,

devas and Sakka devas etc. on them. When darkness falls and full moon rises, lights are lit. Deeds of religious merits are done at Pagodas and temples and monasteries. In the days of Myanmar kings. Thadingyut light festival was held by the State. Royal Treasury paid for all expenses Inside the palace city and around four corners of outside palace city, semi. Myint Moe Pwes were held with illuminations and holding of performing arts, by both human actors and puppets.

The last Myanmar King Thibaw never failed to hold this traditional light festival of Thadingyut. Konbaungset Maha Yaza Wun 'Taw Kyi [The Great Royal Chronicle of Konbaung dynasty] vol. 3 fully recorded the account of light festival of Thadingyut held by the king in AD 1883. Two serious ceremonies of Thadingyut are Pawarana and Puja. At the end of Buddhist Lent, all Buddhist monks of the same residing monastery gather together and ask each other by turn to reprimand him who is believed or found to have committed any sin. The concerned monk has to confess and promise not to repeat the sin. In that way, transparency, accountability, responsibly and unity and harmony are maintained in the Sangha Order.

Puja means worship or giving a devotional offering. This ceremony is usually performed by laymen. Who pay pujas to the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, Parents and teachers [including the aged] Recipients of Puja give blessings after exclaiming delights of Sadu [well done] three times to the worshipper.

Young ones usually get pocket money from parents, teachers or the aged or some sweet cakes. Full moon Thadingyut is the great occasion for religious and socio-cultural activities we Myanmar never fail to observe, commemorate and enjoy. ■

## 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](mailto: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





The names of Jacques Dubochet, Joachim Frank and Richard Henderson are displayed on the screen during the announcement of the winners of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2017, in Stockholm, Sweden on 4 October, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

## Microscope trailblazers win 2017 Nobel Chemistry Prize

STOCKHOLM — Scientists Jacques Dubochet, Joachim Frank and Richard Henderson won the 2017 Nobel Prize for Chemistry on Wednesday for developing cryo-electron microscopy which simplifies and improves the imaging of biomolecules.

Cryo-electron microscopy has enabled scientists to fill in previously blank spaces in research, generating images of everything from proteins that cause antibiotic resistance, to the surface of the Zika virus.

"This method has moved biochemistry into a new era," the Royal Swedish Academy

of Sciences, which awards Nobel prizes, said in a statement. The awarding brings a 9 million Swedish crown (\$1.1 million) prize.

"Researchers can now freeze biomolecules mid-movement and visualise processes they have never previously seen, which is decisive for both the basic understanding of life's chemistry and for the development of pharmaceuticals."

Scottish-born scientist Henderson used an electron microscope to generate a three-dimensional image of a protein at an atomic resolution, showing the

potential of the technology.

His breakthrough was further developed by German-born scientist Frank while Dubochet of Switzerland used rapidly frozen water to preserve the natural shape of the biomolecules.

Chemistry is the third of this year's Nobel Prizes after the winners of the medicine and physics prizes were announced earlier this week.

The prizes are named after Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, and have been awarded since 1901 for achievements in science, literature and peace, in accordance with his will.

While the chemistry award has sometimes been overshadowed by the towering reputations of physics winners such as Albert Einstein, laureates include ground-breaking scientists such as radioactivity pioneers Ernest Rutherford and Marie Curie, though she also won the physics prize. The award passed over one of the highest-profile fields of research, the so-called CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing technology that earlier this year allowed US scientists to alter genes in a human embryo to correct a disease-causing mutation.—Reuters ■

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Catalan pro-independence parties request parliamentary vote on Monday

MADRID — Pro-independence parties Junts pel Si and CUP have requested a debate and vote on independence from Spain to be held on Monday at the regional government's parliament, a regional government political source said on Wednesday.

They made the request at a closed-door parliamentary committee held on Wednesday, the source said. Pro-independence parties hold a slim majority of seats in the regional government meaning that any vote on a declaration of independence will be a formality.—Reuters ■

### Germany: Rule of law must hold in Spain

BERLIN — It is important for Spain to uphold the rule of law to preserve stability, German Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman said on Wednesday as Catalonia moves towards declaring independence from the EU state.

"Germany is watching developments there closely. We have a great interest in the stability of Spain. Therefore it is important ... that the rule of law is adhered to," spokesman Steffen Seibert told reporters. Describing the conflict between Madrid and Catalonia as an internal matter, he said any solution "can only take place within the Spanish constitution and democratic order" and he declined to condemn police action over the weekend.—Reuters ■

### Siemens ready to help modernise Russian power plants - executive

MOSCOW — German engineering firm Siemens is ready to participate in the modernisation of power plants in Russia, the head of its Russian branch said on Wednesday. "Around 50 per cent of stations require modernisation and Siemens is ready (to consider) offers," Dietrich Moeller, the head of Siemens Russia, said at an energy conference in Moscow.—Reuters ■

### Ryanair flight escorted by fighter jets to London airport after "hoax"

LONDON — Britain on Wednesday scrambled RAF Typhoon fighter jets to escort a Ryanair flight from Lithuania to Britain after a hoax security alert, the defence ministry and airline said, adding that the flight landed safely.

The flight from Kaunas to London Luton was diverted to London's Stansted airport, the

British airport designated to deal with major incidents, and there were reports of a sonic boom over eastern England when the fighter jets were deployed.

"The RAF can confirm Quick Reaction Alert Typhoon aircraft were launched this morning from RAF Coningsby to intercept a civilian aircraft.

The aircraft was safely escorted to Stansted airport," a spokesman for the Royal Air Force said.

He added the planes had been "authorised to transit at supersonic speed for operational reasons".

Police said passengers were being safely taken off the plane and Stansted Airport said the

runway was briefly closed while the aircraft landed but flights were arriving and departing normally again.

"This flight from Kaunas to London Luton diverted to London Stansted in line with procedures after Lithuanian authorities received a suspected hoax security alert," Ryanair said in a statement.—Reuters ■



## Turkey's Erdogan in Iran, Kurdish independence on agenda

ANKARA — Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan arrived in Tehran on Wednesday to discuss a possible joint response against a Kurdish vote in favour of secession in Iraq, a result with both Turkey and Iran fiercely oppose.

Fearing Kurdish separatism within their own borders, Iran and Turkey have threatened to join Baghdad in imposing economic sanctions on Iraqi Kurdistan and launched joint military exercises with Iraqi troops at their borders with the region. "During the visit, expansion of economic and trade ties will be discussed. Regional issues, including Syria, Iraq and the referendum in Iraq's Kurdistan will be discussed as well," Iranian State TV reported.

Erdogan will meet Iran's top authority Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as well as President Hassan Rouhani during his one-day trip to Tehran.

Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region announced on Tuesday it was calling presidential and parliamentary elections for 1 November. Baghdad has responded with further punitive measures, having already slapped sanctions on Kurdish banks and halting foreign currency transfers to the Kurdish region. Iraq's central government, its neighbours and Western powers fear the vote in favour of secession could spark another, wider conflict in the region to add to the war in Syria, and fear it could derail the fight against Islamic State. The Kurds are the region's fourth largest ethnic group, spread across Iran, Turkey, Syria and Iraq, all of which oppose any moves towards sovereignty. In Turkey, a 30-year insurgency waged by Kurdistan's Workers' Party (PKK) militants has recently flared up since a ceasefire broke down almost two years ago.—Reuters ■



Military vehicles of Iraqi army and Shi'ite Popular Mobilization Forces are seen on the outskirts of Hawija. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Iraqi forces in final assault to take Hawija from Islamic State

BAGHDAD — Iraqi forces launched a final assault on Wednesday to capture the town of Hawija, one of two pockets of territory in Iraq still under Islamic State control, the country's military said in a statement.

Iraqi state TV broadcast live footage showing the area covered by thick black smoke, rising from oil wells torched by the militants as a tactic to prevent air detection. Hawija is located near the oil city of Kirkuk, in northern Iraq.

The offensive on Hawija is being carried out by US-backed Iraqi government troops and Ira-

nian-trained and armed Shi'ite paramilitary groups known as Popular Mobilisation. They began moving on the town of Hawija two days after capturing the Rashad air base, 30 km (20 miles) to the south and used by the militants as a training and logistics site.

Iraq launched an offensive on 21 September to dislodge Islamic State from Hawija and surrounding areas where up to 78,000 people could be trapped, according to the United Nations.

Iraqi security officials say the militants are preventing some residents from leaving,

while others are afraid of escaping towards government forces because of explosives that might have been laid by Islamic State around the town.

The other area of the country still under the control of the militant group is a stretch of land along the Syrian border, in western Iraq, including the border town of al-Qaim.

The militants also hold the Syrian side of the border at al-Qaim, but the area under their control is shrinking as they retreat in the face of two different sets of hostile forces — a US-backed, Kurdish-led coalition, and Syrian

government troops with foreign Shi'ite militias backed by Iran and Russia.

Islamic State's cross-border "caliphate" effectively collapsed in July, when US-backed Iraqi forces captured Mosul, the group's de facto capital in Iraq, in a gruelling battle which lasted nine months.

The militants' leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who declared the caliphate from Mosul in mid-2014, released an audio recording last week that indicated he was still alive. He called on his followers to keep up the fight despite the setbacks.—Reuters ■

## South Africa's Eskom to appoint new board, CEO in November — cabinet minister

CAPE TOWN — South Africa's scandal-plagued power supplier Eskom will appoint a new board and begin the search for a new chief executive at a special meet-

ing in November, Public Enterprises Minister Lynne Brown told lawmakers on Wednesday.

Eskom, which is at the centre of allegations of improper

dealings in government contracts, has suspended its chief executive and chief financial officer pending disciplinary hearings, both of whom have denied

wrongdoing.

Many of the allegations are linked to a slew of leaked emails, which Reuters have not independently verified.—Reuters ■

## Rwanda charges critic of president with inciting insurrection

KIGALI — Rwandan authorities have charged a critic of President Paul Kagame with inciting insurrection and forgery after she was barred from challenging him in August elections, the public prosecutor's spokesman said on Wednesday.

Diane Shima Rwigara, a

35-year-old accountant, has repeatedly accused Kagame of stifling dissent and criticised his Rwandan Patriotic Front's near total hold on power since it fought its way to power to end a genocide in 1994.

Kagame won the August election with 98.8 per cent of the

vote. Rwigara's mother Adeline and sister Anne have also been charged with incitement and "discrimination and sectarianism", prosecutor's spokesman Faustin Nkusi told Reuters. He said the cases were filed in court on Tuesday and awaited a trial date.

The three women have been in detention for around two weeks. They were first taken from their home in the Rwandan capital on 30 August on tax evasion allegations related to the family's tobacco company. That charge was not listed in those filed on Tuesday.

Kagame won international praise for restoring stability in Rwanda and presiding over a rapid economic recovery after the genocide, in which an estimated 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and politically moderate ethnic Hutus were killed.—Reuters ■



## Russia hopes its ties with US to overcome current artificially created deadlock — Lavrov

MOSCOW — Russia still hopes its relations with the United States could be ultimately driven out of the current artificially created deadlock but the future of relations will depend on both sides, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in an interview with the Asharq Al-Awsat Pan-Arab newspaper.

“There is a hope that we could overcome this artificially created deadlock in our cooperation, although the future of our relations depends not only upon us, but upon the American side as well,” he said.

According to the Russian top diplomat, it is not Russia’s fault that Russian-US relations are declining. “This is a direct consequence of the policy pursued by the Obama administration that was destroying the foundation of our cooperation and, before leaving, planted time bombs underneath it to make things difficult for its suc-

cessors,” he noted.

The minister reiterated that Russia is ready to pool efforts with the new US administration “to search for ways of improving relations on the basis of the principles of mutual trust and consideration for each other’s interests.”

“Unfortunately, our bilateral ties still remain hostage to the bickering in the American establishment,” Lavrov said, adding that despite that Moscow hopes “that common sense would nonetheless prevail in Washington and it would be possible to stop further confrontation.”

“We do really seek it,” he stressed. “We understand that the US and Russia as major nuclear-weapon states bear special responsibility for the general situation in the world, for maintaining global stability and security. It can be viewed as a positive sign that our coun-



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. PHOTO: TASS

tries resumed their dialogue on strategic issues in September, which had been frozen since the beginning of 2014.

Lavrov said he is confident there is a big potential for Russian-US cooperation in international affairs but this potential, in his words, is underdeveloped. “We have long been urging our colleagues to establish real coordination in the area of counter-terrorism and in dealing with other dan-

gerous challenges, i.e. the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug trafficking and cyber crime. Let alone the goal of resolving regional crises the number of which in the world, unfortunately, does not diminish,” he underscored.

More to it, in his words, the two countries have possibilities to implement mutually beneficial initiatives in the trade and investment sphere. “It is indicative that

the American business values its presence on our market and wants to develop mutually beneficial projects with Russian partners,” the minister said. “The US business delegation consisting of representatives of 140 companies became the most numerous at the SPIEF in June. Profit margins of American businesses in Russia are higher than on many other markets and working conditions are very favorable.”—Tass ■



## Ireland says EU action over 13 billion euro Apple tax bill ‘regrettable’

DUBLIN — Ireland on Wednesday described as “extremely regrettable” an EU decision to take the country to the European Court of Justice for failing to recover up to 13 billion euros (11.51 billion pounds) of tax due from Apple Inc (AAPL.O)

Ireland has said the Commission’s August order for the US tech giant to pay the unpaid taxes was unjustified, but it had agreed to collect the money and was seeking one or more investment managers to handle an escrow account.

“It is extremely regrettable that the Commission has taken this action, especially in relation to a case with such a large-scale recovery amount,” the finance ministry said in a statement. “Irish officials and experts have been engaged in intensive work to ensure that the State complies with all its recovery obligations as soon as possible, and have been in constant contact with the European Commission and Apple on all aspects of this process for over a year.” —Reuters ■

## German prosecutors accuse former far-right party leader of perjury

BERLIN — German prosecutors said on Wednesday they were pressing perjury charges against Frauke Petry, former leader of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), who last week quit the party and will sit in the national parliament as an independent lawmaker.

Lorenz Haase, senior public prosecutor in the eastern city of Dresden, said it was unlikely the case against Petry would proceed quickly as Dresden’s regional court would need to apply to lift her immunity as a member of the national parliament.

Petry has been dogged by allegations that she lied under oath to a committee of the

Saxony parliament about how the party’s campaign for the 2014 election in the state was financed. She has denied the allegations.

In August the regional parliament of the state of Saxony lifted Petry’s immunity from prosecution.

But now that she is due to take up her seat in the Bundestag, the lower house of the German federal parliament, she will be granted immunity there. A majority of lawmakers in the Bundestag would have to vote to lift her immunity.

The first session of the lower house is expected to take place by 24 October at the latest.

Petry, long considered the

face of the anti-immigrant AfD, had for months been on the losing side of a dispute between the party’s warring wings. She had advocated a more moderate course while others shifted further to the right and wanted the party to focus on a role in opposition rather than trying to govern.

Some AfD members have followed in Petry’s footsteps to quit the AfD and she now plans to set up a new party.

The AfD won 12.6 per cent of the vote in the 24 September federal election, making it the first far-right party to enter the Bundestag in more than half a century and the third largest parliamentary bloc.—Reuters ■



# ‘I will not give up’ — May tries to stamp authority on party

MANCHESTER, (England) — Prime Minister Theresa May will tell her Conservative Party on Wednesday it is not her style “to give up and turn away” when things get tough, trying to persuade critics she can lead Britain and secure a strong Brexit.

Striking a more personal tone, the 61-year-old May will describe her political drive to try to win over and rally a party that is disillusioned by rifts in her top team of ministers and by a June election when the party lost its parliamentary majority. In a speech to the party faithful at their conference when May will unveil a plan to build more homes, the prime minister wants to reset her agenda and assert her authority after coming under pressure from her foreign minister Boris Johnson over her plans to leave the European Union in March 2019.

Her address could



British Prime Minister Theresa May is pictured in her hotel room as she prepares her conference speech that she will deliver to her party's annual conference, tomorrow, in Manchester Central conference center, in Manchester, Britain on 3 October, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

be make or break for the prime minister, whose attempt to present a united front at the conference has been undermined by Johnson, a possible leadership contender who received rousing applause for his speech on Tuesday.

Calling on the party to

concentrate on voters instead of its internal wrangling, May will say she was in politics “to make a difference. To change things for the better. To hand on to the next generation a country that is stronger, fairer and more prosperous”. “None of this will be

easy. There will be obstacles and barriers along the way. But it has never been my style to hide from a challenge, to shrink from a task, to retreat in the face of difficulty, to give up and turn away,” she will say, according to excerpts of the speech.—Reuters ■

## Europe will do everything to preserve Iran nuclear deal — EU diplomat

ZURICH — European countries will do their utmost to preserve a deal limiting Iran's nuclear programme despite misgivings by US President Donald Trump, a senior European Union diplomat said on Wednesday.

“This is not a bilateral agreement, it's a multilateral agreement. As Europeans, we will do everything to make sure it stays,” Helga Schmid, secretary general of the EU's foreign policy service, told an Iranian investment conference in Switzerland's financial capital.

The deal was brokered in 2015 by the bloc between Iran, the United States, France, Germany, Britain, Russia and China.

Trump is weighing whether the pact serves US security interests as he faces an 15 October deadline for certifying that Iran

is complying, a decision that could sink an agreement strongly supported by the other world powers that negotiated it.

Schmid said Europe has concerns about Iran's role in regional affairs, but that those issues were not part of the nuclear accord known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

“I'm absolutely convinced we will not be in a better place to address any of these issues by ditching the JCPOA,” Schmid said.

“The world does not need a second nuclear proliferation crisis. One is already too many,” she added in an apparent reference to Washington's standoff with North Korea.

Nicholas Hopton, Britain's ambassador to Iran, said the UN nuclear watchdog's reports had shown Iran was fully



Helga Schmid, Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS), addresses the 4th Europe-Iran Forum in Zurich, Switzerland on 4 October, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

complying with terms of the accord.

“We hope that President Trump will recertify the deal and that the US will continue to play a constructive and important role in the implementation of the JCPOA,” he told the conference.

US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis said on Tuesday the United States should consider staying in the Iran deal unless it were

proven that Tehran was not abiding by the agreement or that it was not in the US national interest to do so.

Although Mattis said he supported Trump's review of the agreement, the defence secretary's view was far more positive than that of Trump, who has called the deal agreed between Iran and six world powers an “embarrassment.”—Reuters ■

## Greek archaeologists' decision clears way for Hellenikon tourism project

ATHENS — Greece welcomed a decision by senior archaeologists to conditionally permit a major tourism project in Athens on Wednesday, saying it cleared the way for the country to turn the site into one of Europe's biggest coastal resorts.

The 8 billion euro (\$9.39 billion) project to develop the disused Hellenikon airport site is a key term of Greece's international bailout and is closely watched by its official creditors and potential investors in the crisis-hit country.

Greek developer Lamda signed a 99-year lease with the state in 2014 for the 620-hectare (1,530-acre) area, once the site of Athens airport. But the project has faced delays, partly over a long-running

row between developers and those who fear it will destroy the environment and cultural heritage.

After three inconclusive meetings in recent weeks, the Central Archaeological Council, an advisory body, recommended on Tuesday that about 30 hectares (74 acres) of the 620-hectare plot under the project be declared an archaeological site.

“The decision is fine,” Deputy Economy Minister in charge of investments, Stergios Pitsiorlas, told Reuters. “The fact that a small area is declared of archaeological interest shields the whole process from future litigation.” Pitsiorlas said the recommendation meant that archaeologists will have a closer supervision of construction work.—Reuters ■

### CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA RAJIN VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA RAJIN VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.10.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

### 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 5.10.2017 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.

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

Phone No: 2301185



# Bollywood icon Aamir Khan says next film will be biggest yet

SINGAPORE — Aamir Khan, the Bollywood superstar with a conscience, says his next movie about a small town teenage girl who uses the Internet to become a singing sensation will be much bigger than his last film, which was India's highest grossing ever.

Khan, 52, plays a sleazy music producer in the film "Secret Superstar" and says he is second lead to teenager Zaira Wasim, playing a schoolgirl who defies her conservative Muslim family to pursue her dream of a singing career.

Khan's last film "Dangal", or wrestling pit, was based on the true story of a former wrestler who trains two of his daughters to become champions in the sport. It was the highest grossing movie for Bollywood, as India's Hindi film industry is known, and was powered by huge collections in China.

"While both are about the empowerment of the girl child, I feel it (Secret Superstar) is a much bigger film," Khan said in an interview in Singapore ahead of the movie's release later this month. He and his wife have produced the film.

"While Dangal was about



Actor Aamir Khan attends a meeting with students to talk about his film "Secret Superstar" in Singapore on 2 October, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

the dream of a father which a daughter fulfils, this is about the hopes and aspirations of a 14-year-old girl from a small town in India. I don't know what the box office will be but it's a bigger film than Dangal in what it's trying to say."

Three of Khan's films are in Bollywood's top four all-time hits. Besides Dangal, these in-

clude "PK", in which he played an alien dealing with religious divisions in India, and "3 Idiots", about the frailties in India's education system.

All three have also done well in China, and Khan said he was "very happy with the type of relationship that's building between me and my audience in this part of the world with each film".

He also produced and acted in a popular television documentary series on social ills in India called "Satyameva Jayate", or Truth Alone Triumphs.

That series led him to set up a non-profit to work on a project to ease the shortage of water in the western Indian state of Maharashtra, he said.

Despite the social messages

in his movies, Khan said he has no desire to become politician, as some other Bollywood stars have.

"The desire in me to contribute back to society is something I can do very well in the field that I am in," he said. "I don't have to join politics. That's an area I don't ever want to go into."

Khan, who belongs to India's Muslim minority, was embroiled in controversy two years ago when he said his Hindu wife had asked him if they should move out of India over concerns about insecurity. Khan later said the family had no plans to leave.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government has been accused of intolerance towards liberal and dissenting views.

Khan said intolerance had not affected his ability to express himself as an actor.

"For me, when I'm making a film, my primary responsibility is to give my audience a good time. Then if it's giving a message which is important and creative, if it's changing the way we look at things, great. "If it's giving a message which is highly negative, then I would not be a part of it." —Reuters ■

## SRK thanks Bollywood divas for their graciousness and love



Superstar Shah Rukh Khan. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

MUMBAI — Superstar Shah Rukh Khan has thanked his leading ladies Sridevi, Kajol, Karisma Kapoor, Rani Mukerji and Alia Bhatt for being the epitome of love and grace.

The 51-year-old star took to Twitter where he shared some pictures with the B-Town divas.

"Some nights the stars with you shine brighter than the ones in the sky. Thank you ladies for your graciousness, beauty and love," Shah Rukh wrote.

In his 25-year-long career in the film industry, the actor has shared screen space with most of the leading ladies.

While SRK starred with

Sridevi in "Army" (1996), he romanced Kajol and Rani in "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai".

Shah Rukh and Kajol is one of the most iconic onscreen couples in Bollywood. The duo have given hits such as "Baazigar", "Karan Arjun", "Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham" and "My Name Is Khan".

The actor worked with Karisma in Yash Chopra's "Dil To Pagal Hai" and "Shakti - The Power".

With Alia, SRK was seen in the last years "Dear Zindagi". —PTI ■

## Music mogul Clive Davis tells of heartbreak over Whitney Houston death

LONDON — For music mogul Clive Davis, one memory stands out from a six-decade career - the sudden death of long-time collaborator Whitney Houston. The Grammy-winning record producer and executive — and subject of a new documentary "Clive Davis: The Soundtrack of Our Lives" — met the future star singer when she was an untested teenager.

"Whitney and I formed this creative collaboration, right from the beginning when she was 19 years old, and chose together every song that she ever recorded," Davis said.

Houston won six of her own Grammys in a 25-year career that was marred by drug and alcohol problems and a turbulent marriage to singer Bobby Brown. She died in 2012 aged 48, after drowning in a hotel bathtub.

"Her death was so startling and unexpected — there is that

analogy when someone dear to you, and it brought back the loss of my parents — how you can be affected by this tragedy," he told Reuters.

"The film does make clear

that I might have been a little bit more vigilant earlier. But once I became aware of the seriousness of Whitney's addiction, I acted," he added. —Reuters ■



Singer Whitney Houston waves at the crowd next to Clive Davis at the conclusion of her performance at the 2009 Grammy Salute to Industry Icons event. **PHOTO: REUTERS**





Japanese Emperor Akihito (2nd from L) and Empress Michiko (L) are greeted by Kamilah Hanifah (2nd from R), Brunei's ambassador to Japan, and her husband at the Bruneian Embassy in Tokyo on 4 October, 2017. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

## Emperor signs guest book on Bruneian sultan's golden jubilee

TOKYO — Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko signed on Wednesday a guest book at the Bruneian Embassy in Tokyo to congratulate the country's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah on the 50th anniversary of his reign.

The emperor and the empress entered their names at the embassy in the capital's

Shinagawa Ward as they will not be able to attend a ceremony scheduled for Friday in the Southeast Asian country.

The couple received an invitation from the Bruneian government but cannot make it due to the short notice on which they were notified, according to the Imperial Household Agency.

It was the first time the imperial couple had visited the embassy.

The sultan succeeded to the throne in 1967 following the abdication of his father. The emperor and the empress met him when they were crown prince and princess during the sultan's visit to Japan in 1984 as a state guest. — Kyodo News ■

## Workers scale Brussels' Atomium to start cleaning process

BRUSSELS — Dangling from ropes as they straddle giant silver spheres that reflect the cityscape below, a team of cleaners began the annual clean-up of Brussels' iconic Atomium.

Getting ready to celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday next year, the celebrated structure consisting of nine polished steel globes, each 18 metres (60 ft) in diameter connected by tubular passageways, represents a crystal of iron. But it has also come to be the symbol of the Belgian and European Union capital. "When we arrived the first day, at first we enjoyed the view and being there, and then, after that, it's just a job like any other," said Olivier Delecosse, leader of

the cleaning crew who began work on Monday and will spend the next two weeks on the job.

The team polish from the top to the underside of each sphere in turn. The process usually takes place in summer as the cleaning product cannot be used in the rain. However, the crew are optimistic for a good dry run in often damp Brussels.

"Cleaning the Atomium is always something very special for us," Delecosse said of the 100-metre (300-ft) high exhibition space, which was built for the World's Fair of 1958.

"Each one of us, we are proud to do this because this is a symbol of Belgium." —Reuters ■



A worker cleans one of the nine spheres of the Atomium, a 102-metre-tall (335-foot-tall) structure designed for Expo 58 in the form of a crystal of iron, during the annual cleaning of Brussels' iconic monument, Belgium on 3 October, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

## Greece overcomes forestry setback to develop Athens coastal resort

ATHENS — Greece has won an appeal over objections from forestry officials to a major tourism project in Athens that forms part of its third international bailout, overcoming one of the obstacles to turning the site into one of Europe's biggest coastal resorts.

The 8 billion euro (7.09 bil-

lion pounds) project to develop the disused Hellenikon airport site is being closely watched by Greece's European Union and International Monetary Fund lenders and potential investors in the crisis-hit country.

The project features prominently among privatisation tar-

gets in the country's 86 billion euro aid package, the third since the crisis began in 2010.

Greek developer Lamda signed a 99-year lease with the state in 2014 for the 620-hectare (1,530-acre) area, once the site of Athens airport. But the project has faced delays, partly over a long-running row between developers and those who fear it will destroy the environment.

Forestry authorities in May declared 3.7 hectares (9 acres) of the estate as protected woodland, on a spot developers said was integral to the project.

Greece's privatisation agency, which is in charge of concluding the deal with Lamda, appealed the decision. A four-member panel of the country's forestry department ruled on Monday that the plot was not forest.

"The agency's appeal ... was

upheld by a 3-to-2 majority," the committee's president, Christos Antonellis, told Reuters, adding that the decision was expected to be published by Wednesday.

The decision is subject to appeal. The privatisation agency's chief, Lila Tsitsogiannopoulou, said the decision was "positive" and that the agency's appeal had strong legal grounds.

Separately, the government's top advisory body on the protection of antiquities recommended on Tuesday that only 30 hectares (74 acres) of the 620-hectare plot under the project be declared an archaeological site, according to sources close to the process.

Government officials said the decision was a "big step for the development of the investment, in line with Greek law and the protection of cultural heritage". Lamda was not immediately available for comment.

The recommendation is not binding, but the culture ministry always respects the body's decisions. Backed by Chinese and Gulf investors, Lamda submitted its detailed development plan for Hellenikon in July.

The Central Archaeological Council was still discussing the issue and had yet to approve the investment plan, one of the sources said. The council has held three inconclusive meetings on this issue this month.

The Hellenikon project has become a major political issue in Greece, which is slowly emerging from a multi-year debt crisis.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, whose leftist party strongly opposed it before coming to power in 2015, is now seen as keen to implement the deal to help boost economic activity and reduce unemployment, the euro zone's highest. —Reuters ■



A man rides his bike along the former international Hellenikon airport in Athens, Greece on 16 July, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**



# Myanmar, Thailand footballers to play friendly match today

Kyaw Zin Lin

In preparation for the 2019 AFC Asian Cup Qualifications, the Myanmar national football team will play against Thailand today at Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay.

The Myanmar players have been training in Mandalay recently not only for today's match but also for the upcoming international competitions.

A press conference held yesterday was attended by the football players and coaches from Myanmar and Thailand.

Myanmar's coach said today's friendly would be a good test for his team because of the talented opponents.

"As Thailand is one of the best teams in Southeast Asia, we will respond our best. I will watch this match for who will be the right player for the upcoming qualifications. As Kyi Lin has been recovering from his injury, I would like try to give a playing chance for this player," said Myanmar Head Coach Gerd Zeise.



Thailand Head Coach Milovan Rajevac and Myanmar Head Coach Gerd Zeise shake hand at the yesterday's press conference. **PHOTO: MFF**

anmar Head Coach Gerd Zeise.

"While this friendly match is important, it's not as important as the upcoming AFC

Qualification match against Kyrgyzstan. We will take many advantages from this friendly match to the next international

qualification matches," said Myanmar shinning player Yan Aung Kyaw during the conference. ■

## MFF and MOE to jointly implement Myanmar youth football development plans

In an effort to continue the improvement of Myanmar's football talent through the youth sector all across Myanmar, officials from the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) and Ministry of Education (MOE) pledged a Youth Development Strategic Plan (YDSP) yesterday.

According to the plan, the officials will focus on the requirements of Myanmar football and the opportunities for future Myanmar youth football and sports programmes.

The MFF mainly discussed providing football lessons as part of the timetable of Basic Education High Schools throughout Myanmar, grassroots youth football tournaments for boys and girls in Under 11, 13 and 15 categories should be hosted frequently in Myanmar, as should having skillful referees, football coaches and fitness coaches for Myanmar youths, the officials said. Myanmar youths' football scheduling calendars should be drawn in accordance with FIFA matches and international matches, and the Ministry of Education (MOE) agreed to the plan and to cooperate with the MFF. U Zaw Zaw, the MFF chairman, also pointed out the current football development efforts of Japan and the collaboration between MFF and the Japan Football Association (JFA).

The discussions are underway, and the MFF will next talk over the plan with officials from Ministry of Health and Sports on 6 October, according to the MFF.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■

## Halep sets up Sharapova rematch in Beijing

BEIJING — World number two Simona Halep set up a mouth-watering third-round clash with Maria Sharapova at the China Open after the Romanian's opponent Magdalena Rybarikova retired due to illness trailing 6-1, 2-1 on Tuesday.

Halep survived a break point in the opening game before

powering her way to a 5-0 lead with two breaks of her own as Rybarikova struggled on serve and committed 19 unforced errors en route to conceding the first set.

The 28-year-old Slovakian conceded the match early in the second set after a medical timeout, giving Halep an opportunity to avenge her US Open

first-round defeat by Sharapova.

The Russian, who has never lost to Halep in seven previous meetings, beat compatriot Ekaterina Makarova 6-4, 4-6, 6-1 to record a second consecutive three-set victory in Beijing earlier on Tuesday.

"You can take a little bit away from all the matches we've

played in the past," Sharapova said. "We know each other's games very well. They've always been very challenging, tough, competitive, emotional."

"I love the challenge of playing against someone that's number two in the world. She's a great player. She's had a great year."—Reuters ■



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