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Job market ripe for young people

A panel discussion titled "Youth and Job opportunities" was held at the recreation centre in Yangon University yesterday. Dr. Pe Myint, the Union Minister for Information, said at the event that the discussion was open for everyone to voice their opinion in a democratic and non-aggressive way. **(FULL STORY ON PAGE-2)**



Paddy harvesting under way in Maungtaw region, Northern Rakhine State. **PHOTO: SEIN LWIN AUNG**

3-month harvest time for 20,000 acres in Maungtaw

THE harvest of over 20,000 acres of paddy in Maungtaw region in northern Rakhine State will be completed within three months, guaranteed the Agricultural Mechanization Department-AMD that will do the job in cooperation with the Settlements and Land Records Department-SLRD.

"Paddy fields in Buthidaung and Maungtaw regions are ripe

for harvesting. We are using all available equipment and forces in harvesting the fields as a preventive measure against any loss or wastage. We are systematically transferring the harvested paddy to the relevant bodies. Of the over 40,000 acres, we will transfer the winnowed rice to the bodies within three months, said Director-General U Soe Hlaing of AMD.

Beginning 26 October, 14 state-owned machines and 18 region-owned machines totaling 32 are harvesting and winnowing paddy in Maungtaw region.

Under the leadership of Rakhine State government, AMD and SLRD have set up five camps in harvesting and winnowing the paddy daily. The camps are operating eight harvesters and winnowers at

Kyaungtaung village-tract, six at Marawady village-tract, six at Alethankyaw village-tract, six at Nwayontaung village-tract and six at Myothugyi village-tract totaling 32 in the southern regions of Maungtaw in harvesting and winnowing about 1500 acres daily. "AMD in cooperation with SLRD is carrying out the task with the help of machines.

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Job market ripe for young people

A PANEL discussion titled "Youth and Job opportunities" was held at the recreation centre in Yangon University yesterday.

Dr. Pe Myint, the Union Minister for Information, said at the event that the discussion was open for everyone to voice their opinion in a democratic and non-aggressive way.

Also at the event was the Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein who said he wanted to listen to the voice of the people from all 45 townships in Yangon.

He said there needs to be active participation from the public in the democratization process. The Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Information for organizing the event.

Dr. Daw Thida Tin, the Deputy Director-General of the Department for Information and Public Relations, said according to FDA reports, young people make up 28-30 per cent of the population in Myanmar and said they are the hope for the future.

She said young people need a steady job in their beginning years and one that also matched their level of education.

Dr. Daw Thida Tin said the rules and regulations for conducting business in Myanmar



A panel discussion titled "Youth and Job opportunities" in progress. PHOTO MNA

and other connected sectors need to be developed to create job opportunities. She then said the discussion will be continued by five spokespersons on what young people should prepare for getting a job and what the government is doing to meet these needs.

The discussion panel was opened with Naw Pann Thitizar Myo, the Minister for Kayin Ethnic Affairs, saying the workforce in Yangon is increasing as more and more people

from rural areas migrate into commercial Yangon. She said young female workers make up the majority of the workforce in the 29 economic zones in Yangon with 70 per cent of them working in the textile and garment industry and the other 30 per cent engaged in industrial work.

The next speaker was U Wai Phyo Han, the Yangon Hluttaw representative from Insein Constituency (2).

He talked about the diffi-

culties of finding a job in Yangon and how there are instances of young people accepting jobs they're not interested in due to scarcity of opportunities. He said these are not good for personal development and that young people need skills in order to get good jobs.

Next, U Aung Htay Win, the Deputy Director for the Department of Labor Administration, discussed about the process of the Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population in

connecting potential workers with employers.

He also explained the history of the ministry which was established as the Employment Contact Office in 1946.

U Win Naing from JPE Everest Ltd., a local job agency, shared his experiences of connecting people seeking jobs to employers.

He said that the type of job that pays well and is accessible depends on the individual's skill. He said the areas with the most job opportunities in the country right now are in sales and marketing, engineering, admin and HR.

Afterwards, U Than Soe, CEO and Chief Editor of 7 HR Business Group and Two Four DMA Media Group, said there are more job opportunities in recent years since social media is an easily accessible platform for job advertisements.

He said employees and workers now have the right to speak out against bad jobs and that employers are becoming more aware of keeping regulations. He said the most advertised jobs are for HR and Admin followed by Sales and Marketing, Accountants, Drivers, and Security Personnel in areas like Hotels, Distribution, Food, Liquor and Construction. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Taninthayi donates school for Maungtaw Township

MAUNGTAW in Rakhine State in the west of Myanmar will get a new village school donated by the people of Taninthayi Region in the far south.

Apart from a building for classrooms there will also be a common room for teachers, said Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Lae Maw.

The chief minister was speaking at the ceremony to drive in stakes for the school building in new Kainggyi (Mro) village on Maungtaw-Kyaukpan-

du road.

It will not be built by Rakhine State government. Well-wishers of Taninthayi Region donated funds for the school building. They could not turn a deaf ear to the plight of their kith and kin in Rakhine State. So they collected public donations for the state, said the chief minister.

We wish children of the region get access to education. We planned to build a post primary school. It will have a fence and a 250-foot long entrance road.



Chief Minister Dr. Lae Maw meets with Mro people. PHOTO: MNA

We will also build a pagoda and a monastery near the village, she added.

After the speeches delivered by her and Rakhine State Minister for Social Affairs Dr. Chan Tha, medicines and cloths

donated by the Taninthayi people were presented to the villagers of Kainggyi.

The project includes a building for classrooms, another for a common room and two toilets. —News Team ■

3-month harvest time for 20,000 acres in Maungtaw

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Labour shortage is the main problem of the region. So, we asked the help of 100 AMD staff of Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Sagaing. Even we pay a daily wage of K 10,000 for each worker, we still face difficulty in recruiting labour, said AMD Staff Officer U Khin Zaw Ohn, adding, we will prioritize the farms that are accessible for the farm machinery.

Over 3000 acres have been harvested during the 10-day period from 26 October to 4 November. Per acre yield is 50 baskets per acre. The two departments are transferring the rice to the relevant bodies that are storing the produce at the warehouses in Alethankyaw, Myinlut and other places. —News Team (MNA) ■

VP U Henry Van Thio honours Aung La N Sang

Vice-President of the Republic of Union of Myanmar U Henry Van Thio honoured Aung La N Sang at his residence in Yangon yesterday evening.

The Vice-President cordially conversed with Aung La N Sang, the winner of the open-weight bout at ONE Championship 63 and presented the champion a certificate of honour.

Aung La N Sang defeated challenger Alain Ngalani Muay Thai and Kickboxing Champion, in just four minutes and 31 seconds of the first round of an open-weight bout at ONE Championship 63 on 3 November in Yangon.

The Ministry of Health and Sports also honoured Aung La N Sang who defeated challenger Alain Ngalani (Hong Kong), Muay Thai and Kickboxing Champion.

Union Minister for Health and Sports presented the certificate of honour to Aung La N Sang at Sedona Hotel in Yangon at 11 am the same day.

The Union minister hosted a luncheon in honour of the Champion.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Vice-President U Henry Van Thio presents Chin traditional gifts to Aung La N Sang. **PHOTO: MNA**



Myanmar Motion Picture Organization donates money for the resettlement and development in Rakhine State



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint accepts donation from Myanmar Motion Picture Organization. **PHOTO: MNA**

The ceremony for providing donation money for resettlement and development in Rakhine State was held at the meeting hall of MMPO in Wingaba road in Yangon at 8 am of yesterday. The Union Minister for Information attended the event and accepted the donation money.

In the ceremony Chairman of MMPO, U Zin Waing gave a welcoming speech and the patrons of MMPO, chairman and members handed over the donation MMK 10 million to be used in resettlement and development works in Rakhine to the Union Minister for Information, Dr Pe Myint.

The Union Minister Dr Pe Myint delivered an address in

which he spoke that many thanks are due to the MMPO as donation is made for the use in resettlement of Rakhine State and he stated that Rakhine affairs are the affairs of the whole country and the troubles encountered by Rakhine people are the troubles of all people. He also mentioned his delight as the MMPO comes to the assistance every time the country is in crisis. In those times it is always found the persons from MMPO has taken part in activities willingly and actively. It is really an encouragement for the local people as the MMPO helps in money and also show their personal presence in the crisis area. The present aids of MMPO for Rakhine resettlement

and development project manifest the perpetuation of their good tradition of assistance in social affairs.

Then, the patron of MMPO, Sithu Bogale Tint Aung gave a speech of delight. The responsible personnel from Ministry of Information, patrons of MMPO and MMPO members attended the ceremony. The Union Minister, Dr Pe Myint accepted the donation money as MMPO is a friendly organization of the MoI and the donation money will be conveyed to Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development for the use in the projects of UEHRD, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Fourth Irrawaddy Literature Festival in which local and foreign literati take part, successfully ends

The fourth Irrawaddy Literature Festival participated by literati and literature-lovers started on 3rd November at Mandalay Hill Resort and successfully finished at 5 pm of 5th November.

In the event local and foreign literati were reading papers, the writers and literature enthusiasts were discussing about the literature, reciting the poems and drawing the painting and cartoons and about 40 book shops from Yangon and Mandalay sold the books. "Among the Irrawaddy Literature Festivals held so far, the present festival is the most satisfactory one. There are a lot of young participants who take part in discussion in earnest. The content of the discussion made by international literati are invaluable for the participants. The journalists also discussed about the fake news and they exposed by themselves how to divert the news to the wrong track. The audience also increased in number than the previous ones as there were more book shops, souvenir shops and food donations in the present festival. It is hoped there will be more satisfying and fruitful literature festivals for the youths in future" said country director, U Aung Myint.

The most distinguished feature of the 4th Irrawaddy Literature Festival was that

Myanandar Poem Anthology containing poems from Thakha in Kodaw Mhaing age to the poems of contemporary age both in English and Myanmar language and the collection of all cartoons by cartoonists could have been published.

Moreover, "The 4th Irrawaddy Literary Festival was more well-attended and the journalists from Yangon, Mandalay and abroad actively came to participate in the festival. The festival could support the development of Myanmar literature and give attendants the wider perspective. International writers could know more about Myanmar and it was good for the country," said writer from Mandalay, Kyaw Yin Myint.

Ko Myo Myint from the Organ book shop said, "The aesthetic/knowledge books sold more in this festival. Most of the buyers were writers, old-aged literature enthusiasts and the teachers. The total value of books sold amounted to Kt 200,000 a day. The book shops were mostly from Yangon and we will sell the books also in Mandalay festival."

The 4th Irrawaddy Literary Festival started on 3rd November and ended on 5th November. The festival holding committee members, local and foreign literati and writers took documentary photos.—Min Htet Aung (Man Sub-printing House) ■

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CAN Manufacturing factory launched in Yangon

OPENING ceremony of Can manufacturing Factory joint ventured by Loi Hein Co, Ltd and Toyo Seikan Group Co, Ltd was held at Thilawa industrial zone yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Industry U Khin Maung Cho, National League for Democracy (NLD) Central Executive Committee Secretary U Win Htein, Chairman of Loi Hein Co, Ltd Dr Sai San Htun, President of Toyo Seikan Group Holdings Co, Ltd Mr. Takao Nakai, Managing Director of Yangon Can Manufacturing Co, Ltd Mr. Tomonori Ogata and other invited officials attended the opening ceremony. U Win Htein, Dr Sai San Htun, Mr. kazuyuki Takimi, Mr. Takao Nakai and Mr. Ichio Otsuka delivered an opening speech and Mr. Ichio Otsuka, Mr. Tomonori Ogata, U Zaw Zaw and Dr. Than Than Thwe cut the ribbon for the launching of the factory.

Then the officials observed the production of Shark branded cans in the factory. Then, vocalist Chan Chan entertained with songs along with



Union Minister for Industry, U Khin Maung Cho Looks around the production line of Can Manufacturing factory at Thilawa Industrial Zone. **PHOTO: PHOE TAW ZIN**

Japan-Myanmar friendly dances and Mr. Tomonori Ogata expressed his gratitude for the entertainment.

"The aim of the factory is to save foreign exchange ex-

penditure as the country is importing 80 containers of Shark branded cans from Thailand every month spending a large amount of foreign exchange.

The Japanese joint-venture

factory can produce 200 million tonnes per year — 150 million tonnes for Shark brand and the others for Alpine dairy products," said Dr. Sai San Htun. —Ye Yint Shine ■

Efforts made to set minimum wage agreeable to employers and employees: NCFMW

Ko Moe

THE National Committee on Fixing the Minimum Wage is working to set the minimum wage rate agreeable to employers and employees, said U Myo Aung, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, who also serve as a vice-chair (2) of the national committee.

"The Minimum Wage Law was enacted in 2013. The first-ever minimum wages was introduced at Ks3,600 for an eight-hour work day in August 2015. Under the Minimum Wage Law, the national committee is to revise the minimum wage rate every two years.

The national committee will set the new minimum wage rate agreeable to employers and employees," he added.

He went on to say that a series of discussions were made while authorities were working to set the first daily minimum wage of at Ks3,600.

At present, there are a few discussions between employers and employees about the new minimum wage.

As part of efforts to set new pay rates, the national committee, Confederation of Trade Union Myanmar (CTUM), Agriculture and Farmer Federation of Myanmar (Food Allied Workers) (AFFM-IUF), Myanmar Industrial Craft and Service Trade Union Federation (MICFTUsF), region/state labour unions and representatives from township labour organizations gathered at a meeting held on November 4 in Dagon Myothit (North) Township in Yangon.

Our federation has proposed to set the minimum wage of Ks5,600. Furthermore, authorities should designate gratuity and the rights of workers exactly based on their skills and expertise.

The ministry is now discussing the setting of the minimum wage between Ks4,000 and Ks4,800. "The minimum wage must be raised as work-

ers are grappling with the rising cost of living every day. Authorities are seeking the best way to increase the wage. For the time being, the country sees a decline in the productivity. So, we also consider the employer side. In other countries including China, the increase in commodity prices is linked to their economic growth.

In our country, the increase in prices of commodity is not associated with economic growth," said Economist Dr Zaw Oo from Myanmar Development Institute.

He added that capacity-building trainings should be given to employees to boost productivity.

The National Committee on Fixing the Minimum Wage also met with businesspersons at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) on Friday afternoon.

U Aye Lwin, one of participants at the meeting, said that the new minimum wage should

be different based on types of businesses as well as regions and states, urging the government to put more efforts to reduce the rise of land prices, electricity and transportation charges the businesspersons face.

Htet Htet Lwin, a company staff, said: "In our country, commodity prices always are already rising and never go down. In addition, the cost of living and general expenses are also increasing considerably. Since the introduction of the Yangon Bus Service, daily transportation costs of commuters are twofold higher than before."

To set a new minimum wage, the national committee will lead the meeting between employers and employees in Mandalay Region on November 11.

Plans are underway to take place a conference in December, comprising government, employees and employers, and those working for labour affairs. ■

Natural gas export earned US\$20 million more than last FY

DESPITE decreasing gas production of Yetagun, Zawtika and Yadana projects, export earnings from natural gas over past seven months in current fiscal year exceeded over US\$1.64 billion, which is up by about \$20 million against similar period of last FY.

During the same time of last FY, natural gas export revenue estimated \$1.61 billion, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Gas production from Yetagun, Zawtika and Yadana gas projects with their pipelines to Thailand are declining, according to an announcement of the Ministry of Electricity and Power.

Natural gas was started to be extracted from Yedagon gas field in Taninthayi offshore in

2000, with daily production of about 330 million cubic feet only for export. However, production has now begun to decline down to 250 million cubic feet.

Additionally, the gas from Zawtika Project located in the Gulf of Moattama started to be exported to the neighbouring country Thailand in 2014, with its production of 279 million cubic feet for use of Thailand and 64 million cubic feet for local consumption. According to announcement released in June of this year by the Ministry of Electricity and Power, it produces 250 million cubic feet for export and 80 million cubic feet for local consumption.

According to the statistics in 2014, the daily production from Yadana natural gas field totaled 910 million cubic meters,

711million cubic meters of which were exported to Thailand and the remaining were for domestic consumption. Nevertheless, the gas field matures and production declines and so, about 800million cubic feet are currently produced a day.

At present, about 450 million cubic feet are daily exported to China from Shwe natural gas field discovered in Rakhine offshore in 2014 and its production of about 100 million cubic feet is for local consumption.

In export sector, natural gas and agricultural products individually made up 25 per cent while CMP garment accounted for 16 per cent, minerals for eight per cent, fisheries for five per cent and forest, animal products and other products for 21 per cent. — Mon Mon ■

Over 60 tonnes of dried tea leaves go to China, Thailand in one week

MYANMAR exported more than 60 tonnes of dried tea leaves to China and Thailand through cross-border points in the third week of last month, earning over US\$22,000 trade authorities say.

According to official statistics, China, the world's most populous country, bought over 31 tonnes of Myanmar's dried tea leaves worth over \$10,000 from Muse 105-mile trade zone and Chinshwehaw border gate between 14 and 20 October.

The neighbouring Thailand also imported \$11,947 worth of dried tea leaves weighing 30 tonnes via Tachilek border trade sta-

tion within the same period.

Previous week before 14 October, the country exported nearly 100 tonnes of domestically produced dried tea leaves, including 29 tonnes to China from Muse gate and over 70 tonnes to Thailand through Tachilek gate.

When compared to the previous week, the export volume of dried tea leaves decreased by about 40 tonnes in the third week of October.

Dried tea leaves have been commercially cultivated in Mogkok Township in Mandalay Region and Ywangan area in Shan State. Efforts are being made to improve international market access.—Shwe Khine ■

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Union Minister of Education attends 39th UNESCO General Conference

A Myanmar Delegation consisting of Dr Myo Thein Gyi, the Union Minister of Education, U Han Thu, Myanmar's Ambassador to France, and Prof. Dr. Kyi Shwin from Yangon University of Foreign Languages and the Secretary General of Myanmar UNESCO Commission attended the UNESCO General Conference held in Paris.

Dr Myo Thein Gyi attended the senior minister meetings on 1 November and attended a breakfast meeting led by UNESCO Secretary General Ms. Irina Vokova and other Ministers of Education from UNESCO countries on 2 November.

At the meeting, the Union Minister discussed and explained Myanmar's policies and strategies to achieve UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The Union Minister also



Dr Myo Thein Gyi and party attend UNESCO General Conference in Paris. **PHOTO: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

gave a speech on Myanmar's National Policy and explained the outline of the National Education Strategic Plan 2016-2021 in accordance with UNESCO's SDG. The National Education Strategic Plan includes policies to ensure no one is left behind and all chil-

dren receive the opportunity to get education. Free education from kindergarten to high school is one of the goals and during the 2017-2018 education year there was a 98.1 per cent attendance in kindergartens across Myanmar.

The Union Minister said

there have been special classes for students with vision and listening impairments and around 49 ethnic languages were being taught in their respective regions. The Ministry of Education has also established a Department for Extracurricular and Lifelong Learning and has changed the education system to a KG+12 grade system. The ministry is also developing a new deep learning curriculum to replace the old rote learning system and is collaborating with other countries for student and teacher exchange programs. One such program is the Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) with the British government.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has announced that technological and vocational skills will become a first grade

education and the Diploma for teachers will be changed from a 2-year course to a 4-year course. The Union Minister also expressed his gratitude to UNESCO for the inclusion in the World Heritage List and sharing of new communication and transport technologies.

The Union Minister and delegates attended the UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning on 2 November and discussed plans for conducting skill development workshops for educators and teachers in Myanmar.

The Union Minister also attended the UNESCO Education Commission meeting on 3 November.

The Delegation led by the Union Minister returned to Myanmar on 5 November. —Ministry of Education ■

Tourists flock to Hsin Kyone Fort in Ava Ancient City

HSIN KYONE Fort in Ava Ancient City is flocked with visitors local and abroad in the beginning of high season, residents say.

"This year sees a significant increase in number of holiday-makers in the Ava Cultural Zone in TadaU Township in Mandalay. The Hsin Kyone Fort in the area was largely crowded with visitors on November 3, the full moon day of Tazungmone," said one of residents in Hsinkyone Village.

He added that the majority of visitors are from foreign countries.

Hsin Kyone Fort (Innwa Fort) was built in A.D 1874 (1236 ME) during the reign of King Mindom, under the supervision of Crown Prince Kanaung, Min-

ister U Kaung and Minister U Pho Hlaing, Lord of Yaw and with the assistance of Italian engineer Commotto. The fort is situated in the form of triangle with other two forts. The other two are Asay Gan Fort (Sagaing Fort) on the western bank of the River Ayeyawady, Thabyedan Fort on the eastern bank, few miles below Amarapura. These forts were built to defend against the invaders via the river.

The square-shaped Hsin Kyone Fort consists of three brick walls. This is the best destination to enjoy beautiful landscapes along the river and observe cannons and arsenal in the ancient structure. —Than Zaw Min/Zeyatu (Magway) ■



Tourists crowd to Hsin Kyone Fort in Ava ancient city. **PHOTO: THAN ZAW MIN/ZEYATU (MAGWAY)**

Historical Gway Chaung Fort crowded with visitors

THANKS to social network, historical Gway Chaung Fort located at opposite bank of Ayeyawady River has become one of popular inbound tour sites and high number of holidaymakers flocked to the place this year, said the local residents of Gway Chaung (South) village, Magway Township.

During this year, around 80 trippers visited Gway Chaung Fort a day during holidays and there were around 30 visitors in the other days. Local travelers go on a trip to Gway Chaung Fort to observe the historical site. There

is no yet commercial place near the Fort. If there is better transportation to the Fort, more people might come, said a traveler from Yangon.

Gway Chaung Fort was built with a wall having 275 feet length, 155 feet width, 12 feet height and 4 feet thickness in order to resist British invasion. There are 159 rooms for Myanmar's soldiers to fight back the British invading troops in the east, west and north of the wall. It is also near Min Hla Fort situated 12 nautical miles away from Magway town. —ZayYaTu (Magway) ■



Gway Chaung Fort. **PHOTO: ZAYYATU (MAGWAY)**

Army deployed in Malaysia's Penang as floods displace thousands

KUALA LUMPUR — Military forces were deployed on Sunday to help thousands of displaced people in Malaysia's northern state of Penang, officials said, as floodwater rose from more than 24 hours of incessant rain.

At least 2,000 people had been evacuated and 80 per cent of the state was hit by typhoon-like winds and heavy rain, chief minister Lim Guan Eng said in a statement.

He said floodwater had risen to 3-4 metres (10-12 feet). Lim also warned in a Facebook post that more rain was expected and advised residents to stay at home.

Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the National Security Council was coordinating with police and the military to

assist flood victims after a request for assistance from Penang.

Hundreds of trees were toppled and roads were submerged, leaving many areas practically paralysed, Malaysian news agency Bernama reported. At least two people had been killed, it said.

"We remain fearful that there may still be untoward incidents because of the strong winds, the like of which have never been experienced before, and flash floods might recur," Lim told reporters in Penang, according to Bernama.

Hundreds of people had been placed in temporary shelters after their homes were flooded or destroyed by the storm.—Reuters ■

ASEAN to pass on letting East Timor join grouping this year

BANGKOK — The Association of Southeast Asian Nations has reached a decision to refrain from admitting East Timor to the regional grouping within the year, it was learned Saturday from ASEAN diplomatic sources.

Amid the 50th anniversary this year of the bloc's founding, there have been repeated discussions on whether or not to let East Timor join as its 11th member.

The former Portuguese colony submitted an application for membership in 2011, but some members have been cool to the idea.

Singapore, for example, has voiced concern over the country's lack of human resource capability to cope with the large number of ASEAN meetings.

A feasibility study to assess the country's readiness to join the organization in the areas of its politics and security, economy, and social issues has been completed and the findings are being studied by high-level officials.

Despite receiving oil and gas revenues since 2005, it remains one of the world's poorest countries, with a yawning economic gap with ASEAN member countries.

There had been a possibility of East Timor's membership being put on the agenda of the grouping's summit in November.

East Timor's Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri recently confirmed that he will attend the ASEAN Summit in the Philippines as an observer.—Kyodo News ■



A screen capture of supplied video taken by a spectator shows a drone falling before crashing into the crowd during an event in Ogaki, Gifu Prefecture, central Japan, on 4 November 2017. Six people, including children, were injured, according to police. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Six people hurt as drone crashes into crowd at central Japan park

GIFU, (Japan) — A 4-kilogram drone hovering over a park during an event in Gifu Prefecture on Saturday suddenly crashed into the crowd, injuring six people including children, police said.

The victims, aged between 5 and 48, sustained minor injuries such as scratches on foreheads and shoulders, according to the police.

The drone, about 85 centimeters in diameter and 55 cm in height, was scattering sweets from the air at the park in Ogaki, central Japan, during the event showcasing robotic technologies, the police said. The event was organized by a local tourism as About 600 people, including some 100 children and their families, were gathered at the event site at

the time of the incident, according to the organizer.

Police are questioning the 37-year-old male representative of a drone-producing company in the prefecture who was flying the drone. According to the organizer, the man said he had acquired the transport ministry's permit to operate a drone at the event.—Kyodo News ■

Cambodia sees Belt and Road Initiative as key development strategy for trade, investment

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia regarded the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative as a key development strategy for the country's trade and investment expansion, said a Commerce Ministry news release on Sunday.

Proposed by China in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, aiming at building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes of Silk Road.

"This initiative not only

brings enormous advantages to the countries involved, but also becomes a long-term strategy to promote connectivity and cooperation in all fields such as infrastructure, economy, investment and finance, as well as strengthens people-to-people bonds," the news release said, citing a Commerce Minister Pan Sorasak's speech delivered at the 2017 Asia-Pacific Regional Conference in Perth, Western Australia on Saturday.

The minister said that through the initiative, Cambodia and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding

on strengthening cooperation and investment on industries in 2015.

He added that under the Cambodia-China Belt and Road Initiative cooperation, China has invested in many large projects in Cambodia, including a 400-megawatt Lower Sesan II Hydropower Plant with the cost of 781 million US dollars, a 246-megawatt Tatay River Hydropower Plant with the cost of 540 million US dollars, 16 road projects worth 1.6 billion US dollars, and a 880-million-US-dollar new airport in Siem Reap province.—Xinhua ■

One killed, dozens of buildings damaged in strong earthquake in Indonesia

JAKARTA — One person died and dozens of buildings were damaged in the latest powerful earthquake in Maluku province in Indonesia, local disaster agency said on Saturday.

"One old person died during the quake," Abdul Jabarraharusun, head of emergency unit of

disaster management agency in Maluku, told Xinhua by phone on Saturday.

A total of 40 houses and scores of buildings including a shopping mall, an airport, school buildings and government office buildings, were devastated by the 6.2 magnitude quake earlier

this week. The quake also forced dozens of people to flee home and take shelters on safer grounds, the official said.

The assessment of the earthquake's impact is undertaken by the officials of the disaster management agency, according to Jabarraharusun.—Xinhua ■

Let us work in relays for national reconciliation and Union peace!

Khin Maung Oo

DURING the two-year-period after the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement was signed, the Union Peace Conference—21st Panglong had been convened for two times. Now preparations are under way to successfully resume its 3rd Conference very soon.

The ultimate goal of the political negotiations by convening the Peace Conferences is the emergence of a Federal Union as hoped by all after complete cessation of internal armed conflicts. So as to reach the destination there are many processes to be performed. Out of them, the first-ever one is none other than taking part in the signing of the nationwide ceasefire agreement.

It is of great importance to lay down fundamental principles on federalism

based on common political agreements achieved from political negotiations at different levels after signing the NCA. So, efforts are initially being made for the successful convening of the NCA and political dialogues. It is the most important thing to have enough time, to thoroughly discuss and to gain mutual trust among all participants. Likewise, pure minds and unadulterated intentions are important for national reconciliation.

As there are still some armed ethnic groups left to sign the NCA, the Union Government has repeatedly said that the Union Government would always welcome the remaining groups with open arms to come to the negotiation table.

The State Counsellor has also said that the international political situation was always changing, and that national unity was the most important for any country to stand tall among the other

countries of the world.

Only if there was national reconciliation and peace, will national unity be strong. A federal union can be built up through national unity. To do so, all armed national ethnic groups need to take part in signing the NCA. Now we are required to make concerted efforts for the remaining groups left to sign to join with firm determination. We hereby invite our brethren to promptly join for the sake future generations. We all need to leave a brighter future for them.

The NCA is one of the important milestones of the political road map. Only upon completion of it, other important processes can be performed such as drawing a fundamental framework of federalism, convening national-level political dialogues, convening the Union Peace Conference and performing other important processes. If the UPDJC, the

most important process for bringing about Union Peace can strictly and enthusiastically make efforts, political strength will become stronger.

Now that efforts for all-inclusive participation according to the steps included in the peace process are being made, we hope that the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong Third Session would be held very soon. We also hope that the work of laying down the fundamental principles, the foundation for building up the Federal Union would be completed by 2018. Accordingly, we hereby urge to hand over the task of National Reconciliation and Union Peace to younger generations as instructed by the State Counsellor so that our country would be able to stand tall in the midst of the world as a country no one dares to insult for the youths of today will become the future citizens of Myanmar. ■

A Real Shelter from the Heat of the Worldly Life

Dr. Saw Mra Aung

WHEN we got out of Yangon, the new day had just broken. The country outside the city lay fresh from the coolness of the night. Nature revealed its beauty to its advantage in the rising sun. The traffic still thinned in the Yangon-Bago High-way. As our car scudded along, all landscapes on both sides of the road spun swiftly around behind.

We were now bound somewhere north, which could ensure us a day-solace from the scorching April sun. This summer, especially after the Thingyan, was unbearably hot. The April sun raged with undiminished fury for some consecutive days. The air-conditioned rooms could cushion us from this intense heat only temporarily. We felt stifling hot in the narrow rooms of such sort. So restless and fretful were we in the heat of the scorching sun. We knew that we humans were paying for what we had done to nature. Though we thus submitted to the heat philosophically, it was too much for us to stand. The mounting temperature approached our maximum forbearance. We felt an urge for at least a momentary shelter in the cool shade of wooded lands outside the city. So, before day-break, we had rigged out with what was necessary and departed hurriedly to buck the hot, boisterous city, our duties and jobs dispensed with. This was it that we were now on the Yangon- Bago High-way leading northwards.

Our team comprised eight members. Ko Kyaw Swa, who was the owner and driver of the car and Daw Tin Tin Khaing, a member of Yangon Rice-donation Association, who were familiar with this



road, took the helm of the trip. Towards 8am, when we neared Hlegu, the weather changed suddenly. The temperature soared up suddenly. So the windows of the car had to be shut up and then all air-conditioners inside had to be turned on and kept at full volume. Soon, with the consensus of all members, the car stopped in front of a tea-shop on the roadside in downtown Hlegu. We were ushered in and led by a waiter to a large empty table in a corner. I noticed all tables inside the shop were taken by passengers of all ages and descriptions. We wolfed down snacks ordered. While having breakfast, we, due to higher temperature, sweated all over. Outside, the sun was shooting its fiery glances down upon the earth. We did not want to take trouble to stay in that merciless heat even for a few minutes. So, once we had breakfasted, we piled rapidly

into the car. When we installed ourselves in the car, we were out of breath, not due to tiredness but to the oppressive heat.

Soon, we reached Inn-ta-kaw. We saw many factories on both sides of the road. After we had passed Inn-ta-kaw, we drifted along for some time. Often, we espied pagoda-crowned hills looming high above the wooded lands at some distance from the road. Off and on, we saw some meditation centres on the edges of forests. At 9am, we got to the Ten-mile Hill near Bago. All of a sudden, we sighted the arched way-gate reading “Monle Forest-retreat Monastery”. With the approval of Daw Tin Tin Khaing who had been to it once, our car went into the gate and pursued the concrete path leading off east. Both sides were shrubs, sometimes interspersed with bamboo groves. After a few minutes, we got right

in front of the monastery. It ensconced itself on a thickly-wooded slope with low gradient. In the north-western corner of the precincts stood a small gilded pagoda sheltered by a large leafy banyan tree and a big Dhamma-hall (Dhamma-sa-la). Some Jackfruit, mango, *Padauk* and *Gankaw* trees huddled together at the gate. We walked under them to a covered passage, which led down to a patch of land ended with a three-storey building. Down on the right of the passage were one-storey meditation buildings in row and on the left were two-storey monastic buildings. Some mango trees in front of the three-storey building were covered with dangling fruit, ripe and green. Some crows and birds of unknown species were pecking at some over-ripe mangoes, cawing aloud continually. The whole precinct rang with noises of the birds. We found ourselves surrounded on all sides by the forestry scenery. We felt due to the leafy trees in the precinct as if the heat torturing us all the way lessened suddenly.

We found a stair-case and an elevator on the ground-floor of the three-storey building, which led upstairs. We ascended the second floor by the stair-case. That floor contained a big hall and a bed-room. A verandah was projected out eastwards from that floor. It overlooked a wide lake down a little distance to the east, whose banks were thickly forested. Its surface was stirred by ripples, turning deep blue, as breaths of wind came rushing through the forests on the bank. In the big hall, we found bodily relics in varying sizes and shapes of Monle Sayadaw and other eminent Arahants loaded in the caskets and glass-show cases.

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A Real Shelter from the Heat of the Worldly Life

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We also saw the life-size statue of Monle Sayadaw Bhaddanta Samvara in the manner of sitting on a couch and the circle of the Paticcasamupada (Law of Dependent Origination) hung on the wall. We paid homage reverentially to the statue of the Sayadaw and the relics which bore the standing witness to the liberation from the Samsara. Then we went down and walked to the office of the trustees standing across the building. There, we made cash-donation and bought a booklet which included the short biography of Monle Sayadaw and the discourse on the Paticcasamupada he had preached to his laity.

Monle Sayadaw Ven. Samvara was a native of Gangaw Township. Although he entered the Holy Order as a novice with Monle Sayadaw Bhaddanta Jagara as his preceptor at his advanced age, he meditated ardently at a small hut by the western bank of the southern lake inside the precinct of the Monle Forest-retreat Monastery. At the age of 57, he was ordained as a monk with Ven. Sucittalankara, Presiding Sayadaw of the Manaung Monastery in West Gangaw Village as his preceptor. When he as a monk attained six rains-retreats (Vassa), he learnt insight meditation (Vipassana) through Mogok technique from Ven. Dhammisara and Ven. Sumana, emphasizing the Paticcasamupada. Then he preached his personal meditative experiences to his lay people. Then, at the request of his lay people, he opened a meditation centre in Gangaw and then toured various parts of Myanmar and preached the Dhamma. At the invitation of his lay people abroad, he went to U.S, U.K, Australia, Singapore and Thailand and preached his personal meditative experiences to them. He opened forest-retreat meditation centres in West Gangaw, Mandalay, the Ten-mile Hill near Bago and Kyaing-tong. Due to his relentless contributions to the Sasana, he was awarded the Aggamahakammathanacariya Title by the

State in the year 1361 Myanmar Era. He in his 34th vassa demised in Mandalay in 2011 at the age of 91, leaving behind his bodily relics.

It is learnt that Monle Sayadaw emphatically expounded the Discourse on the Paticcasamupada to his disciples. It is included in the Vibhanga, the second of the Seven Treatises of the Abhidhamma Pitaka. It was re-popularized in Myanmar by Mogok Sayadaw Ven. Vimala, who was known as an Arahant to the whole Myanmar. So all the monks who followed the Mogok meditative technique emphasized this discourse in preaching the Dhamma at the insight meditation centres. The Paticcasamupada explains about the twelve factors- ignorance (avijja), volitional activities (sankhara), consciousness (vinnana), mind-matter (nama-rupa), six sense-bases (salyayatana), contact (phassa), feeling (vedana), craving (tanha), grasping (upadana), existence (bhava), birth (jati), death (marana), etc. which make beings subject to repeated rebirths in Samsara. In it, the preceding factors are the cause of the following ones. For example, due to ignorance, beings do actions, moral and immoral. Due to these volitional actions, they get mind and matter (Five Aggregates). Due to the Five Aggregates, they get six sense-bases such as eyes, ears, noses, etc. Due to the six sense-bases, they are overcome with craving and then grasping. Due to grasping, they are reborn. Due to rebirth, they face sorrow, lamentation, death, etc. When they die, due to their consequences of their volitional actions and craving, they have to be reborn again. Thus the round of rebirths goes round and round endlessly. So the Buddha preaches that only if one eradicates ignorance, the starting pointing and craving, the leader of all evils, this endless round of births will come to a total stop and beings are free from the Samsara.

At the short but clear explanation on the release from the Samsara through the Paticcasamupada, it seemed to me that an enlightening idea flashed into my mind

and I realized what I should do for my samsaric journey ahead. My restless mind was calmed down to some degree. I looked up and saw amongst the branches of the trees the sun still scorching hot against the cloudless sky. But my mind was cooled. On the way back home, I fell to thinking about Arahats like Mogok Sayadaw, Sayadaw U Sila, Vebhu Sayadaw, Zulun Sayadaw, etc who left behind their bodily relics and their body intact after their demise. At the same time, I thought that I had today discovered a real shelter from the heat of the worldly life and felt myself lucky to have been born and bred in Myanmar where the Three Types of the Sasana (Dispensation) – Pariyatti (Buddhist Scriptures), Patipatti (Meditation) and Pativedha (Attainment of Path-knowledge and Fruition-knowledge) – thrived.

Though I started writing this article from April this year when I visited the Monle Forest-retreat, I chance to finish it off just now for some reason. In course of writing it, some events have taken place in our country, a few of which could attract the global attention. It is learnt that a rumour has been going around about our country in the global community for a few months. I think this rumour should not be taken as the truth, for ours is a country over which loving-kindness and compassion of the Lord Buddha and Arahats are showered. Its people also stick to the Five Moral Precepts, the first of which is to avoid killing living beings. Moreover, they believe in the Kamma Niyama (Law of Actions and their Consequences) which explains that “One must enjoy or suffer from the equal results of their actions”. So, let alone committing genocide, they flinch from killing only a tiniest living being. Therefore, I would like to conclude this article referring to the Kalama Sutta (included in the Anguttara Nikaya) that, “One should not believe a rumour, a hearsay, inference, speculation, ... etc, but should try to accept or discard it only after analyzing it through one's rationality”. ■

Commander-in-Chief to attend Defence and Security 2017



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is greeted by Chief of Joint Staff of the Royal Thai Armed Forces on arrival in Thailand. **PHOTO: MNA**

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and delegation left Yangon by air yesterday morning for Bangkok to attend the ASEAN Defence and Security Exhibition 2017.

The Commander-in-Chief and delegation were welcomed

at Suvarnabhumi Airport by Gen Ponpipa Benyasri Chief of Joint Staff and senior officers of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand U Myo Myint Than, Myanmar Military Attaché (Army, Navy, Air) Brig-Gen Khin Zaw and officials.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Commander-in-Chief honours Aung La N Sang

CERTIFICATE of honour awarded to Aung La N Sang by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing was handed over to the One Championship Middleweight Title Holder through a representative at Sedona Hotel in Yangon yesterday morning.

Aung La N Sang was honoured as he defeated his challenger Alain Ngalani (Hong Kong), Muay Thai and Kickboxing Champion, through a guillotine choke in the first round of an open-weight bout

at ONE Championship 63. The match took place at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 3 November.

The Champion accepted the certificate of honour from Col Min Thet Oo of Yangon Command.

In addition to the Commander-in-Chief's certificate of honour, families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) also presented an honorary award of K 10 million to Aung La N Sang who won the One Championship Middleweight Title on 30 June this year. Myanmar News Agency ■



Aung La N Sang accepts the Commander-in-Chief's certificate of honour. **PHOTO: MNA**

Trump kicks off Asia tour with golf diplomacy in Japan

TOKYO — US President Donald Trump began the first leg of his Asian tour in Japan on Sunday for a visit in which he will look to put on show with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe the strength of their countries' defence alliance in the face of the North Korea threat while promoting their shared values.

The two leaders spent part of the first day of Trump's three-day trip — his first to Japan since taking office in January — sharing their passion for golf at a country club just outside Tokyo.

"We are in the midst of having very major discussions on many subjects, including North Korea and trade and other things, and we're doing very well," Trump told reporters before having dinner with Abe in Tokyo after their golf game.

In their summit Monday, Abe and Trump are likely to reconfirm their shared stance of applying the maximum possible pressure on North Korea to compel it to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

While there has been no significant provocation by Pyongyang in recent weeks, both Japan and the United States have kept the North Korea issue high on their agenda and will remain on alert for further provocations timed to coincide with Trump's tour.

Abe has repeatedly voiced support for Trump's position that all options, including military action, are "on the table" in



US President Donald Trump (L) and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meet at Kasumigaseki Country Club in Kawagoe, Saitama Prefecture, north of Tokyo, on 5 November 2017. Trump and Abe will discuss regional security and other issues during Trump's three-day Japan visit. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

responding to Pyongyang, but Trump's visit offers him a chance to reiterate his backing in person. Speaking before a crowd of US and Japanese troops after arriving in Air Force One on Sunday morning at the US Yokota Air Base in the suburbs of Tokyo, Trump refrained from mentioning North Korea by name.

But he warned that "no one — no dictator, no regime and no nation — should underestimate, ever, American resolve."

He also hailed the impor-

ance of the Japan-US alliance and praised efforts by US allies to "renew their commitment to peace through strength."

"For almost 60 years, the military alliance...has endured (as) a cornerstone of sovereignty, security and prosperity for our nations, this region and indeed the entire world," Trump said.

Trump earlier told journalists aboard Air Force One en route to Japan that Washington will decide "very soon" on whether to relist North Korea

as a state sponsor of terrorism.

He also said he plans to hold talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom he expects to meet at a summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Viet Nam during his tour, and ask him for increased cooperation in reining in Pyongyang.

On Sunday afternoon, the leaders played golf together with Japanese professional golfer Hideki Matsuyama. —Kyodo News ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Pro-Catalonia independence parties seen winning election

MADRID — Pro-Catalonia independence parties will win the regional election in December but are unlikely to take a parliamentary majority, a survey published in *La Vanguardia* showed on Sunday.

According to the GAD3 poll of 1,233 people between 30 October and 3 November, pro-independence parties ERC, PDECat and CUP would win the election with between 66 and 69 seats in the 135-seat parliament. —Reuters ■

Iran, Russia, Turkey top military officials to meet on security cooperation

TEHRAN — Iran's army chief, Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri, is to attend a trilateral meeting with his Russian and Turkish counterparts on security cooperation in the near future, *Financial Tribune* daily reported on Sunday.

"Soon, the chiefs of the general staff of Russia, Turkey and Iran will hold a trilateral summit," Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Ebrahim Rahimpour was quoted as saying.

"They will talk about the security of the region and fighting terrorism," Rahimpour said without specifying the venue for the meeting. —Xinhua ■

Democratic leader vows fair nomination process in 2020 after uproar

WASHINGTON — The head of the Democratic National Committee on Saturday vowed to ensure all candidates have an equal chance to win the Democratic presidential nomination after a former party chair accused the committee of rigging the process to aid Hillary Clinton in 2016.

DNC Chairman Tom Perez said in a statement the 2020 nominating process would be "unquestionably fair and transparent."

Perez made his comments after former DNC Chairwoman Donna Brazile said in an opinion

piece in *Politico* earlier this week that the nomination process had been "rigged" in Clinton's favor after she signed a fundraising agreement with the DNC in 2015.

Clinton, a former US senator and first lady, beat Senator Bernie Sanders for the nomination but lost the election to Republican Donald Trump in November 2016.

Senator Elizabeth Warren, a Massachusetts Democrat, told CNN this week that Perez needed to assure Democrats, including supporters of Sanders, that the process was fair and she

agreed that the 2016 nominating process was "rigged."

Perez said he is "more committed than ever before to restoring voters' faith in our democratic process because even the perception of impartiality or an unfair advantage undermines our ability to win. That is unacceptable."

Sanders' campaign manager Jeff Weaver told CNN this week he thought the debate schedule was "rigged."

Perez said the party will "decide the debate schedule in advance, instead of negotiating

it after all our candidates have entered the race" and "any and all joint fundraising agreements will be transparent."

Leaked emails in 2016 suggested the party had actively favored Clinton over Sanders.

Former Clinton campaign manager Robby Mook on Friday denied the nomination had been rigged in Clinton's favor.

"Hillary Clinton won this primary with almost 4 million votes," Mook told CNN. "The idea that the DNC could rig a contest frankly is laughable." —Reuters ■

Two dozen militants killed by unmanned planes in Afghanistan

KABUL — Nearly two dozen armed insurgents have been killed by unmanned planes in the eastern region of Afghanistan since Saturday, officials said Sunday.

The security forces in the latest strikes against the armed opposition groups targeted a Taliban hideout in the eastern Paktia province killing eight fighters and injuring seven others, spokesman for provincial government Abdullah Hasrat said. —Xinhua ■

Sicilians elect new governor in dress rehearsal for national vote

ROME — Sicilians began voting for a new regional government on Sunday in a crucial ballot seen as a test of national trends ahead of parliamentary elections in the spring.

The contest on the Mediterranean island is expected to be a close race between a resurgent centre right and the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement, with the ruling centre left, weakened by internal divisions, in a distant third place.

Bolstered by the return of four-times prime minister Silvio Berlusconi to the campaign trail, the centre right is looking to reclaim its traditional supremacy over Sicily and show that after years of scandals it is again a force to be reckoned with.

It faces tough opposition from 5-Star, which has never won control of an Italian region and hopes victory in Sicily can propel it to success in the national ballot to be held by May at the latest.

The centre left, which now heads both the Sicilian and national governments, has succumbed to feuding with leftist rivals — a fratricidal struggle that looks likely to wreck its chances of retaining power.

Some 4.5 million Sicilians are eligible to vote for the island's new governor, with opinion polls



Forza Italia party leader Silvio Berlusconi (L) speaks next to local candidate Nello Musumeci during a rally in Catania, Italy, on 2 November 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

pointing to a battle between 5-Star's Giancarlo Cancelleri and Nello Musumeci at the head of a centre-right coalition.

Fabrizio Micari, the candidate of the ruling centre-left Democratic Party (PD) may be challenged by Claudio Fava, backed by a cluster of left-wing parties.

A bad showing for Micari would pile more pressure on PD

leader and former Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, whose party has splintered after a raft of local vote setbacks in recent years.

5-Star, which leads most national opinion polls with about 27 per cent of the vote, just ahead of the PD, has invested most political capital in the Sicily election, with its new leader Luigi Di Maio campaigning hard on the island since the summer.

The centre-right bloc is made up of Berlusconi's conservative Forza Italia and the anti-immigrant Northern League, each with about 14 per cent of the national vote, flanked by the far-right Brothers of Italy on around 5 per cent. Exit polls will be issued when voting ends at 10 pm (2100 GMT), but the actual vote count will not begin until Monday at 8 am. —Reuters ■

Brazilian electoral body considers forming anti-fake news task force

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil's Supreme Electoral Court (TSE) is looking to create a task force to investigate and combat fake news, as 2018 presidential elections loom, local media reported on Saturday.

According to the daily *Folha de Sao Paulo*, the electoral body is concerned about the possible impact that fake news generators could have on the elections.

Last week, Defence Minister Raul Jungmann said the army's communications and digital warfare command (CCOMGEX) could help weed out fake news spread through social networks.

The TSE said it was considering setting up "working groups to study security measures to be adopted to guarantee the electorate's freedom to vote."

To that end, the TSE said it would reach an "agreement with the Defence Ministry's technology department," which oversees the CCOMGEX. —Xinhua ■

Neither George Bush voted for Trump, book author tells NY Times

NEW YORK — George H.W. Bush and his son George W. Bush did not vote for fellow Republican Donald Trump last year, says the author of a new book on the 41st and 43rd US presidents in which they open up about their disapproval of the man now occupying the White House.

The elder Bush voted for Hillary Clinton, while his son voted for neither Trump nor his Democratic challenger, or "none of the above," said Mark K. Updegrove, who wrote "The Last Republicans" with the cooperation of the two Bushes. HarperCollins will publish the book on 14 November.

In an interview with the New York Times, Updegrove said the elder Bush, 93, who served as president from 1989 to 1993, had an instinctive dislike of Trump though he did not know him per-

sonally. In an interview during the 2016 presidential campaign, George H.W. Bush told the author that Trump was a "blowhard," driven by "a certain ego" and lacking a commitment to public service. The younger Bush, 71, who served in the White House from 2001 to 2009, believed candidate Trump lacked both humility and a necessary understanding of the presidency, Updegrove said in previewing the book about the relationship between the Bushes, written with the cooperation of the father and son.

During the campaign, George W. Bush told the author that he feared he would turn out to be the last Republican elected president. "At the time, I think he was concerned that Hillary Clinton would win," Updegrove told the Times.

"But if you look at his values



President George H.W. Bush hands the ball to President George W. Bush for the ceremonial first pitch in game five of the 2017 World Series between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Houston Astros at Minute Maid Park in Houston, TX, USA, on 29 October 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

and those shared by his father and Ronald Reagan, they are very much in contrast to the values of the Republican Party today, in

particular the platform that Donald Trump ran on, which is essentially protectionism and a certain xenophobia," said Updegrove, a

historian who has written several books about the presidency.

Updegrove could not be reached for further comment.

"The American people voted to elect an outsider who is capable of implementing real, positive, and needed change — instead of a lifelong politician beholden to special interests," White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said in a statement.

"If they were interested in continuing decades of costly mistakes, another establishment politician more concerned with putting politics over people would have won." Like many Americans, George W. Bush was surprised that Trump fared so well in last year's Republican state primaries, where his brother Jeb, a former Florida governor, emerged as one of Trump's most frequent targets. —Reuters ■



People march during a demonstration under the banner "Protect the climate - stop coal" two days before the start of the COP 23 UN Climate Change Conference hosted by Fiji but held in Bonn, Germany, on 4 November 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Thousands march against coal ahead of climate conference in Bonn

FRANKFURT — Thousands of people took to the streets of Bonn on Saturday to call for the phasing out of coal as a source of power ahead of global talks on climate change in the German city next week. The issue of whether to end coal production has been one of the sticking points in coalition negotiations between German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her would-be allies: the Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP).

Organisers of the march called for the German government to implement the 2015 Paris plan to shift the world economy from fossil fuels this century.

The implementation of the Paris accord will be discussed at the 195-nation climate meeting in Bonn from 6-17 November. "We expect the Federal Government to finally and effectively implement the Paris Climate Agreement," activist group Campact said in a statement. The group

said 25,000 people took part in the march. A spokesman for the Bonn police said he could not provide an official figure but estimated the number of participants at around 10,000. US President Donald Trump has announced plans to pull out from the 2015 Paris accord to limit global warming. His pro-coal policies and doubts that climate change is caused by man-made greenhouse gas emissions have cast a shadow over the Bonn meeting.—Reuters ■

South Korea's Blue House asks people to "warmly welcome" Trump's visit

SEOUL — South Korea's presidential Blue House on Sunday asked people to warmly welcome US President Donald Trump who will make a state visit to the country next week.

Presidential spokesman Park Soo-hyun told a press briefing that the government will treat President Trump as the state guest with respect and warmly welcome him in a bid to turn his visit into a decisive opportunity to make the South Korea-US relations a "great alliance" beyond the current comprehensive alliance.

The briefing came ahead of Trump's two-day visit to South Korea next week. The US president will hold a summit meeting with South Korean President Moon Jae-in on Tuesday, delivering a speech to the National

Assembly the next day before leaving for China.

Rallies both welcoming and opposing Trump's travel to South Korea were held Saturday in central Seoul. Elderly conservative voters hailed his visit, but anti-Trump protesters claimed his bellicose rhetoric toward the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) escalated military tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The anti-Trump protesters reportedly requested over 100 rallies to be held in Seoul during Trump's two-day stay.

The spokesman said the comprehensive South Korea-US cooperation in political, economic and military areas is currently more important than ever, given the very grave security situations on the Korean Peninsula.

Park said the US leader's first state-visit to South Korea in 25 years had a significant meaning under the current situations, noting that Trump's visit will eventually bring peace and prosperity to the peninsula.

He said welcoming a guest hospitably is a tradition that has been handed down from generation to generation in South Korea, adding that through the hospitality, South Korea and the United States will be able to confirm the firm alliance. The spokesman asked people to warmly welcome President Trump wholeheartedly, vowing best efforts to achieve the results that can make people's lives and safety as well as peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula leap a step forward through President Trump's state visit.—Xinhua ■

Defence minister to inspect missile defence test site in Hawaii in January

TOKYO — Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera will travel to Hawaii in January to visit the US test facility of a land-based missile defence system that Japan now plans to deploy, Japanese government sources said Saturday.

Japan plans to introduce the Aegis Ashore system to counter the threat posed by North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

The United States conducts missile intercept tests at the complex on Kauai Island that Onodera will visit. Japan aims to learn more about the operation of the system and issues it should take into account when introducing the system, the sources said.

Onodera is also expected to hold talks with Adm. Harry Harris, commander of US Pacific Command, during the visit to further enhance bilateral cooperation through the missile defence system, the sources said.

Aegis Ashore is similar to the missile defence system fitted on Japan's Aegis destroyers, but is expected to reduce the workload of Self-Defence Forces in missile intercept operations because the Aegis Ashore system is installed at a fixed location on land.

The government is expected to set aside funds when it drafts the fiscal 2018 budget next month to cover part of the costs to introduce the new missile system.—Kyodo News ■

Indonesian officials find multiple violations in deadly factory blaze

TANGERANG, (Indonesia) — Police investigating a fire that killed nearly 50 people at a fireworks factory on the outskirts of Jakarta late last month have found multiple safety violations at the plant, which was crammed with three times the number of workers allowed.

One of Indonesia's worst industrial disasters, the 26 October blaze in the congested industrial suburb of Tangerang, has cast a new spotlight on lax safety standards in Indonesia, where rules are often ignored or weakly enforced.

Reuters interviews with police investigators, government officials and survivors show that at the time of the fire,

the factory was overcrowded, had only one exit, and a single mid-sized fire extinguisher even though it had reported having four on site.

The building housed more than 4,000 kg of combustible materials in various locations, which, police say, made it all too easy for the fire to rip through the 2,600 square metre factory within minutes, killing 49 workers and injuring dozens more. Survivors told Reuters they had not had any emergency training or drills, and were not familiar with evacuation routes. Police spokesman Argo Yuwono said there was no indication anyone had tried to use the fire extinguisher.—Reuters ■



An aerial view of an explosion at a fireworks factory at Kosambi village in Tangerang, Banten province, Indonesia, on 26 October 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Death toll from typhoon in Viet Nam rises to 27

HUE, (Viet Nam) — The death toll rose to at least 27 on Sunday from the typhoon that pumelled central and southern Viet Nam just days before the region is due to host the APEC summit of Asia-Pacific leaders.

Typhoon Damrey, the 12th major storm to hit Viet Nam this year, made landfall on Saturday with winds of up to 90 km/h (56 mph) that damaged more than 40,000 homes, knocked down electricity poles and uprooted trees.

The communist state's Steering Committee for Disaster Prevention said 27 people were now counted dead and 22 were missing. It said 626 houses had collapsed entirely in a trail of destruction that has forced the evacuation of more than 30,000 people.

Heavy rain and high winds lashed the coastal strip on Sunday. Flooding led to a 30 km (19 miles) tailback on Viet Nam's main north-south highway in Thua Thien Hue province.

Battle tanks were mobilised to help with rescue efforts.



People walk along a flooded road after typhoon Damrey hits Vietnam in Hue city, Viet Nam, on 5 November 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

"The floodwaters are rising very fast," said Dinh Cong Hoa, deputy commander of the provincial military command in Nha Trang, which bore the brunt of the typhoon.

One middle-aged woman in

Nha Trang, Vo Thi Tuyet Anh, told state television: "I've never seen such a strong storm since I was born."

Danang, where the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit is taking place

this week, is around 500 km (310 miles) to the north of Nha Trang. It also suffered.

A gateway proclaiming "Welcome to Danang" collapsed in the storm, state media said. Authorities in the area called

on citizens to volunteer to help clean up.

Danang will host US President Donald Trump from 10 November, as well as China's Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin and counterparts from other APEC members.

The storm moved from the coastal area into a key coffee-growing region of the world's biggest producer of robusta coffee beans. Traders had expected the storm to delay harvesting, but were not sure whether it would damage the crop.

The government said on Saturday more than 40,000 hectares of crops had been damaged, including sugar cane, rice fields and rubber plantations.

Floods killed more than 80 people in northern Viet Nam last month, while a typhoon wreaked havoc in central provinces in September. The country of more than 90 million people is prone to destructive storms and flooding due to its long coastline.—Reuters ■

PM Modi says India may announce tax relief for traders next week

NEW DELHI — India may announce measures next week to help traders and small businesses who say a new nationwide goods and services tax (GST) has increased their tax and administrative burden.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said if there is consensus at the next GST council meeting due over 9 November to 10 November, the government would take the necessary steps to help traders and strengthen the country's economy.

A panel of ministers last month recommended reducing tax rates for small businesses and traders and raising the minimum revenue threshold for companies that need to pay tax, local media reported.

The launch in July of the long-awaited GST, which transformed India's 29 states into a single customs union, has left thousands of small and medium-sized firms at the bottom of the supply chain short of working capital.

Modi is facing criticism for



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi is seen at Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India, on 30 October 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

the disruption to the economy caused by the roll-out of GST and the shock removal of higher-value bills from circulation last year. As a result of these issues India's economy is expected to grow at its slowest pace in four years this fiscal year, a Reuters poll found.

Modi's comments came days after India jumped about 30 places to 100th on the World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business" rankings, reflecting reforms in

accessing credit, power supply and the protection of minority investors.

Modi said he expected India's ranking to improve next year when the GST and other reforms were considered.

"There are many other reforms that have already happened but need gestation and stabilization time before they are taken into account by the World Bank," Modi said.—Reuters ■

New York marathoners undaunted by deadly truck attack

NEW YORK — This week's deadly truck attack in New York could not deter blind Japanese runner Toshiaki Ito from joining 50,000 fellow competitors in the city's marathon this Sunday.

"I will not be defeated by it," Ito, a 59-year-old banker, said as he picked up his race number three days after an Uzbek immigrant drove a truck down a Manhattan bike path, killing eight people and injuring a dozen more.

Holding his white cane, Ito, who will run with a sighted guide, said through an interpreter that while the attack gave him "a little trepidation," he is "definitely running."

He is far from alone, according to organizers of the annual road race, who said runners were defying concerns to join the world's biggest marathon.

"There's been no spike in cancellations that we've seen," said Chris Weiller, a spokesman

for race organizer the New York Road Runners.

New York officials allowed the city's Halloween parade to step off just hours after Tuesday's attack and vowed that the marathon would go forward, with some enhanced security.

The race has been canceled only once in its 47-year history — in 2012, following Superstorm Sandy's devastating hit to the region. It even went forward after the 11 September, 2001, attacks, which killed about 2,600 people in New York.

Marathoners train for months to prepare for the 26.2-mile (42.2 km) race, and some wait years before winning a spot in the drawing that gives about 30 per cent of them access to a field that includes the world's top runners and draws about 2.5 million spectators.

"The determination that got them here is the determination that I think that they have right now going into Sunday," Weiller said.—Reuters ■

Peace Music Festival starts 1st round of level 3



Contestants performing music at level-3 competition at peace music festival in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE first round of Level 3 of Peace Music Festival 2017 was held yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw's Myanmar International Convention Center 2 (MICC-2).

Attending the festival were U Aye Thar Aung, Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, U Thant Sin Maung, Union Minister of Transport and Communications, Dr. Win Myat Aye, Union Minister Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, U Kyaw Thiha, Chairman of the Committee for Sustaining Natural Resources and the Environment, Dr. Myo

Aung, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Counsel, members of the Union Election Commission, members of the Nay Pyi Taw Counsel, permanent secretaries, Director Generals and fans of the Peace Music Festival. Level 1 of the festival was conducted in Taunggyi, Myitkyina, Mawlamyine, Lashio, Patheingyi, Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Sittway, Hpa-an and Kalay cities. 36 winners were selected for the Level 2, of which 11 contestants were picked to move on to Level 3.

The Level (3) stage of the

festival will be held with 4-contest series and the decision-making goes not only to the referees but also to the audiences through voting for the contestants.

The code numbers for SMS voting are (7676) for MPT network, (6600) for Telenor network and (6031) for Ooredoo network. The SMS votes shall be sent within 48 hours of the contest. The number of votes for each contestant will be announced on Myanmar Television Programmes and Music Festival official Facebook Page. The list of selected contest-

ants from Level (3) of the first round will be announced at the second round of the same contest on 11 November.

The Level (3) stage's third and fourth and final rounds will be held in Yangon, it is learnt.

First, second, third and eight consolation prize winners will emerge from among the 11 who reached Level 3, at the Grand Final contest to be held in Yangon in the coming December.

The winner will be awarded Ks 30 million, the first runner up Ks 20 million and the second run-

ner up Ks10 million. Each consolation winners will be awarded Ks3 million respectively.

MRTV from the Ministry of Information is holding the festival across the nation with the aim of arousing public awareness and support of and cooperation in the national reconciliation, the national unity, the internal peace and the democratic federal state.

MRTV is broadcasting live program of the Music Festival at 8 pm on TV and facebook page, www.facebook.com/peacemusicfestival.—MNA ■

Miss contest held in Myitkyina, Kachin State

Under the sponsorship of TSDP, Sports and Physical education Committee's Chairman Cup Miss Contest was held at Citapu Manaw field Myitkyina, Majwe Hall in Myitkyina, Kachin State on Saturday evening.

Chief Minister of Kachin State's wife Dr. Je Kawtbu attended the ceremony and Township Administrator U Than Win delivered an opening speech at the contest.

Kachin vocalist MranSaiNaw acted as a Presenter for the miss contest and other vocalists entertained with songs for the contest and selected five runner ups.

Then Designer Arr Phone presented the fashion show and awarding ceremony was held consequently. Ma Si SiL-yar Gyar Sai (contestant no.5) won the first prize while Ma



Candidates of Miss Contest presenting performances. **PHOTO: IPRD (MYITKYINA)**

Su SuHlaing (contestant no.1) secured the first runner up and Ma Pann Nyo (contestant no.9) got the second runner up respectively and officials

awarded the runner ups and consolation prize winners. The contest is aimed at developing the Sports and Physical Education of Myanmar and

we will continue to hold the contest in the coming years,- said Township Sports Administrator Daw Bati Sai San. —IPRD (Myitkyina) ■

28th Carthage Film Festival kicks off in Tunisia

TUNIS — The 28th Carthage Film Festival (JCC) kicked off in Tunis on Saturday.

A total of 180 films will be screened among different competition categories namely the official competition, the official selection out of competition, and parallel selections.

As for the official competition, 51 films from 27 countries will be involved, including 14 feature-length fictions, 15 short fictions and 8 short documentaries.

The opening ceremony was highlighted by the screening of the film "Writing on the Snow" by Palestinian director Rashid Mashrawi. —Xinhua ■

World's largest paper mache sculpture gives voice to endangered Myanmar elephants



A paper mache elephant is seen at the VOICES FOR MOMOS campaign, at Mahabandoola Park. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

“See big, think big, and do big to save our elephants” is the message that artist Arker Kyaw is sending through We Love Our Momos, a public art that aims to raise awareness of the elephant poaching and skinning crisis in Myanmar. Unveiled today in downtown Yangon, the project which features a herd of seven supersize paper mache elephants is Arker Kyaw’s showcase contribution to the VOICES FOR MOMOS campaign.

VOICES FOR MOMOS calls upon individuals and organisations across all sectors to use their voice to drive awareness and call for the end of illegal wildlife sales in Myanmar. As of August 2017, the figure of poached and skinned elephants is averaging one per week, due to a high demand for elephant body parts including skin, teeth, and tusks.

“My art is my voice. Through this creation I hope to show the

big crisis we are facing. If we don’t act now and act big, we will lose all our wild elephants forever. We love our momos. We want to save them and see them in the future of our children,” said Arker Kyaw.

We Love Our Momos was inspired by traditional toy elephants that Myanmar children grew up with.

“Imported toys were expensive and we didn’t actually have them here in Myanmar so me and my brothers played with paper mache animals, and we loved elephants the most,” he said.

Arker Kyaw is attempting to set a new Guinness World Record for the largest paper mache sculpture ever made. The largest of his paper mache elephants measures 21ft (length) x 7ft (width) x 21ft (height), or almost three times the size of an average adult male elephant, which is between 7 to 9 feet’ tall.

(*The current Guinness

World Record holder is a mariachi musician with a harp sculpture created in Mexico, which measures 11ft 4.57in (length) x 3ft 9.59in (width) x 12ft 6.43in (height)).

It took Arker Kyaw and a team that includes celebrated bamboo sculptor U Myint (Yote Lone Kabar) more than two months to bring the idea to life. Made of donated recycled newspapers and a robust woven-bamboo base, the parade of colossal colourful elephants creates a spectacular sight in front of the City Hall and Mahabandoola Park in the heart of Yangon.

“Big thank you to all the artists, U Myint and his Yote Lone Kabar team who worked so hard

day and night, and to all those who donated old newspapers, contributed time and resources to make this possible. Together we can save our momos and this is just the beginning,” Arker Kyaw said.

We Love Our Momos is available for public viewing until 6 November.

Celebrities including film director Kyi Phyu Shin, singer Bunny Phyo, Miss Universe Myanmar Moe Set Wine, Miss Face of Beauty Myanmar Chuu Sitt Han, and meteorologist U Tun Lwin were spotted taking selfies with the giant elephants earlier today. More are expected in the coming days including Yangon-United Football Club stars Kyaw

Ko Ko, Than Paing, and San Set Naing.

Myanmar Storytellers, an award-winning youth group founded in 2009 to preserve and use stories, particularly folktales, also came to support VOICES FOR MOMOS. They brought the elephant crisis to light using popular Burmese folktales about elephants.

Over the three-day exhibition, fair-trade shop Pomelo will be in the vicinity with elephant-themed handicrafts made by local social enterprise La Min. One of the products on sale in support of VOICES FOR MOMOS are miniatures of the paper mache elephants designed by Arker Kyaw.—GNLM ■



A visitor takes a picture of a paper mache elephant at the Mahabandoola Park, Yangon. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Wood crafts sell well at 4th Irrawaddy Literary festival in Mandalay

WOOD crafts have been displayed at the fourth Irrawaddy Literary Festival in Mandalay attracted the event visitors who bought these handicrafts a lot.

The Irrawaddy Literary Festival, a not-for-profit has annually been held with the aim of opening up communication between Myanmar writers and their fellow authors worldwide. The three-day festival brought together a stellar cast of international and local writers.

The aim of selling wood craft at the expo is to in-

spire creativity and imagination of children through handiworks.

Between 3 and 5 November, a wide range of works were showcased at the festival, including houses, photo frames, Buddhist temples and pagodas, Mandalay palace and clock tower. Colourful pieces of wood to make a craft are also available at the event.

Based on design and size, the works were sold for between Ks1,500 and Ks20,000, said Thuta Min Nyo, one of handicraft makers.—Taintaman ■



Wood handy crafts displayed at the 4th Irrawaddy Literary Festival. **PHOTO: TAINTAMAN**

Nay Pyi Taw crowns U-13 Boy's States and Regions Football Tournament



U Zaw Zaw (left) awards the cup to Champion Nay Pyi Taw team at Thuwunna ground stadium yesterday. **PHOTO:MFF**

KyawZin Lin

AS a final match of U-13 Boy's States and Regions Football Tournament, Nay Pyi Taw and Ayeyawaddy U-13 football team played at Thuwunna ground stadium in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw won the champion of the tourney by beating Ayeyawady with 2-1 result.

Both teams seemed equal

in skills and played alternatively from the start. However, misunderstanding between Ayeyawady's defender and keeper caused leading goal for Nay Pyi Taw at 7 minute. The leading goal was scored immediately by Nay Pyi Taw's striker Nyan Lin Maung. After the goal, Ayeyawady used speedy play and got stability in football control and distribution along

with gaining goal opportunities. At 23 minute, Ayeyawady team got an equalizer by Khun Than Kyaw's strong kick directly into the goal net.

Both teams played very carefully at the other half and scored no more goals in the ordinary time. A single or winning goal of Nay Pyi Taw scored by Paing Zay Thaw within 2 minutes of the extra time catapulted the

team to be the Champion of the current tourney.

The Champion Nay Pyi Taw team was awarded Ks 15 lakhs while the second runner up Ayeyawady was awarded Ks 10 lakhs and Bago and Shan (East) who got the third place together were awarded Ks 5 lakhs respectively by the officials at the awarding ceremony after the final match. ■

Men's Asian Challenge Hockey Competition 2017 to be hosted in Myanmar

Kyaw Zin Lin

THE 2017 Men's Asian Challenge Hockey Competition will be hosted at Thein Phyu Hockey Stadium in Yangon from 25 November to 3 December, according to the Asian Hockey Federation webpage.

National teams from Brunei, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan will participate in the competition.

The Myanmar national hockey team won silver in the 2017 SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Myanmar lost in the final to the world 12th ranked host Malaysia by a score of 0-14.

Myanmar will play Hong Kong on 25 November; Sri Lanka on 26 November; Brunei on 28 November; Kazakhstan on 30 November; Chinese Taipei on 2 December and Uzbekistan on 3 December in the upcoming Men's Asian Challenge Hockey Competition.

The match schedule was approved by International Hockey Federation on 17 August. ■

Alcacer scores twice as Barca sink Sevilla

BARCELONA — Paco Alcacer enjoyed a rare outing for Barcelona by scoring twice in the club's 2-1 La Liga win over Sevilla at the Nou Camp on Saturday.

With second-placed Valencia having strolled to a 3-0 win over Leganes and third-placed Atletico Madrid downing Deportivo La Coruna 1-0 earlier in the day, Barcelona were determined to preserve their four-point lead at the top of the standings.

Although all eyes were on Lionel Messi playing in his 600th

game for Barca, it Alcacer who was on target for his side in the pouring rain in the Catalan capital.

Making just his fourth La Liga appearance of the season, the striker netted a goal in each half to ensure leaders Barca stayed unbeaten after 11 games. They lead the standings with 31 points.

"We need to just take advantage of the chances that the boss gives us. I'm very happy to have scored twice, but the most

important thing is the result," Alcacer told BeIN Sport. "We're going well. The side feels good, we need to carry on as we are doing."

Luis Suarez twice went close in the opening five minutes, while Ivan Rakitic whistled a volley wide as Barcelona started strongly. They were rewarded as Alcacer pounced on a Sergio Escudero error to run through and slot under the onrushing David Soria after 20 minutes.

Sevilla enjoyed possession

but rarely threatened the Barcelona goal before Guido Pizarro drew the visitors level in the 59th minute by nodding home from a corner.

However, the joy was short-lived as Alcacer scored again five minutes later by poking home a Rakitic cross.

Goals from Dani Parejo, Rodrigo and a penalty from Santi Mina earlier helped Valencia cruise to victory at home to Leganes, while Thomas Partey scored a 92nd minute free kick

as Atletico Madrid beat Deportivo La Coruna 1-0.

It was a largely unimpressive display from Diego Simeone's side, who looked set to draw for the seventh time in their last 10 games in all competitions before Partey found the top corner to break Depor hearts. Third-placed Atletico trail Barca by eight points. Real Madrid, who host Las Palmas on Sunday, are fourth while Sevilla stay fifth on 19 points. —Reuters ■