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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observes the Seminar on Educational Development Implementation in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Education reform from memorisation to rationalisation: State Counsellor

THE government is striving to change the country's education system from rote memorisation to a rationalisation-based system, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said yesterday.

In her opening address at the Seminar on Educational Development Implementa-

tion in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, the State Counsellor said it is critical to reform the way in which the country's children are taught.

"The main objective of learning is to develop the practices of taking responsibility and accountability, the ability to

judge based on reasonability, the spirit of cooperation and nurturing elite people with sustainable learning", she said.

In changing from the deep-rooted system of learning by rote into an education system based on judgment and reasonability, the State Coun-

sellor highlighted the current education system's weak points, such as only teaching prescribed lessons, paying excessive attention to a high pass rate and indoctrination of good results from accurate answers as described in prescribed books.

SEE PAGE-7

Killers of NV card issuer sought by police

POLICE are in pursuit of two Muslims who killed Rofique Amen, also known as Rafique Ramen, on 5 December in Maungtaw, who assisted immigration officials in issuing National Verification cards to locals.

The victim is the in-charge of Du Nyaung Pin Gyee village. He died on the spot in the attack by the two unknown attackers at his home at 9 pm.

The two Muslims called his name, rushed in and attacked him with a gun and machetes, then fled, police said.

According to the initial investigation, it was found that Rofique Amen had assisted enthusiastically when Immigration and Population Department officials conducted a field visit in Maungtaw Township to issue NV cards.

It is believed that he was killed by ARSA extremist terrorists for his assistance to government immigration officials, authorities said.

The two Muslims who killed Amen and fled, as well anyone who obstructs, threatens or attacks those who are involved in the issuing of NV cards will be exposed and severe action will be taken, said local authorities.—Myanmar News Agency



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2017 International Anti-Corruption Day event in Nay Pyi Taw

INTERNATIONAL Anti-Corruption Day 2017 was celebrated yesterday in a ceremony jointly organised by the Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) at the Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi delivered an opening address noting that 9 December has been designated as International Anti-Corruption Day under the UN General Assembly resolution 58/4 of 31 October 2003 to raise awareness of corruption and of the role of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in combating and preventing it.

Myanmar signed the UNCAC in 2005 and ratified it on 20 December 2012. This ratification of the UNCAC is a clear signal to the world on how Myanmar regards the importance of a corrup-



Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi delivers speech at International Anti-Corruption Day event in Nay Pyi Taw on 8 December 2017. **PHOTO: MNA**

tion-free society with combined efforts of the States Parties under the Convention, U Aung Kyi said.

On international relations, the Anti-Corruption Commission is cooperating with the UNODC under its Country Programme for Myanmar Sub-programme 2: Anti-Corruption. This has been extended until the end of 2019.

The Commission Chairman mentioned his wish for the cooperation between his commission and the UNODC to be deepened and strengthened. He spoke of the commission working with UNDP for a programme on assessment of the anti-corruption infrastructure in Myanmar.

The Commission Chairman

said the anti-corruption efforts have improved Myanmar's ranking in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) from 157 in 2014 to 136 in 2016, even though more still needs to be done.

The Commission is preparing to implement its 2018 Action Plan, which will include not only

investigation and prosecution but also prevention through education and community cooperation. It will also work towards improvement of anti-corruption legal framework by revising the Anti-Corruption Law, 2013.

Twelve winners of the high school-level "corruption-free harmonious country" and middle school-level "cooperate in eradicating corruption" essay competitions were presented with awards by the Commission Chairman and members. The ceremony was attended by Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission chairman, secretary and members, Union Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Directors General from ministries and departments, ambassadors from ASEAN countries, representatives from related organisations, UN, NGOs, civil society organisations, news and media personnel, commission office staff and students.

—Myanmar News Agency ■

Complaints should be made properly with required evidence: Anti-Corruption Commission

By Shin Min, Mi Phyo
Photo: Aye Than

THE following are excerpts of interviews with members of the Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission at the 2017 International Anti-Corruption Day events.

A ceremony for International Anti-Corruption Day was held yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw, at which Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission members were interviewed. U Han Nyunt, Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission member

The commission was first formed on 23 November 2017 with U Aung Kyi as chairman. Six work committees – policy, international, legal, complaints, office personnel, information – were formed. I am the head of the information committee, and U Khin Maung Myint and Daw Le Le Thwin are members. There are three in the information committee. The information committee will work together with the news media group to inform and educate the public. We will have our



U Han Nyunt.

strengths and weaknesses, as we have to do things according to the law, but we will always study the wishes and wills of the people who want to see the changes and reforms. But we can be reached at all times in our office. The commission office is located in Wunna Theikdi Ward, Group 1, Nay Pyi Taw Sports Ground, Nay Pyi Taw. My director U Tun Tun Win can be reached at 09-44853 4015 and the office can be reached at 067-8102243 where details can be asked.

U Khin Maung Myint, Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission member

I would like to explain about



U Khin Maung Myint.

complaints submitted to the commission. The main point is to include evidence. Without evidence, it is difficult to hear the case and many cases were filed. It is difficult to pursue these further because of a lack of evidence.

Although people filed complaints, but most are not in accordance to Anti-Corruption Law section 22(b)(c). Thus complaints should be made properly with required evidence.

When filing complaints, the name, address, telephone number or a copy of the national identification card should be included. The name, address,



Daw Le Le Thwin.

office, department etc. of the accused must also be included, together with the reason for complaining. All available evidences are to be provided as well as details of the location where the corruption case occurs. Only then can the commission investigate.

Anti-Corruption Law had specific sections on specific corruptions (and these should be taken as a guide).

It is only a few days since we've started work and have received 20 cases so far. In the earlier term of the commission, there were more than 4,000 cases. But most were incomplete in one way or another, so it all

ended being filed and could not be followed through.

Daw Le Le Thwin, Myanmar Anti-Corruption Commission member

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw promulgated the Anti-Corruption Law as Law No. 23 on 7 August 2013. There were six objectives in promulgating this law. These are to eradicate corruption as a national duty, to set up a clean government, good governance, raise the prestige of the country and the people in matters related to the people and to take effective actions against corrupt people and those who corrupt.

As part of the information committee, we will inform and educate the people. This will be most effective in eradicating corruption. We will inform and raise awareness of corruption. The punishment for corruption. We will inform the people to properly file the complaints. But we could not do all of these on our own. For all the people to know, we need to work together with states and regions governments, civil society organisations, news and media. We will do this as a national duty. ■

ပြည်ထောင်စု သမ္မတမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်
နိုင်ငံတော် သမ္မတရုံး
အမိန့်ကြော်ငြာစာ
အမှတ်၊ ၉၈/၂၀၁၇
၁၃၇၉ ခုနှစ်၊ နတ်တော်လပြည့်ကျော် ၅ ရက်
(၂၀၁၇ ခုနှစ်၊ ဒီဇင်ဘာလ ၈ ရက်)

ရခိုင်ပြည်နယ်ဆိုင်ရာ အကြံပြုချက်များအပေါ်
အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ဆောင်ရွက်ရေးကော်မတီ၏
အကြံပေးအဖွဲ့ ဖွဲ့စည်းခြင်း

၁။ ရခိုင်ပြည်နယ်ဆိုင်ရာ အကြံပြုချက်များအပေါ် အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ဆောင်ရွက်
ရေးကော်မတီကို ဤရုံး ၏ ၁၂-၉-၂၀၁၇ ရက်စွဲပါ အမိန့်ကြော်ငြာစာအမှတ်၊
၇၅/၂၀၁၇ ဖြင့် နိုင်ငံတော်သမ္မတ က ဖွဲ့စည်းပေးပြီး ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

၂။ ယင်းအမိန့်ကြော်ငြာစာတွင် ရခိုင်ပြည်နယ်ဆိုင်ရာကော်မရှင်များ၏ အကြံပြုချက်
များနှင့် စပ်လျဉ်း၍ အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ဆောင်ရွက်ရာတွင် မြေပြင်အခြေအနေ
အပေါ်မူတည်၍ အကျိုးရှိစွာ ထိထိရောက်ရောက် ဖော်ဆောင်နိုင်ရေးအတွက်
လိုအပ်သော အကြံဉာဏ်များကို ရယူနိုင်ရန် အကြံပေးအဖွဲ့ကို ပြည်တွင်း/ပြည်ပ
ပညာရှင်များ၊ ဘာသာရပ်ဆိုင်ရာ ကျွမ်းကျင်သူများ၊ အတွေ့အကြုံရှိသူများနှင့်
ဖွဲ့စည်းရမည်ဟု ဖော်ပြခဲ့ပါသည်။

၃။ အထက်အပိုဒ် (၂) ပါအတိုင်း လိုအပ်သည့် အကြံဉာဏ်များ ရယူနိုင်စေရန်အတွက်
ရခိုင်ပြည်နယ်ဆိုင်ရာ အကြံပြုချက်များအပေါ် အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ရေး
ကော်မတီ၏ အကြံပေးအဖွဲ့ကို အောက်ပါ ပြည်တွင်း/ပြည်ပ ပညာရှင်များဖြင့်
ဖွဲ့စည်းလိုက်ပါသည်-

- (က) Dr.Surakiart Sathirathai
Chairman, Asia Peace and Reconciliation Council-APRC
Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Thailand
- (ခ) Mr.Urban Ahlin
Speaker, Chair of the Riksdag Board
Member of the Swedish Parliament
- (ဂ) Governor Bill Richardson
Chairman, Richardson Center For Global Engagement
Former Governor of New Mexico and
Former United States Secretary of Energy
- (ဃ) Professor Lord Derzi of Denham
Former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State of Health,
Department of Health
Member of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council
- (င) Mr.Roelof Petrus (Roelf) Meyer
Former Minister of Defence
Former Minister of Constitutional Affairs and Communication
Former Minister of Constitutional Development and
Provincial Affairs South Africa
- (စ) ဦးဝင်းမြ
ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ၊ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံအမျိုးသားလူ့အခွင့်အရေးကော်မရှင်
- (ဆ) ဦးထွန်းမြတ်
အငြိမ်းစား၊ ကုလသမဂ္ဂလက်ထောက်အတွင်းရေးမှူးချုပ်
- (ဇ) ဦးခင်မောင်လေး
အဖွဲ့ဝင်၊ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံအမျိုးသားလူ့အခွင့်အရေးကော်မရှင်
- (ဈ) ဦးလှမြင့်
သံအမတ်ကြီး (ဗြိတိန်)
အဖွဲ့ဝင်၊ အာဆီယံအစိုးရချင်းဆိုင်ရာလူ့အခွင့်အရေးကော်မရှင်
- (ည) ဒေါက်တာ ဒေါ်ခင်ညို
ကျန်းမာရေးနှင့် အားကစားဖွံ့ဖြိုးတိုးတက်ရေးကော်မတီ
ပြည်သူ့လွှတ်တော်

၄။ ရခိုင်ပြည်နယ်ဆိုင်ရာ အကြံပြုချက်များအပေါ် အကောင်အထည်ဖော်ဆောင်
ရွက်ရေးကော်မတီ၏ အကြံပေးအဖွဲ့သည် သတ်မှတ်ထားသည့် လုပ်ငန်းတာဝန်
များနှင့်အညီ အကြံဉာဏ်များပေးနိုင်ရေး ဆောင်ရွက်ရန်ဖြစ်ကြောင်း ဖော်ပြ
အပ်ပါသည်။

(ပုံ)ထင်ကျော်
နိုင်ငံတော်သမ္မတ
ပြည်ထောင်စုသမ္မတမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with the US-ASEAN Business Council. PHOTO: MNA

Myanmar, US-ASEAN Economic Council discuss economic cooperation

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, received the US-ASEAN Business Council delegation led by Ambassador Michael Michalak, Senior Vice President and Regional Managing Director of the US-ASEAN Business

Council at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, matters related to investment and economic cooperation between Myanmar and the United States of America were discussed.

Also present on the oc-

casion were Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Kyaw Win, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Deputy Minister for Commerce U Aung Htoo and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—Myanmar News Agency

Officials meet to plan malaria elimination in region by 2030

THE Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe separately received World Health Organization (WHO) South-east Asia Regional Director Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Asia-Pacific Director Dr. Shin Young-Soo and the Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance (APLMA) Board Chair Ms. Ruby Shang yesterday morning at the Grand Amara Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

The meeting of the senior officials of the Malaria Elimination in Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) by 2030 was held in the Grand Amara Hotel at 10 am, where the Union Minister said the occurrence of malaria was reduced to 86 per cent while fatalities were reduced to 91 per cent in GMS over the past five years.

Based on the WHO Global Technical Strategy and Strategy for Malaria Elimination in

the Greater Mekong Subregion, Myanmar has drawn up and conducted the National Malaria Elimination Project. The projects need to be systematically conducted by responsible persons and partner organisations. Although occurrence of malaria has declined, it is still occurring in remote and border areas and among migrating people.

Afterwards, the Union Minister, WHO Southeast Asia Regional Director, Asia Pacific Director, officials from GMS countries discussed about Malaria Elimination in GMS by 2030.

The Director General of the Ministry of Health and Sports read the “Ministerial Call for Action to Eliminate Malaria in the Greater Mekong Subregion before 2030” on behalf of GMS countries, followed by discussions in support made by representatives from Cam-

bodia, the People’s Republic of China, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. Two regional directors from WHO, representatives from APLMA, Civil Society Organisations, Asia Development Bank, USAID and the Global Fund also spoke in support.

In the evening, a signing ceremony for “Global Fund NFM-2 Grant Agreements (2018-2020)” was held and Global Fund Interim Executive Director Dr. Marijke Wijnroks, UNOPS Asia Regional Director Mr. Sanjay Mathur, Save the Children Country Director Mr. Michael McGrath, representatives from Civil Societies representatives Daw Nwe Zin Win signed the agreements for US\$130 million from the Global Fund to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS and US\$94 million provided for TB treatment, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

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Union Ministers receive Japan Youkou Sakura Friendship Association

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye and Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung met separately with Mr. Yasuraru Narizubu, Japan Youkou Sakura Friendship Association at May Kha Lar hall of ministry office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on matters relating to promoting of bilateral relations between Myanmar and Japan.

In the evening, Union Ministers received Mr. Ellen Glodstein, World Bank Director, and discussed projects of providing help and support in Rakhine State.

And then, Union Minister clarified the process of providing humanitarian aids, help for education and healthcare, acceptance of victims and resettlement in systematic ways.—MNA■



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye holds talks with Mr. Yasuraru Narizubu, Japan Youkou Sakura Friendship Association at May Kha Lar hall of ministry office in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

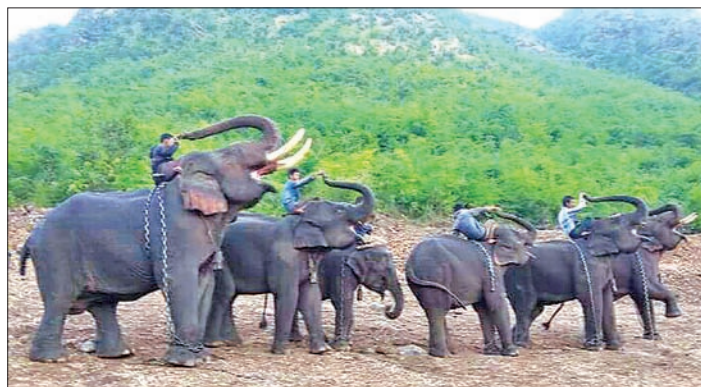
Pyin Oo Lwin Elephant Camp to be opened soon

By Aung Thant Khaing

WITH a view to introducing the Elephant Camp for vacationers, arrangements for opening the conservation camp with six elephants by the end of December is underway, officials said.

The elephant camp is near Three-Step Falls, nine miles and three furlongs from Kyauk Chaw-Ye Ywa Road in Pyin Oo Lwin, Mandalay Region, according to the Myanmar Timber Enterprise (Mandalay Region).

The camp, which is 27 miles from Mandalay, houses six elephants from the Marle elephant camp in Singu Township which were brought here on 4 December. The camp is situated on 74 acres of land, and is targeted to be opened on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. Arrangements can be made for those who wish safe and secure riding of ele-



phants, said U Aung Myint Htay, the manager.

"Services will be provided up to the waterfall. A night-stay program is not allowed, including for foreign tourists. Places for lodging at night are not convenient. On riding elephants, safe and secure services will be given. Arrangement for visitors to feed elephants with sugar-cane have already been made. Fare for riding elephants is designated by the de-

partment. Liquor is not allowed to be sold at restaurants, only soft drinks and food. Abodes for workers had been arranged. One elephant is cared for by two mahouts."

Of the six elephants, one is 55 years old, with the others between the ages of 10 and 17. They are considered tame. Fees for riding elephants are designated at Ks 5,000 plus the entrance fee of Ks1,000 for Myanmar citizens, while Ks20,000

plus the entrance fee of Ks2000 have been designated for foreign travellers. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Myanmar Timber Enterprise and Four Paws International [FPI] was signed on 19th September to use 1.8 million euros for establishment of elephant camps and conservation of elephants. It has been learnt that Wingabaw, Hmawyawgyi, Nathmaw, Pawlangyaintba, Wawma, Warphyutaung, Natmauk, Chaungtha, Kyarzwe and Mokekha elephant camps were already established, it was learnt.

According to the statistics of the Hotels and Tourism Department, Mandalay Region, there were 374,221 tourists coming into the region from China, Thailand, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, the US and the UK. Of them, most were from China, Thailand and France. ■

Workshop, panel discussion to be held to increase number of skilled seafarers

A workshop and panel discussion will be held at Myanmar Mercantile Marine College in Kamayut Township, Yangon on 16 December, according to a report in the Myawady Daily on Thursday.

The discussion will be or-

ganised by alumni of Myanmar Mercantile Marine College (MMMC) with an aim to increase and promote the number of skilled seafarers in the country. At the workshop, alumni from MMC, officials from related organisations, and seafarer em-

ployment agencies will attend and take part in the discussion. "Everyone can participate at the discussion free of charge. At the workshop, they are going to discuss the procedure of the seafarers and the process to emerge as skilled seafarers," said a

member of the MMC alumni group. Currently, there are over 100,000 seafarers in Myanmar, but only 20,000 are employed at well-paying foreign shipment companies. For further information, please call 09-254316614 of the MMC.—GNLM

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

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

Marine exports from Myanmar-Thailand borders increased

MYANMAR exported 8,800 tonnes of marine products to neighbouring Thailand between 18 and 24 November through border points, earning US\$7.428 million, according to a report of the Ministry of Commerce.

Exports after 17 November saw an increase of over 1,200 tonnes when compared with the previous week's total of 7,476 tonnes, according to the official statistics of border authorities.

The country exported \$242,000 worth of marine products to the neighbouring country from the Myawady border trade zone, while \$2.577 million worth of fisheries products weighing over 2,300 tonnes were

exported from the Myeik border point, and almost 6,300 tonnes of similar products worth \$4.609 million from the Kawthoung border gate.

Myanmar exports a wide variety of fish, dried fish, prawns, crabs, octopus, eels and other kinds of marketable aquaculture products to its overseas trade partners through not only border points but also sea routes.

According to the ministry's figures as of 1st December, the total export of marine products was valued at \$417.768 million, an increase of \$71 million against the same period of last year.—Shwe Khine ■

Hotels room rates need to be fixed to increase number of tourists

TO be able to increase the number of tourists in Myanmar, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism needs to fix the hotel's room rates, according to a report in the Myawady Daily on 6 December. The Ministry has tried to increase the number of tourists, but the travelling costs in Myanmar are much higher than neighboring countries. The hotel room rates are also high, depending on supply and demand. Therefore, the Myanmar hotel room rate should be fixed.

Room rates in Cambodia and Laos are US\$75 a night cheaper than hotels in Myanmar

with the same star ranking. In Myanmar, room rates are around US\$130 per night.

"When we try to attract the attention of the tourists, we need to think about the hotel room rates too. In 2010, the hotel room rate in Myanmar increased to between US\$250 and US\$600 per night. The hotel room rate then declined to between US\$100 and US\$150 a night in 2015," according to a tourism entrepreneur.

The number of tourists is lower than expected in Myanmar because of the high price of air tickets and the hotel rate.—GNLM ■



Employees work at a production line in a garment factory in Hlaingthaya, Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Myanmar to cooperate with Demark to promote work environment of Myanmar's garment sector

THE MYPOD project was launched at Hotel Yangon in Yangon on Wednesday to improve the work environments of Myanmar's garment sector, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The three-year project will be implemented in 2018, officials said.

The project aims to generate

more decent jobs, sustainable increased value addition and participation in garment sector through improved work environment, productivity and social dialogue.

It is funded by the Danish Market Development Partnerships fund and carried out in collaboration between the partners; the Danish Ethical Trading Initiative (DIEH); the Ethical

Trading Initiative (ETI) UK; BESTSELLER the Danish trade union federation; 3F and Aalborg University.

The local stakeholders in the project are SMART Myanmar, Yangon Technological University and local trade unions, Industrial Workers Federation of Myanmar (IWFMM) and MICS.—GNLM ■

Myanmar's electricity sector to receive extensive foreign investment

MYANMAR'S electricity sector is expected to receive extensive foreign direct investment (FDI), according to a report in the Myawady Daily on Thursday.

Currently, the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) is scrutinising 12 foreign direct investment proposals and 16 local investment proposals.

"Now, foreign electricity suppliers are discussing with the con-

cerned ministry. And the heavy projects like Hanthawaddy April project are being planned to invest in Myanmar very soon. Their proposals have not been submitted to MIC yet. But, they will submit very soon", said U Aung Naing Oo, the Director-General of Directorate of Investment & Company Administration (DICA).

The MIC approved 163 foreign direct investment projects

and the investment committees of respective governments in Yangon, Bago and Ayeyawady regions approved six foreign direct investment projects between April and November in the current fiscal year. Investments in new projects totals US\$ 30.8 billion, and the total investment including the additional investment in existing projects is over US\$ 4.04 billion.—GNLM ■

Government budget to upgrade Hlaingthaya night market

THE government has budgeted Ks150 million in the 2017-2018 fiscal year to upgrade the Hlaingthaya night market, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The night market is old and there are an increasing number of vendors, officials said, which

has prompted the plans for improvements and to upgrade sanitary conditions.

"We are preparing to upgrade the night market. The market is not really good look with the vendors. We have already received the budget from the government to upgrade the

market," said U Win Maung, the Region Hluttaw representative for Hlaingthaya Township.

Included in the upgrade are construction of nine two-storey buildings. More than 400 people will own shops in the market. Also, over 1,000 vendors will be located in the market.—GNLM ■

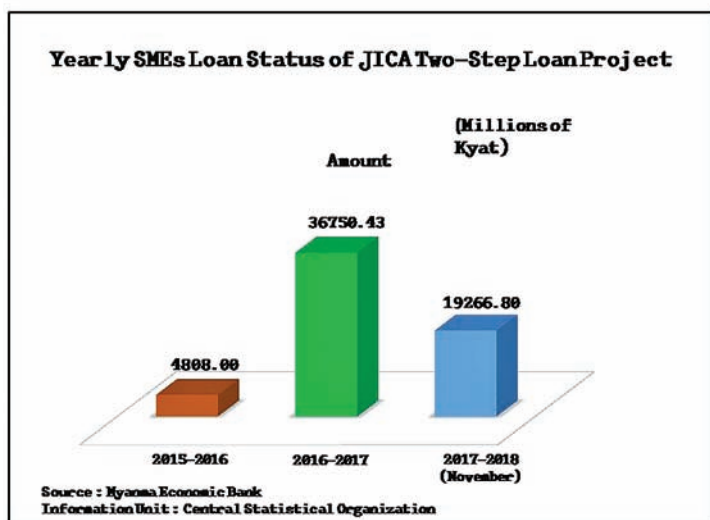
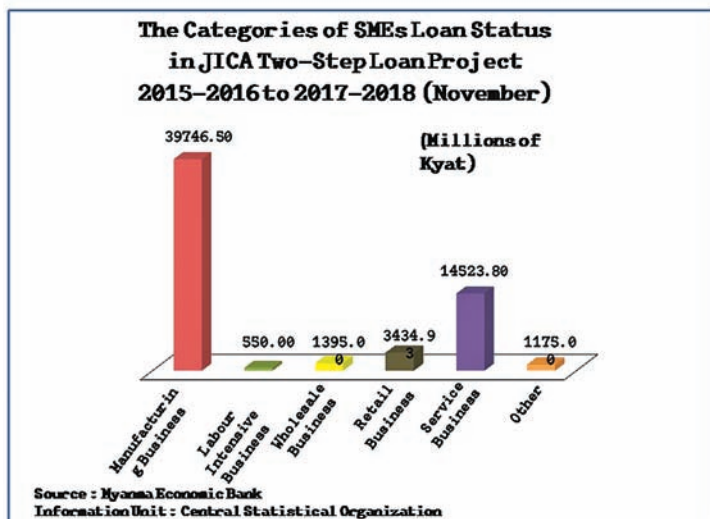
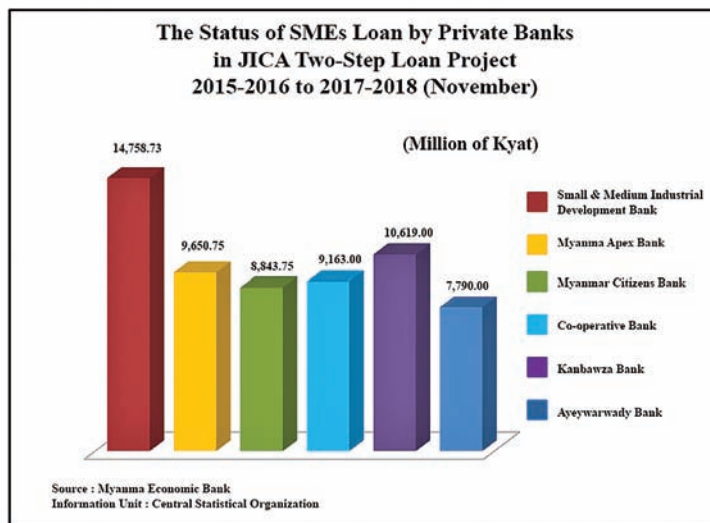
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The Status of SMEs Loan by Private Banks in JICA Two-Step Loan Project



Vice President U Henry Van Thio attends the second work coordination meeting. **PHOTO: MNA**

U Henry Van Thio attends National Cultural Central Committee meeting

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, in his capacity as the Chairman of the National Cultural Central Committee, attended and addressed the second work coordination meeting held yesterday morning in the meeting room of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture in Nay Pyi Taw.

U Henry Van Thio said Myanmar is proud to have much cultural and natural heritage all over the country. Pyu ancient cities that are included in the World Heritage list, Mandalay Maha Lawka Marazein Kuthotaw Pagoda's stone inscriptions that are included in the Memory of the World list, the Myazedi (Yazakuma) Inscription and Shwezigon Pagoda in Bagan and inscriptions on the great bell of Bayintnaung are examples of Myanmar cultural pride.

A proposal for Ananda Sandra stone inscription in Shitthaung (Shite-thaung) pa-

goda, Mrauk U to be included in world record cultural heritage list was submitted to Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP) in 31 August 2017. Preparations were made to submit additional submission to these lists by May 2018, while local and international experts were being formed to put Bagan cultural region and Mrauk U cultural region on the World Heritage list.

National cultural heritages were retained for thousands of years by national ethnic brethren and passed on to new generations. In addition to researching and preserving cultural heritages, lost and diminishing cultural heritages need to be uncovered and exposed, the Vice President said.

It is the duty of all Myanmar nationals to preserve and retain for long the Myanmar cultural heritages and this is why National Cultural Central Committee

was formed and assigned duties.

The Vice President requested that the attending central committee members should identify cultural heritages as well as the traditions of ethnic nationals, draw up policies in order to enact laws and rules to retain and preserve such cultural heritages and benefit the local people.

Meeting attendees explained the preservation and exhibition of Myanmar cultural paintings, and measuring and defining ancient cultural zones through coordinates system. Discussion and suggestions on uncovering, preserving and maintaining cultural heritage were also conducted.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin, Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Aung Soe, Permanent Secretaries, departmental heads, officials and cultural preservation experts. —Myanmar News Agency

Mine explosion in Rakhine injures three soldiers

THREE mines exploded yesterday while a military convoy passed a road in Myaypon, Rakhine State, injuring three soldiers.

The first two mines blasted when the convoy crossed the area and the third one exploded five

minutes later.

The rear-view mirror of a military transport vehicle was damaged and three soldiers on board were injured in the attack. The injured are not in critical condition. —Myaypon Township IPRD

National Instruments hosts Myanmar Professor Days in Yangon

MYANMAR Professor Days, organized by National Instruments, was held yesterday morning at the Lotte Hotel in Yangon. Myanmar Professor Days is a forum for the academic community and aims at promoting and improving the standard of education in Myanmar.

National Instruments is a provider of platform-based systems that enable engineers and

educators to solve the world's greatest engineering challenges.

Myanmar is one of the fastest growing economies in the region, and education is of paramount importance to compete with others in the long run.

It can present the latest platforms for teaching and research for the academic segment as a part of the academic community.

National Instruments is a

leading provider of platforms for teaching engineering, from entry level to advanced courses in Mechatronics, Circuits and Electronics, and Wireless Communications.

Attendees at the forum were Myanmar engineers, researchers, educators, and international guest speakers from Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Thailand. —Khin Zar Li

Education reform from memorisation to rationalisation: State Counsellor

FROM PAGE-1

To reduce the dropout rate, the incumbent government has carried out distribution of prescribed text books, exercise books, school uniforms free of charge, appointment of more school teachers to fulfill requirements, construction of school buildings and an analysis program for children outside classrooms.

The State Counsellor said she appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Education for reforms in the education sector such as creating opportunities for an access to learning, promoting educational qualifications, curriculum and syllabus, assessment by examination, teaching methods and education management.

“Children know general knowledge about their homes, their environment, their societies, the history of their country and the world populace, apart from school lessons. Just after arrangements had been made for them to acquire the opportunity for learning together, based on their experiences and knowledge, their judgment and reasoning ability will develop. In addition, openness, tolerance, responsi-

bility and accountability, ability to accept differences and other personalities of excellence will develop”, the State Counsellor said.

The change in the educational system will require cooperation from all sides, the State Counsellor said.

“Teachers need to be well qualified, but students and parents also have responsibilities. It cannot be said that a school student is dutiful just by going to school regularly. He is required to think about the lessons on the whole taught during a one-day period, to take part in sports and arts based on their hobbies, to acquire the good habit of reading books from the outside world, and to rightfully reason the knowledge and intellect acquired from the books one has read. As for parents as well, they are required to encourage the abilities of invention of their children” she said.

“Edutainment” such as the practice of reading, talks, discussions, and celebrations of sport activities can make children happy. This can reduce rates of dropping out while learning. Excursion trips on the subject mat-

ters and culture, putting records on discoveries and developing libraries can train to develop their literature and intellects.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said the expectations for the country from a revamped education system are significant.

“With a long-term investment in the education sector, we can hope for liberation from the poverty we are now experiencing. And we can hope for the enjoyment of rule of law, peace, justice and freedom for the whole national populace. Moreover, we can expect to learn the value of cultural heritages, of the national ethnic people, through education. We must hope for every individual and every parent to possess pleasant living standards through education”, she said.

“These are the opportunities we can hope from education. Accordingly, we wish the present seminar can train good citizens and good human beings by frankly discussing how we can fully supply students with opportunities for learning and high-quality education, and for success of the process from beginning to end”.—Myanmar News Agency ■



The second day of the sixth Media Development Conference being held in Yangon on 8 December, 2017. **PHOTO: MNA**

2nd Day of Media Development Conference held

The second day of the sixth Media Development Conference was held yesterday morning at the Chatrium Hotel in Yangon.

At the conference, Myanmar Press Council Secretary U Thihha Saw took the chair and discussed the many ways forward to strengthen media freedom and development of the media in Myanmar.

This conference has served as a rare opportunity for media stakeholders across the country to engage in dialogue with government representatives and Members of Parliament on many issues such as the development and essence of media roles.

Conference attendees discussed laws and regulations relating to media and social problems, fake news, the role of media in the peace process, countering misinformation in the digital age, and the sustainability of media.

Attendees also raised many questions to the panelists after the discussions.

The Media Development Conference was jointly organised by the Ministry of Information, UNESCO and other media development groups and has been held since 2012. This is the sixth time it the conference has been held in Myanmar; it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Try to become decent military engineers for the country and Tatmadaw

WHILE upgrading our Tatmadaw to be modernized and capable, combat power and combat skill must be promoted with engineering knowledge and effective training in accordance with the motto “Technology for Military Might”. Physical and mental training are required to enhance the combat skill.

By our three main tasks of Tatmadaw, “Observe, Practise and Obey,” all of you must try diligently with the assistance of perpetual study and application of your experience and knowledge acquired to become decent military engineers for our country and our Tatmadaw, said Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing at the Passing out Parade of the 19th Intake of Defence Services Technological Academy held at the parade ground of DSTA in Pyin Oo Lwin this morning.



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Passing out Parade of the 19th Intake of Defence Services Technological Academy. **PHOTO: MNA**

Also present were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thiri Pyanchi Ye Aung and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Zeya

Kyawhtin Tin Aung San and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Zeya Kyawhtin Khin Aung Myint and wife, senior military officers of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and

their wives, Command commanders, the commandant of DSTA, senior officers of the Pyin Oo Lwin Station, invited guests and parents and relatives of the cadets. First, the Senior General took the

salute of the cadet battalions and inspected them. Then, the cadet battalions saluted the Senior General with slow-march past and quick-march past.

The Senior General presented Best Cadet Award to Cadet San Ye Kyaw (Cadet No.7076), Outstanding Award in Training to Cadet Zin Ko Htet (Cadet No.7097) and Outstanding Award in Literature to Cadet Kyaw Zin Thant (Cadet No.7060).

Then, the Senior General took the salute of the cadet battalions and left the parade ground.

After the parade, the Senior General met the three outstanding cadets and their parents and gave an honorary speech at the parlour of DSTA. The Senior General said thanks to the six years of hard work, they have won outstanding awards and they need to continue working hard.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Directions of constructive and destructive attitudes

COORDINATING Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister Wiranto offered counter-terrorism assistance and advice to the Union Government of Myanmar, it was learnt. Such an offer of the Indonesian Government to the government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar shows their acknowledgement of our Government's policy regarding anti-terrorism and actions taken recently. Mr. Wiranto, Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister stated, "The threat of terrorism and radicalism is everywhere, in all countries, including Myanmar and Indonesia."

Also, Wiranto noted, "Our ability of detection or prevention is very important to cripple the possibility of terror attacks." The statement of Mr. Wiranto is not directly referring to Rakhine State Affair in Myanmar, but it highlights the point many countries including UN Human Rights Council failed to notice. ARSA extremist terrorists did not vanish as if vaporizing into thin air, so evidently enough, they sure will harm the process of accepting the displaced Bengalis and giving citizenship rights to those who comply with the citizenship law among them, in some way or another. Yet, concerning the Rakhine State Affair the United Nations Human Rights Commission's failure to mention the dangers of the ARSA extremist terrorists

is a mere partiality, with hearts full of hatred. Therefore failure to pay respects to a nation's sovereignty including failure to acknowledge a nation's own particular complex problem may be considered as the intentional intervention into another country's internal affair and harming its sovereignty. Here, we should note that constructive attitudes can highlight the cause of the problem whereas destructive ones can push the nation into the path of destruction.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

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

Let us build up national database system for strengthening democratic system!

By Aung Myo Win
(Kyaikhto)

WHAT is the most important thing for establishing a modernized democratic nation is none other than a system built on the fundamental foundation. In the present 21st century in which computer technology is rapidly developing, the following database is practically being applied. They are as follows:

1. Human Resource Database for protection and control of people,
2. Business Database to control economic enterprises and protect from illicit trades,
3. Asset Database to control movable articles such as vehicles and to protect people from the risks of death, and
4. to control immovable properties such as real estates and buildings and to give protection of them from fraudulent sales and purchases by building Property Database; and to strengthen administrative mechanism by building up National Database.

Human Resource Database means respective departments and organizations' uses of personal resources of all the citizens living officially in the country, installed in the modernized computer system. Among those living officially in the country are included citizens, guest nationals, those applying for guest nationals and long-term resident foreigners.

Starting from new-born infants up to the aged in the country, all are to be enlisted into the National Database by giving different unique IDs. Here, the people are to be well convinced of Unique ID numbers and Enlistment of these Unique IDs. Here, we must know that such an enlistment is not concerned with Citizenship.

Today's Myanmar's National Registration System and National Scrutiny System are only taking photographs of personal data of the national populace, because the government will never know personal facts and figures of every individual until the person in question himself make affidavit of the person's

performances, possessions, educational attainments and etc., apart from the facts given at the Immigration Offices. In fact, the government is to monitor the people over the network, as if seeing from CCTVs. If necessary, the information must be able to be searched from the kept video files.

Since prior to the acquisition of public information, the

photos and other necessary data of a person are not only kept by the national centre for controlling data but also to be shared for use by other department, so that the government will promptly come to know about changing social

book or a national registration card been lost, he sure would find it difficult to get the new one. Thus, he cannot perform his career works by spending a lot of time, causing national production to be harmed.

will be uselessly spent for lack of National Database System which can like all other departments for the time being, though they worked hard honestly, that is attributed to busying with paper works of the red-tape system. In case there was a better system, such a workforce of 20 staff can finish 400 units per day.

The government will be able to pay double their salaries if and when more services are provided with a few staff. The people as well can save time, helping increase national income. As for the 30 redundant staff from the job, they will arrive at the industries they are more interested or



“If our Myanmar people are in a developed country such as Singapore, they have to strictly abide by its laws. The advantages of National Database System the country is exercising requires the city dwellers including its national populace to abide by

life of the people.

Moreover, the present governmental departments as well can build up currently e-government, saving time and making errors free in performing the respective duties, simultaneously helping eradicate the corruption of government personnel, which will besmirch the national image. For example, due to lack of such systems in governmental departments, it is very difficult to reduce the impact of red-tape system, in the government services of renewal registration of our motor vehicles, passports and other works. Had a car owner

The similar demand of government service personnel is to make their salaries proportional to current commodity prices. If this can be accomplished, all the staff can live merely upon their remunerations, free from bribery and corruption. In solving the current problem, increasing their original salaries by taking productive capabilities from them is better than just paying increased salaries. For example, on the supposition that there is 50 staff at the registration department of motor vehicles, and their capacities are designated as 200 units per day, their efforts and time

in real estate businesses. The current situation is an exit for fraudsters to exploit from greedy owners. The government needs not to request the public to develop the spirits of responsibility and accountability in them. By exercising the Carrot and the Stick Approach, and by using modernized systems, people's excessive craving will reduce and they will learn to feel consideration for others. No one will commit an offence if there is a law which will severely punish if committed. For example, if our Myanmar people are in a developed country such as Singapore, they have to strictly abide by its laws. The advantages of National Database System the country is exercising requires the city dwellers including its national populace to abide by.

Loving-kindness and a gun cannot bring about the administrative mechanism. If we say to people to bear shame and guilt culture all the day long, it will never be worthwhile. Due to deeds of 10 percent of mischievous people will adulterate the minds of the remaining 90 percent of the people. Especially, national finances and revenues will be lost mostly.

Attempts to evade taxes to levy as little as it should be, are not faults of the people. Lack of tax law which cannot let anyone evade tax is the major problem. Under the current situation the government cannot know exactly how much income the tax payer has, taxes are being collected according to estimated figures. During these conditions, government and company service personnel are mostly subjected to the current situations. That is because their salaries are on the lists but companies' profits are vanishing without evidences. As it is, the person who are required to pay tax are evading taxes whereas staff is suffering a lot, trying their best to eke out their living. These are caused by avoidance of National Database System.

To sum it up, National Database System is essentially to be built up in the country in trying our best in changing our country into peaceful and prosperous democratic nation.

*Translated by
Khin Maung Oo*

Enhancing public resources through progressive tax policies can help reduce inequality, highlights a joint UN-Oxfam study

A JOINT study released today by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Oxfam warned that the increase in inequality in several economies of Asia-Pacific, if left unchecked, could undermine long-term economic growth, diminish the prospects for further reduction in poverty and threaten social cohesion.

Measured by any metric, evidence shows that the income gap between the rich and poor in several economies of the region has widened considerably in recent decades. The study notes that the population-weighted income Gini coefficient, based on household income estimates, increased from 37 to 48 between 1990 and 2014; a spike of almost 30 per cent in less than three decades. At the same time, private wealth concentration has made the region the most unequal in terms of wealth distribution. Today, Asia's 'super-rich' outstrip their North American and European peers in both headcount and wealth, while the share of the bottom income groups in the growing economic pie stagnates.

In her remarks, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr. Shamshad Akhtar said, "High inequality in income and wealth hurts medium and long-term growth, reinforces inequality of opportunities, and undermines social cohesion. Strengthening public resources through progressive tax policies and enhancing international and regional cooperation on tax matters, along with enhanced financial inclusion, can help reduce inequality."

The joint study entitled, *Taxing for Shared Prosperity*, argues for a comprehensive strategy to reverse the trend of rising inequality. It highlights how public finance in general, and tax policies in particular, can help governments tackle the challenge.

The study underscores that the potential of tax policies in reducing inequality is yet to be fully leveraged in Asia-Pacific developing countries. The average tax revenue levels in several economies of the region remain low compared to other developing regions and many of these countries are only achieving half or less of their maximum revenue potentials. As a result, the fiscal space for proactive public spending to enable the poor in exploring economic opportunities and protect them from external shocks through social security networks has been limited.

Furthermore, the overall tax mix in Asia-Pacific developing countries remains highly skewed towards indirect taxes, while progressive direct taxes, such as the personal income tax, remain small in most cases. Direct taxes account for roughly a third of the region's total tax revenue at 36.1 per cent, in comparison to 55.8 per cent in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries. Property and wealth taxes, which are instrumental in adjusting wealth distribution and break the inheritance of excessive inequality cross-generations, are also largely missing.

Recognizing these challenges, the study provides a number of policy options that could be considered by Asia-Pacific developing countries. It encourages reforms to increase the share of progressive direct taxes in the overall tax mix, so that not only the overall revenues increase but also their potential in adjusting income and wealth distribution is enhanced. It also highlights the importance of international and regional tax cooperation, including through the United Nations platforms, to ensure that large corporations and wealthy individuals cannot evade their fair share of tax by exploiting international taxation loopholes.

Ms. Lilian Mercando, Oxfam's Regional Director for Asia added, "This study explains why there must be a fair distribution of tax burdens across different income groups to eliminate extreme inequality and break the spiral of growing income and wealth gaps. Countries must build a benign tax culture through fair taxes and accountable spending."— ESCAP News

France's Macron says external powers must stop interfering in Lebanon

PARIS — French President Emmanuel Macron called on all foreign powers to stop interfering in Lebanese politics and urged all Lebanese sides to fully implement a pact to keep out of regional conflicts.

“For Lebanon to be protected from regional crises it’s essential that all Lebanese parties and regional actors respect the principle of non-interference,” Macron said at the opening of international meeting on Lebanon in Paris.

“The meeting today must show the will of international community to see the policy of regional disassociation put into place effectively by all in the country.” —Reuters ■



French President Emmanuel Macron speaks during a news conference in Doha, Qatar, on 7 December 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

German SPD says outcome uncertain for impending government talks

BERLIN — A senior member of Germany’s Social Democrats (SPD) said her party would start exploratory talks next week with Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conservatives on forming a coalition, a move that could end a political impasse in Europe’s largest economy.

The SPD voted on Thursday to open talks with the conservatives, even though the party had earlier pledged to go into opposition after suffering its worst election result in the post-war era in September. The talks will begin on Wednesday.

The result of the talks was still open and a “grand coalition” between the SPD and conservatives was by no means a foregone conclusion, Andrea Nahles, the parliamentary leader of the SPD, said in an interview on Deutschlandfunkradio on Friday.

“It’s no more and no less than having talks at the moment,” Nahles said. “It’s not automatic that we’ll end up in a grand coalition - rather tough discussions will be necessary, and I don’t know what the conservatives are prepared to work with us on.”

Merkel is hoping the SPD will agree to a re-run of the grand coalition that has governed Ger-



Social Democratic Party (SPD) parliamentary group leader Andrea Nahles arrives for a speech during the SPD party convention in Berlin, Germany, on 8 December 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

many for the last four years. She was forced to turn to the SPD after talks with the environmentalist Greens and liberal Free Democrats (FDP) on a three-way alliance collapsed.

Merkel’s conservatives and the SPD both saw their vote share shrink in September elections, complicating the coalition arithmetic. Their coalition remains in place as a caretaker government.

Nahles said the SPD had not set any conditions for joining a

coalition with the conservatives but had laid out key points for the SPD, including getting rid of Germany’s two-tier public and private health system - an idea the conservatives oppose.

“But you don’t go into negotiations with a huge backpack full of red lines,” she said. The exploratory talks will be held to determine whether they can foresee working together, before deciding whether to proceed to full-blown coalition talks.—Reuters ■

Ukraine approves IMF-compliant 2018 state budget

KIEV — The Ukrainian parliament has adopted the country’s 2018 state budget Thursday overnight, pegging its deficit target at about 2.4 per cent of the gross domestic product — in line with requirements of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The budget was passed with the support of 273 lawmakers, 47 more than the minimum threshold of 226 lawmakers, according to a statement on the parliament’s website. The budget plan envisages Ukraine’s fiscal revenues this year at about 33.7 billion US dollars and expenditures at 36.4 billion dollars.

It is based on the expected economic growth of 3 per cent and inflation of 9 per cent.

Ukraine’s spending on defense next year is expected to remain at 5 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product and reach 6.09 billion dollars.

The budget also envisages increased support for agriculture, road construction, energy efficiency, education, science, healthcare and culture.

In 2018, Ukraine is counting on receiving a total of 3.5 billion dollars from the IMF’s 17.5-billion-dollar bailout programme.—Xinhua ■

Iranians hold rally to condemn US decision on Jerusalem

TEHRAN — Tens of thousands of Iranians held a nationwide rally on Friday to condemn the US President Donald Trump’s recent decision to move his country’s embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

The rally came following the Iranian Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) call for an “anti-US-Israel” protest before a Friday prayers.

In the capital Tehran angry protestors flocked to the streets carrying placards and banners demonstrating their anti-US and anti-Israel sentiments and shouted slogans in the support of Palestinians.

“Al-Quds (Jerusalem) belong to the Muslims and will remain Islamic,” the demonstrators said.

“We will stand against this

blatant move by the United States and will never allow Trump’s unilateral decision to be materialized,” Mr. Ahmadi, a school teacher, said.

“The US move will spark another wave of extremism and violence in the region,” Maryam, a university student said.

Earlier on Thursday, Iranian senior officials strongly condemned the Washington’s recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and called it a “blatant violation of international resolutions.”

On Wednesday, Trump announced his recognition of Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel, and instructed the State Department to begin the process of moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.—Xinhua ■

Congress averts US government shutdown for now

WASHINGTON — The US Congress moved rapidly on Thursday to send President Donald Trump a short-term funding bill to avert a government shutdown this weekend, leaving fights over budget priorities and a range of other controversial issues for the coming weeks.

The House of Representatives, working against a Friday midnight deadline, approved legislation in a 235-193 vote to fund a wide range of federal programs through 22 December.

The Senate followed up by approving the bill 81-14. The White House has said Trump will sign it into law.

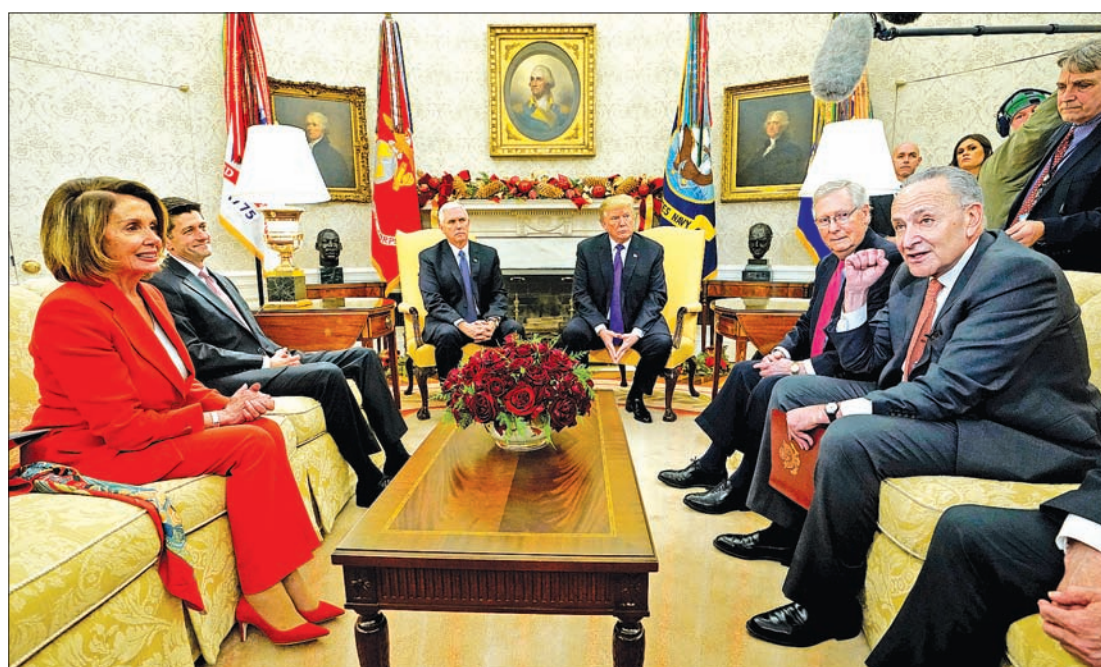
The measure creates more time for a reckoning between Republicans and Democrats about budget differences, which Trump discussed in a meeting with leading lawmakers at the White House earlier in the day.

"We hope that we're going to make some great progress for our country. I think that will happen," Trump said.

The White House said negotiations would resume on Friday.

Leaders now have about two weeks to find common ground on a host of thorny issues for the next government funding bill in order to prevent a partial government shutdown on 23 December.

Both sides want to avoid having parts of the government close, particularly during the holidays, for fear of a public backlash, and leaders from both parties have preemptively blamed the other for such a potential outcome. That political blame game is likely to continue in the next two weeks while, behind



US President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence meet with House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, US, on 7 December 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

the scenes, leaders hammer out a compromise. Republicans mainly want a big increase in defence spending for the fiscal year ending 30 September, 2018. But Democrats are insisting that any added Pentagon funding be accompanied by increases to other domestic programs.

Democrats also want to enact into law protections for nearly 700,000 undocumented immigrants who were children when they were brought into the United States.

Republicans want a much wider series of immigration law changes to further clamp down on foreign arrivals, and they want immigration negotiations to be held on a separate track from the government funding bill.

Democrats also want to shore up the Affordable Care

Act, known as "Obamacare," by reviving federal subsidies for low-income people in the programme.

House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer joined Trump and Republican congressional leaders for the talks after cancelling a similarly planned meeting last week when the president posted a note on Twitter attacking their policy positions.

The two Democrats said in a statement that the meeting on Thursday was productive but nothing specific had been agreed. Defence Secretary Jim Mattis joined the group to discuss military matters.

The White House foresees a compromise with lawmakers that will include increases in de-

fence and non-defence spending, White House legislative affairs director Marc Short told Reuters.

He said the White House wants a deal that covers spending for fiscal years 2018 and 2019.

Earlier on Thursday, Schumer said Trump seemed to be rooting for a shutdown and warned that, if one occurs, "it will fall on his shoulders."

"His party controls the Senate, the House and the presidency," he said. "Nobody here wants to see a shutdown. We Democrats are not interested in one."

Pelosi said Democrats were not willing to shut down the government over the Deferred Action for Child Arrivals (DACA) immigration programme, but she also said "we will not leave here without a DACA fix." —Reuters ■

WORLD BRIEFS

US has excluded itself from Middle East peace process — France

PARIS — The United States has excluded itself as a mediator in the Middle East peace process, France's foreign minister said on Friday, after US President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as its capital. "I hear some, including Mr Tillerson, say things will happen in time and the hour is for negotiations. Until now it could have had a mediation role in this conflict, but it has excluded itself a little. The reality is they are alone and isolated on this issue," Jean-Yves Le Drian told France Inter radio. —Reuters ■

Russia says ready for talks with US to try to save arms pact

MOSCOW — Russia's Foreign Ministry said on Friday it was ready for talks with the United States to try to keep a landmark arms control treaty that helped end the Cold War alive and that Moscow would comply with its obligations if the US did.

The ministry was referring to the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, which was signed in 1987 and banned all Soviet and American short and intermediate-range land-based nuclear and conventional missiles.

Its statement was published to mark the 30th anniversary of the treaty, which was signed with the Soviet Union. —Reuters ■

Defence Ministry to seek funding for long-range cruise missile plan

TOKYO — Japan's Defence Ministry will request additional funding in the next fiscal year's budget to introduce long-range cruise missiles for fighter jets, Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera said Friday.

Onodera denied that the new acquisitions would constitute a shift in Japan's strictly defence-oriented policy, under which the Self-Defence Forces do not possess the capability to strike other countries' territory.

"Our way of thinking has not changed at all," Onodera

said, stressing that Japan leaves strike capability to its defense ally the United States.

The ministry requested a record-high budget for fiscal 2018 in August, seeking to counter the threat from North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear development.

While Japan's postwar Constitution renounces war and the maintenance of "war potential," the government maintains that strike capability is allowed under the Constitution as long as it can be consid-

ered a self-defence measure.

The missiles in question are the JSM by Norway's Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace, with a range of about 500 kilometers, and Lockheed Martin Corp.'s JASSM-ER and LRASM missiles, which each have a roughly 900-km range.

The JSM will be mounted on the Air Self-Defence Forces' F-35 stealth fighters and the JASSM-ER and LRASM will be surveyed for possible mounting on F-15 fighters.

Onodera said the mis-

siles would be used to defend Maritime Self-Defence Force destroyers equipped with the Aegis missile defence system.

He also suggested they could be used in island defence, "dealing with enemy surface forces or landing forces before they get close."

He said the ministry left the cruise missiles out of its initial funding request in August because it had not yet finalized arrangements with the developers. —Kyodo News ■

One killed, eight wounded in eastern Afghan mosque blast

JALALABAD, (Afghanistan) — At least one Afghan civilian was killed and eight others wounded after a bomb ripped through a mosque in eastern province of Nangarhar on Friday, a provincial government spokesman said.

"The incident occurred at around midday in Sultan Khel Mosque in Hazarnaw locality of remote Muhmand Dara district. The blast left the prayer leader of the mosque dead on the spot and injured eight civilians," spokesman Attaullah Khogyani told Xinhua. —Xinhua ■

Be 'ready to GO!' Southern California warns residents as fires rage

FARIA BEACH/LILAC, (Calif) — Fanned by gusting winds, wildfires raged in densely populated Southern California for a fourth day on Thursday, with a new blaze north of San Diego exploding in size in just a few hours and dangerous conditions forecast until Sunday.

The blazes destroyed hundreds of houses and forced many Los Angeles-area schools to close. Flames hopscotched over highways and railroad tracks, and residents rushed to evacuate their homes with only minutes' warning, some leaving behind holiday gifts. People feared for the safety of animals from cats to llamas.

About 200,000 residents were evacuated



A firefighter is working on extinguishing the Lilac Fire, a fast moving wildfire, in Bonsall, California, US, on 7 December 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

from their homes at one point, though some were due to return on Thursday evening.

Authorities said the four biggest fires — ranging from Los Angeles up the Pacific coast to Santa

Barbara County — were whipped up by the region's notorious westward Santa Ana winds that could reach

hurricane strength.

The winds blow in hot and dry from the California desert, and the state CAL FIRE agency said gusty winds and extremely low humidity would continue through Sunday.

"Prepare now to ensure if evacuated you and your family are ready to GO!" CAL FIRE said on Twitter. The Thomas Fire northwest of Los Angeles grew to 115,000 acres (46,540 hectares) from 96,000 acres (38,850 hectares) and destroyed 439 structures, officials said. More than 2,600 firefighters from as far away as Portland, Oregon, and Nevada were battling the blaze, which was 5-per cent contained. North of San Diego, another blaze called the Li-

lac Fire grew from 10 acres to 2,500 acres (1,011 hectares) in just a few hours on Thursday, CAL FIRE said, prompting Governor Jerry Brown to declare a state of emergency for San Diego County.

The blaze destroyed 20 structures and prompted evacuations and road closures. Propane tanks under several houses exploded from the heat, sounding like bombs, according to a Reuters photographer at the scene.

The other fires, which broke out on Monday and Tuesday, have reached into the wealthy enclave of Bel-Air on Los Angeles' West Side. Some major highways in the densely populated area were intermittently closed.—Reuters ■

Britain and EU clinch Brexit 'breakthrough' with move to trade talks

BRUSSELS — Britain and the European Union struck a divorce deal on Friday that paves the way for arduous trade talks, easing immediate pressure on Prime Minister Theresa May and boosting hopes of an orderly Brexit.

May rushed to Brussels before dawn to seal European Commission agreement that "sufficient progress" had been made to begin talks about trade and a two-year Brexit transition period that will start when Britain leaves the EU on 29 March 2019.

Negotiators in London, Brussels and Dublin worked through the night before breaking an impasse over the status of the Irish border, the last major obstacle to the opening of trade talks which EU leaders are due to bless at summit on 14-15 December.

Speaking before sunrise at the EU's executive headquarters in Brussels after a hurried flight on a Royal Air Force plane, May said opening up



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May is welcomed by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker at the EC headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, on 8 December 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

trade talks would bring certainty for citizens and businesses about Britain's future after quitting the EU.

"The most difficult challenge is still ahead," European Council President Donald Tusk cautioned. "We all know that breaking up is hard. But breaking up and building a new relationship is much harder."

May, looking wea-

ry after just a couple of hours sleep, spoke after European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker announced the breakthrough first in English and then in German and French.

The move to trade talks 18 months after the United Kingdom's shock vote to exit the EU allayed some fears of a disorderly Brexit that could disrupt trade

between the world's biggest trading bloc and its sixth-largest national economy.

Sterling climbed to a six-month high against the euro on Friday before it fell back around midday to sit broadly flat, with one euro worth 87.4 pence, while bond yields across the euro zone rose. Against the US dollar the pound also weakened.—Reuters ■

US Marine Corps denies object fell from aircraft onto nursery school

TOKYO — The US Marine Corps has said a small cylindrical object that hit a nursery school roof in Okinawa on Thursday is unlikely to be a part of one of its aircraft that flew over the area at that time, Japanese government sources said Friday.

But Japanese authorities still believe that the object fell from an aircraft, possibly a CH-53 transport helicopter. No one was injured in the incident, which

occurred about 300 meters from US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma that sits in the middle of a densely populated residential area in Ginowan. According to local police and the Okinawa government, the cylindrical object was about 9.5 centimeters long and about 7.5 cm in diameter. It is thought to be the plastic cover of an instrument used to monitor the condition of helicopter rotor blades.—Kyodo News ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV CAPE FLORES VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CAPE FLORES VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.12.2017 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
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Ash billows from Bali volcano in fresh volley of activity

KARANGASEM, (Indonesia) — A rumbling volcano on Indonesia's tourist island of Bali ejected greyish-white plumes of ash on Friday, a timelapse sequence of Reuters images showed, a reminder, if it were needed, that its weeks-long period of activity has not ended.

Ash spewed as high as 2.1 km (1.3 miles) above the crater during one emission at 7:59 am (2359 GMT, Dec. 7), within a radius of about 5 km (3 miles) around the mountain, the Indonesian Disaster Mitigation Agency said.

"Sometimes it is hard for the lava and magma to come out, and when there is pressure, it will spew ash," agency head Gede Suantika told Reuters.



Mount Agung volcano erupts as seen from Kubu, Karangasem Regency, Bali, Indonesia on 28 November 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Until the volcano started to enter the ash emission stage on Friday, its emissions since

25 November had been mostly composed of steam, though there was some ash mixed in, he said.

The 3,000-metre (9,800-foot) Mount Agung volcano, which is capable of very violent eruptions,

has shown a marked increase in activity in the last few weeks, stoking fears of a repeat of an eruption in 1963 that killed more than 1,000 people.

While hot magma has produced an eerie orange glow just above the crater, and thousands of villagers have fled homes on the mountain's slopes, Agung's ejections of material have been small this time.

Authorities raised the alert status to the maximum after it started erupting last month, causing travel chaos by closing the island's airport for three days last week. Operations were normal on Friday at the international airports in Bali and on nearby Lombok island.—Reuters ■

Lao gov't adopts work plans to enhance ties with China

VIENTIANE — The monthly Lao cabinet meeting has adopted work plans to enhance the country's ties with China, local daily Vientiane Times reported on Friday.

Chaired by Lao Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith, the two-day monthly meeting for November ended on Thursday in Lao capital Vientiane.

The meeting adopted work plans to enhance Laos-China cooperation including plans to realize successful outcomes of the state visit to Laos by Chinese President Xi Jinping in November which resulted in the signing of series of cooperation documents.—Xinhua ■

Three Thai men rescued on northern Japan mountain

SAPPORO — Three Thai men were rescued on a mountain in Hokkaido on Friday morning after one of them suffered an injury and became unable to descend overnight, police said.

The three men were found on a slope near the fifth station of the 1,984-meter Mt. Kurodake at around 7:50 am by the Hokkaido prefectural police mountain rescue unit. They were taken to hospital for treatment for possible

frostbite but none of them was in a life-threatening condition, the police said. The unit was dispatched after the police received a rescue request around 10 pm Thursday from 12 other Thai men and women who had entered the mountain together with the three.

The rescued men are Taweepong Kanpinit, 32, Thanathorn Juangroon-gruangkit, 39, and Supat Bunjuar, 28, the police said.

The 12 others climbed down the mountain on

Thursday evening but the three men stayed on after one of them slid and sustained an injury, with the two others deciding to stay to care for him, according to the police.

All 15 were scheduled to descend Thursday after spending at least four nights in the mountainous area of the town of Kamikawa for mountaineering training. They had tents and other equipment for cold weather.—Kyodo News ■

Int'l panel agrees on looser regulations on tropical tuna fishing

MANILA — An international fisheries commission adopted Friday looser regulations on tropical tuna fishing in the western and central Pacific Ocean.

Member and participating countries under the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission agreed on measures to increase the catch limit on bigeye tuna as well as

shorten the closure period of fish aggregating devices on the high seas. Shigeta Oda, head of the Japanese delegation, said the allowable catch limit was increased by about 8 percent on average, while the closure period was reduced to five months from 12 months.

The WCPFC chair, Rhea Moss-Christian,

said that the measure is a result of a long process of consultation among the countries throughout their five-day conference held in Manila.

There are 26 member countries in the international commission as well as seven participating territories and seven non-member states.—Kyodo News ■

#RiseForYourRight

Universal Health Coverage Day



You are cordially invited to:
"RiseForYourRight: Universal Health Coverage Day"
Date: Tuesday 12th December 2017
Time: 12:30pm – 5pm
Venue: Myanmar Medical Association
No. 249, Thein Phyu Road, Yangon

**MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE
EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER**

1. MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WILL SELL TEAK & HARDWOOD ROUND LOGS AND SAWN TIMBERS BY OPEN TENDERS IN US DOLLARS. PARTICULARS OF THE OPEN TENDER SALES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

(a) DATE & TIME	- (15-12-2017) (12:00) Noon (19-12-2017) (12:00) Noon
(b) COMMODITIES & VOLUME	- TEAK LOGS ABOUT (1022) TONS - TEAK CONVERSION ABOUT (245) TONS - HARD WOOD LOGS - IN-KANYIN/INGYIN/HTAUKKYAN/SAGAWA HNAW ABOUT (2722) TONS
(c) PLACE	- TAW WIN HALL, GYOGONE, INSEIN TOWNSHIP, YANGON.

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**OPEN TENDER COMMITTEE
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE**

Cast member Gal Gadot poses at the premiere of "Wonder Woman" in Los Angeles, California US, on 25 May 2017.
PHOTO: REUTERS



'Wonder Woman,' 'The Post' among AFI's movies of the year

LOS ANGELES — Press freedom movie "The Post," gay romance "Call Me By Your Name," World War II film



"Dunkirk" and superhero movie "Wonder Woman" were among 10 films of the year chosen by the American Film Institute (AFI) on Thursday, in a list likely to be echoed at

Hollywood's high-profile awards shows next year.

Racial psychological thriller "Get Out," coming-of-age drama "Lady Bird," fantasy romance "The Shape of Water," romantic comedy "The Big Sick," dark comedy "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" and social drama "The Florida Project" were also on the AFI's annual list.

The AFI's list is non-competitive with no overall winner. The movies are selected because they "advance the art of the moving image, enhance the rich cultural heritage of America's art form, inspire audiences and artists alike and make a mark on American society," the AFI said in a statement.

The list was announced as Hollywood's awards sea-

son moves into high gear with nominations next week for the Golden Globes and the Screen Actors Guild awards. Oscar nominations will be announced in January.

The AFI list covered a wide range of movies spanning personal, political, racial and women's issues. "Lady Bird" and "Wonder Woman" are both directed by women, while "The Big Sick," "The Shape of Water" and "Get Out" were written and directed by people of color.

The AFI also picked its top television shows of the year, with HBO's medieval fantasy "Game of Thrones," female-led drama "Big Little Lies," Netflix's 1980s science-fiction series "Stranger Things" and Hulu's dystopian thriller "The Handmaid's Tale" making the list.—Reuters ■

Petals and confetti shower stage at La Scala opening

MILAN — Rose petals, flowers and golden confetti showered the stage of the rarely-performed Italian opera 'Andrea Chenier' at La Scala's season premiere on Thursday.

Applause roared as the curtain fell on the last, emotional duet — sung by a real-life couple — followed by the bloody conclusion to the opera, set during the French Revolution.

'Bravo' echoed in Milan's eighteenth century theater as the main characters of the

powerful, two-hour long performance took their bows. Members of the "Amici del Loggione" — a group of semi-professional critics who decide the success of the evening — popped confetti and threw petals and flower on stage as they acclaimed the singers.

"It was excellent," Gino Vezzini, president of the group, told Reuters at the end, noting how the performance had some cinema-like traits. He added that star soprano Anna Netrebko, who played young aristocrat

Maddalena di Coigny - a role once played by diva Maria Callas - was "superlative".

Inspired by the French poet Andre Chenier, the emotional plot sees a love triangle between the artist, torn between politics and love, Maddalena and her servant-turn-revolutionary Gerard.

Its most famous aria, the dramatic 'La Mamma Morta' — or in English 'They killed my mother' — was featured in a scene of the US movie 'Philadelphia'. —Reuters ■



Director Riccardo Chailly and the cast acknowledges the applause at the end of the "Andrea Chenier" by Umberto Giordano which opened the 2017-18 season at Milan's La Scala opera house, Italy, on 7 December 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**



Ed Sheeran poses with his MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) medal that was presented to him by Britain's Prince Charles during an Investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace, London, on 7 December 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Pop star Ed Sheeran receives honor from Britain's Prince Charles

LONDON — Grammy-winning singer Ed Sheeran received an MBE — a British state honor — for services to music and charity from Prince Charles in a ceremony at Buckingham Palace on Thursday.

The 26-year-old "Shape of You" singer was the most-streamed artist on music service Spotify globally in 2017, and his third album "Divide", topped the US album charts.

He has also used his celebrity to support several charities,

including children's hospices, anti-poverty campaigns and an AIDS charity.

Speaking to reporters after the ceremony, Sheeran said his late grandfather would have been pleased with his honor.

"My grandfather was a massive royalist," he told the BBC. "He had all the commemorative plates and stuff, and he died on this day four years ago, so it's actually quite a nice full circle thing, I guess he'd be pretty proud."—Reuters ■

Five-Star “Pan Pacific Yangon Hotel” Opened

OPENING ceremony of the International standard five-Star “Pan Pacific Yangon Hotel” was held at the Junction City, at Pabedan in Yangon yesterday.

Present at the ceremony were U Ohn Maung, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism, U Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region and Cabinet members, departmental heads, Ambassadors in Myanmar and diplomats, U Aik Tun, Chairman of Shwe Taung Group, responsible officials from Pan Pacific Hotel Group and invited guests.

At the opening ceremony, Mr William Lau, General Manager of Pan Pacific Hotel gave the welcoming address.

Afterward, U Ohn Maung, Union Minister, U Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region gave addresses respectively, followed by words of thanks from U Aung Zaw Naing, CEO of Shwe Taung Group.

Following that, Pan Pacific



Pan Pacific Yangon Hotel, Junction City. **PHOTO: MNA**

Yangon Hotel was opened by Union Minister U Ohn Maung, Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon City Mayor U Maung

Maung Soe, Mr Robert Chua, Singapore’s Ambassador to Myanmar, U Aik Tun, Chairman of Shwe Taung Group, and CEO

U Aung Zaw Naing, Mrs. Tan Wee Wei, Executive Director of PPHG, by cutting ribbon.

After the ceremony, guests

present at the opening ceremony were hosted with dinner in honour in commemoration of the ceremony.

Pan Pacific Yangon Hotel opened today is the five-star luxury hotel, consisting of 336 rooms. It has international standards SAAN-all day Dining, Haj Tien Lo, Cartonese restaurants including Spa, Fitness Centre. It is 25-storeyed one, giving views from Teak Bar at the Sky Lobby.

Junction City is situated at the corner of Bogoyoke Aung San Road and Shwedagon Pagoda Road, the economic hub of Yangon. In March, 2017 Junction City Shopping Centre and Grade A Office Tower were opened. Five-Star Pan Pacific Hotel, Yangon was opened as the completion of Junction City Phase 1. Junction City Phase 2 which will include Service Residences will be continued in 2018. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Public Peace Movement Week celebrated in Longlon Township

PUBLIC Peace Movement Week events including musical entertainment and peace movement talks were held in Maung Ma Gan and Pandale villages, Longlon Township, Taninthayi Region, yesterday.

U Jimmy and U Min Ko

Naing of 88 Generation Peace and Open Society gave talks on peace movement.

Before the talks, vocalists entertained the public with songs.

Participants also held a candlelit vigil for peace in the

country.

The musical entertainment and public peace talk were attended by Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Daw Lei Lei Maw, and about 250 local people.—Launglon IPRD ■



U Min Ko Naing talk in progress at Public Peace Movement Week event on 8 December 2017. **PHOTO: LAUNGLON IPRD**

DG of SSTD signs book of condolence for Dr. Surin Pitsuwan



Daw Kay Thi Soe, Director-General of the Strategic Studies and Training Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sign the book of condolence in memory of Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, former Foreign Minister of Thailand and former Secretary-General of ASEAN, opened at the Embassy of Thailand in Yangon on 8th December 2018. Dr Surin Pitsuwan passed away on 30th November, 2017. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

WEATHER

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30)hrs M.S.T today, the depression over the West Central Bay of Bengal centered at about (310) miles East-Southeast of Machilipatnam, (215)miles South-Southeast of Gopalpur (India) and forecast to move North- Northwest wards. Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal and cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 9th DECEMBER, 2017: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Sagaing Region, Shan and Chin States, scattered in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Rakhine and Kayah States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainly is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface winds speed in squalls may reach (35)m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about (6-9)feet in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts, (4-7)feet in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon- Taninthayi Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of fairly widespread rain or thundershowers in Sagaing Region and Chin State and scattered in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Shan and Rakhine States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9th DECEMBER, 2017: Likelihood isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainly is (60%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9th DECEMBER, 2017: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainly is (60%).

Myanmar to play Viet Nam today in Thai's M-150 Cup 2017

As an open day match of Thai's M-150 Cup 2017, Myanmar national football team will play against Viet Nam national team today at Buriram United's I-Mobile Stadium in Buriram, Thailand.

Twenty-one players were selected for the Myanmar U-23 national football team, which will be competing in the tourney and even six players from Myanmar U-21 football team had been selected in senior Myanmar national team for the tourney.

Myanmar, Viet Nam and Uzbekistan will comprise Group B, while host Thailand, Japan and the Democratic Republic of Korea are in Group A. All six U-23 teams will play in a round robin format. All Myanmar team's matches will be broadcasted on MRTV according to the statement on Myanmar Football Federation.—KyawZin Lin ■



Myanmar national footballers seen under training in Thailand for today's match against Viet Nam in M-150 Cup. **PHOTO:MFF**

Myanmar U-21 team prepares for international football tourney in Viet Nam

THE players for the Myanmar U-21 national football team who will participate in the upcoming Thanh Niên Newspaper International U-21 Football Tournament that will take place in Can Tho, Viet Nam from 12-22 December were selected. The two goalkeepers selected are BhoneThitsar Min and Htun Nanda Oo.

The defenders selected are Than Htike Zin, Kyaw Thu Tun, Win Moe Kyaw, Thurein Soe, Ye Yint Aung, Thet Paing Htwe and Hein Htet Si Thu.

The midfielders are Myat Kaung Kant, Soe Lwin Lwin, Zayya Naing, Myat Tun Thit, Zwe Thet Paing, Thein Htet Aung, Shwe Ko and Kyaw Myint Win. The three strikers selected are Thi Nyein Min, Zin Min Tun and Ehi Soe.

U Kyi Lwin will be head coach of the Myanmar U-21 national football team, while U Chit Naing and U KyawLwin will be assistant coaches.

U MyoKyaw Thu will be goal coach.

The tourney will feature five teams — Japan's Yokohama Club, the Thailand U-21 team, the Myanmar U-21 team, U-21 Viet Nam and U-19 Viet Nam. Teams will compete in a round robin format, with the two best teams entering the final.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■

Ronaldo pips Messi to win Ballon d'Or for joint-record fifth time

PARIS — Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo was awarded the Ballon d'Or for world player of the year on Thursday for a joint-record fifth time, going level with eternal rival and Barcelona forward Lionel Messi as the player to have won the prize the most times.

The Real Madrid forward won the award, handed out by

magazine France Football, for the second consecutive year having led his side to the La Liga title with 25 goals and a successive Champions League crown, netting 12 goals including two in the 4-1 win over Juventus in the final.

Ronaldo collected the trophy in a glitzy ceremony at the Eiffel

Tower in the French capital, presented by former France player David Ginola.

"I feel very happy, it's a fantastic moment in my career," Ronaldo said upon collecting the award, standing with his mother Maria Dolores and his oldest son Cristiano Jr.

"I've waited a long time for

this. This has been a stupendous year for me, we won the Champions League and La Liga and on a personal level I was top scorer in the Champions League.

"Trophies help me win prizes like this and I have to thank my team mates at Madrid and Portugal. They've been very important to me." —Reuters ■



Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Kuznetsova out of Australian Open with wrist injury

MELBOURNE — Russia's world number 12 Svetlana Kuznetsova will miss next month's Australian

Open as she recovers from wrist surgery, organisers confirmed on Friday.

The 32-year-old former French and US Open champion was already rated doubtful and was missing from the official entry list when it was published on Friday along with China's world number 94 Zheng Saisai, who has

a right knee problem. Reigning champion Serena Williams was included in the field for the first grand slam of the year but remains a doubt for the event after giving birth to a daughter in September.

Novak Djokovic, Andy Murray, Kei Nishikori and Stan Wawrinka, all of whom ended last season early due to injuries, are expected to return to Australia next month. "We have been in regular contact with Andy Murray, Kei Nishikori and Stan Wawrinka, who are all set

for the Aussie summer," tournament director Craig Tiley said in a statement. "They will all have lower rankings meaning there's a real chance we'll finally see a breakthrough from one of the rising stars like Alexander Zverev, Dominic Thiem or David Goffin."

The Australian Open follows the world rankings for seedings so world number ones Rafa Nadal and Simona Halep will top the men's and women's singles draws for the 15 to 28 January event at Melbourne Park.—Reuters ■