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Investigation Commission visits Maungtau for the third time

RAKHINE State investigation commission members led by U Myint Swe, Vice President and Chairman of the Rakhine State Investigation Commission, arrived in Sittwe, Rakhine State by air to make another inspection on the ground concerning the report of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

The commission members were welcomed at the airport in Sittwe by U Nyi Pu, Chief Minister of Rakhine State, the Minister for Social Affairs of the State and other officials.

The Vice President, accompanied by the Chief Minister and commission members, then traveled to Kyiganpyin by helicopter and proceeded to Buthidaung Prison to ensure that treatment of prisoners was in accord with basic international principles.

During the inspection, U Chan Aye Kyaw, Assistant Director of the Buthidaung Prison, clarified facts about the penitentiary. This was followed by explanations from the district officer on legal affairs and the township judge concerning the trials of prisoners in the courts.

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LOCAL BUSINESS



Export value from manufacturing goods drops by US\$ 300 million

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Nuns gathered yesterday create a sea of pink and saffron. Religious degrees were conferred on Buddhist monks and nuns at the 58th Maha convocation held at the Maha Pasana Cave in Thiri Mingalar KabaAye Hillock in Yangon yesterday. The degrees were conferred on those who passed the Dhammacariya, Pali Pathamapyan, Nikaya Exam, Abhidhamma and Visuddhi Magga examinations with credit. PHOTO: MNA

WWF to invest in Myanmar's Waste Disposal System

Ko Moe

THE World Wildlife Fund (WWF) will provide technical support in Myanmar's industrial waste disposal system, said U Sein Thaug Oo, the co-chairman of the Myanmar Food Processors and Exporters Association.

"Myanmar's waste disposal system is weak, as we develop in the industrial sector we should be ready in preparing a proper system for disposing industrial waste, and WWF is supporting us with the technology for this," he said.

Yesterday at the Traders and Industrial Headquarters, the Myanmar Food Processors and Exporters Association and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to consolidate the agreement.

The WWF will begin giving training on its technologies starting this March in ShwePyitar Industrial Zone.

Myanmar Country Director Dr. A. Christy Williams further stated the WWF will also provide support in harnessing raw

power from waste disposals, proper harnessing of natural water, and saved consumption of raw energy.

Even though Laws on Waste Disposal has been promulgated, business owners' adherence to these laws has been weak.

"There had been no system like this in the factories before. Even after these laws were introduced, the factories continued to run as they were. We should implement these systems as soon as possible. It's been 20 years since the factories have been running

and disposing waste in this manner, and although it's too late to repair the mess that has been made, if we start implementing this system now it will make for much improvement in the years to come," stated Hluttaw Representative U Kyaw Kyaw Htun at the Second Yangon Region Hluttaw Meeting.

U Kyaw Kyaw Htun further stated that inspections on these factories' waste disposal management should be conducted by experts, Hluttaw representatives and members of civil society.



သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမာန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Pyithu Hluttaw

2nd Pyithu Hluttaw 4th regular session holds its 8th day meeting

THE Pyithu Hluttaw continued its 4th regular session in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, discussing issues related with establishing ecotourism areas and land leased to private cultivators for reforestation.

U Ohn Win, the Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, replied to a question raised by Daw Khin San Hlaing of the Pale constituency as to whether there was a plan to designate Alaung-taw Katthapa National Park as an ecotourism zone.

“An ecotourism working committee was formed on the development of ecotourism, designating 15 ecotourism zones including Alaung-taw Katthapa National Park. In implementing the tasks for the development of the tourism industry in the long run, three major sectors — minimising as much as possible the destruction of natural environment, not harming social and cultural matters and characteristics of the local people due to the tourism industry, and making sustainable development of tourism-related businesses and local people to be taken into consideration. Like-



Members of Pyithu Hluttaw gather at the Parliament building to attend the meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

wise, other ecotourism zones such as Alaung-taw Katthapa National Park were designated as an ecotourism zone and special plans are being made in consultation with international organizations, for the emergence as the National Park.”

Union Minister U Ohn Win also replied to the question raised by U Khin Cho of Hlaingbwe constituency as to whether there was completion of plantation during the designated period according to the acreage granted

to be grown or not; plantation of un-granted plants or not; unofficial transfer of plots or not; plans for scrutinising and amending in accord with fair rates and plans for taking actions over the arrears (if ever) or not.

“In accord with the policy of forestry, the Private Teak Plantation was granted as a public-combined reforestation industry as of 2006 and with Private Hard Wood Plantation in 2007. Private forest plantation in protected sites in and out of forest

reserves are in accord with prescriptions granted respectively.

The Ministry is pledging the Office of the Union Attorney General to give legal suggestions for performing in accord with the law over the arrangement to cancel and withdraw contracts, as some entrepreneurs licensed to plant rubber plantation failed to abide by contract prescriptions. With a view to reducing national budget spending if there were destruction due to abandoning granted area and to giving special

emphasis in establishing Private Teak and Hard Wood plantation, under the decision made at the meeting held on May 3, 2016, it was prescribed that all plantations (teak & hard wood) should be deposited as Ks50,000 per acre in advance as the warranty, to finish all the acreage to completion of the work project, and to withdraw from the respective banks and confiscate the warranty fees as the People’s Finance with the approval of district officer of forestry department.”

Over the motion, Daw Khin Moh Aung of Latha constituency seconded and U Myint Kyi of Katha constituency took part in the discussion, together with U Myint Lwin, of Twantay constituency, U Aung Naing of Mogok constituency, Dr Daw Khin Nyo of Dedaye constituency, U Myat Lay Oo of Htilin constituency and U Myint Oo of Thanatpin constitution.

Over the motion, U Ohn Win, Union Minister submitted to the Hluttaw to put the motion on record, and the Speaker took the approval of the Hluttaw, announcing that it would be recorded. —Myanmar News Agency

Amyotha Hluttaw

Road upgrades in Shan, Chin states discussed at Amyotha Hluttaw

THE improvement of road conditions in Shan State and Chin State brought up by two Members of Parliament were the main issues on the eighth day of the fourth regular meeting of Amyotha Hluttaw.

U Tun Tun Oo, MP for Mandalay Region’s constituency 2, asked whether there could be plans for a new road which is shorter and safer than the Mandalay-Muse road, which is the main road for Myanmar-China border trade. The current road is frequently congested and is mown for the many accidents that occur along its route.

“The government is working out the details for a new, 2,855-long Goattwin bridge, which passes outside Nawngkhio town and the road between PyinOo Lwin and Lashio will be used without congestion when being constructed,” said U Win Khaing, Union Minister for Construction.

The minister also pointed out that the congestion frequently occurs in Goattwin because of numerous trucks, weakness in truck maintenance and unskilled drivers, which cause frequent blockages.

Currently, there is a 50-ton capacity crane vehicle which is on 24-hour standby to clear traffic.



U Win Khaing, Union Minister for Construction. PHOTO: MNA

The traffic police works together with the road maintenance team when accidents or breakdowns occur.

Besides, the upgrading tasks of a 48 ft wide, 4-lane nylon road are being undertaken in the most congested section between Kutkai and Namphakar, though only some tasks will be finished before the rainy season because of security concerns. As the first steps there will be road expansion in the narrow parts and maintenance in the 36 ft-wide section of road. The Nylon standard range for 48 ft wide road will be implemented annually to minimize the slippery surfaces. If finished in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the congestion would be reduced and the flow of

commodities would be quicker, the minister said.

As Mandalay-Lashio-Muse road is a strategic economic corridor, the government is make a feasibility study to seek a new route and would implement a 4-lane highway if suitable sites are found.

U Wai Tin, MP for Chin constituency 11, also asked about a tar road construction plan between Palatwa Township in Chin State and Kyauktaw Township in Rakhine State in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

The minister explained that Kyauktaw-Platwa road is managed by the Union government and is being implemented for road expansion, refilling holes with stones in ruined parts caused by flooding and bridge maintenance, which are done using state funds and be finished in 2017-2018.

The road in Chin State is being implemented with Ks611.337 million in state funds for 13.5 miles, which can be used in any season. The road will be continued until its finalisation in the 2017-18 fiscal year for 1.5 miles using Ks292.5 million in state funds. The remaining nine miles will continue to be constructed depending on funding. —Myanmar News Agency

U Sein Oo appointed as Ambassador of Malaysia

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Sein Oo, Director-General of the Consular and Legal Affairs Department,

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Malaysia.—Myanmar News Agency



Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Ti Khun Myat holds talks with Ms. Margaret Hodge and Ms. Rushanara Ali, members of House of Commons from the Labour Party of Britain in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw receives House of Commons members from Britain

DEPUTY Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Ti Khun Myat received a delegation led by Ms. Margaret Hodge and Ms. Rushanara Ali, members of House of Commons from the Labour Party of Britain at the office of Pyithu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At their meeting, they

discussed cooperation with international parliaments for promoting the Hluttaw’s procedures, the further role of women in political affairs, issues related to democratic, human rights and peace in Myanmar and parliamentary and legislative affairs. —Myanmar News Agency



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes Ms. Rushanara Ali MP from the Labour Party of the United Kingdom at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor receives MP from the Labour Party of the UK

DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received the delega-

tion led by Ms. Rushanara Ali, MP from the Labour Party of the United Kingdom, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw at 11:15 hrs, on 14th Febru-

ary 2017, and exchanged views on the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and the UK.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Investigation Commission visits Maungtau for the third time

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The Vice President said prisoners should be allowed to meet with their families, should be given adequate and regular medical care and should have faster access to the court system for judging cases in accord with the law, in consultation with respective departments. The Vice President met with prisoners and enquired about their health care and living conditions in the prison.

Buthidaung Prison holds up to 1,388 prisoners, but currently houses only 1,294 prisoners. According to the findings of the investigation done by the Myanmar Human Rights Commission into Buthidaung Prison, it is learnt that



Vice President U Myint Swe enquires officials of the Buthidaung Correctional Department in Northern Rakhine. PHOTO: MNA

there were no cases of torture, and that systematic preparation was done for feeding prisoners in accord with the designated limit. In addition, freedom of worship was allowed, according to the findings.

The Vice President and commission members then inspected construction sites of courts to be expanded for judging cases in accord with the law, as soon as possible.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Sagaing Chief Minister gives directive to expand Child Protection Centres

SAGAING Region Government Chief Minister Dr. Myint Naing gave a directive to expand Child Protection Centres to address child rape cases committed in Sagaing Region.

The Chief Minister was speaking at the Children's Day

ceremony which falls on February 13 and held at Monywa Town Hall.

Dr. Myint Naing said, "Cases of violence against children including rape were committed in many cities in the region. The government departments con-

cerned and charity organizations need to cooperate."

He also urged departments and organizations to establish Child Protection Centres at the grassroots and community levels.—*Manzar Myay Mon (Miz-zima)*

Opening Ceremony of Pang Long Hall in Yangon University



Thonkhwa Pyithu Hluttaw representative Daw Su Su Lwin unveils Pang Long Hall Signboard at Yangon University. PHOTO: MNA

In tribute to the 21st Century Pang Long Conference taking place this year, the new residence at Yangon University has been named Pang Long Hall, which had its opening ceremony yesterday morning.

Present at the opening ceremony were Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Education, U Naing Ngan Lin, Minister for Social Affairs of Yangon Region Cabinet, Dr Pho Kaung, Rector of Yangon University, Dr Naw Joo Phaw, professor and head of English Faculty and Dr Poe Poe, director of the National Center for English Language.

The hall was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony with Daw Su Su Lwin, the Pyithu Hluttaw representative of Thonkhwa, unveiling the signboard of Pang Long Hall and delivering a welcoming speech.

Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Education and Dr Myo Myint, chairman of the national education policy, also made opening speeches, followed by words of thanks from the professor and head of the English Faculty at Yangon University and the

director of the national center for English Language.

Afterward, Union Minister presented certificates of honour to donors, and students majoring in English entertained with songs.

At the Pang Long Hall, disciplines are being conducted for Pre-and-Post-Graduates majoring in English language, English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), English for Professional Purposes (EPP), Intercultural Communication Academic Writing and other related courses of study. He chosen fields of study are being expanded for compatibility with the needs of the country and improving in accord with the times, officials said. English for Prelim for doctoral students and Foundation English for Pre-Graduates are also being done to be upgraded to the international level.

The opening of the Pang Long Hall is a sign of peace, and will be one of the achievements in the educational sector, as it will be able to fulfill the needs of the English language for the development of Myanmar.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Convention on Sustainable Development Goals

AN organisation consisting of Southeast Asian countries, CLMV (Cambodia, Lao, Myanmar, Vietnam) held a convention in Nay Pyi Taw's Horizon Lake View Resort yesterday morning to discuss sustainable development goals among the countries.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win delivered the opening speech. Afterwards, Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF) Myanmar's Representative Mr.Achim Munz and Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) Director Dr.Genevieve Barre delivered speeches. Directors-gneral from ministries concerned cussed the

necessary and required procedures and Myanmar's current progress concerning Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Asia-Europe Foundation Planning Manager Ms. Grazyna Pulawska addressed the programme for the convention and discussed the progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, and Mr. Frank Thomas, an expert from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), discussed the necessity of interconnecting international and national objectives concerning the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).—*GNLM*

4th Myanmar-Japan Human Rights Dialogue held



Representatives of Myanmar and Japan participate in 4th Myanmar-Japan Human Rights Dialogue. PHOTO: MNA

THE fourth Myanmar-Japan Human Rights Dialogue was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw, on 14 February 2017. U Kyaw Zeya, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar and Ambassador Koichi Mizushi-

ma, Deputy Director-General and Ambassador in-charge of the United Nations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan co-chaired the dialogue.

Senior officials from the relevant government agencies of Myanmar and Japan were also

present.

At the dialogue, the two sides exchanged views on policies and practices in the field of human rights and enhancing of cooperation between Myanmar and Japan in multi-lateral fora.—*Myanmar News Agency*

New veterinary hospital to be built in Yangon's Mingala Taungnyunt Township

AS PART OF its programme to control the stray dog population, the Yangon City Development Committee will build a new veterinary hospital in Mingala Taungnyunt Township in Yangon.

According to the YCDC's Veterinary and Slaughter Houses Department, the 250-square-foot hospital structure will be established under a three-year project to control the stray dog

population and create a rabies-free zone between 2017 and 2019.

About 120 dogs can undergo surgical operations at the same time at the new hospital, an official of the department said.

The immunisation programme to prevent rabies in dogs will be carried out at the hospital after the project is completed, with officials targeting

to vaccinate dogs in Sangyoung and Mingala Taungnyunt Township.

Essential veterinary care will be given by the YCDC through the new animal hospital, which will be equipped with storage facilities, operating rooms, rooms for veterinary emergencies, a kitchen and cages. According to the YCDC's data, there are roughly 180,000 stray dogs in the city.—200

Free cleft lip, palate repair treatment in NyaungU

CHILDREN will receive cleft lip and cleft palate surgery free of charge for nine days in NyungU District General Hospital.

Doctors from the Ministry of Health and Sports and InterPlast Germany, a medical charity, will give treatment to people with cleft lips, cleft palates and burn injuries between 19 and 27 February, said U Aung Nyunt from Bagan See Sar restaurant.

The patients have to arrive for treatment no later than 17 February and must inform Bagan See Sar restaurant. The family of U Aung Nyunt will take responsibility for all accommodations for these patients.



PHOTO: THE MIRROR

U Aung Nyunt, a member of the donor family, said this is the 33rd time the programme has been conducted by the U Aung Nyunt family since 1996.—001

Over a hundred thousand tonnes of raw rubber exported in fiscal 2016-2017

OVER one hundred thousand tonnes of raw rubber worth US\$135 million were exported from April to the third week of January in fiscal year 2016-2017, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

"This year, we exported more raw rubber than last year. The ministry of commerce is supporting the development of the rubber sector. We need more support from the ministry of commerce to penetrate the in-

ternational market. The price of Myanmar rubber has decreased in the international market by US\$300," said U Ko Ko Oo, a rubber businessman.

The rubber is mostly grown in the Taninthayi Region and in Mon State. There are over 1.2 million acres of rubber plantations across the country, including over four hundred thousand acres in Mon State.

Fifteen rubber factories are exporting over 80,000 tonnes

every year. Myanmar rubber is included in export priority sectors for national export. Myanmar rubber is being exported mainly to Japan, Malaysia and China.

Myanmar rubber has three grades. First and second grade rubber are of the best quality and the third grade is of lower quality. The rubber businessmen are selling only the third grade quality rubber in the local market, said a local rubber businessman.—200

Formation of Supervision Committees for Political Dialogues at the National-Level for Shan State, Bago Region

Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee issued Notification 1/2017 yesterday. Following is an unofficial translation of the full text of the announcement.—*Ed*

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee

Notification 1/2017

3rd Waning of Tabodwe 1378 ME

14th February 2017

1. In accordance with the guidance for working process of political dialogues at the national level and principles on political dialogue included in the framework of political dialogue, region-orientated political dialogue at the national level will be held in Bago Region whereas race-orientated political dialogue at the national level in Shan State. For monitoring the dialogues, political dialogue supervision committees at the national level for Shan State and Bago Region have been formed as follows:

(a) **Supervision committee for Political Dialogue at the National-Level for Bago Region**

- (1) Daw Naw Pwal Hsay (Minister for Ethnic Affairs)
- (2) Col Myo Aung (Tatmadaw)
- (3) U Khin Maung Than (Pyithu Hluttaw MP)
- (4) Saw Se Gae (Ethnic armed group)
- (5) Saw Tun Ke (Ethnic armed group)
- (6) Saw Ki Do (Ethnic armed group)
- (7) U Thein Tan (Political party)
- (8) U Tin Soe (Political party)
- (9) U Yan Naing (Political party)

(b) **Supervision committee for Political Dialogue at the National-Level for Shan State**

- (1) Dr Tun Hlaing (Minister for Ethnic Affairs)
- (2) Col San Nyunt Zaw (Tatmadaw)
- (3) Dr Daw Than Ngwe (Pyithu Hluttaw MP)
- (4) Khun Tun Tin (Ethnic armed group)
- (5) Lt-Col Saung Han (Ethnic armed group)
- (6) Lt-Col Saing Han (Ethnic armed group)
- (7) U Khin Maung Nyunt (Political party)
- (8) U Khun Thura Aung (Political party)
- (9) U Sai Myint Maung (Political party)

2. The supervision committees for political dialogues at the national-level are obliged to make efforts for the successful and systematic holding of the political dialogues at the national-level in line with the provisions and respective directives approved by the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee.

Sd/Aung San Suu Kyi
Chairperson

Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee

7 out of 9 human trafficking cases in Jan were forced marriage

7 OUT OF 9 HUMAN trafficking cases committed in January were forced marriage with Chinese nationals.

In January, human trafficking victims were taken from ethnic inhabited areas and there were 7 cases of forced marriage with Chinese nationals, one forced labour and one case of prostitution.

The human trafficking victims were from Bago, Shan State, Mandalay, Kachin State and Kayah State. Three cases were committed in Bago Region, three cases in Shan State, one case in

Mandalay Region, one case in Kachin State, and one case in Kayah State.

A news report released by Information Ministry says 11 out of 16 human trafficking victims were rescued and 9 out of 19 accused were arrested with the remaining 10 accused still on the run. Currently, human trafficking victims are being given protection and counselling services by Social Welfare Department under Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. — *Mizzima*

LOCAL Business

Export value from manufacturing goods drops by US\$ 300 million

THE export value of manufacturing goods as of 3rd February in this fiscal year slumped by US\$385.3million when compared to that in the similar period of last year, according to official figures of the Commerce Ministry.

Out of seven export groups, manufacturing and mineral sectors this fiscal year are found to have lower export value against last year. However, other sectors managed to scale up the export value. Therefore, the export value as of 3rd February totalled \$9,518.202mil which was up from \$8892.311mil in last FY.

The export values from 1st April to 3rd February in this fiscal year were \$2.31billion from agricultural products, \$7.94mil from animal products, \$458.09mil from fisheries products, \$812.332mil from minerals, \$201.48mil from forest products, \$4430.916mil from manufacturing goods and \$1.29bil from other products, according to statistics from the Commerce Ministry.

The country's exports from the private sector mainly comes from garment enterprises under Cut-Make-Pack (CMP) system,



A ship loaded goods to export at a port in Yangon on 14 January 2017. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

and the garment products on a CMP basis fetched about US\$1.85billion so far. This sector looks promising to improve year by year.

A fully online license system for some import and export items was launched in January 2016, and concerted efforts are being exerted to issue on-

line licenses for CMP garment enterprises in cooperation with the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association. Additionally, those engaged in the garment enterprises are making efforts to transform from a CMP into Freight On Board (FOB) system, it is learnt.

The import value

from 1st April to 3rd February in this fiscal year plunged by over \$450mil when compared to that of last year because the government is scrutinising luxury import items except for essential items, according to the Second National Development Plan, in an effort to reduce the trade deficit.

The total import values as of 3rd February during this fiscal year were \$13.53bil, with \$5.42bil from capital goods, \$4.85bil from raw industrial materials and \$3.26bil from personal goods, according to the statistics provided by the Commerce Ministry.—*Mon Mon*

Over 2,000 unclaimed vehicles at Yangon port up for auction

OVER 2,000 imported vehicles which have not been claimed after 60 days at Yangon port will be sold at auction, according to Myanma Port Authority.

These unclaimed imported vehicles are found to be in non-compliance with model year limit and some are attributed to the absence of incharge resulted from shutting down of the car sales centers.

Out of those cars, there are high-end cars of high model. Thilawa port is no longer hold these unclaimed cars for space problems and so, Myanma Port Authority will auction off those unclaimed cars, it is learnt.

The money from auction will be used as public finance. Myanma Port Authority auctions off the unclaimed cars every year and those cars are confiscated by the government. The income from auction will be revealed to public.—200

Indian parliamentary Panel on External Affairs irked at delays in Kaladan project

CONNECTIVITY to Myanmar through the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, entails construction of 69 bridges, is important for India's strategy to contain insurgency in the north-east. But, the inordinate delay in the project has irked the Parliamentary Panel on External Affairs.

The Parliamentary Panel on External Affairs has also expressed its doubt on the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) claims that the tendering process will be completed within the stipulated time. The committee faulted the MEA that in the last financial year (2015-16)

it was "unable to utilize even half the provided budget outlay".

The Kaladan project is estimated to cost around Rs. 29 billion. On completion, it will provide an alternate route to the existing longer route between the northeastern states and India passing via Siliguri in West Bengal, better known as the Chicken's Neck. The MEA has been expecting that Road Component under the Kaladan project would commence in 2015-16. "However, it took significant time in obtaining necessary approvals for these projects," the MEA responded to the

Panel's queries and justified it saying that training programme and small development projects were carried out as 'Aid to Myanmar'.

India has undertaken the construction of 69 bridges and Tamu-Kyigone-Kalewa section of the India-Myanmar-Thailand highway and upgrade the Kalewa-Yargi section of the highway. Warm relations with Myanmar are imperative if India wants to restrict the insurgency in the north-east as many outfits have network across the 1600 km long border that the two countries share.

The Committee ex-

pressed its dissatisfaction at the justification given by the MEA for the delays saying it could have easily anticipated with a certain amount of foresight on part of the Ministry and avoided the situation of locking up of scarce funds pending approvals. "Moreover, carrying out of less capital intensive projects such as training programmes and small development projects cannot compensate for the loss of time and resources in big ticket projects," the Panel headed by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor in a report tabled in the Parliament.—*Express News Service*

Diebold Nixdorf opens office in Yangon

Diebold Nixdorf, the U.S.-based automated teller machine (ATM) manufacturer and distributor with partnerships among most of the world's top 100 financial institutions, has opened an office in Yangon, it is learnt.

Diebold Nixdorf has been supporting local banks with their self-service technology needs for many years. Cash is still the favoured payment system in Myanmar, though digital channels are growing in popularity.

The total number of ATMs in Myanmar as of 2015 was approximately 1,780. The ATM users are

likely to grow 21 per cent from the end of 2015 to end of 2021, according to strategic research of a consulting firm RBR.

Diebold Nixdorf, which has established partnerships with a number of banks across the Asia Pacific region, hopes to help financial institutions increase the number of banking consumers and provide more services and technologies, it is learnt.

Diebold Nixdorf will cater to the needs of local banks with a team of 30 service staff in Myanmar and will help to expand their businesses beyond the big cities.—*Ko Khant*

Thailand's new king shows his strength

BANGKOK — From requiring constitutional changes to pushing for unity in the divided country and reshaping the royal household, Thailand's new king is putting an assertive stamp on his rule.

King Maha Vajiralongkorn has made it clear to the generals running the country that he will not just sit in the background as a constitutional figurehead since taking the throne in December from a father treated by Thais as semi-divine.

That matters in Thailand, where relationships between monarchy, army and politicians have long determined the stability of Southeast Asia's second-biggest economy and America's oldest regional ally.

Predictions by some pundits of a troubled royal transition have proven wrong - at least for now.

"His majesty has proven himself to be very adept at managing the junta and the military," said academi-



Portraits of Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun and the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej are displayed at a department store in central Bangkok, Thailand, on 17 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

ic Paul Chambers at the Institute of Southeast Asian Affairs in Chiang Mai.

None of more than two dozen serving or former officials, military officers, parliamentarians, diplomats or analysts that Reuters spoke to for this story saw any immediate threat to that balance of power.

With jail facing anyone found guilty of insulting the monarchy under the nation's "lese majeste" laws, few Thais comment openly on royal matters.

Asked for a response for this story, a palace official said it did not comment to the media. A government spokesman declined

comment.

King Vajiralongkorn started from a very different place to his father, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who died on 13 October.

When the teenage Bhumibol took the throne in the late 1940s, the future of the monarchy itself looked in doubt.

Building alliances, he quietly re-established the royal aura and authority - becoming ultimate arbiter during coups and spells of chaos as Thailand changed from rural backwater to middle-income country.

King Vajiralongkorn, 64, has spent years abroad, his private life complicated by three marriages, and he has yet to win the public adoration received by his father.

But the king's background puts him on different terms with the generals: He went through military academies; he saw combat against insurgents in the 1970s; he can fly a fighter jet.

In line with protocol, junta members prostrate themselves before the new king at audiences, as palace photos show.

"The relationship is at least one of obedience," said Eugenie Mérieau, a lecturer and researcher at Sciences Po in Paris.—*Reuters*

Cambodian PM, Putin's top security advisor discuss bilateral ties, int'l issues

PHNOM PENH — Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen met with visiting Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev on Tuesday, discussing ways to enhance bilateral ties and exchanging views on regional and international issues.

"The meeting focused on the strengthening and expanding of relations and cooperation between Cambodia and Russia, especially in the security sector," Kao Kim Hourn, a minister attached to the Cambodian prime minister, told reporters after their talks. He said both sides also shared views on regional and international issues, especially the issue of counterterrorism.

On Monday, Nikolai also held talks with Cambodian Defense Minister Gen. Tea Banh, focusing their discussion on security cooperation.—*Xinhua*

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Supporters of Indonesia capital's governor in colorful push for votes

JAKARTA—Supporters of the governor of Indonesia's capital are hoping their checkered shirts in red, white and blue will help galvanize the vote in a city election on Wednesday and win a second term for their leader.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama is Jakarta's first ethnic Chinese and Christian governor, and the election in the city of 10 million people has stoked religious tension in the Muslim-majority country.

Purnama has won middle-class support for cutting red tape and improving the performance of the bureaucracy, but he has been campaigning for re-election while on trial for blasphemy, after being accused of insulting the Koran.

He denies doing so.

The checkered shirts were first popularized by his predecessor as city governor, Joko Widodo, who became president of the world's third-largest democracy in 2014.

The shirts are aimed at invoking a folksy charm and conjuring up a sense of hard work, and Purnama often wears one.



Jakarta governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (C) take pictures with residents during his campaign at Jatinegara district in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 6 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

His supporters have also taken up the fashion, turning up at his weekly court appearances where they are separated by police in colorful contrast to white-clad members of a hardline Muslim group calling for Purnama to be jailed.

Purnama suffered a hit in the polls, apparently related to his trial, but his support has rebounded over the past few weeks.

His campaign team is hoping the checkered shirts will resonate with voters, in much the same way that US President Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" red

baseball caps did.

"It's simple, easily remembered and is a symbol for hard workers," said Purnama campaign official Guntur Romli.

"We're invoking that memory," Romli said, referring to recollections of Widodo, a hugely popular Jakarta governor who has retained strong backing after his move to the presidential palace.

Near Purnama's campaign headquarters, the red, white and dark blue checkered shirts cost up to 170,000 rupiah (\$13) and have recently been selling fast at street stalls.

Hats, mugs and key

chains bearing the likeness of Purnama, who is known by his nickname Ahok, were also on display.

Office worker Emma Kusuma, who was browsing through the merchandise this week, said she had made the trip from the outskirts of Jakarta.

"I was hoping to catch a glimpse of Ahok and take photos with him," she said.

Other businesses are also trying to cash in: fast-food chains and online shopping sites have launched election promotions, including discounts for those who share the same name as candidates.

Purnama, who was Widodo's deputy when he was running Jakarta, is in a tight race with Agus Yudhoyono, the son of former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and a former education minister, Anies Baswedan.

Baswedan often wears a white shirt and a black Muslim cap while campaigning, while Yudhoyono tends to be more casual in a black polo shirt.

But neither has established a trademark style.—*Reuters*

Philippines to launch anti-HIV campaign to curb epidemic among youth

MANILA — At least 28 Filipinos are infected daily with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) which overtime results in the Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), 24 of which are the young ones, National Youth Commission (NYC) Chairwoman Aiza Seguerra said on Tuesday.

During the launch of the “Virus Ends With Us” anti-HIV campaign on Tuesday, also Valentine’s day, in the Philippine presidential palace Malacanang, Seguerra said at least 85 per cent of new HIV infections daily are aged between 15 to 30 years old, and those aged between 15 to 24 accounts for 62 per cent.

“There is a growing HIV epidemic among young people,” she said, citing that the problem of HIV is getting worse due to lack of knowledge about the virus and ways of its spread and prevention, as well as discrimi-

nation and misconceptions against those who undergo HIV testing.

She said the government needs the public’s support for anti-HIV campaign undertaken by the Departments of Health and Education.

“Because we believe that we love each other, it is timely to take the issue of HIV seriously,” she said, adding that the NYC is also pushing for the lowering of the age limit to 15 from 18 for those who can undergo HIV testing without their parents’ consent.

She said parents are encouraged to talk to children to provide them adequate information not only about HIV, but also about issues like sex, drugs, and mental health.

It aims to enlighten the parents and educators about the best ways to approach taboo issues as well as help adults be open minded if their children get infected with HIV.— *Xinhua*

China’s Xi says officials should prevent abuse of power

BEIJING — Top Chinese officials need to “build a fence” to ensure neither they nor those around them abuse power, and must practice greater self-discipline, state media cited President Xi Jinping as saying as he drives home his anti-corruption message.

Since assuming office four years ago, Xi has waged war on deep-seated graft, warning, like others before him, that the problem is so bad it could affect the party’s grip on power.

Dozens of senior figures have been jailed for corruption and abusing their positions, including China’s once powerful domestic security chief, Zhou Yongkang.

Speaking at a workshop on fighting graft, Xi said leading officials must practice strict self-discipline and “eliminate special privileges”, state news agency Xinhua said late on Monday.



Chinese President Xi Jinping attends a meeting at the United Nations European headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, on 18 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Senior officials should “build a fence against special privileges to prevent themselves and those around them from abusing power” and use their power impartially, cautiously and legally, the news agency cited Xi as saying.

Close relatives, especially wives and children, have been implicated in many recent corruption scandals.

The workshop was focused on last October’s

Communist Party plenum, which strengthened rules to prevent corruption and also anointed Xi as “core” leader of the party.

Xi’s comments come ahead of an important reshuffle of the top leadership, at a 19th Party Congress, which is expected late this year.

In a separate statement, the party’s top anti-graft watchdog, the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection,

reprimanded officials in Beijing and three other regions for failing to sufficiently tackle corruption.

The commission said officials in the western city of Chongqing had failed to “sufficiently dispel the poison of ‘Bo’ and ‘Wang’”, referring to the city’s disgraced former party secretary Bo Xilai and police chief Wang Lijun.

Bo, once a rising star in China’s leadership circles, was jailed for life in 2013 on charges of corruption and abuse of power after a dramatic fall from grace that included his wife being given a suspended death sentence for murdering a British businessman.

Current Chongqing party secretary Sun Zhengcai, tipped for national leadership, said he accepted the watchdog’s assessment “without question”, saying it had “hit the nail on the head”, the commission said in its Monday statement.— *Reuters*

North Korea rejects UN statement, says missile tests defensive

GENEVA — North Korea on Tuesday rejected the UN Security Council’s statement on its weekend missile launch and declared that all of its tests were “self-defence measures” designed to protect its people.

The UN Security Council on Monday denounced North Korea’s missile launch, urging members to “redouble efforts” to enforce sanctions against the reclusive state, but gave no indications of any action it might take.

Han Tae Song, the new Ambassador of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) to the United Nations in Geneva, was addressing the Conference on Disarmament a day after taking up his post.

“The various test fires conducted by DPRK for building up self-defence capabilities are, with no exception, self-defence measures to protect national sovereignty and the safety of the people against direct threats by hostile forces,” Han told the 61-member state forum.

“The successful test launch of a medium-to-long range missile on February 12th is a part of self-defence measures,” he said. “In this respect, my delegation strongly rejects the latest statement of the UN Security Council and all UN resolutions against my country.”

In New York, US Ambassador Nikki Haley said in a statement after the Security Council meeting that it was “time to hold North Korea accountable” with “actions”.

US, Japanese and South Korean military officials held a teleconference on Monday in which they condemned the launch as “a clear violation” of multiple Security Council resolutions. The United States “reaffirmed its iron-clad security commitments” to South Korea and Japan, the Pentagon said.

Han said the divided Korean peninsula “remains the world’s biggest hotspot with a constant danger of war”.

He condemned joint military exercises carried out annually by South

Korea and the United States, as well as what he called “nuclear threats” and blackmail towards his country.

“It is the legitimate self-defence right of the sovereign state to possess strong deterrence to cope with such threat by hostile forces aimed at overthrowing the state and the socialist system,” he said.

North Korea shared mankind’s common goal of global denuclearization, Han said.

“The DPRK supports global efforts toward nuclear disarmament and complete obliteration of nuclear weapons and we play a responsible role to contribute to achieving global denuclearisation,” he said.

Japan’s disarmament Ambassador Nobushige Takamizawa in Geneva condemned North Korea’s latest missile launch and urged Pyongyang to comply with Security Council resolutions and not take further “provocative actions” that undermine peace and security in the region.— *Reuters*

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Opinion

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

The dawn of peace in Myanmar

Khin Maung Oo

As known by all, the Panglong Agreement is a very important foundation for Myanmar's Independence. It is indeed a historic milestone. Under the leadership of our national leader, Bogyoke Aung San, national ethnic leaders signed the Panglong Agreement on 12 February 1947, paving the way for our Independence. Accordingly, by acknowledging the great importance of the Panglong Agreement, we have been celebrating Union Day every year, in recognition of the importance of keeping the Union spirit alive. The 70th Anniversary of the Union Day has been celebrated in cities and towns all over the country. This year's Union Day celebrations are more meaningful and remarkable, because the Second Meeting of the 21st Century Panglong Conference will be held later in February this year. What is more remarkable is that this year, the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi herself, attended the Union Day celebrations held in Panglong, Shan State, meeting with families of the leaders who signed the Panglong Agreement, youths and national ethnic people.

These days, we are hearing on Radio and TV programs, a lot

of election campaign speeches made by political parties contesting in the forthcoming By-elections to be held on 1st April, 2017. Dictionaries define the word, "election" as the process of choosing a person or a group of people for a position, especially a political position, by voting. In other words, an election can be said to be a test as to how much people trust and rely on a candidate. So, a candidate representing a political party needs to disclose their respective party's policy and political outlook, so that voters can assess how much the candidate or the party is qualified to gain the people's trust. Now we have the opportunity to know, through speeches of national ethnic races, their policies, attitudes and visions. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a country in which various national races have lived together since time immemorial. The ethnic national races want genuine federalism, peace, equality and maintenance of their respective national identities. They firmly believe that a member of any national race should be able to get a post they deserve if they are well-qualified. All must have equal rights. No one is born to be a master or a slave. To gain their trust and respect, we must re-

spect and try to understand their attitudes and feelings from the bottom of our hearts. Each of us should try to build up trust and gain the confidence of the other person. Without mutual trust, we cannot succeed in doing anything.

Our ultimate goal is to build a modern, developed Federal Democratic Union. To reach our goal, it is impossible without peace and stability. Peace cannot be achieved by waging warfare as civil war drains away the lives and resources of our country. All want peace and nearly all have attended numerous political dialogues. At a time when we are blessed with extremely patriotic, qualified and unprecedentedly broadminded leaders, we should implement the peace process till we achieve ultimate success. Concurrently, destructive elements are surrounding us, to destroy peace talks and then to harm the sovereignty of the nation. It may take a considerable amount of time to gain peace, and surely we cannot gain peace overnight. We have a right to agree to differ. Had this period of discussions and negotiations lasted for long, subversive elements can cause problems anytime. So we need to be forever vigilant and try to look out for dangers and pitfalls that

may be lurking at every corner. We should certainly be on the lookout for "the slings and arrows" of those who cannot bear to see us succeed. If we can win the support and trust of our people, the "eyes and ears" of nearly 55 million people will be sufficient to warn us of any impending danger. As we sit down to discuss and negotiate to find a solution acceptable to all of us, or at least the majority. All of us with different views need to reach a kind of "modus vivendi", or in plain English "a practical compromise". The first step is to agree on a nationwide ceasefire. But, "procrastination is the thief of time," as the saying goes. The most important thing is for all armed groups to come to the negotiation table. Failing that, the destiny of our younger generations will be in great peril and our nation will certainly plunge to the deepest depths of misery.

To sum it up, 2017 Union Day Celebrations can be said to have revived the Union Spirit conceived in people's hearts, like a burning-but-ashes-covered fire. Under the favorable circumstances, we are seeing the dawn of Peace, but we will yet to work together for the same goal with firm resolution and aspiration.

Mobilizing against measles

Act decisively to eliminate measles

Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh



Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh.

THE WHO South-East Asia Region is making rapid progress against vaccine-preventable diseases. The Region was certified polio-free in 2014. Maternal and neonatal tetanus was routed in

2016. And routine immunization for diseases such as diphtheria and pertussis continues to expand. More than 90% of populations Region-wide are now accessing the life-saving benefits vaccines bring.

To add to the Region's gains, health authorities now have measles in their crosshairs. Measles is a virus that can be transmitted through airdrops, personal contact and infected surfaces. It preys on the young and old, and reserves special ire for the immune-compromised and malnourished. Most disturbingly, it can inflict a range of deadly complications including pneumonia, diarrhea, encephalitis and malnutrition. It is not without reason that a ninth century Persian physician held measles 'more to be dreaded than smallpox'.

That the Region's governments have committed to eliminate the problem by 2020 is to be welcomed. Two doses of measles-containing vaccine have now been introduced in each of the Region's 11 countries. 95% coverage

of both doses – the level needed to establish herd immunity – has been achieved in five of these countries. Where routine childhood vaccination programmes are less than ideal, supplementary immunization drives have helped close immunity gaps. In 2015 alone around 18 million children were reached by supplementary campaigns, while an estimated 640,000 lives were saved Region-wide due to the sum of measles vaccination efforts.

There is nevertheless a need to scale up action against the disease, which remains a major childhood killer, claiming an estimated 54,500 lives in 2015. Up to 5.5 million infants are deprived of even the first dose of the measles vaccine each year, many of whom are the most at risk of death if complications arise. Region-wide coverage of the vaccine's second dose, meanwhile, is 71%, signifying the need for further gains.

WHO is advocating for all of the Region's countries to eliminate

measles by 2020 – a target that is achievable. For the Region to claim yet another victory in the battle against vaccine-preventable diseases, health authorities and communities Region-wide must act decisively. To this end, strengthening routine immunization programmes is critical. Though supplementary immunization campaigns are useful to close immunity gaps in the short-run, routine systems should be strengthened and coverage enhanced. In each of the Region's countries the second dose of the vaccine should be provided to every eligible child, and communities being missed should be identified and catered for: At least 95% of children Region-wide should be covered by both doses of measles-containing vaccine. At the same time, in countries where most children are now covered by vaccinations, and where the disease is seen in adults, efforts should be made to achieve immunity at all ages.

Improving surveillance and laboratory capacity is likewise essential. All countries in the Region should strengthen their surveillance systems for detection of all measles cases and to help better target interventions. Though each

country has, to varying degrees, implemented functional surveillance systems, not all cases are reported or laboratory confirmed. To turn this around, and to provide the infrastructure necessary to gauge the success of elimination efforts, health authorities should reinforce and expand surveillance to the community level.

In pursuit of these goals, society-wide buy-in is vitally important. This means encouraging health-seeking behavior when measles-related symptoms such as fever and rash occur. It means addressing socio-cultural issues while creating greater awareness. It means establishing and maintaining political commitment at the local and national level for the pursuit of measles elimination targets. And it means leveraging support from international stakeholders that can help mobilize the resources and know-how capable of making real change possible. WHO is privileged to be a part of these efforts, and to support countries across the Region as they strive to eliminate measles' preventable burden.

The wider benefits of measles vaccination strengthening will be substantial.

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Myanmar Farmers' Development Party presents policy and programmes



U Kyaw Swa Soe, Chairman of the Myanmar Farmers' Development Party.

U KYAW SWA SOE, Chairman of the Myanmar Farmers' Development Party, presented policies, attitudes and programmes of his party on 14 February 2017, on radio and TV programmes. The translation of his presentation is given below:

Esteemed citizens,

First of all, I'd like to wish you physical and mental wellbeing.

I am Chairman U Kyaw Swa Soe from Myanmar Farmers' Development Party.

Altogether 268 farmer candidates from our farmers' party contested the 2015 elections. Unfortunately, they could not participate in the affairs of Hluttaws.

But it is undeniable that the Myanmar Farmers' Development Party has been conceived in Myanmar. It is, therefore, certain that the party will give birth to (a baby) someday. Therefore, our farmers' party will give birth to MPs in the Hluttaw representing the farmers.

It is the farmer representatives who know the most about the lives of poor farmers. Therefore, we are the right candidates who will diligently strive for making known to the state the hardship of farmers.

There are two types of people in the world:

(a) The first types are those who do a job first before thinking; and

(b) The second types are those who think first before doing a job.

Our poor farmers should be well aware of the fact that the results to the work of those who do a job first before thinking is just repentance whereas the results from the work of those who think first before doing a job will be success and happiness. Hence, I would like to ask you to cast your vote with care.

It is also important to differentiate between honesty and ignominy.

It is totally unnatural that we, the poor farmers, are the most hard working but the poorest.

Leaders of successive periods showed sympathy towards farmers by saying words of compassion. But keep in your mind that the sympathy for farmers they show is not genuine, for they've never suffered the woes the farmers experienced.

As the economic standard of our country is too low, the fami-

lies of poor farmers are separated because members of their families have to go abroad to earn a living at the lowest level there to provide their families back in the villages. It is the family members of the poor farmers who know the most the woes of having to wait for the return of their beloved ones.

It is known to all how much Myanmar people love and cherish their families. But now, for a long time, the poor farmers are facing starvation while working on the farm.

We possess land, water, air-space and enthusiastic workforce to overcome these hardship, but lack of technology and capital cause hindrances. Although the government tried to provide assistance, farmers usually suffer loss of market while crops are harvested.

To overcome this situation, the farmer party will make suggestions to the government authorities while seeking help from them and making contact with international communities.

As the chairman of the Myanmar Farmers' Development Party, I would like to beg the pardon of the entire peasants as we made many mistakes because our party is led by farmers who have little experience. Our party was established on 6-11-2012, and within the three-year period we had to contest 2015 election. The founders of the party were just simple farmers from the rural areas. The leaders of the farmers just wanted to win the election. And so they accepted and organized all the people to add the number of the party. There were black sheep in the party and they forcefully collected member fees from their fellow farmers, canvas for votes by giving false promises which were not in line with the attitude of the party and organized people by offering lip service. Therefore, we had to expose and take action against those black



Party Logo.

sheep who praised themselves by boasting they were able persons of other parties. These were just the acts of exploiting fellow farmers. Therefore, I would like to say to forgive us and understand us.

So, we hereby vow to make our utmost efforts for the betterment of the farmers' party.

The farmers said, "U Kyaw Swa Soe, we don't understand democracy or democratic. We just know that we are all with empty stomach and we've got into heavy debt." So sad for me to hear such words. They also said, "We are poor and lack farsightedness. So please tell the representatives first to feed us and then only tighten the rules. Because we have not enough food we apathetically break the rules. We swear we will fully follow the rules if the entire poor people are fed enough." So, what should I say?

Ours is an agro-based country. The development of the agricultural sector plays an important role in development of the nation's economy. To meet this end, farmers need to have a voice in Hluttaw. Therefore, farmer representatives' participation in Hluttaw is very important.

In voting for Hluttaw candidates, I would like to urge not to vote for those who give priority to his own cause but to vote for those who will implement your cause.

In canvassing too, make it sure you not get swayed by sugar-coated words like, "We will make

the world better and we will make the country good." Tell them, "We will vote for you if you do good to us."

Voting means selection of reliable persons who are assumed to be smarter than you.

I am too eager to see farmer representatives from a farmers' party participating in Hluttaw because Hluttaw can be likened to father whereas citizens to sons and daughters.

Government, formed by the Hluttaw, can be likened to a nanny whose task is to look after not a baby here but the people by serving their interests. Nanny is a person very close to sons and daughters. If farmer representatives have seats in Hluttaw, the father, they can take care of their children. Only the parliamentarians with the reputation of good fathers and mothers have seats in Hluttaw, will they be able to serve the interests of their children with might and main. Therefore, I wish the farmer representatives win the seats of Hluttaw.

I want you to elect the reliable, daring candidates.

Farmers are remorseful as their lives remain unchanged in successive eras. The entire peasantry, Myanmar Farmers' Development Party would, therefore, like to conclude its speech by quoting a now popular song, "Don't be afraid girl, Bo Aung Din loves you and will face all."

(Unofficial Translation)

Fire loss over one month in Mandalay totalled Ks35 million

THE TOTAL amount of fire-related loss over the past 39 days in Mandalay was over Ks35 million, according to figures issued by the Mandalay Region Fire Services Department.

The number of fire accidents that occurred across the region between 1 January and 8 February reached 22.

In January alone, the region experienced 16 fire accidents. It is calculated that the losses in January totalled over Ks20 million. Over the first 8 days of this month, six fire cases occurred in the region, damaging properties worth about Ks15 million.

Fire prevention tasks will be continued at factories, work-

shops, residential houses and fuel stations under fire safety plans being developed by the department, said U Than Zaw Oo, head of the department.

The number of fire cases in 2013 was 248. The figure decreased by 32 cases in 2014.

Seven residents were killed, while 13 individuals sustained injuries in fiery accidents in 2015, when as many as 340 households were destroyed by the flame.

A total of 583 households plus two plants and six warehouses were damaged in fire accidents last year. The majority of fire cases occurred in March and April, the hottest months

of the year. The fire killed eight people while 34 others with injuries escaped from the blazes. The number of fire victims reached 567 in 2016.

Last year's fire loss increased by over Ks1 billion compared with the similar period in 2015 because of the fire at Mingala Market, a huge shopping centre in the region. Eight new fire extinguishers were bought in the 2015-16 fiscal year. There are 31 fire extinguishers plus 47 tanker trucks in 2014-2015 FY in Mandalay, with the department having recently submitted a proposal to buy new fire-related equipment.—Myitmakha News Agency

Mobilizing against measles

>> FROM PAGE 8

This is especially so for the control of rubella, a disease that affects approximately 40 000 births in the Region every year, and can cause a series of heartbreaking conditions when transmitted from mother to fetus. At the start of 2017 rubella vaccine was part of a combination vaccine in eight of the Region's 11 countries. In February, India became the ninth; In August, Indonesia will make it ten. As part of this process, each country will embark on mass immunization catch-up campaigns. These will have

wide-ranging impact in the battle against both diseases, and will enhance the life chances of millions of children in each country. As countries scale-up their measles immunization campaigns, this point must stay front-of-mind. By eliminating measles, millions of children will be given the opportunity to grow and prosper where they otherwise may not have. Health systems will be strengthened, and other diseases better controlled. For the South-East Asia Region, and each of the countries within it, measles elimination is a cause worth mobilizing for.

Correction

A story entitled "Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses ..." on page 2 of yesterday's Global New Light of Myanmar contained the incorrect name for a bill. The correct name of the bill is the "Bill Amending the Myanmar Territorial Sea and Maritime Zones Law."—Ed

Syria's al-Bab largely under control of Turkey-backed rebels, Turkish PM says

ANKARA — Turkey-backed rebels have largely taken control of the Syrian town of al-Bab from Islamic State militants, Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said on Tuesday.

"Al-Bab has been largely taken under control. Our aim is to prevent the opening of corridors from territories controlled by terrorist organizations to Turkey," he said while speaking to members of his ruling AK Party in parliament.

The Syrian rebels, backed by Turkish special forces, tanks and warplanes, swept into northern Syria in August in an opera-

tion, dubbed "Euphrates Shield" by Ankara, to push Islamic State from Turkey's border and stop the advance of Kurdish fighters.

The rebels have been pressing a major offensive on al-Bab, 30 km (20 miles) south of the Turkish border for weeks. The advance risks putting them in direct conflict with Syrian government forces who are closing in on the city from the south.

President Tayyip Erdogan and other Turkish leaders have been saying for weeks that the al-Bab offensive was nearing an end.—Reuters



Rebel fighters stand with their weapons on the outskirts of the northern Syrian town of al-Bab, Syria on 8 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

UK unlikely to trigger Article 50 at 9 March EU summit: Brexit minister

STOCKHOLM—Brexit minister David Davis said on Tuesday the government was on course to meet its end-March deadline to launch the formal divorce procedure from the European Union but did not see Britain doing so at an EU summit next month.

EU officials are keen to know when Prime Minister Theresa May will trigger Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty and launch some of the most complicated talks Britain has held since World War Two to end its more than 40-year membership of the bloc.

In Stockholm, Davis was asked whether he expected May to deliver the Article 50 letter at an EU summit in Brussels on 9 and 10 March — a date some British media had said was under consideration to avoid any clash with a summit of the other 27 states on 25 March to celebrate the bloc's 60th anniversary.

"The 9th or 10th is not a

date I recognize in terms of our timetable. What we have said is by the end of March, some-

time during March," Davis said alongside Ann Linde, Sweden's minister for EU Affairs and

Trade.

"I'm confident that we'll do it before our timetable but

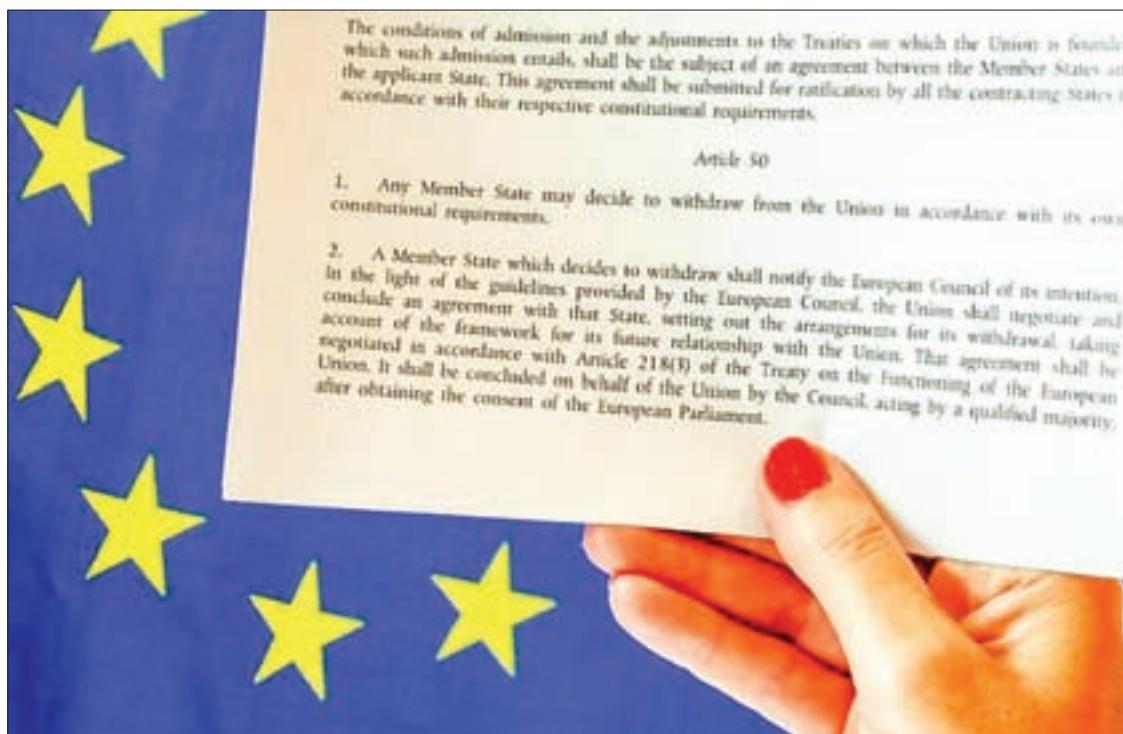
not necessarily before the one you played out," he added.

Davis said he was confident that legislation needed for May to trigger Article 50 would be passed by Britain's upper house of parliament "in good time before the end of March".

Earlier this month, the lower house of parliament passed the bill and it has now been handed over to the unelected House of Lords where some members say they will attach conditions to it that could stretch the government's timetable.

Davis also said he hoped that in the two years allocated for the divorce talks, Britain could negotiate not only its departure from the European Union but also a free trade deal, as both shared common standards.

"We want in two years to come to a conclusion on this matter," he said. "We have said that we may have some implementation things to do after that, but we think in two years both are possible." —Reuters



Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty that deals with the mechanism for departure is pictured near an EU flag following Britain's referendum results to leave the European Union, in this photo illustration taken in Brussels, Belgium, on 24 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Dozens killed in fighting among jihadists in Syria

BEIRUT — Dozens of fighters have been killed in two days of fighting between rival jihadist factions in north-western Syria, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported on Tuesday.

The fighting has pitted a jihadist group seen as ideologically close to Islamic State - Jund al-Aqsa — against

a newly formed jihadist alliance spearheaded by a faction that was once al Qaeda's official affiliate in the war.

The jihadist alliance — Tahrir al-Sham — has captured at least six villages from Jund al-Aqsa since Monday, the Observatory reported.

Their power struggle is focused in northern areas of Hama prov-

ince and adjoining areas of Idlib.

Tahrir al-Sham was formed last month from an alliance of factions including Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, known as the Nusra Front until it formally severed ties with al Qaeda last year.

The Observatory said the death toll on both sides so far stood at 69.—Reuters

Turkish police detain more than 500 people in operations targeting PKK — Anadolu

ISTANBUL — Turkish police detained more than 500 people on Monday in operations across Turkey targeting suspects linked with the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group, state-run Anadolu news agency reported.

It said senior members of the group were among the 544 suspects held in operations across 25 provinces, including the major western cities of Istanbul and Izmir. Of-

ficials from the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) were among the 45 detained in the southeastern province of Gaziantep, the provincial governor's said in a statement.

The government accuses the HDP, the second biggest opposition party in parliament, of being a political extension of the PKK and many of its officials and MPs have been remanded in custody on

charges of such links.

The PKK, designated a terrorist group by Turkey, the European Union and United States, launched an armed insurgency against the state in 1984 and more than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict.

A ceasefire between the PKK and the state broke down in July 2015 and thousands have been killed in conflict since then.—Reuters

Seven Hong Kong policemen guilty of assault on pro-democracy activist

HONG KONG — A Hong Kong court found seven police officers guilty on Tuesday of beating a handcuffed pro-democracy activist during demonstrations in 2014, a rare incident of police brutality in the financial hub that triggered public outrage.

The 79 days of student-led protests paralyzed parts of Hong Kong and posed one of the greatest challenges to the central government in Beijing in decades.

But Beijing gave no grounds on demands for greater democracy and resentment among some residents of the city, which enjoys a significant degree of autonomy, has simmered ever since.

The trial centered on an incident on 15 October, 2014, at the height of the protests. A group of police officers was filmed dragging a protester, Ken Tsang, to a dark corner by a pumping substation next to the protest site, where he was kicked and punched. The officers were later suspended from duty. District court judge David Dufton said in a written summary that all



Five of the seven police officers, charged in connection with the beating of a protester during Occupy Central pro-democracy demonstrations, arrive at a court in Hong Kong, China on 14 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

seven officers were “guilty of assault occasioning actual bodily harm”, but were found not guilty of the more serious charge of causing grievous bodily harm.

“The court was satisfied that by carrying Tsang to the substation where he was dumped on the ground and immediately assaulted,

the only inference to draw was that Tsang was carried ... to be assaulted,” Dufton wrote in a summary of the verdict.

Tsang, a social worker, suffered face, neck and shoulder injuries. He was handcuffed with plastic zip ties at the time, though the court heard he had earlier

thrown some liquid at police.

Two senior officers among the seven convicted had not taken part in the assault directly, Dufton said, but should have been duty-bound “to prevent the commission of a crime, even by fellow police officers.” Instead they had en-

couraged the others to carry out “unlawful personal violence” on Tsang, he added.

The seven men, who had pleaded not guilty, appeared in suits and ties and showed no emotion when the verdict was read. Several of Tsang’s supporters cheered in the public gallery.

Outside the court, Tsang’s supporters were heckled by a group of about 70 people who chanted “support our police”.

The court did not give a date for sentencing. Under Hong Kong law, they could be jailed for up to three years.

Heavy-handed policing is rare in Hong Kong and the case triggered public outrage and deepened tension during the protests in which clashes occasionally erupted. Tsang told Reuters he needed to consider the verdict before making a statement. Hong Kong reverted from British to Chinese rule in 1997 under a “one country, two systems” formula that accords the city a degree of autonomy and freedom not enjoyed in mainland China. China bristles at dissent, however, especially over issues such as demands for universal suffrage. Many in Hong Kong are increasingly concerned about what they see as Beijing’s meddling in city affairs. Unease about the city’s future has stoked protests and has even led to calls for independence from China.—Reuters

British defence spending dipped below NATO target in 2016 -think tank

LONDON — Britain’s defence spending last year dipped just below the NATO military alliance’s target of 2 per cent of gross domestic product, the International Institute for Strategic Studies said on Tuesday.

The government disputed the figures, saying NATO’s own data showed it had spent 2.21 per cent of GDP on defence last year.

Britain has previously

met the commitment and during a visit to Washington last month Prime Minister Theresa May discussed the issue with US President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly criticised members who do not spend enough on their militaries.

Echoing the rationale behind Trump’s criticism, May then warned EU leaders at a summit earlier this month that they must raise

their defence spending.

“In 2016, only two European NATO states, Greece and Estonia, met the aim to spend 2 per cent of their GDP on defence, down from four European states that met this measure in 2015,” said John Chipman, Director General of global security think tank IISS, at the launch of a report on global military capabilities.

“The UK dipped

slightly below this at 1.98 per cent, as its economy grew faster in 2016 than its defence spending. Nonetheless, the UK remained the only European state in the world’s top five defence spenders in 2016.”

The British government said the IISS presented its spending figures in US dollars, and so had been impacted by fluctuations in exchange rates.—Reuters

Hot enough to fry an egg on a car in Australia

SYDNEY — Video of an Australian police officer frying an egg on the bonnet of his patrol vehicle during a heatwave has gone viral on social media. The video posted on the Queensland Police Service’s Facebook page shows an officer from the town of Birdsville cooking an egg with a frying pan on the hood of his vehicle.

The scene from Big Red, among the famous red sand dunes of Australia’s Simpson Desert, has drawn

more than 3 million views since it was posted on Friday. Temperatures in Birdsville usually reach a high of 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 Fahrenheit), but soared last Sunday to a record 47.1 degrees Celsius (116.78 Fahrenheit). The extreme heat roiling out of Australia’s desert interior has fanned bushfires on the country’s east coast, forced the cancellation of major sporting events and put pressure on the electricity grid.—Reuters

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV WEST SCENT VOY. NO (140)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY. NO (140) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

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CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV CSC ZHI HAI VOY. NO (1702)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CSC ZHI HAI VOY. NO (1702) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T-2 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.

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CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV GOLDEN TRADER VOY. NO (0558)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GOLDEN TRADER VOY. NO (0558) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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US admiral stresses democracy at Thai war games

CHONBURI, Thailand —The most senior US officer to visit Thailand since a 2014 coup emphasised the importance of restoring democracy on Tuesday as he launched the annual Cobra Gold military exercise.

The United States scaled down its presence at Asia's largest annual multinational military exercise as one of the former US administration's steps to pressure the junta.

With ties improving even before President Donald Trump took office, activists had voiced concern that Washington would put less focus on democratic change in a region where it faces an increasingly forceful China.

"We look forward to Thailand's re-emergence as a flourishing democracy because we need Thailand to be a strong and stable partner," said Admiral Harry Harris, head of US Pacific Command, which covers about half the earth's surface.

"We need Thailand to get back to being the re-



US Admiral Harry Harris, commander of the Pacific Command, and Thailand Chief of Defence Forces General Surapong Suwana-Adth (C) pose for a picture during the opening ceremony of the Asia-Pacific multilateral military exercise known as Cobra Gold, at Sattahip Royal Thai Marine Corps Base in Chonburi, Thailand on 14 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

gional and global leader that it always has been."

Harris will later meet junta leader Prayuth Chan-ocha in Bangkok.

Harris's attendance

was planned before the inauguration of Trump,

whose policy moves on Asia are closely watched after signals of potential confrontation with China

over trade and territory.

In the face of the US measures to push for democracy, Thailand has strengthened military co-operation with China.

New York-based Human Rights Watch said the change in relations with Thailand marked a worrisome shift given the military's grip on power

and the arrests of activists and opponents of army rule.

"It appears Pentagon policymakers are intent on using Cobra Gold as a way to reboot US military engagement with their Thai counterparts," wrote John Sifton of the advocacy group in an opinion piece that first appeared in the Washington Post.

The Thai junta held a referendum last year on a constitution to allow a general election. It is expected next year.

On Tuesday, the military government was also due to start meetings with political groups on national reconciliation ahead of the election. Parties have welcomed the idea, but questioned whether the generals can be fair.

Thailand has hosted the Cobra Gold war games since they began in 1982. This year's event will be attended by more than 8,300 personnel from 29 countries. Among them will be about 3,600 from the United States. —Reuters

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(3 / 2017)**

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-082(16-17)	ZP375 Rotary Table (1) No	US\$
(2)	IFB-083(16-17)	Travelling Block with Hook (2) Items	US\$
(3)	IFB-084(16-17)	Rotary Swivel (2) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-085(16-17)	Skid Mounted Water Transfer Pump with Engine and Accessories (6) Sets	US\$
(5)	IFB-086(16-17)	Transformer Welding Set, 400 AMP with Accessories (4) Sets	US\$
(6)	IFB-087(16-17)	Welding Machine (Portable) with 14 HP Engine and Accessories (4) Sets	US\$
(7)	IFB-088(16-17)	50 Ton Hydraulic Mobile Crane (1) Unit	US\$
(8)	IFB-089(16-17)	Fuel Bowser (2800 Gal Capacity) (1) Unit	US\$
(9)	IFB-090(16-17)	Skid Mounted Crude transfer Pump with Engine(100GPM x 300PSI) (2) Sets	US\$
(10)	IFB-091(16-17)	Skid Mounted Water Transfer Pump with Engine (100 GPM x 300 PSI) (2) Sets	US\$
(11)	IFB-092(16-17)	Air Compressor Engine Driven Skid with Air Dryer (80-120 HP) (1) Set	US\$
(12)	IFB-093(16-17)	CNG Compressor Driven Electric Motor with Complete Package (1) Lot	US\$
(13)	IFB-094(16-17)	2900 Series Well Head Equipment (1) Set	US\$
(14)	IFB-095(16-17)	900 Series Well Head Equipment (1) Set	US\$
(15)	IFB-096(16-17)	600 Series Well Head Equipment (3) Sets	US\$
(16)	IFB-097(16-17)	Pumping Unit (160D-173-74) Max Length 74 Inches (1) No	US\$
(17)	IFB-098(16-17)	Pumping Unit (114D-119-96) Max Length 74 Inches (1) No	US\$
(18)	IFB-099(16-17)	Gas Compressor (1) No	US\$
(19)	DMP/L-024(16-17)	A3 Digital Multifunction Copier (1) Item	Ks
(20)	DMP/L-025(16-17)	Binocular Microscope with Lighting Equipments (1) Item	Ks
(21)	DMP/L-026(16-17)	Space Aerial Cable (SAC) 95mm ² , KVA Rate & Aerial Bundle Cable, 95 mm ² , (600/1000 V Rated) (2) Items	Ks
(22)	DMP/L-027(16-17)	Submersible Pump with Motor(4-6) KW (1) Item	Ks
(23)	DMP/L-028(16-17)	Telephone Cable (2) Items	Ks
(24)	DMP/L-029(16-17)	630 KVA, 11/0.4 KV & 100 KVA, 11/0.4 KV Transformer (2) Items	Ks
(25)	DMP/L-030(16-17)	Electrical Cable (1CU x 185mm ²) (1) Item	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 13-3-2017, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 13TH February, 2017 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph. +95 67 - 411206 / 411274

NOTICE

My Client, Daw Thin Thin Myo, presently residing in Newyork of the United State of America, who instructs as follows.

U Soe Naing Aung (father) U Aung Myint, holder of Citizenship Scrutiny Card No.12/Ma Ga Da (Naing) 0044871, Bamar, Buddhist, was married to Daw Thin Thin Myo, (father) U Myo Aung, holder of Citizenship Scrutiny Card No.12/Ma Ga Da (Naing)105119 in the presence of the Staff Officer and witnesses at Yangon Division Court on (1-10-2000). No natural offspring is bear out. In 2003, Daw Thin Thin Myo legally department to work to the USA. She legally called her husband. U Soe Naing Aung to the USA in July 2009, they consummated and stayed in Newyork U Soe Naing Aung had reached to Newyork, he was legally married to another one, without being legally divorced from Daw Thin Thin Myo in September 2016 that has realized. U Soe Naing Aung and Daw Thin Thin Myo are not legally divorced from each other. Therefore it is noticed that my client, Daw Thin Thin Myo is the only legal first wife of U Soe Naing Aung.

By Instruction
Daw San (LL.B, Dip in English (Y.U)
Advocate (Sr-11279)
Bldg (2), 4-B, Mya Yadanar Street, Warso Ward,
Dawbon Township
Ph: 09422465348, 09 31786335

Tour bus crashes in Taiwan, killing at least 32

TAIPEI, China — At least 32 people were killed when a tour bus crashed near Taipei on Monday night, with television footage showing the bus careening toward a road barrier before flipping on its side.

Of 44 people on the bus, 30 were pronounced dead at the scene and two died in hospital, the fire department said, adding that 12 people were still being treated in hospitals around Taipei, the capital.

Many of the passengers were elderly, although the age range was early 20s to late 60s, according to city authorities.

The trip had been arranged by the Tieh Lien Hua Travel Agency, according to Taiwan's tourism bureau.

An official with the agency said the tourists were "likely" all from Taiwan, but that it was still looking at passenger information.—Reuters

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Keanu Reeves interested in making a new 'Matrix' movie

LONDON — Keanu Reeves wants to make new 'Matrix' film Keanu Reeves to star in 'Siberia' Keanu Reeves, Common's competition during 'John Wick 2' Keanu Reeves to appear in romantic thriller 'Siberia' When Ruby Rose felt proud of getting elbowed by Keanu Reeves.

Actor Keanu Reeves has said he would be interested in making another film in the "Matrix" series.

The 52-year-old actor has revealed he would love to reprise the role of hacker Neo, but admitted he did not know what the directors, Lana and Lilly Wachowski thought about it, reported FemaleFirst.

"I don't know about the Wachowskis. They would probably do something really original. I'd certainly like to see what would happen and more exploration of that world," said Keanu.

The "John Wick 2" actor also said he was unsure about the treatment of the sci-fi film considering today's age.

He added, "I think it's cool that when another time takes that story and makes it their own, so I wouldn't categorically say that would be bad."

The actor disclosed he is currently working on a new "Bill & Ted" movie.—PTI

Ratings for 2017 Grammys on par with last year

LOS ANGELES — CBS Corp's airing of the 59th Annual Grammy Awards drew a 16.0 overnight rating on Sunday night, down slightly from last year, according to Nielsen data.

Last year's Grammys show, which aired on a Monday night, drew a 16.1 overnight rating, translating to nearly 25 million viewers.

CBS will release viewership figures later on Monday.

The overnight rating measures 56 major markets in the United States, which represents about 70 percent of the country and is an early indication of what the final number will be.—Reuters

Lady Gaga enjoys Billboard boost after headlining Super Bowl

LOS ANGELES — Lady Gaga soared back up the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday after a flawless performance at the Super Bowl halftime show gave her catalog of music a sales boost.

Gaga's "Joanne," which was released in October, climbed more than 60 spots on the chart to No. 2, with sales of 74,000 units, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

Gaga gave a solo performance at the 5 February National Football League Super Bowl championship, singing a medley of hits after flying off the roof of the stadium to the stage while suspended on cables.

The football game and halftime performance were watched on television by more than 110 million viewers.

Gaga's set also provided a massive boost for her earlier albums. Her 2008 record "The Fame" reentered the chart at No. 6 with 38,000 units sold, while her 2011 album "Born This Way" landed at No. 25 with 17,000 units sold.

Gaga, 30, topped the Digital Songs chart, which measures online

song sales, with her new track "Million Reasons" selling 149,000 copies. Her earlier hits such as "Born This Way," "Bad Romance" and "Poker Face" also experienced big boosts on the singles chart. The Billboard 200 album chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

Despite Gaga's Super Bowl boost, California rapper Big Sean took the No. 1 spot on the Billboard 200 album chart this week with "I Decided," which sold 151,000 units in its first week. It ousted last week's chart-topper, hip hop trio Migos' "Culture," which dropped to No. 3.

New albums in the top ten of the Billboard 200 chart include country singer Reba McEntire's "Sing it Now: Songs of Faith" at No. 4, the soundtrack to the hit Broadway play "Dear Evan Hansen" at No. 8 and "The RCA-List, Vol. 4," a compilation of current hip hop hits, at No. 10.—Reuters



Singer Lady Gaga performs during the halftime show at Super Bowl LI in Houston, Texas, US, on 5 February 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Pregnant Beyonce keeps all eyes on her despite shock Grammy loss

LOS ANGELES — A surprise loss didn't stop Beyonce from being center of attention Sunday's Grammy awards, as the pregnant singer delivered the night's most anticipated performance and was praised on stage by the artist who triumphed over her.

Beyonce, 35, went into music's biggest night with a leading nine nominations including the top awards of the night - album, record and song of the year -- but lost all three to Britain's Adele.

"The 'Lemonade' album is so monumental and so well thought out and so beautiful and soul-baring, and we got to see another side to you that you don't always let us see and we appreciate that," Adele said, addressing Beyonce, as she accepted the album of the year award for "25."

Beyonce, dressed in a red sequined gown, mouthed 'thank you,' as she looked on.

The R&B singer did win two Grammy awards, including best urban contemporary album for "Lemonade."

"My intention was to create a body of work that would give voice to our pain, our struggles, our darkness and our history," Beyonce said as she accepted her Grammy trophy.

While Beyonce is

usually known to deliver energetic dance-filled performances, the singer opted to slow things down now she is expecting twins and instead centered her set on the theme of motherhood.

For

her performance of "Love Drought" and "Sandcastles," a video projection of Beyonce dressed in a gold chain bikini and gold halo crown appeared on stage, as she caressed her pregnant belly and posed with her mother Tina Lawson and 5-year-old daughter Blue Ivy. Beyonce then appeared for real on stage, dressed in a nude sequined dress and crown, strutting along the top of a long table strewn with flowers while her dancers, dressed in flowing dresses, surrounded her. At one point, she sat on a chair on top of the table, which tipped back as she sang.

The performance ended with the singer standing in the spotlight as her dancers raised their intertwined arms behind her, looking upwards as Beyonce's voice recites, "If we're going to heal, let it be glorious."

A proud Jay Z wiped tears from his eyes as he cuddled Blue Ivy, who was dressed in a pink tuxedo in homage to Prince.

Beyonce's mother introduced her performance, praising the singer for her "devotion and love" and her "powerful words and music."—Reuters



Beyonce accepts the Grammy for Best Urban Contemporary Album for 'Lemonade' from presenter William Bell at the 59th Annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, California, US, on 12 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS



Very old, charming - er - thing goes on display in Athens

ATHENS — A bird-like statuette dating back 7,000 years has mystified archaeologists in Greece who still do not know exactly what it is, or where it came from.

The “7,000-year-old enigma,” as it has been dubbed by the National Archaeological Museum, has been put on display until March 26 after being brought from the museum’s storerooms.

It is the latest item to be presented under the title “The Unseen Museum” — a reference to the roughly 200,000 antiquities from statues to gold jewelry and every-day objects in store and not on daily display.

Carved out of granite, the 36 cm (14 inches) “enigma” statuette of the late Neolithic era has a pointed nose and long neck leading to a markedly round belly, flat back and cylindrical stumpy legs.

“It could depict a human-like figure with a bird-like face, or a bird-like entity which has nothing to do with man but with the ideology and symbolism of the Neolithic society,” Katya Manteli, an archaeologist with the museum, told Reuters.



A 7000-year old Neolithic statuette is temporarily displayed at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, Greece, on 10 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Experts also cannot be sure of its provenance, as it belongs to a personal collection. They assume only that it is from the northern Greek regions of Thessaly or Macedonia.

Unlike most Neolithic figurines made of soft stone, it is carved out of hard rock even though metal tools were not available at the time. And while it is too short for a life-size depiction of the human figure, it is bigger than most Neolith-

ic statues, which are rarely found over 35 cm tall.

“Regarding technique and size, it is among the rare and unique works of the Neolithic period in Greece,” Manteli said.

More puzzling still is the lack of clear indication of sex. Is it due to technical sculpting limitations? Or did the sculptor intend to create an asexual figure. Archaeologists believe the fact that the statuette is polished suggests the figure is

in its final form, although they maintain that if the sculptor had the appropriate tools it would have taken a more specific form.

“Yes, it could be a pregnant figure but there are no breasts, used in Neolithic times to depict the female body. On the other hand it lacks male organs so it is presented as an asexual figure,” Manteli said.

“There are enigmatic aspects to it which make it charming.”—Reuters

Angola’s second-largest diamond discovered by Australian firm

LAUNDA — A 227-carat diamond, the second-largest ever found in Angola, has been discovered at the Lulo Diamond Project mine east of the capital Luanda, Australian miner Lucapa Diamond said on Monday.

Lucapa, along with Angolan state firm Empresa Nacional de Diamantes E P, co-own the mining concession.

A 404-carat stone was discovered in 2007, Lucapa said.

“The recovery underlines the significant potential of the Lulo Kimberlite drilling programme,” the Australian company said in a statement.

Angola is the world’s fourth-largest diamond pro-

ducer by value. It is keen to find alternative exports to oil, following a sharp drop in global crude prices over the last two years which has forced it to borrow to cover a shortfall in revenue.—Reuters

Cutting the ice: lawnmowers race on frozen Finnish lake

HELSINKI — Through the half-light of a bitter winter’s day into the dead of the Nordic night, lawnmower racers from around Europe battled for 12 hours in a race that tested their endurance of the cold as well as their driving skills on ice.

Held on the frozen Lake Karhijarvi, some 250 kilometers (155 miles) northwest of the capital Helsinki, on Saturday, the drivers skidded their noisy ride-on machines around an 850-metre (930-yard) course.

“You have to under-

stand what it is to drive on something that is slippery, you have to understand how snow works, when you drive on the snow how it affects the tyres,” race organizer Kari Nikrus said.

“And there (are) different kinds of snow, when it’s cold it doesn’t stick the same way as when it’s warmer, and you just have a gut feeling how ... to drive on it.”

Race participants came from Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Estonia and Finland.—Reuters

Top dogs vie for blue ribbon at New York show



Chuckie, a Pekingese, wins the Toy group at the 141st Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, in New York City, US February 13, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — More than 2,800 dogs, from tiny Chihuahuas to massive Great Danes, converged on New York City on Monday to compete for the top prize in the storied Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show.

Westminster, the second-oldest sporting event in the United States behind the Kentucky Derby, drew entries from 200 breeds this year, the kennel club said. It will announce the final winner on Tuesday evening.

Dogs from 49 states and 16 foreign countries are in this year’s show, where they are judged on characteristics specific to their breeds.

Individual breeds are judged during the day, with the winners of each moving on to group competitions on Monday and Tuesday evenings. The winners of seven groups then compete for the final “Best in Show” award on Tuesday.

Monday’s four groups

are hounds; herding dogs; toy dogs, which are the smallest breeds; and the non-sporting dogs, a group largely made up of those bred for show or as pets.

Sporting dogs, working dogs and terriers will be judged on Tuesday.

The sporting group, representing hunting and retrieving dogs, has the largest number of entries at more than 500. The most popular breed in this year’s show is the golden retriever, with 65 entries.

There are three new breeds in this year’s competition: the American Hairless Terrier, which was bred in the 1970s to hunt rats and other vermin; the Pumi, an ancient Hungarian herding breed, and the Sloughi, a North African sighthound. An additional 330 dogs competed in an agility competition on Saturday, a separate event from this week’s judged show. It featured several winners, grouped by size.—Reuters

mitv

Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(15-2-2017 07:00am ~ 16-2-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Myanmar Charitable Labour Association
07:38	Am	A Way of Life: Karate-do
07:51	Am	Orchid Lover
08:03	Am	News
08:25	Am	Writer, Philanthropist: Daw Than Myint Aung (Part - I)
08:53	Am	A Nun’s Creation in Fruit Carving
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Chef Life: Zin Min Htun
09:34	Am	Products Of Myanmar — Myanmar Circular Stone Slab

09:47	Am	Philatelic Pleasure
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	An Ardent Aficionado Of Traditional Design

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Journey To Southern Shan State (Ep-1)
07:47	Pm	Grow Back For Posterity “The Dawn of Development”
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Exquisite Myanmar Silk
08:46	Pm	The Art of Sand Painting And Its Creator’s life

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

Pats owner unfazed with players skipping White House visit

WASHINGTON — New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft downplayed the growing number of his players who have said they will boycott a visit to the White House, saying on Monday that it is America and people are free to do what they want.

At least six Patriots players have publicly said they will not make the trip to the White House — a longstanding tradition among pro sports teams after winning a championship — and some cited US President Donald Trump as their reason.

Kraft, a Trump friend and supporter who attended the presidential inauguration last month, said on NBC's "Today" show that players were able to make up their own minds and added that members of the team have skipped the visit in the past.

In 2015, Patriots quarterback Tom Brady cited a "fam-

ily commitment" when he declined an invitation to be feted at the White House by former President Barack Obama after winning the fourth of his five Super Bowl titles.

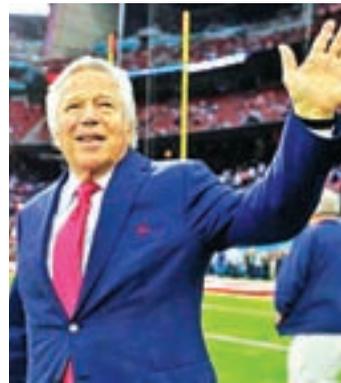
"It's interesting, this is our fifth Super Bowl in the last 16 years, and every time we've had the privilege of going to the White House, a dozen of our players don't go. This is the first time it's gotten any media attention," said Kraft.

"Some of the players have the privilege of going (to the White House) in college because they're on national championship teams. Others have family commitments. But this is America. We're all free to do whatever's best for us. We're just privileged to be in a position to be going."

Patriots tight end Martellus Bennett, safety Devin McCourty, linebacker Dont'a Hightower, defensive end Chris Long, running back LaGarrette Blount and defensive tackle Alan Branch have all said they will not visit the White House with their teammates.

Bennett touched off the controversy following the Patriots 34-28 overtime Super Bowl win over the Atlanta Falcons saying he would not be attending the White House reception.

"I haven't thought about it. I am not going to go," Bennett said. "I can elaborate later on in life." —Reuters



New England owner Robert Kraft. PHOTO: REUTERS

Swans dealt Dyer blow

LONDON — Swansea City's Premier League survival hopes were dealt a blow on Monday with the news that Nathan Dyer has been ruled out for the rest of the season with an Achilles injury.

Dyer was recalled to the starting line-up for Swansea's 2-0 win over Leicester City on

Sunday, but lasted less than 10 minutes before limping off. A scan on Monday revealed that the 29-year-old winger had ruptured the Achilles tendon in his left ankle. Former Southampton forward Dyer has featured in five games since Paul Clement was appointed Swansea manager last month. —Reuters



Hull City's Andrew Robertson and Swansea City's Nathan Dyer in action during the match of FA Cup Third Round. PHOTO: REUTERS



Spain's Rafael Nadal reacts with his coaches Toni Nadal (L) and former player Carlos Moya during a training session ahead of the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne, Australia, on 15 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Toni Nadal to quit as Rafa's coach after this season

MADRID — Rafael Nadal's uncle, Toni Nadal, will step down as his coach after this year's ATP Tour, as he feels he has been sidelined by other figures in the player's entourage, he told an Italian tennis magazine.

The 55-year-old has been with the 14-times grand slam champion since before the Spaniard broke into the big-time by winning the French Open as a teenager in 2005.

Two weeks after watching his nephew lose in five sets to Roger Federer in the Australian Open final, Toni Nadal told *Il Tennis Ital-*

iano website that after this season he wants to concentrate on training emerging players.

"From next year I will no longer follow Rafael on the circuit but will dedicate myself exclusively to our academy," he said, referring to the Rafa Nadal Academy which opened last October in Mallorca. "The relationship with my nephew has always been excellent, in all these years we have never had periods of crisis," he said, but added that he has felt increasingly sidelined by Nadal's manager Carlos Costa and the player's father.

"The truth is that every year I am making fewer decisions, to the point that I won't be deciding anything any more!"

Former World number one and fellow Mallorcan Carlos Moya joined Nadal's coaching staff this season, hoping to help revive the player's career after two injury-plagued years.

Nadal, without a grand slam title since winning the French Open for a ninth time in 2014, withdrew from last year's tournament and missed Wimbledon because of a wrist injury. —Reuters

Bilic charged with improper conduct

LONDON — West Ham United manager Slaven Bilic has been charged with improper conduct after Saturday's 2-2 Premier League draw against West Bromwich Albion, the Football Association said on Monday.

"It is alleged that his behaviour in or around the 90th minute of the fixture amounted to improper conduct," the FA said in a statement.

The Croatian was sent off by referee Michael Oliver after venting his anger on a pitch-side television microphone following West Brom's injury-time equaliser at the London Stadium.

Assistant manager Nikola Jurcevic was also charged with alleged misconduct after a 19th min-



West Ham United manager Slaven Bilic. PHOTO: REUTERS

ute incident that saw him sent to the stands for leaving the technical area to protest an offside call.

Both face possible touchline bans and fines if found guilty of the charges.

"To be fair I am already big time punished with what hap-

pened in the game," Bilic had said after the game.

"I don't think that I crossed the line, it was nothing personal. It was the fourth or fifth decision which went against us and it's hard to get over that without reacting." —Reuters