

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IV, No. 75, 8<sup>th</sup> Waxing of Waso 1379 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Saturday, 1 July 2017

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## Special meeting on Rakhine issue held

A special meeting on the issue of Rakhine was held yesterday at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

The meeting was opened by the President U Htin Kyaw who made opening remarks.

Vice President (1) U Myint Swe, Chairman of the Maungdaw Region Investigation Commission explained about the work of the Commission.

The security situation in Maungtau Township and the

measures taking to strengthen the security of the area was explained by Vice Senior General Soe Win, Deputy Commander in Chief of the Defence Services and Commander in Chief (Army). The Union Min-

ister for the Ministry of State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe reported to the meeting the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine and the National Security Ad-

viser U Thaung Tun reported on the measures taken by the Government with regard to the Fact Finding Mission set up by the Human Rights Council.

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## Thailand delays new labour act after 6,500 Myanmar workers return

THAILAND has delayed the enforcement of the Management of Foreign Workers Act for four months in order for foreign workers to come into compliance, according to the Labour Department.

The move came yesterday after negotiations between U Maung Maung Kyaw, the Director-General of the Labour Department, and officials of Thailand at a meeting in Yangon yesterday.

More than 4,000 Myanmar migrant workers returned yesterday and about 2,500 workers on Wednesday after Thailand's labour act went into effect.

Thousands of undocumented migrant workers from Myanmar and Cambodia fled from Thailand, prompting officials from Myanmar to engage in negotiations with its neighbour.

Workers from Myanmar and Cambodia, make up the backbone of Thailand's manual labour force. Many industries, including a multi-billion dollar seafood sector, are heavily reliant on foreign workers.

Undocumented migrants are sometimes subject to exploitation by employers and cases of forced labour have been found by the media and Thai-



Myanmar migrant workers arrive at the 999 border gate in Myawady yesterday as they returned from Thailand.  
**PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (MYAWADY DISTRICT IPRD)**

land's foreign trade partners.

Under the decree that officially went into effect on 23 June, an employer who hires an undocumented foreign worker faces a fine of up to 800,000 baht (Ks31.92 million).

The penalty has some businesses scrambling to fire undocumented workers or get them registered.

"Some employees are scared, because they employ illegal workers. Even though we

aren't rounding these workers up, they are still scared about the hefty fines," Pornchai Kuntee, deputy commissioner of the Immigration Bureau, told Reuters.

"There will be an impact to

the economy because foreign workers are an essential part of the workforce," he said.

Thailand's government says it has made legalising foreign workers a priority to help businesses. **SEE PAGE-3**

Pyithu Hluttaw

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Pyithu Hluttaw 5<sup>th</sup> regular session 24<sup>th</sup> day meeting

PYITHU Hluttaw decided to record and wait for future undertaking a motion by Daw Yin Min Hlaing of Gangaw constituency urging the union government to upgrade the national health sector by reforming the nursing circle that is the most important and basic workforce for people's health after discussing the motion in 2<sup>nd</sup> Pyithu Hluttaw 5<sup>th</sup> regular session 24<sup>th</sup> day meeting held yesterday.

The motion was discussed by U Win Win of Minbu constituency, U Tun Wei of Phaungpyin constituency, Dr. Daw Khin Nyo of Dedaye constituency, U Myo Nyunt of Homalin constituency, Daw Mya Khwa Nyo Oo of Shwedaung constituency, Dr. Daw Pyone of Indaw constituency, Dr. Daw A Zin Latt of Shwebo constituency, Dr. Oo Sein Mya Aye of Dala constituency and Dr. U Aye Min of Khayan constituency. Union Minister Dr. Myint



Dr. Daw A Zin Latt, Representative for Shwebo constituency. **PHOTO: MNA**

Htwe explained and discussed about the motion after which the hluttaw decided to record and keep in view the motion.

Replying to a question by Dr. Daw Pyone of Indaw constituency on plan to build a sports stadium and township sports



U Win Win, Representative for Minbu constituency. **PHOTO: MNA**

and physical education office in Indaw Township, Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe said old Mya In Tha sports stadium in Indaw Township is being auctioned and with the proceed of this auction, township sports and physical education office will be built in Aye

Mya Thaya sports ground that is one furlong away from Mya In Tha sports stadium. As for the township sports stadium, priority is given for it in the Sagaing Region government budget for FY 2018-2019 and when authorization is given it will be constructed said the Union Minister.

U Tun Tun of Pwintbyu constituency then questioned about arranging a separate room (ward) in state, region, district and township hospital to treat prisoners. Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe said department of medical services was informed to report on present status and requirement of the ward in central, state and region level hospitals to provide treatment to prisoners. According to an initial study hospitals in Buthidaung, Maungtaw, Kyaukphyu and Thandwe in Rakhine State urgently require these wards and since there is adequate space

available in those hospitals, calculations were made to build a separate ward for prisoners. Department of medical services is giving priority to hospitals in towns where there are prisons. At the central level hospitals, separate wards for prisoners already exists and if there is a requirements to repair these wards, it will be done with approved fund of department of medical services said the Union Minister. Similarly questions on health related matters by U Nay Htat Win of Sinbaungwe constituency, U Tun Tun Win of Yamethin constituency and U Tun Tun Maung of Ponnagyun constituency were answered by Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe.

Hluttaw then made a decision to approve a bill amending Myanmar divorce act submitted by Supreme Court of the Union.—Myo Mint, Aye Aye Thant (MNA) ■

Amyotha Hluttaw

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Amyotha Hluttaw 5<sup>th</sup> regular session 23<sup>rd</sup> day meeting

2<sup>nd</sup> Amyotha Hluttaw 5<sup>th</sup> regular session 23<sup>rd</sup> day meeting was held yesterday morning in Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall where five questions were answered and two bills were submitted.

Of the farmers who had their lands confiscated when Myanmar Wanbao Mining Copper Limited fenced off the project area of Letpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project, some farmers were refusing to accept land and crop compensation and U Ye Htut of Sagaing Region constituency 5 asked whether there is a plan to pay land and crop compensation to these farmers.

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win said compensation for land and crop for these farmers will continue to be paid by an Implementation Committee based on Letpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project Investigation Committee Report. The Implementation Committee includes Sagaing Region government members, officials of No. 1 Mining Enterprise, Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited and Myanmar Wanbao Mining Copper Limited.



Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win. **PHOTO: MNA**

In accordance with the suggestion included in the report Wanbao Company had paid land and crop compensation totaling Ks 4,950.177 million for 4,817.47 acres of land from 16 March 2013 to 31 March 2017. 1,810.06 acres of land remains to pay land and crop compensation. As per the guidance of the Implementation Committee, an additional support of Ks 3,205.015 million for 4738.12 acre of land from 3 February 2014 to 31 March 2017 was paid leaving 1,889.41 acres that were not provided with additional support.

According to a Contribution



U Ye Htut, Representative for Sagaing Region constituency 5. **PHOTO: MNA**

Plan for those who had lost land while they wait for employment, 902 farmers were provided with Ks. 3,478.712 million as of 31 May 2017.

Therefore, when Sagaing Region government compile a list of farmers who had not accepted land and crop compensation and send it to Wanbao company, the ministry will closely monitor and insist the company to pay the compensation for land and crop, additional support and payment according to the Contribution Plan in the same rate paid to the farmers who already accepted it answered the Union

Minister.

Responding to the question by U Saw Moe Myint @ Samuel of Kayin State constituency 1 on whether projects (Letpadaung Copper, Tagaung Nickel, offshore natural gas, Kyaukphyu Deep Sea Port) implemented with foreign investors under production sharing contracts (agreements) were employing local experts according to ratio agreed in the agreements and income tax is collected from foreigners working in the projects, Union Minister U Ohn Win said Letpadaungtaung Copper Project, Sabeitaung, Sabeitaung (south), Kyesintaung copper projects and Tagaungtaung Nickel Project conducted under foreign investment law were employing local and foreign experts according to the agreement and even though Letpadaungtaung Copper Project is starting commercial production, due to remaining construction works, foreign experts are more in number than the local experts.

In the joint management committee meetings with these companies, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation is always insisting and pressing to train

Myanmar staff, increase the employment of Myanmar experts and reduce the number of foreign experts said the Union Minister. The Union Minister also said foreigners working in these projects are paying income tax according to existing law.

The Union Minister also replied to questions asked by U Tin Aung Tun of Magway Region constituency 5, U Ko Ko Naing of Sagaing Region constituency 8 and Dr. Kyaw Than Tun (Canton) of Mandalay Region constituency 3.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than then announced interested Hluttaw representatives to register their names to discuss a bill to repeal Public Accounts Failure Act that was sent back by Pyithu Hluttaw with amendments.

Afterward Daw Ohn Kyi of Mandalay Region constituency 4 supported a motion for Amyotha Hluttaw to discuss a third bill amending Anti-Corruption Law submitted by U Zaw Min of Sagaing Region constituency 6 and hluttaw announced its agreement to discuss the bill.

2<sup>nd</sup> Amyotha Hluttaw 5<sup>th</sup> regular session 24<sup>th</sup> day meeting is scheduled to be held on 3 July. —Thura Zaw (MNA) ■



Special meeting on Rakhine issue is held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

## Special meeting on Rakhine issue held

### FROM PAGE-1

The meeting was also attended by President U Htin Kyaw, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Myint Swe, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than, Deputy Commander in Chief of the Defence Services and Com-

mander in Chief of Army Vice Senior General Soe Win, Union Ministers Lt. General Sein Win, Lt. General Ye Aung, U Kyaw Tint Swe, Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo and National Security Advisor of the Union Government U Thaung Tun.

The meeting concluded at 4:15pm.—Myanmar News Agency

# State Counsellor receives ambassadors of Thailand, South Africa, Mexico separately



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes Mr Jukr Boon Long, Thailand Ambassador. PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Mr Geoffrey Quinton Mitchell Doidge, Ambassador of Republic of South Africa. PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Mexican Ambassador Mr. Nathan Wolf Lustbader. PHOTO: MNA

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, received Mr Jukr Boon Long, Thailand Ambassador to Myanmar at 10:30 am, Mr. Geoffrey Quinton Mitchell Doidge, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa at

10:30 am and H.E. Mr. Nathan Wolf Lustbader, United Mexican States Ambassador to Myanmar at 11am, separately at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

In meeting with Thailand Ambassador, matters on up-

grading Myanmar-Thailand bilateral cooperation were cordially discussed. At the meeting with Mr. Geoffrey Quinton Mitchell Doidge, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of South Africa to the Republic of the Union of Myan-

mar with residence in Bangkok, they exchanged views on the matters related to strengthening of the friendly relations and promotion of cooperation between the two countries and democratic transition, national reconciliation and peace process of Myanmar.

During the meeting with Mr. Nathan Wolf Lustbader, Ambassador of the United Mexican States, they cordially discussed matters relating to the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Mexico.—Myanmar News Agency ■

## Thailand delays new labour act after 6,500 Myanmar workers return

### FROM PAGE-1

“During the 120-day suspended period, Myanmar migrant workers should obtain the necessary documents to work in Thailand,” said U Aung Myo Thant, a labour attorney at the Myanmar embassy in Thailand.

In addition, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission sent a letter yesterday to Thailand’s National Human

Rights Commission requesting help for Myanmar migrant workers who are currently facing difficulties in obtaining documentation.

After the law came into effect, Thai police began making arrests of people with insufficient documents. Although Myanmar authorities would not comment on the new law, they have requested Thailand’s NHRC to protect the human

rights of Myanmar migrant workers and their families who are currently in Thailand.

News media had earlier published pictures of workers crossing a border river from Thailand back into Myanmar, carrying bundles of belongings in plastic bags.

Reuters reported last month that, despite a Thai crackdown on human trafficking, people-smuggling across

the Thai-Myanmar border is on the rise as people arrive in search of jobs.

This week, the United States kept Thailand on a trafficking watch list, saying it did not meet the minimum standards to end human trafficking.

Thailand defended its efforts to stop trafficking and urged U.S. officials to visit and see its efforts. —GNLM, Reuters ■

### U Tha Aung Nyun presents credentials in New Zealand

U Tha Aung Nyun, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to New Zealand, presented his Credentials to Her Excellency The Right Honourable Dame Patsy Reddy GNZM, QSO, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Realm of New Zealand on 28 June 2017, in Wellington.—Ministry of Foreign Affairs ■

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com  
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# Motion on new MraukU town project in Rakhine State Hluttaw

May Thet Hnin

A motion by State Hluttaw representative U Tun Tha Sein of MraukU township constituency 2 to implement a new MraukU town project was submitted to Rakhine State Hluttaw meeting on 28 June and as there was no objection, the motion will be discussed it is learnt.

"MraukU is an ancient town where archaeology research value and regional development meet head on. Height of a building in MraukU could not be higher than 30 ft and digging deeper than 2 ft is not allowed. Concrete roads could not be laid in MraukU as it is an archaeology research zone. When MraukU become a world heritage area it needs to be preserved and protected for national interest as well as for the entire world's interest. On the other hand, there is a need for MraukU town development and therefore the motion to implement a new MraukU town project was submitted" said U Tun Tha Sein.

One of the advisors to the state government Daw Khin Than said about 20 years ago Htammaritz new town was planned outside of MraukU but only government offices, staff houses and hospitals were built there. Infrastructures like water and electricity were not available for the people at that place and therefore she is supporting this motion for a new MraukU town.

About 2,700 acres currently proposed is northwest of Htammaritz ward directly connected to MraukU and if compensation are paid to farmlands according to land record act there'll be



One of the archaeological sites of MraukU filled with ancient history. PHOTO: MNA

a new town and the people will also be satisfied if it is according to the law added U Tun Tha Sein.

State hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the motion are invited to register until 30 June and the Rakhine State Hluttaw is adjourned the entire week it is learnt.

U Nyein Lwin, director of MraukU sub-branch, Department of Archaeology and National Museum said if a new MraukU town project is implemented it will resolve the matter of squatters living in MraukU cultural area. It is an issue that is required to be included in the master plan for MraukU region to become UNESCO heritage site. Furthermore, the new MraukU town project will also be beneficial for people without



Land being cleared for the new MraukU town project. PHOTO: MNA

proper place to live and therefore he welcomes the project said U Nyein Lwin.

Government is increasing the momentum to put MraukU in the UNESCO list and a draft

nomination to include MraukU region in World Heritage list will be submitted in 2018 September and a final submission will have to be made by 31 January 2019. ■

## Statement issued by National Human Rights Commission on detained media men

No. 7/2017 30 June, Nay Pyi Taw

1. A senior reporter from The Irrawaddy and two reporters from the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) have been detained in Lashio Police Station, Northern Shan State after it was reported they had been in contact with the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) on

26 June. International human rights groups are claiming this is a violation of freedom of the media.

2. The Myanmar NHRC said that in this incident the ones being taken action against are media personnel and their freedom to obtain news and

information should be taken into consideration. It should also be put into consideration that Myanmar is currently going through a national peace process.

3. The Myanmar NHRC also advises that the detained media personnel be given the

right to health protection, the right to protection from torture, permission to meet family members, the right to hire a legal advisor when facing a court of law and other basic human rights.—Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (Unofficial Translation)



A woman prepares lacquerware at her shop in Bagan. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

## Lacquerware handicrafts facing extinction

Lacquerware manufacturing businesses in Bagan are on the verge of extinction, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Previously, the lacquerware handicrafts were made by many people from the Bagan area, but nowadays they are interested in other businesses which can earn them more money, such as restaurant and hotel businesses. Therefore, lacquerware handicraft businesses are facing the danger of extinction, said U Maung Muang, the chairman of the Myanmar Lacquerware Pro-

ducers Association.

Before 2010, many Myanmar lacquerwares were made in abundance, and had a place in the international market. But in recent years, there has been a significant decline in the export volumes and a rise in lower-priced fake lacquerware is now entering Myanmar, which can have a negative impact upon the Myanmar lacquerware market.

“Currently, the lacquerware businessmen are persuading the local youth to prevent the lacquerware industry from the danger of becoming extinct in

the Bagan area. Also, the lacquerware businessmen are cooperating with the government to produce lacquerware by artisans from the Lacquerware College in Bagan”, said U Ngwe Aung, a lacquerware manufacturers from Nyaung U Township.

In an effort to keep lacquerware from becoming extinct, lacquerware businessmen hold meetings and workshops annually with Asian countries. Currently, there are only seven commercial lacquerware businesses and a few manageable-scale businesses in the Bagan area.—GNLM ■

## Rice price up due to increased demand

The price of low-quality rice, which is mainly exported abroad, has increased because of the rising demand to export via sea routes, according to the Bayintnaung rice market.

Moreover, the price of high-quality rice called Shwebo Paw San and other Paw San species have also increased thanks to higher domestic demand.

The prices of high-quality rice and rough rice increased by

Ks500 per bag this week when compared to the last week.

“Paw San has slightly increased because of Myanmar domestic consumption. But the rough rice has also increased because of increased exporting via sea route,” said U Aung Myint, a rice dealer. Currently, the good-quality rice is selling well in the domestic market. Although the export volume of the rice via sea routes has increased, that of

the rice exported through the Muse 105th Mile border gate has declined because the provincial authorities in Yunnan area are preventing the rice from entering Yunnan province.

Shwebo Pawsan sold for Ks45,000 per bag while Myaung Mya Paw San sold for Ks36,000 per bag and 25 Marks rough rice sold for between Ks17,000 and Ks17,500 per bag in the domestic market.—Min Min ■

## Meiktila tomato price declines

The price for Meiktila tomatoes has declined with the tomatoes from Shan State entering Meiktila, according to tomato dealers from Meiktila Myoma market.

Previously, three or four truckloads of tomatoes consisting of about 900 or 1000 boxes entered Meiktila market from Shan State. But these days, eight or nine truckloads of tomatoes are entering into the Meiktila market. The price of a tomato box weighing 20 viss (1 viss =

1.6 kg) has declined to Ks6,000, down from Ks14,000, according to a local tomato broker.

“There are two types of tomato in Shan State: wet tomatoes and dried tomatoes. The wet tomatoes are much cheaper than the dried ones because the latter can last longer. The tomatoes entering Meiktila are mainly from Yatsauk, Aung Pan, and Aung Tha Pyay towns in Shan State,” said Daw Htay Htay Hla from the Kyaw Brokerage.—Min Min ■

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## Ex-Tepco execs plead not guilty as trial starts over Fukushima crisis

TOKYO — Former top company officials responsible for the Fukushima Daiichi power plant pleaded not guilty Friday as they stood trial for their alleged failure to prevent the nuclear meltdown disaster triggered by the 2011 tsunami.

Appearing before the Tokyo District Court for the first criminal trial over the disaster, Tsunehisa Katsumata, 77, then chairman of plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Co., started with an apology but added, “It was impossible to predict the accident.”

Two former vice presidents also pleaded not guilty in line with the expected argument of the former officials’ defence counsel — that there was no way to foresee the massive tsunami waves, triggered by a magnitude-9.0 earthquake, which engulfed the coastal power plant and crippled key reactor cooling functions. With major investigations into the worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl already completed by the government, Tepco and other entities, the trial is seen as the last chance to shed light on whether the accident was preventable and why the operator had not acted on 2008 data that warned of the risks of massive tsunami.

It took Fukushima residents and their supporters more than five years to bring the three former key officials before a criminal court, as prosecutors twice decided not to charge them.

After the prosecutors’ decision was overturned by an inquest of prosecution made up of ordinary citizens for a sec-



File photo taken 11 March 2011, shows a tsunami rolling into the Fukushima Daiichi complex in northeastern Japan, destroying its seawalls. Former top officials of Tokyo Electric Power Co. went on trial on 30 June 2017, over the nuclear disaster at the plant, pleading not guilty. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

ond time, Katsumata and the two other defendants — Ichiro Takekuro, 71, and Sakae Muto, 67 — were finally indicted last year.

The three former executives are facing charges of professional negligence resulting in injury to people at the site as well as the death of dozens of patients who were forced to evacuate from a hospital near the plant. On 11 March, 2011, huge tsunami waves swamped the six-reactor plant, located on ground 10 meters above sea level, and flooded power supply facilities. Reactor cooling systems were crippled and the Nos. 1 to 3 reactors suffered fuel meltdowns, while hydrogen explosions damaged the buildings housing the Nos. 1, 3 and 4 units.

The case, overseen by a

panel of three judges with a group of specially appointed lawyers acting as prosecutors, is not expected to see a ruling before next year.

At the hearing, the specially appointed lawyers argued that the three former officials could have foreseen the possibility of the plant being inundated by huge tsunami waves, based on a tsunami estimate produced by a Tepco subsidiary in March 2008.

The data showed the plant could be hit by up to 15.7-meter-high tsunami. The lawyers said the subsidiary proposed to Tepco the following month a specific measure to enhance the plant’s preparedness, which was to “build a 10-meter-high seawall” on the same site where the reactor buildings stand.

“We will argue that the

three clearly failed to perform their duty of care by showing they downplayed (the significance) of the estimate, neglected information-gathering and sharing, and were not aware of the need to take measures,” they said. They also said that at a meeting in 2009, the three had been informed of the risk of 14-meter-high tsunami by Masao Yoshida, then in charge of nuclear equipment issues. Later as head of the Fukushima power station, Yoshida led the heroic efforts to stabilize the tsunami-ravaged plant with co-workers called the “Fukushima 50.” “The three should have been able to predict that the plant would be hit by tsunami on a scale that would overwhelm the site,” the lawyers said.—Kyodo News ■

## Train services hit due to protest by tribals

KOLKATA — Train services were today affected in Kharagpur and Adra division of south eastern railway due to ‘rail roko’ call given by Bharat Jokat Majhi Pargana Mahal (BJMPM), the largest outfit of tribals in west Midnapore, SER sources said.

The outfit has called the ‘rail roko’ to protest the ‘Hool Divas’ not being properly celebrated in the state. They also demanded that importance should be given to their Alchiki language. June 30 is commemorated as Hool Divas by tribals in memory of their 30,000 ancestors who were martyred during the Santhal Rebellion of 1855-56. The services have been affected since 6.30 am today. Agitations have been organised at Nekurseni and Khemasuli stations of Kharagpur division, and Chhatna, Madhukunda, Garh-dhrubeswar and Salboni stations of Adra division, the sources said.

Three trains, Khargpur-Hatia passenger, Kharagpur-Tatanagar passenger and Adra-Mednapur passenger, have been cancelled. Several other trains, including Howrah-Mumbai Duronto, have either been terminated, controlled or detained, they added.—PTI ■

## ADB to offer \$10 bln support for India’s low-income states

NEW DELHI — Asian Development Bank President Takehiko Nakao said Friday the Manila-based lender will provide \$10 billion support for improving economic performance of low-income states in India.

He said at a news conference in the Indian capital that the ADB stands ready to meet immediate development needs of up to \$5 billion over the five-year period beginning in 2018 for less developed states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand. Nakao also said the ADB is prepared to invest up to another \$5 billion during the period for infrastructure building to develop the East Coast Economic Corridor.—Kyodo News ■

## Customs seized over 100 kg of gold bars from Malaysia in April

OSAKA — Customs at Kansai International Airport in Osaka Prefecture confiscated in April more than 100 kilograms of gold bars brought from Malaysia, customs officials said Friday, revealing yet another attempt at smuggling gold into Japan.

The gold bars, worth over 500 million yen (\$4.46 million) in the domestic market, were seized when inspectors found

them hidden under the clothing of 10 Malaysians who had arrived at the airport on a flight from that country.

None of them went through the required customs declaration procedures and customs officials are investigating the matter as a suspected violation of the customs and consumption tax laws.

Gold smuggling has been increasing since Japan’s con-

sumption tax was raised from 5 percent to 8 per cent in April 2014.

Many gold smuggling cases reported since then involved passengers arriving on flights from airports in Hong Kong and South Korea. Investigative sources say smugglers may be exploring new routes including from Malaysia.

In a recent smuggling case, five women living in Aichi

Prefecture, including four with South Korean passports, were arrested in early June at Chubu airport near Nagoya for smuggling 30 kg of gold bars.

One was quoted as telling police that the women had been involved in gold smuggling multiple times and paid 10,000 yen per 1 kg of gold brought into Japan, saying she was engaged “as if it was a part-time job.”—Kyodo News ■



Tourists enjoy on a beach at the island of Koh Tao, Surat Thani Province, Thailand, on 19 September 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Thai police probe Belgian tourist's "suicide" amid online doubts

BANGKOK — Thai police said on Friday they were re-opening an investigation into the death in April of a Belgian tourist which was ruled a suicide at the time after online posts voiced concern that she may have been murdered.

The body of Elise Dallemange, 30, was found in a jungle on Koh Tao island, where British backpackers Hannah Witheridge and David Miller were murdered on a beach in 2014. Police said Witheridge, 23, had been raped and bludgeoned to death and Miller 24, had suffered blows to his head.

Thailand, famous for its beaches and cultural sites, is a regional tourist magnate and the tourism industry is a major income generator.

Posts on social media this

week said Dallemange had booked a ticket to Chumphon province, on the mainland, and that her luggage arrived after her death, implying that she had not intended to kill herself.

"Police continue to look for new evidence, because it was an unnatural death, but we have not found any," Police Colonel Preecha Kladsawad, deputy of Surat Thani police, said.

The 2014 murders of the British backpackers prompted some local and foreign media to brand Koh Tao "murder island". Two migrant workers from Myanmar were arrested and sentenced to death after they were convicted of the crime in December 2015 - a move criticized by rights groups who say they were wrongfully convicted. —Reuters ■

## Malaysia's aim for more palm oil export to China may hit snag: banker

KUALA LUMPUR — While Malaysia, the world's second largest producer of crude palm oil (CPO), is seeking to export more palm oil to China following Prime Minister Najib Razak's visits to China, it may be a tall order this year, as soybean supplies remain ample and Indonesia, another major CPO producer, still has its competitive advantage over Malaysia.

"China's demand for palm oil depends on how competitiveness is CPO price against soybean oil, the availability of domestic edible oils in China as well as the release of rapeseed oils reserves by the government," Ivy Ng, the regional head of agribusiness of CIMB Investment Bank, told Xinhua.

According to Bloomberg data, CPO trades at about 80 US dollars per ton lower than that of soybean oil currently, which is below its 10-year historical average discount of 140 US dollar per ton.

"From historical standpoint, the discount is not as wide or attractive relative to historical average discount. It does not make it very attractive for them (Chinese) to buy more than historical average consumption now," Ng added.

According to a recent report written by UOB Kayhian Research, soybean planting is expected to continue increasing to meet growing demand from China as meat consumption soars. —Xinhua ■

### Myanmar Gazette

# Appointment of heads of service organizations

1. The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each from the date they assume charge of their duties.

#### Name

(1) U Win Shein  
Director-General  
Factory and General Labour Laws Inspection Department  
Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

(2) U Maung Maung Kyaw  
Director-General  
Department of Labour  
Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

(3) U Nyunt Win  
Director-General  
Department of Labour Relations  
Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

(4) Dr Daw Tin Tin Lay  
Director-General  
Department of Health Professional Resource Development and Management  
Ministry of Health and Sports

#### Appointment

Director-General  
Department of Labour  
Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Director-General  
Department of Labour Relations  
Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Director-General  
Factory and General Labour Laws Inspection Department  
Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Director-General  
Department of Human Resources for Health  
Ministry of Health and Sports

2. The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed Dr Win Tun, Director-General of Education Research, Planning and Training Department under the Ministry of Education on the expiry of one-year probationary period from the date he assumes charge of his duties.—Myanmar News Agency ■

## UNDP, listed industrial zone sign deal on enhancing economic, social impact of SEZs in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH — The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and listed Phnom Penh SEZ (Special Economic Zone) on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on enhancing the economic and social impact of the SEZs in Cambodia. The deal was inked in Phnom Penh between UNDP-Cambodia Representative Claire Van de Vaeren and Phnom Penh SEZ's chairwoman Lim Chhiv Ho.

"The MoU between UNDP and Phnom Penh SEZ serves as the very first agreement under the new United Nations Social Impact Fund (UNSIF) on the establishment of partnerships between UNDP and social impact investors in the country to ensure the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030," said a joint press release.

The UNSIF is a unique blended financing model where innovators, entrepreneurs, donors, philanthropists, public and private sector investors can identify and finance SDG-aligned investment projects that create both economic and social returns, the press release said.

The five-year partnership between UNDP and Phnom Penh SEZ aims at demonstrating how SEZs can contribute to the success of the SDG8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) in particular, said UNSIF's global chief David Galipeau.

"The SEZs can potentially serve to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and to contribute to sustainable consumption and production pat-

terns," he said.

He said through UNSIF's financial support, UNDP will work with Phnom Penh SEZ to enhance the social development impact of SEZs in various areas of activity ranging from promoting equality, affordable housing, safe and healthy work conditions, and protecting the environment.

UNSIF will also support Phnom Penh SEZ to facilitate capital market and blended financing that focuses on "smart" SEZ development that is sustainable and inclusive, said the press release.

According to government figures, the Southeast Asian country has 45 SEZs, 12 of them are operational as the rest are under construction. More than 260 factories have been built in those SEZs, generating over 86,000 jobs. —Xinhua ■

## Health and Longevity for All

Khin Maung Oo

Of all human beings in this world, most people, young or old, tend to carelessly live, without considering our outer appearances deeply. Due to various reasons—having a pile of workload or daily rituals at homes or working places, lack of concentration to ponder about their all-time physical changes in their bodies and inability to pay for present day's skyrocketing medical charges, here I want to claim that we fail to notice that our internal organs are gradually deteriorating day by day.

And, in our body system comprising of the Four Elements—earth, air, fire and water, we are inclined

to regard it as unimportant, and that regardless of ages we are likely to lose our lives in case one of the four is not in harmony with our body system. Only when we have reached the state of critical condition that we try to rush to medical surgeons and physicians. Generally, we know that deterioration will lead us to destruction or cessation of life. But, there are many cases of impermanence we do not know. An average life-span of a human-being may be 75 years, but it is a sorrowful thing for a person to have died young or earlier.

Management to have a long life is the best reward. According to WHO's (World Health Organization) 2014 report, 59% of the deceased in

Myanmar died of new disease (un-infectious), with 30% of the remaining 41% dead of contagious diseases and 11% dead from car accidents.

Apart from deaths due to old age in Myanmar, others regardless of ages and classes died from un-infectious diseases and accidents caused by man.

What I mean is that we need to notice new or un-infectious diseases which claim 59% of the whole populace. Among them, 3% died of diabetes and sugar urine disease, 9% of chronic lung and suffocation diseases—*asphyxia* or *asphyxiation*, 11% of cancers, 25% of hypertension and coronary heart disease. The last one was found at the top. Thus, we

must take care of it, the silent killer or un-infectious diseases which can claim our lives anytime and anywhere. If our blood pressure reached 140/90, it may be because of hypertension.

As we advance in age we need to take extra care of our diet, especially so as not to take salty foods, fats, cigarettes and liquors.

Patients suffering from diabetes, obesity, renal disease and pregnant women are required to take some medication.

Last but not least, we should live on a carefully managed diet, take sufficient physical exercises and reduce our stress so that we can keep away from the silent killer. ■

## Brain Drain Vs Brain Gain

Tommy Pauk

A term 'brain drain' is defined as 'a significant emigration of educated or talented individuals. They expect better pay, benefits or upward mobility in foreign countries. If it is to say simply, a brain drain is the movement of highly skilled and qualified people to a country where they can work in better condition and earn more money. In other words, when we talk about a brain drain, we are referring to the movement of a large number of scientists or academics, away from their own country to other countries where the salaries and conditions are better for them. Besides, they want to develop their skills, experiences and new knowledge. It is human nature that if a person acquires high skill and possesses high caliber, he or she might expect the payment and benefits which best deserved them duly.

If a certain country encounters brain drain issue, it will affect the country's socio-economic development. Basically this movement is caused by the acts or responses of the unwise governments who neglect the capacity of intellectuals and intelligentsias. In some countries, when the selfish and power crazy groups of people are in power and authority, they never ever think about the nurturing of human resources for developing of the nation. The subservient sycophants who toady to the regimes get higher salaries and better conditions than the decent personnel in the public services. Sometimes, those sycophants are neither academics nor experienced personnel in the respective government departments, but

they are more authoritative than the other officials who are well-educated and skilful in the same departments. For these frustrating situations, the academics and skilful personnel quit from their positions on their own accord in order to seek the job with higher salaries and benefits in some prosperous foreign country. For example, computer specialists, medical doctors and skilled technicians seek decent jobs abroad. They seek not only job opportunity but also citizenship of the rich countries especially in the US and Europe countries. The wealthy parents send their children to advanced countries to pursue academic study. E.g in the USA, UK and JAPAN etc. The wealthy parents expect that their offspring could easily get the job when they obtain degrees or diplomas from those popular or high-rank colleges and universities abroad. In this way, the concerned nation loses the educated people of new generation which are human resources.

Most of the academics seek the countries in which they could legal-

A brain drain is the movement of highly skilled and qualified people to a country where they can work in better condition and earn more money.

ly get employment permit and stay permit especially in the First World; the rich industrial countries in the world. However, it is not easy for them to enter or get job in these countries because each country has a statute of employment which stipulates or favors their own citizens to get employment. Furthermore, the academics from developing countries or from countries which have substandard education level must take advance courses at colleges and universities in the developed countries so that they will be qualified in their major subjects. Another way to getting job is that they need to apply for getting work permit for foreign entrants to the government concerned.

Brain-gain denotes the alien academics or intelligentsia or intellectuals or cognoscenti are being employed with fringe benefits and attractive payment in the developing countries. In other words, brain gain is defined as 'an increase in the number of highly trained, foreign-born professionals entering a country to live and work where greater opportunities are offered. Normally, the developing countries lack technical know-how, expertise and experts so they hire or employ foreign experts to aid the all round development of the concerned employer-country. Besides, if a certain country cannot upgrade its education level to the high standard, the country needs to have the assistance of foreign experts for the progress of the country. In that case, local people are trained by the alien academics or intelligentsia or intellectuals or cognoscenti for widening knowledge and skill in order

to build capacity in their respective fields or subjects.

Aforementioned movements of brain gain and brain drain occur significantly across the world due to economic gap between developing countries and developed countries. Unquestionably, the developed countries can create more job opportunities than the developing countries so the educated people from the

Brain gain is defined as 'an increase in the number of highly trained, foreign-born professionals entering a country to live and work.

developing countries seek and grab the jobs in the developed countries. Nevertheless, brain drain can cause the negative impact in a concerned nation. All the leaders of developing nations should be able to tackle the brain drain issue efficiently. Unless they can handle it, their nation will lose the human resources which are of their own citizens. As a result, the individuals gain benefits, achievement and high creature-comforts, but their countries encounter weak economy and inefficient capacity in nation building. The more brain drain occurs, the less development arises in a certain nation indeed! ■

## Rakhine State minister reassures residents that area is secure

TROOPS in northeastern Rakhine State were put on high alert on Tuesday, police said, after nearly 200 Rakhine Buddhist villagers fled the area after a recent spate of killings and amid fears of fresh attacks by Muslim insurgents.

Rakhine Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and senior state government officials travelled to the area after receiving reports of fleeing villagers, officials said, and border guards in neighbouring Bangladesh have also been put on alert.

On Tuesday, a villager in northern Rakhine was speared while praying at the weekend, following a separate attack on a village head by a group of at least 10 masked assailants who stabbed the village leader to death on June 17.

“The killings took place over the weekend and the situation is getting increasingly worse. A group of people wear-



Rakhine Chief Minister U Nyi Pu hands over aid to local resident. **PHOTO: THAKKA**

ing black masks has killed local administrators close to the government, so the residents are panicking. That’s why we are on high alert,” Rakhine State police chief, Sein Lwin, told Reuters.

Sein Lwin and a military source operating in the area said security forces expected fresh militant attacks on troops after Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, which

ended in Myanmar on Monday.

Kyaw Win, a Rakhine ethnic villager, said nearly 200 villagers from 11 Rakhine ethnic villages had fled to the cities of Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Sittwe.

“We don’t dare to live here, there are a lot of rumours spreading among the people that we will be attacked by Muslims,” Kyaw Win told Reuters by telephone. But U Nyi Pu urged Rakhine nationals living in Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships not to be taken in by rumours which could harm the peace and stability of the region.

“We came to know that local people are earning their living under stress as regards the event which took place in the village of Tarein very recently. Concerning this, I don’t want you to feel any worries. Measures are being increased concerning the security of the area, by combined forces of

border guard police forces and government forces. I hereby want to claim that you should not be tricked by these rumours that can ruin regional peace and stability”, U Nyi Pu said Thursday while giving words of encouragement to resident of the village of Ywama at the Thiri Mingalar Ywama monastery in Buthidaung.

Colonel Htein Lin, minister for security and border affairs, Dr Chan Thar, minister for social affairs and Thura San Lwin, Police Brig-General also gave words of encouragement.

Local people living in Ywama Village in Buthidaung township were provided with rice, cooking oil, beans and canned sardines, followed by an inspection of housing estates for the staff being constructed by Housing Department by Chief Minister & responsible officials.— Reuters, Myint Maung Soe, Aung Kyaw Oo ■

## Census report: Half a million young people cannot read or write

YANGON, Myanmar, 30 June 2017 — A new census report reveals that while youth literacy in Myanmar is relatively high at 94 per cent, this still means that more than half a million young people cannot read or write. This is primarily due to low school attendance. Almost half a million children aged 7-15 have never attended school. School attendance differs by age, but peaks at only 85 per cent for nine year-olds. Less than one in three teenagers aged 15-19 go to school.

“Young people represent a huge source of potential for Myanmar’s development. Government policy needs to focus on improving the standard of education, as well as on increasing school attendance and youth literacy. It is also essential to invest in skills training for those who have already left school. Education must reach all groups in society so that every young person’s potential is fulfilled, and no one is left behind”, says Janet Jackson, UNFPA Representative for Myanmar.

The findings come from the 2014 Myanmar Population

and Housing Census Thematic Report on Education. At a critical time of development, the report underscores the need to improve education in Myanmar at all levels. The data and analysis in the report highlight policy implications, and set out in detail where action is needed. The findings call for a concerted effort by government, civil society, academia, and international organizations to use education as a platform to improve the lives of people of Myanmar now and for future generations.

A literate population is necessary for the socio-economic development of a country. Myanmar’s adult literacy rate is 89.5 per cent. However, this relatively high figure conceals stark disparities within the population. For example, while the difference between female and male literacy is relatively small up to the age of 50, gender differences become more apparent at higher ages. Lower literacy among older women reflects low female school attendance in the past. Rural literacy is lower than urban literacy, and it varies significantly

across states and regions. In Shan, for example, only 64.6 per cent of people can read or write, and 44.9 per cent of adults have no schooling at all.

The report shows that educational attainment in Myanmar is low: 61.3 per cent of the population aged 25 and over have no education at all, or have only attended primary school. Only 7.3 per cent of the population aged 25 and over have a university-level degree. The report also shows that, proportionally, more women than men pursue higher education. Of people who hold a postgraduate degree, 63 per cent are women, and 37 per cent are men.

“For Myanmar to take advantage of the human capital that these highly educated women represent, women need better access to work opportunities, including leadership roles, outside the home. Only half of women in Myanmar (50.5 per cent) are in the labour force, compared to 85.6 per cent of men”, says Janet Jackson, UNFPA Representative for Myanmar.—Press Release by UNFPA ■

## Ministries donate cash assistance for victims of Y8 plane crash

THE Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation donated cash to relatives of the victims of the military transport plane crash to the Ministry of Defence in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental

Conservation U Ohn Win presented Ks3.6 million and Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint presented Ks2.5 million for the families of the victims.

Lt-Gen Sein Win, Union Minister for Defence, accepted the cash donations on behalf of the families.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Lt-Gen Sein Win accepts cash donation from Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Fees for residence permits, re-entry visas to change

THE fees for visas for foreigners entering Myanmar will change, starting today, according to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

The newly fixed rates are US\$50 for Stay-Visa/Residence Permit for the duration of between one day and three months, \$100 for the duration of three

months to six months and \$200 for the period over six months up to one year; whereas the newly fixed rates are \$60 for a Single Re-entry Visa up to the increased period of 6 months and \$200 for a Multiple-Journey Special Re-entry Visa up to the increased period of one year, it has been learnt.—Thet Thet Paing (MNA) ■

## Japan, EU begin crucial final talks on free trade deal

TOKYO — Japan and the European Union started final-stage talks Friday in the hope of concluding a broad bilateral free trade agreement before their leaders meet next week on the sideline of the Group of 20 summit in Germany.

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and European Union Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom met in Tokyo as the two sides ramp up efforts to broach differences over such key issues as farm imports from the European Union and Japan's automobile exports.

Japanese Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Yuji Yamamoto and EU Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner Phil Hogan are expected to join Kishida and Malmstrom in the meeting, set to run through Saturday, a senior Japanese official said.

Japan and the 28-member bloc, together accounting for some 30 per cent of the world's gross domestic product, remain apart over whether and when to cut tar-

iffs on Japanese automobiles imported into Europe and those on EU farm products shipped to Japan.

Chief negotiators from both sides have been in informal talks on the free trade pact for about three weeks in the Japanese capital.

The two EU commissioners' visit to Tokyo suggests that the talks are reaching a stage where a political decision is required, an EU source told Kyodo News earlier.

The talks, initially launched in 2013, have recently seen renewed urgency amid uncertainty around multilateral free trade agreements following the United States' withdrawal from the 12-member Trans-Pacific Partnership and Britain's decision to exit the European Union.

Japan and the European Union say they hope to strike the free trade deal to send a strong message to countries leaning towards a more protectionist stance while demonstrating the importance of free and fair trade based on high-level rules. —Kyodo News ■



European Union Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom (R) and EU Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner Phil Hogan arrive at Narita airport, near Tokyo, on 30 June 2017, to attend final-stage talks for a broad bilateral free trade agreement. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

## US likely to bar Japan investigators from interviewing warship crew, official says

TOKYO — The United States will likely bar Japanese investigators from interviewing USS Fitzgerald crew manning the guided missile destroyer when it was struck by a cargo ship in Japanese waters killing seven American sailors, a US navy official said.

The Philippines-flagged container ship ACX Crystal and the US warship collided at night just south of Tokyo Bay on 17 June. The US deaths were the greatest loss of life on a US Navy vessel since the USS Cole was bombed by militants in Yemen's Aden harbour in 2000. No one was hurt on the cargo ship.

At least six investigations are being carried out, including two US Navy internal hear-

ings and one by the United States Coast Guard (USCG). The Philippines government is also conducting an investigation.

The US Coast Guard, which is investigating on behalf of the National Transportation Safety Board, has interviewed the crew of the container ship.

But the US navy official, who declined to be identified, said warships were afforded sovereign immunity under international law and foreign investigators were not expected to get access to the US crew.

"It's unlikely Japanese or Philippine authorities will have direct access to crew members," said the US official.

The US Coast Guard

would instead provide summaries of crew interviews to the Japan Transport Safety Board (JTSB), which would share them with the Japan Coast Guard (JCG), he said.

Declining access may be viewed by Japanese investigators as falling short of a pledge made by Seventh Fleet commander Vice Admiral Joseph P. Aucoin of full cooperation in the investigation.

"We have asked for access to the US ship and its crew and can't proceed until we hear back from the US Navy," said a spokesman for the JTTSB. He said he was unaware that the US side was likely to turn down the request.

A Seventh Fleet spokesman said the navy would

"share information in accordance with protocols."

In the first detailed account from someone involved in the accident, the ACX Crystal's captain, in a report seen by Reuters, said his ship signalled the Fitzgerald with flashing lights about 10 minutes before the collision, but the US ship did not respond or alter course.

The Fitzgerald will enter dry dock at its home port in Yokosuka, Japan, where engineers will assess damage and patch it up in preparation for a return to the United States for full repairs.

"We are still working through the timing and how the ship will get there," the Seventh Fleet spokesman said. —Reuters ■

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Ukraine power company says was hit by second cyber attack

KIEV — Ukrainian state power distributor Ukrenergo was hit by another cyber attack on Thursday which used a computer virus different from one that hit Ukraine earlier in the week, the company's acting chief said.

The second attack did not affect Ukraine's power network, Vsevolod Kovalchuk told a news briefing on Friday. Ukrenergo was an early victim of a cyber attack that began in Ukraine and spread around the world on Tuesday, knocking out thousands of machines, shutting down ports, factories and offices as it hit around 60 countries.—Reuters ■

### Greece returns to normality with solid steps, targets fair growth: PM

ATHENS — Greece is gradually untangling from chronic recession and creates the conditions to return to normality with solid steps, Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said on Thursday while addressing an economic forum in Athens.

Uncertainty receded following the recent conclusion of the second review of the third Greek bailout, and Greece heads to the return to international bond markets, the exit from bailout programmes and fair growth, said Tsipras.—Xinhua ■

### Australian gov't announces new offensive cyber warfare division

CANBERRA — The Australian government has announced that a new cyber warfare division with offensive capabilities will go online from 1 July to ensure the country remains at the "cutting edge" of the cyber security landscape. Making the announcement in Canberra on Friday, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Cyber Security Dan Tehan said the new Information Warfare Division would conduct both offensive and defensive cyber attacks, in a move he said was necessary due to the changing nature of modern warfare.—Xinhua

## Chemical weapons watchdog says sarin used in April attack in Syria

AMSTERDAM — The world's chemical weapons watchdog said the banned nerve agent sarin was used in an attack in northern Syria in April that killed dozens of people, a report from a fact-finding team seen by Reuters on Thursday showed.

The report was circulated to members of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague, but was not made public.

The attack on 4 April in the town of Khan Sheikhoun in northern Idlib province was the most deadly in Syria's civil war in more than three years. It prompted a US missile strike against a Syrian air base which Washington said was used to launch the strike.

After interviewing witnesses and examining samples, a fact-finding mission (FFM) of the OPCW concluded that "a large number of people, some of whom died, were exposed to sarin or a sarin-like substance.

"It is the conclusion of the FFM that such a release can only be determined as the use of sarin, as a chemical weapon," a summary of the report said.



Men ride a motorbike past a hazard sign at a site hit by an airstrike on Tuesday in the town of Khan Sheikhoun in rebel-held Idlib, Syria, on 5 April 2017. The hazard sign reads, "Danger, unexploded ammunition". **PHOTO: REUTERS**

"Now that we know the undeniable truth, we look forward to an independent investigation to confirm exactly who was responsible for these brutal attacks so we can find justice for the victims," US Ambassador to

the United Nations Nikki Haley said in a statement on Thursday.

A joint United Nations and OPCW investigation, known as the JIM, can now look at the incident to determine who is to blame, she said.

The JIM has found Syrian government forces were responsible for three chlorine gas attacks in 2014 and 2015 and that Islamic State militants used mustard gas.

Western intelligence agen-

cies had also blamed the government of Bashar al-Assad for the April chemical attack. Syrian officials have repeatedly denied using banned toxins in the conflict.

The mission was unable to visit the site itself due to security concerns and will not attempt to get there, the head of the OPCW was said to have decided.

Syria joined the chemicals weapons convention in 2013 under a Russian-US agreement, averting military intervention under then US President Barack Obama.

The United States said on Wednesday the Syrian government appeared to have heeded a warning this week from Washington not to carry out a chemical weapons attack.

Russia, the Syrian government's main backer in the civil war, warned it would respond proportionately if the United States took pre-emptive measures against Syrian forces after Washington said on Monday it appeared the Syrian military was preparing to conduct a chemical weapons attack.—Reuters ■

## Five suicide bombers attack Lebanese army during raids

BEIRUT — Five suicide bombers attacked Lebanese soldiers as they raided two Syrian refugee camps in the Aarsal area at the border with Syria on Friday and a sixth militant threw a hand grenade at a patrol, the army said. Seven soldiers were wounded.

A Lebanese army statement said one suicide bomber had detonated his explosive laden belt in front of an army patrol during a manhunt for suspected militants in a refugee camp in the north-eastern border town.

The army said four other suicide bombers blew themselves up without causing any injuries among soldiers, while another militant threw a grenade at a patrol, injuring four soldiers.

During the raids an explosive device blew up while four other explosive devices that were being prepared by the militants were defused.

The Lebanese army has in recent months stepped up raids in the makeshift camps built on the edge of the town where tens

of thousands of impoverished Syrian refugees who had fled violence in their country in recent years live in squalid conditions.

The camps around the town have long been a haven for militants coming from Syria who have clashed with Lebanese forces conducting security raids searching for suspects hiding among the refugees.

The militants briefly over-

ran the town in 2014 in a battle that killed dozens and marked one of the more serious spillovers of the Syrian conflict in Lebanon.

A number of attacks in Lebanon in recent years have been linked to the war in Syria, where Lebanese Shi'ite group Hezbollah is fighting in support of President Bashar al-Assad.—Reuters ■



A general view shows Syrian refugee camps dotted in and around the Lebanese town of Aarsal, near the border with Syria, Lebanon in 2016. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

## New conflicts threaten Syria after Islamic State defeat

RAQQA, (SYRIA)/WASHINGTON — Sheen Ibrahim's track record fighting ultra-hardline militants explains US President Donald Trump's policy of arming Syrian Kurds like her as he seeks to eradicate Islamic State. It also highlights the risks.

Taught by her brother to fire an AK-47 at 15 and encouraged by her mother to fight for Syrian Kurdish autonomy, she says she has killed 50 people since she took up arms in Syria's six-year-old civil war, fighting first al Qaeda, then crossing into Iraq to help Kurds there against Islamic State.

Now 26, she leads a 15-woman unit hunting down the hardline group in its global headquarters Raqqa, speeding through streets once controlled by the militants in a pick-up truck as fellow fighters comb through ruined buildings for booby traps.

The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF),

spearheaded by the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia, have taken several parts of the northern Syrian town since their assault began this month. This week US Defence Secretary James Mattis said Washington may arm the SDF for future battles against Islamic State while taking back weapons it no longer needs.

The plan is the "headline" of a still-unfinished stabilisation plan for Syria by the Trump administration, said a US official, speaking on condition of anonymity. The risk is that it causes new instability in a war in which outside powers are playing ever larger roles.

The US-YPG relationship has infuriated Syria's northern neighbour Turkey, a NATO ally which says the YPG is an extension of the Kurdish Workers Party, or PKK, designated terrorist by both Ankara and Washington for its insurgency against the Turkish state.—Reuters ■

## Global cyber attack likely cover for malware installation in Ukraine: police official

KIEV/FRANKFURT — The primary target of a crippling computer virus that spread from Ukraine across the world this week is highly likely to have been that country's computer infrastructure, a top Ukrainian police official told Reuters on Thursday.

Cyber security firms are trying to piece together who was behind the computer worm, dubbed NotPetya by some experts, which has paralyzed thousands of machines worldwide, shutting down ports, factories and offices as it spread through internal organizational networks to an estimated 60 countries. Ukrainian politicians were quick on Tuesday to blame Russia, but a Kremlin spokesman dismissed "unfounded blanket accusations". Kiev has accused Moscow of two previous cyber strikes on the Ukrainian power grid and other attacks since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014. A growing consensus



Technicians work on a flight timetable for the airport's site at the capital's main airport, Boryspil, outside Kiev, Ukraine, on 27 June 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

among security researchers, suggests the main purpose of the attack was to install new malware on computers at government and commercial organisations in

Ukraine. Rather than extortion, the goal may be to plant the seeds of future sabotage, experts said.

International firms appear to have been hit through their operations in the country. Slovakian security software firm ESET released statistics on Thursday showing 75 per cent of the infections detected among its global customer base were in Ukraine, and that all of the top 10 countries hit were located in central, eastern or southern Europe.

Arne Schoenbohm, president of BSI, Germany's federal cyber security agency, told Reuters in an interview on Thursday that most of the damage from the attack had hit Ukraine, and Russia to a lesser extent, with only a few dozen German firms affected. "In all of the known cases, the companies were first infected through a Ukrainian subsidiary," the German official said.—Reuters ■

## Merkel issues warning to Trump ahead of G20 summit

BERLIN/WASHINGTON — German Chancellor Angela Merkel promised to fight for free trade and press on with multilateral efforts to combat climate change at the G20 summit next week, challenging the "America First" policies of US President Donald Trump.

In a defiant speech to parliament a week before she will host a summit of the world's top economic powers in Hamburg, the northern port city where she was born, Merkel did not mention Trump by name but said global problems could not be solved with protectionism and isolation.

Her remarks raised the prospect of an open clash with Trump at the summit. She later met with European G20 leaders who promised to present a united front in Hamburg, while making clear they preferred compromise to conflict.

"These will not be easy talks," Merkel said. "The differences are obvious and it would be wrong to pretend they aren't there. I simply won't do this."

The G20 summit will be held a little over a month after a G7 summit in Sicily exposed deep divisions between other western countries and Trump



German Chancellor Angela Merkel attends a session at the lower house of parliament Bundestag to deliver State of the Nation Address ahead of EU summit and G20 in Berlin, Germany, on 29 June 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

on climate change, trade and migration.

A short while later, Trump announced he was pulling the United States out of a landmark agreement to combat climate change reached in 2015 in Paris.

Ahead of the G20 summit, Trump's administration has threatened to take punitive trade measures against China, including introducing tariffs on steel imports. This has made for an unusually tense atmosphere before the summit and German officials acknowledge they have little idea what the final communique will look like. Asked about Merkel's comments, Trump's national security adviser, H.R. McMaster, said the US relationship with Germany was "as

strong as ever" and played down the discord.

"Of course there are going to be differences in relations with any country, and we'll talk frankly about those differences. The president enjoys those conversations," McMaster told reporters. The German hosts face a difficult challenge. Along with Trump, Russia's Vladimir Putin and Turkey's Tayyip Erdogan will be attending. All have strained relations with Merkel and other European leaders.

The summit, in a convention centre in the heart of Hamburg, could also be disrupted by tens of thousands of protesters expected to descend on the city of 1.7 million.—Reuters ■

## Heading to Sahel, France's Macron scrambles for exit strategy

PARIS/DAKAR — President Emmanuel Macron heads to Mali on Sunday to throw France's weight behind a new West African military force he hopes will lay the basis for an exit strategy for its own troops; but its prospects for success look slim.

Mali is hosting a heads of state summit with Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and Mauritania — known as the G5 Sahel — who could ultimately deploy thousands of troops into the vast, arid Sahel region that remains a breeding ground for militants and traffickers that Paris considers a threat to Europe.

Four years after intervening in its former colony to ward off a jihadist offensive, there is no sign of France withdrawing its 4,000-strong regional Barkhane contingent as they, alongside 10,000 UN peacekeepers, struggle to stabilise Mali and implement peace accords.

"It's not wrong to say that it's part of an exit plan because the Barkhane mission is not intended to be there for ever, but it's hard

to see how we could draw down soon," said a senior French diplomat.

"We need a long-term multilateral strategy so that we're less exposed. The time of doing everything alone in West Africa is over."

The force endorsed by the UN aims to initially establish specially-trained units by the end of the year, which would work with French forces where jihadist groups are known to operate.

But it faces headwinds before it even becomes operational, with questions over financing, manpower and equipment.

"France had an exit strategy in mind when it spearheaded the new force and wanted as much multilateral funding as possible," said Vincent Rouget, West Africa analyst at Control Risks.

"They don't have the option that they had in CAR (Central African Republic) to just leave. The fact that Macron is in Bamako twice in a month really shows he is pushing his whole weight behind it." —Reuters ■

# Dollar despairs on hawkish central banks, Asia stocks join global slump

SINGAPORE — The dollar extended its losses on Friday as major central banks signalled that the era of cheap money was coming to an end in a boon to sterling, the euro and the Canadian dollar, while Asian shares were hit by dismal performances of European and US markets.

European markets were set to open a little lower, with financial spreadbetter LCG expecting Britain's FTSE 100 .FTSE, Germany's DAX .GDAXI and France's CAC 40 .FCHI to all start the day down 0.1 percent. All three lost between 0.5 per cent and 1.9 per cent on Thursday.

But global stock market indexes are set for more gains by the end of

this year, driven by an economic revival in Europe and bright prospects for much of Asia, a Reuters poll of around 300 financial professionals showed.

The dollar index .DXY fell 0.1 per cent to 95.549, poised for a 1.8 per cent slide this week, having fallen in all sessions but one. It is down 1.4 per cent for the month, and 4.8 per cent for the quarter.

The Korean won weakened against the dollar after the country reported industrial production rose by 0.2 percent in May from a month earlier, missing expectations for growth of 1.5 percent. That followed a 2.2 percent decline in April.

The dollar was up 0.1 percent at 1,142.5 won KR-W=KFTC.

But the greenback remained lower against other major currencies. Adding to the dollar's weakness against the yen was data showing Japanese core consumer prices rose 0.4 per cent in May from a year earlier in its fifth straight month of gains, although inflation remains well below the central bank's 2 per cent target.

The dollar fell 0.25 percent to 111.95 yen, after losing 0.2 per cent on Thursday. It was heading for a 1.2 per cent gain for the month, but is down 4.2 per cent this year.

Bank of England Governor Mark Carney surprised many on Wednesday by conceding a rate hike was likely to be needed as the economy came closer

to running at full capacity.

Sterling GBP=D3 was 0.1 per cent higher on Friday at \$1.3017, adding to Thursday's 0.6 per cent gain.

Two top policymakers at the Bank of Canada also suggested they might tighten monetary policy there as early as July.

The dollar slipped 0.15 per cent to C\$1.2984 CAD=, extending Thursday's 0.26 per cent loss.

Despite comments by sources that European Central Bank President Mario Draghi had intended to signal tolerance for a period of weaker inflation, not an imminent policy tightening, the euro on Friday revisited the 13-month high of \$1.1445 hit on Thursday.

The euro EUR=EBS

remained close to that level and was at \$1.1439 on Friday, retaining most of Thursday's 0.6 per cent gain.

"Obviously there's a shift afoot. It really seems that there's some coordinated effort going on out here among the G10 central banks," said Stephen Innes, head of trading in Asia-Pacific for OANDA in Singapore, referring to the series of hawkish-sounding comments on monetary policy.

In stocks, the MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan .MIAPJ0000PUS fell 0.7 per cent, after hitting a two-year high on Thursday. It is up 5.3 per cent for the quarter and has risen 18.3 per cent this year.—Reuters ■

## World's largest floating gas facility on way to Western Australia

SYDNEY — The world's largest floating gas facility left South Korea on Friday and is due to arrive at Browse Basin, 475 km off the northern coast of Western Australia in one month.

At 488 meters long, 74 meters wide and weighing in at about 260,000 tons, the Prelude Vessel is capable of extracting, refining, producing and offloading liquefied natural gas (LNG) without having to pipe any of the commodity onshore.—Xinhua ■

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# Singapore turns vacant space into urban farms

SINGAPORE — Resource-scarce Singapore is turning vacant pockets of land into space for urban farming as the island city strives to ease its reliance on imported food.

The wealthy Southeast Asian city-state imports more than 90 per cent of its food, much of it from neighbouring countries, which can leave it exposed to potential supply chain disruptions.

Edible Garden City, a company with a grow-your-own-food message, has designed and built more than 50 food gardens in the tropical city for clients ranging from restaurants and hotels to schools and residences.

One of its projects is Citizen Farm, an 8,000 square metre plot that used to be a prison, converted into an urban farm "where the local community can learn and grow together", according to



Head of farmers at Citizen Farm Darren Ho poses in front of an urban farm in Singapore on 20 June 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

the project website.

Citizen Farm produces up to 100 kg of vegetables, 20 kg of herbs and 10-15 kg of mushrooms — enough to feed up to 500 people — a day.

It's tiny compared with demand for food in

the country of 5.5 million people, but it's a start, said Darren Ho, head of the Citizen Farm initiative.

"No system will replace imports, we are here to make us more food resilient," said Ho, adding that it was "up to the communi-

ty" to decide how self-sufficient it wants to be.

Government agencies are considering the company's urban farming concept for other parts of the city, including spaces around high-rise public housing.—Reuters ■

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV X-PRESS YAMUNA VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV X-PRESS YAMUNA VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.7.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 X-PRESS FEEDERS PTE LTD  
Phone No: 2301185

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV EVER ALLY VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ALLY VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.7.2017 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.

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SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINE  
Phone No: 2301185



Kendall Jenner (L) and Kylie Jenner (R) arrive for the 2015 ESPY Awards in Los Angeles, California on 15 July in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Kendall, Kylie Jenner withdraw music icon T-shirts after backlash

LOS ANGELES — Reality TV celebrities Kendall and Kylie Jenner apologized on Thursday after causing an uproar for selling pricey T-shirts featuring their faces over images of famed music groups and artists including The Doors, Pink Floyd, Ozzy Osbourne and slain rappers Tupac Shakur and Notorious B.I.G.

In the second recent marketing misstep involving members of the Kardashian family, Kendall and Kylie Jenner said they had withdrawn their \$125 T-shirt line from sale a day after it was launched.

“These designs were not well thought out and we deeply apologize to anyone that has been upset and/or offended, especially to the families of the artists,” the

Jenner sisters said in a statement. “We are huge fans of their music and it was not our intention to disrespect these cultural icons in anyway,” they added.

The move followed outrage from relatives of some of the artists, and cease and desist letters from other musicians over unauthorized use of the images.

“Girls, you haven’t earned the right to put your face with musical icons. Stick to what you know ... lip gloss,” Sharon Osbourne, the wife of Black Sabbath frontman Ozzy Osbourne, wrote on Twitter. Violetta Wallace, the mother of Notorious B.I.G, accused the sisters of exploitation and said no one had contacted the rapper’s estate for permission.

“This is disrespectful, dis-

gusting, and exploitation at its worst!!!” Wallace said in an Instagram post. Notorious B.I.G, also known as Biggie Smalls or Christopher Wallace, was killed in a drive-by shooting in Los Angeles in 1997.

Kendall Jenner, 21, and Kylie Jenner, 19, are half-sisters of Kim Kardashian and appear in the “Keeping Up With the Kardashians” TV show. They are also both successful models in their own right with a large following on social media.

In April, Kendall Jenner was featured in new Pepsi commercial that the soft drinks company pulled after it prompted outrage and ridicule by critics who said it trivialized political and civil rights protests.—Reuters ■

## Adele says she may never go on tour again

LONDON — Singer Adele, whose “Hello” tour is coming to an end this weekend, hinted that she might never go on tour again.

The “Rolling in the Deep” hitmaker penned a heartfelt letter, which was displayed during her concert at Wembley Stadium in London on Wednesday, reported Variety.

“So this is it after 15 months on the road and 18 months of 25 we are at the end. We have taken this tour across UK plus Ireland, throughout Europe, all over America and I finally got to go to Australia and New Zealand too,” she wrote.

“Touring is a peculiar thing, it doesn’t suit me particularly well. I’m a real homebody and I get so much joy in the small things. Plus I’m dramatic and have a terrible history of touring.” Adele then hinted that this might be her last concert tour.

“I wanted my final shows to be in London because I don’t know if I’ll ever tour again and so I want my last time to be at home,” she continued, before concluding, “Thank you for coming, for all of your ridiculous love and kindness. I will remember all of this for the rest of my life. Love you. Good night for now.”—PTI ■

## Shahid and I make sure our daughter has her own space: Mira

MUMBAI — Shahid Kapoor’s wife Mira Rajput said she and the actor are making sure their daughter has her own space amid all the fanfare surrounding her famous parents.

Shahid and Mira married at a private ceremony in Gurgaon in 2015. The couple welcomed had a daughter, Misha, in August last year.

“(We will) make sure Misha has her own space and not feel the pressure of being in a certain way because there are people around her (referring to fans),” Mira said.

“I think she is growing to see her father work so hard. She will have to respect that and figure out how she is going to manoeuvre her way through that, and I will help her with

that,” she said.

Mira said childhood is an experience that all children should be allowed to go through the way they want.

“They should stay happy, they should have the freedom to do what they want. They should not feel that someone is getting into their space,” Mira said on the sidelines of the launch of noted nutritionist Pooja Makhija’s book, ‘Eat Delete Junior’.

She said Shahid has been showering all the love on their daughter and is even spoiling her.

“He loves her so much, I can’t explain it in words. Misha knows this as well and she uses that to her advantage.”

—PTI ■

## Spider-Man swings into Marvel Universe for latest film



Fans watch as stars from the movie arrive in Los Angeles, California, on 28 June 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Fans were crawling up the walls with excitement as the stars of “Spider-Man: Homecoming” swung into the wider Marvel Cinematic Universe series of films, which have dominated the global box office for years.

British actor Tom Holland, who plays the web-slinging hero, showed up at the premiere accompanied by an actor in full Spider-Man costume who was lying on the bonnet of a car and performing back flips for the crowd.

“I think for me I’ve realized the responsibility of being a role

model for young kids everywhere,” Holland told reporters, adding that the character’s motto that “with great power comes great responsibility”, resonated with him.

The film is the first time that Spider-Man, one of Disney-owned Marvel’s most popular characters, is the lead in a film set in the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Kevin Feige, the president of Marvel Studios, championed the cause of getting Spider-Man into the Disney-run sphere. “Now we have the first time Spi-

der-Man in the Marvel Universe where he belongs,” he stated at the premiere, adding “I sort of am still pinching myself. I can’t believe it. I can’t believe we’re premiering the movie tonight and I can’t wait for people to see it.” The film sees “Iron Man” actor Robert Downey Jr, another staple of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, who has featured in several of the series’ films, taking a co-starring role alongside Holland. The film is released in European cinemas on 5 July, and 7 July in the United States.—Reuters ■

## Thailand: Home to some of world's biggest crocodile farms

BANGKOK — Thailand is home to some of the world's biggest crocodile farms, where tourists can see the giant reptiles lounging in the hot sun, chomping on chicken, or swarming in emerald green pools.

Some 1.2 million crocodiles are kept on more than 1,000 farms in Thailand, according to figures from the Thai department of fisheries. Some are equipped with slaughterhouses and tanneries to produce luxury products.

Sri Ayuthaya Crocodile Farm is one of Thailand's biggest and has been operating for 35 years.

"We're an all-in-one farm, creating jobs for the

people, creating income for the country," said Wichian Rueangnet, the owner of Sri Ayuthaya, which has an estimated 150,000 crocodiles.

Sri Ayuthaya is registered with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), allowing it to legally export products made from the critically endangered Siamese freshwater crocodile, including to top buyer China.

"We do everything from raising crocodiles to slaughtering, tanning and exporting crocodile products," Wichian said.

Crocodile leather products include Birkin-style handbags,

which sell for up to 80,000 baht (\$2,356) each and crocodile leather suits, which fetch around 200,000 baht (\$5,885), Wichian said.

Crocodile meat is sold for as much as 300 baht per kg (2.2 lb). The bile and blood of the reptile, made into pills because they are believed to have health benefits, are worth 40,000 baht and 500 baht per kg, respectively.

The industry has been facing a setback as exports of Thai crocodile leather products fell more than 60 percent in 2016 to 13 million baht from 34 million baht in 2015, commerce ministry figures show. —Reuters ■



Newly-hatched crocodiles are seen at Sriracha Crocodile Farm in Chonburi province, Thailand, on 20 June 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS



A keeper feeds a white lion at Al Zawra zoo in Baghdad, Iraq, on 15 June 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Iraqi zoo gives rare glimpse of white lion

BAGHDAD — An Iraqi zoo showed off a rare white lion cub to mark the animal's first birthday this week, as officials revealed that they hoped to welcome another of the rare big cats in the coming weeks.

The male lion was born in Baghdad's Al Zawra zoo, the first to be born in the country. Officials said the lion's mother is pregnant again, and are hopeful that the new arrival will also be a white lion.

"We expect that another birth of a white lion or cub will occur from this mother and father themselves, as they bear the same genes which is whiteness", Seif Taufiq, a lion and tiger trainer at the zoo said.

"God willing, one hundred percent, it will give birth to a white lion or cub," he added.

White lions are a genetic mutation unique to the Timbavati and Kruger National Park areas of southern Africa

and became technically extinct for at least 12 years until being reintroduced to the wild in 2004.

There are believed to be fewer than 13 white lions left in the wild and only up to 300 in captivity, according to the Global White Lion Protection trust.

The zoo, whose animal population was decimated during the 2003 war, allows visitors to see the white lion for two hours a day. —Reuters ■

### Myanmar International

Programme Schedule

(1-7-2017 07:00am ~ 2-7-2017 07:00am) MST

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(1-7-2017, Saturday)

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One champion Aung La N Sang celebrates after winning the middleweight title at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon yesterday night. **PHOTO: MIN HTET**

## Aung La N Sang claims middleweight title in rematch with Vitaly Bigdash

AUNG La N Sang gave Vitaly Bigdash an early beating in today's "ONE Championship 56: Light of a Nation" headliner. That was all the Myanmar native needed. He rode the momentum of the early high all the way to the end and claimed the middleweight championship to send the crowd into frenzy.

The championship bout between Sang (20-10) and Bigdash (9-1), which served as the main event of the online pay-per-view

card at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon, Myanmar, was a rematch of an exciting matchup from ONE Championship 51 in January, which Bigdash won by unanimous decision.

The rematch didn't produce the same level of thrilling moments over five rounds, and the final outcome was a different one. Sang exacted some revenge with the unanimous decision to hand Bigdash his first career loss.

Sang had Bigdash in more



Aung La N Sang fights with Vitaly Bigdash during ONE Championship at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon yesterday night. **PHOTO: MIN HTET**

trouble in the rematch than any point in the first fight. He dropped the Russian with a massive strike early in the opening round and essentially kept Bigdash in a desperate defensive mode for the majority of the five-minute frame.

Bigdash showed inspiring durability and composure, and successfully got himself back in the fight as time wore on. Sang expended a lot of energy searching for the early stoppage, and despite being hurt badly, Bigdash

displayed superior conditioning to his opponent.

Sang never allowed Bigdash to run away with the fight, though, and despite giving up numerous takedowns in the latter portion of the contest, his early work ultimately made the difference. ONE Championship prioritizes damage and the threat of a stoppage higher than anything else in its scoring criteria, and while an argument can be made Bigdash's takedowns

would have given him the win under the unified rules, Sang was declared the victor under the given ruleset.

The crowd was jubilant following Sang's title win. He's engaged in 50 total minutes of fighting against Bigdash, with a trilogy likely on the horizon. That's no problem for Sang, though. "The Burmese Python" said he's willing to put his belt on the line against all comers. —MMA Junkie ■

## Myanmar defeats Hong Kong 2-1 in U-22 KBZ tourney

On the third day of the KBZ Challenge Cup 2017, the host Myanmar U-22 team beat the Hong Kong U-22 squad by a score of 2-1 in front of their home fans at Thuwanna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

Both teams selected their main players to start the match, which was played evenly throughout the first half.

Although Myanmar had chances to score, Myanmar strikers could not convert as Hong Kong's defenders cleared well. The first half ended with no goals scored. In the second half, Myanmar changed tactics and concentrated their efforts into offense. The Myanmar midfielder



Hong Kong U-22 goal keeper vied for football clearance in yesterday match with Myanmar U-22. **PHOTO: SOE NYUNT**

Maung Maung Lwin broke the scoreless tie with an impressive touch shot into the net at the 51-minute mark.

Now in the lead, Myanmar played with more confidence and scored a second goal at 61 minutes by striker Aung Thu.

With a comfortable lead, Myanmar changed to a defensive style as the Hong Kong team vied to equalise the score.

At 61 minutes, the Hong Kong team scored with a penalty

kick by TanTu Laung. Myanmar tightened its defence and the match finished with 2-1 result. In another match, the Japanese University Club defeated the Cambodia U-22 team by a score of 5-1. The Japanese team will face Myanmar for the tourney championship as both teams possess six marks in total. The final match between Myanmar and the Japanese University Club will be played on 2 July.—Shine Htet Lwin ■

## Wide-open Wimbledon lacks women's favourite

MANCHESTER, (England) — The absence of expectant mother Serena Williams and a failure by any of the other top women to produce the kind of dominance the American seven-times champion has consistently delivered makes this year's Wimbledon the most open in years.

As Williams takes time out to give birth to her first child, last year's losing finalist and world number one Angelique Kerber could be regarded as the favourite but the German has endured a poor season, and is lacking both confidence and form.

"It is pretty open, you see the results of the tournaments you just can't pick a winner because you never know what to expect, who is going to have the better week or two," world number nine Dominika Cibulk-

ova told Reuters.

"It is about who is going to be the most consistent, solid and have the luck," the Slovakian added. Such is the absence of a clear favourite, that the bookmaker's current choice, Petra Kvitova, would have to produce one of the most remarkable comebacks the sport has ever seen to claim her third Wimbledon title.

In December, her career was hanging by a thread after she was knifed during a break-in at her house in the Czech Republic, suffering serious tendon damage to her left hand.

The 27-year-old returned to action at the French Open last month and suffered a second round defeat on the Parisian clay, but the two-times Wimbledon champion, who triumphed in 2011 and 2014, clearly loves grasscourt tennis.—Reuters ■