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State Counsellor urges youth to develop love of reading

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi admires the bust of famous Myanmar poet Zaw Gyi during her visit to Universities' Central Library yesterday, where she noted the importance of libraries and encouraged young people to develop the habit of reading. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Fish placed into pond
in Rakhine State with
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Myanmar workers rescued

Migrants extorted, held against their will in Thailand

Over 100 Myanmar nationals were rescued this week after Thai authorities busted a human trafficking ring on the outskirts of Bangkok.

Members of the Thai-based migrant rights organisation Aid Alliance Committee (AAC), Labour Rights Promo-

tion Network-LRP were alerted on Tuesday about the ring after five victims managed to escape. That same evening, the AAC teamed up with the Thai Department of Special Investigation and went to a house in Mahachai — located approximately 45 kilometres southwest

of Bangkok — where the victims were reportedly being held.

There, they found 81 men and 38 women totalling 119 Myanmar workers who had had their passports confiscated by the brokers and were being forced to stay in the locked house with no access to exter-

nal communication.

“They took between Ks500,000 and Ks700,000 from each person. When [the workers] got here, [the culprits] asked for an additional 9,000 Thai baht [approximately Ks364,000].

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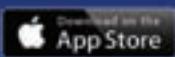
NATIONAL
Three suspects and 22
illegal guns seized in
Mandalay Region

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Manaung Island, city tolls discussed at Pyithu Hluttaw

Kyaw Thu Htet
(MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY)

Infrastructure improvements on Manaung Island and city toll collection in three Ayeyarwady Region townships were among the issues discussed at yesterday's meeting of the Pyithu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw. A total of six questions were answered, two reports confirmed and two bills decided and confirmed by the hluttaw yesterday.

Responding to a question by U Tin Nu (b) U Tin Nu Aung of Manaung constituency on hotel and travel sector development in Manaung, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung said instructions were made to coordinate with related ministries and Rakhine State government.

Manaung Airfield runway was extended in FY2017-2018 and airfield development works will continue from FY2018-2019 to FY2020-2021. A GSM mobile phone station is being installed in Ohwa Village, Manaung Township and a



Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin. **PHOTO: MNA**

proposal submitted to state government to construct two 2-MW solar power plants together with Manaung Public Company and FMI company. Furthermore, a two-storey building for Manaung Hospital was also constructed while a bank branch was opened to provide financial services.

For the hotel and travel sector as well as general development in Manaung Island, Rakhine State government is working together with Manaung Public



Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung. **PHOTO: MNA**

Company and FMI company since 2016. As a first step, a feasibility study was conducted to draw up a main programme and a proposal was submitted to the Myanmar Investment Commission. A master plan and a detailed plan will be submitted in January 2018, said the Union Minister.

Dr. U San Shwe Win of Yekyi constituency then raised a question on whether municipalities have the right to collect town entry tolls on roads constructed

by the construction department and whether collection of four separate road tolls on a single township road is in accord with prevailing laws. Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin said in the past city entry tolls were collected together with road usage tolls on roads constructed by the Ministry of Construction, but now instructions were sent to collect it separately in separate places. City entry tolls for entry into Athoke, Yekyi and Ngathaingchaung cities are collected by the arrangement of the state government and the relevant municipalities. City entry tolls are to be collected from vehicles that enter into a city, and since Patheingyi Road by-passed Yekyi and Ngathaingchaung cities, collection of city entry tolls on this road is not in accordance with the municipal law, said the Deputy Minister.

As the city entry toll collection work into Athoke, Yekyi and Ngathaingchaung was auctioned

by Ayeyarwady Region municipalities for FY 2017-2018, collection will be allowed for this FY and will not be permitted by the start of FY 2018-2019, explained the Deputy Minister. Questions on roads and bridges construction, maintenance and upgrading made by U Win Win of Minbu constituency, Dr. U Min Thein of YeU constituency and U Armoesi of Khaunglanpu constituency were then answered by Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin.

In yesterday's meeting the Hluttaw's agreement to accept the Pyithu Hluttaw electricity and power development committee report and Pyithu Hluttaw people's affairs management committee report was made, submission of an embankment bill sent with amendment by Amyotha Hluttaw and decision of the hluttaw on it and discussion and decision of the Hluttaw on the third amendment of the anti-corruption law approved and sent back without amendment by Amyotha Hluttaw were conducted. ■

Amyotha Hluttaw

Poaching of wildlife and spirulina algae discussed at Amyotha Hluttaw

Thura Zaw
(MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY)

Wildlife poaching and endangered algae were among the issues discussed at yesterday's meeting of the Amyotha Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw.

U Mahn Law Mung of Constituency 8 in Chin State asked about programmes to prevent the poaching of wildlife in the area of Mount Victoria in the Natma Mountain in Mindat and Kanpetlet Townships. Responding to the question, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win said three types of work was conducted in the Natma Mountain National Park area — park patrols for rule of law and for protecting and conserving the bio diverse ecological system, educational meetings with locals and promotion of tourism to develop the socio economic status of the local population.

To prevent poaching and logging in the area, a camp staffed by personnel from the national park, local police force and township forest department was set up at the foot of Mount Victoria this fiscal year to conduct necessary

prevention work. Depending upon the availability of funds and personnel, more camps will be set up, said the Union Minister.

U Win Aung of Sagaing State Constituency 3 then asked about plans to conserve and restore the declining production of Spirulina algae that is on the verge of becoming extinct in Twintaung Lake, one of the four natural lakes in an old volcano in Sagaing Region.

Spirulina, a blue-green algae that is rich in protein and widely used in traditional medicine, blooms naturally in lakes in Sagaing Region. Union Minister for Industry U Khin Maung Cho said Ministry of Industry was harvesting Spirulina algae from the four lakes and discovered water pH level dropping due to fresh water intrusion into Taungpyauk and Twintaung Lake. A team consisting of officials from Ministry of Industry, local and foreign experts conducted a survey and based on the findings, the Water Resources Utilisation Department in 2014 constructed a 1,000 ft concrete canal at the main crack line of an earthen canal for water pumped from Butalin River. This reduced the fresh water intrusion



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

into the lake, resulting in reduction of the lake water level from 72 inches to 46.2 inches by July 2015, restoring the favourable conditions for algae formation. The northern part of the lake is the main source of fresh water intrusion and Ministry of Industry had put in sand bags to prevent this.

Similarly, Yaekharr Lake, where Spirulina algae is harvested, saw fresh water intrusion during the heavy rains of 2016 and 2017 from freshwater dams of nearby villages and entry of Tilapia fish, resulting in the lowering of the pH level in the lake. Only after dikes were built to prevent fresh water intrusion

was the Spirulina algae harvesting restarted

The ministry is following the suggestions of experts to prevent the extinction of Spirulina algae and maintenance of the ecosystem around the area according to environmental conservation and protection laws, rules and environmental impact assessment methodologies as per the instruction of and guidance of the government and in coordination with relevant ministries and state government said the Union Minister.

Questions by U Bwe Khane of Chin State constituency 3, U Khin Myo Win of Taninthayi Region constituency 12 and Dr. San Maung Maung of Bago Region constituency 1 were then answered by Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win and Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Aung Myin Tun.

Afterward, the Myanmar Company bill was submitted to the hluttaw by Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win and Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee report on the bill was read by committee secretary Dr. Myat Nyana Soe.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker then announced the registration of hluttaw representative who want to discuss the bill.

Next, a report of the Amyotha Hluttaw committee on agriculture, livestock and aquaculture development was discussed by U Mya Min Swe of Magway Region constituency 9, U Kyaw Myint Oo of Mandalay Region constituency 10, U Kyaw Kyaw of Rakhine State constituency 4 and U Okka Min of Taninthayi Region constituency 8.

Committee member of Amyotha Hluttaw committee on agriculture, livestock and aquaculture development U Khin Win of Magway Region constituency 2 then tabled a motion for the hluttaw to accept the report and the hluttaw announced the acceptance of the report.

Also during yesterday's meeting, a new Tatmadaw Amyotha Hluttaw representative, Brig-Gen. Tint Lwin, was sworn-in and signed-in by the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

The 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw 5th regular session 31st day meeting is scheduled to be held on 24 July. ■

State Counsellor visits Universities' Central Library

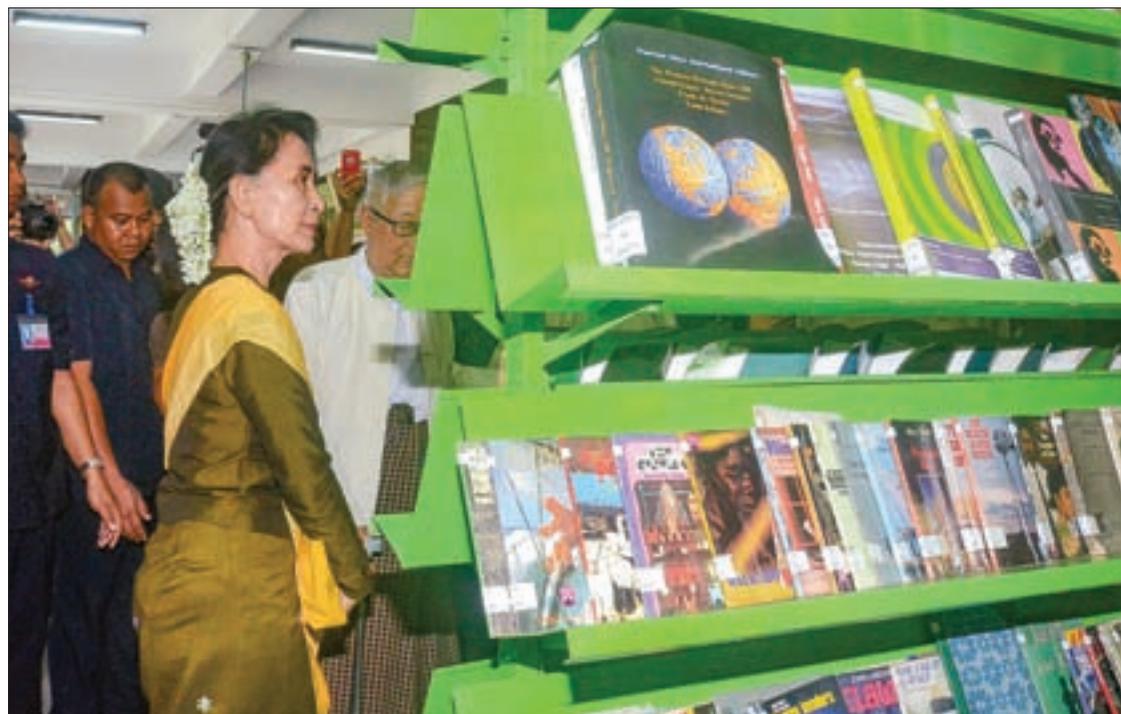
State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited the Universities' Central Library at the University of Yangon yesterday, calling for establishing a habit of going to the library for children.

At the meeting with librarians, she stressed the importance of the role of librarians to cultivate the reading habit for children, urging them to encourage children to come to libraries.

"I would like to claim that the world would be a very narrow place for a man without the habit of reading. It would be a life devoid of meaning for him. This is why children need to develop reading habits. Going to libraries and literacy must be encouraged," said the State Counsellor.

She also praised a librarian as a dignified profession and one that deserves respect.

"Nowadays, reading habits are weakening among people," said Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, "I am afraid that our children will become narrow-minded.



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi peruses the books at the Universities' Central Library in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

Instead, I would like them to love reading books and reading materials."

Searching Google for a fact on the internet is not sufficient to become a reader because it will give only the outlooks and

opinions of compilers of Google, she said.

The State Counsellor also pointed to the decreasing number of distinction winners in the subject of history in matriculation exam results, stressing the

importance of studying history, calling the subject "the foundation of politics" or "the study of our society, our world and humankind."

Other attendees included Union Minister for Education

Dr. Myo Thein Gyi and other Ministers of Yangon Region Cabinet, Higher Education Department Director General Dr. Thein Win, and Yangon University Rector Dr. Pho Kaung.

After the State Counsellor's comments, library science professional Dr. Sithu U Thaw Kaung said, "Reading habits should be cultivated starting from the primary school level."

The librarians of Yangon University Library and Universities' Central Library then discussed current initiatives.

The State Counsellor also inspected various kinds of books, the statue of Sayar Zaw Gyi exhibited in the library and posed for photos.

In 1927, the Colonial Governor Sir Harcourt Butler laid the foundation of the Yangon University Library, which was renamed Universities' Central Library in 1964. In 1987, it was reopened as two libraries—Yangon University Library and Universities' Central Library. —Myanmar News Agency ■

UN Special Rapporteur holds talks with ministers

Ms Yanghee Lee, the situation of UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar held talks separately with Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win and Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe yesterday. During the meetings, they discussed environmental conservation issues, transparency and cooperate social responsibility for natural resources extraction and public health care issues.

Before the meetings with Union ministers, she also met with Thura U Shwe Mann, Chairman of the Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission.

At the meeting, the chairman said he hopes the UN sees that the government and other humanitarian organisations are putting the wellbeing of the nation and its citizens first. He also said the commission is helping the peace process and development of the nation in hand with the UN. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Ms Yanghee Lee holds talks with Thura U Shwe Mann. PHOTO: MNA

Vice President: Myanmar in top 100 business index by 2020

By Ko Moe

Vice President U Myint Swe said he wants Myanmar to make the list of the top 100 countries on the World Bank's Doing Business Index in the next three years.

U Myint Swe said that the country needs to work harder to elevate itself from its current No. 170 position on the index and up to the top 100 so that more foreign investment will flow into the country.

The Vice President made the statement in his speech at the Myanmar Private Sector Development Committee and Myanmar Entrepreneurs Regular Meeting held at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) yesterday.

A nation's ranking on the index is based on the average of 10 sub-indices: (1) Starting a business; (2) Dealing with construction permits; (3) Getting Electricity; (4) Registering property; (5) Getting Credit; (6) Protecting Investors; (7) Paying Taxes; (8) Trading across borders; (9) Enforcing contracts; and (10) Resolving insolvency.



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the meeting with business men and entrepreneurs in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

Since Myanmar's main industry is agriculture, the government is working to elevate agricultural products as high-end commodities and to sell them on the international market. U Kyaw Win, Union Minister for Planning and Finance, said they will provide the necessary loans and technologies to farmers.

Other topics discussed at the meeting include fish farming, the fruit and vegetable industry, sugar cane production, plastic production and economic development in Bago Region and Shan State.

U Htay Myint, Chairman

of the Myanmar Fishery Federation, requested that the government help local fish farming businesses to network with international fish farming businesses.

The plastic industry is predicted for rapid development due to its cheap production cost. Products from Myanmar have to pass the Thai Industrial Standard (TIS) before they are imported into Thailand. U Thein Han, Vice-Chairman of the Myanmar Plastic Industries Association, requested the government to work on issuing a Myanmar Industrial Standard (MIS) to help regulate exports as well as imports. ■

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File photo shows the aerial view of downtown in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Application deadline for Dagon Seikkan Township apartments extended to 31st July

The Urban and Housing Development Department extended its application submission deadline to 31 July, according to a report in the Myawady

Daily yesterday. About 900 apartments in Dagon Seikkan Township including the Yuzana housing project, Kanaung housing and Shwe Lin Ban

housing from Hlinethaya township will go on sale in August. The apartments will cost between Ks9.8 million and Ks13.5 million. —GNLM ■

Training aims to protect turtles from extinction

THE Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS-Myanmar) is providing turtle care training workshops to help protect endangered turtle species, according to a report in Wednesday's Myawady Daily.

Turtle care will be taught by staff from the Turtle Survival Alliance as well as civil society

representatives from conservation project areas.

Daw Kalyar, director of Turtle Survival Alliance (Myanmar Programme), said veterinarians and staff from Yangon Zoological Garden and Hlawga Wildlife Park attended turtle care workshops on Monday. The courses

cover turtle first aid, including how to relieve turtles suffering from dehydration. Trafficking is a major threat to endangered turtles. Often, turtles recovered from trafficking operations require a period of rehabilitation before being released back into the wild. —GNLM ■

Parks and playgrounds to be included in Hlinethaya industrial zone housing development

Yangon region government will build recreational facilities in the Hlinethaya industrial zone residential area, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

A housing development within Hlinethaya industrial zone, which is part of the larger Shwe Lin Ban industrial zone,

will also include parks and playgrounds for workers and their families. Factory proprietors are funding the recreational facilities.

The residential section will include 18 60-unit apartment buildings. The project was started in December 2015. Construction is 90 percent complete. The

government rented the land for Ks 500,000 per acre to factory proprietors under a 60-year deal. The project is scheduled to finish at the end of this month.

Apartments from Shwe Lin Ban industrial zone real estate cost between Ks6.2 million and Ks 9.0 million depending on the apartment type. — GNLM ■

Urban wholesale markets to be renovated

ARRANGEMENTS are being made to upgrade existing wholesale markets, according to a programme of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) outlined in 19th July edition of the Myawady

Daily.

The UMFCCI has been charged with drafting a new policy for the wholesale market committees.

The plan chiefly focuses on wholesale markets in Yangon, Mandalay and Muse, said an

official of the UMFCCI.

The market upgrades will improve pricing, product quality and contract signing. International countries systematically handle those matters through commercial trade centres. —GNLM ■

Thai state-owned bus line to establish new Myanmar routes

TRANSPORT Co. International, a Thai state-owned enterprise which is one of that nation's largest bus operators, announced plans on 19th July edition of the Myawady Daily newspaper to establish routes to Myanmar and India.

"The project is part of the company's plan to extend routes to ASEAN tourism destinations. This project is aimed particularly at Myanmar, which is currently exerting effort to develop the tourism sector," said Mr. Jirasak Yaowatchasakui, managing director of Transport Co International.

Transport Co. International plans to connect Thailand with Myanmar and India through Mae Sot Township, Myawady Town and Moreh Town in the Indian border.

The company also plans to establish trips to Viet Nam. Currently, Transport Co. International is running 15 trips to neighbouring countries. — GNLM ■

Dengue awareness campaign to be held at Chaungtha beach

A dengue awareness event is scheduled on 22 July on Chaungtha beach in Patheingyi Township, Ayeyawady Region, according to a report on 19th July Myawady Daily newspaper.

The awareness programme will be hosted by the Myanmar Ornamental Fish Entrepreneurs Association (MOFEA) and will disburse three types of fish – goldfish, killifish and guppies – which eat mosquitoes and larvae.

The association will also introduce these fish species into ditches and ponds near the beach. Dengue fever is prevalent in Ayeyawady Region during the rainy season. —GNLM ■

Yangon Region High Court.
PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR



Today's Yangon

By Than Htike

YANGON'S Mahabandoola Park Street is always crowded with people including governmental staff and foreign travellers even in the wet season. The street is also busy with public transport buses and cabs. Bus stop is situated in the opposite side of the City Hall near water fountains of north part of the Mahabandoola Park. People around the City Hall sometimes hear the sound of a bell ringing with slow regular strokes from Sule, the golden pagoda located in the heart of downtown. The commercial Yangon has numerous ancient structures, comprising the oldest Immanuel Baptist Church and Yangon Region High Court in the central Yangon. This area is famous among international tourists with very old significant objects.

Several cars and taxis have been found on both sides of the

Mahabandoola Road while the road between the Yangon Region High Court and the park hosts several food stalls with strollers. The public park is flocked with groups of visitors even in weekdays. The park's notable feature is the Independence Monument, one of tourist attractions, placed in the center of the park. It is an obelisk with a height of 46 meters which is surrounded by five smaller pillars of 9 meters. It commemorates the independence of Myanmar from the British in 1948. Foreigners in the park observe the background history of the monument from their tour guides who also explain about the city's heritage buildings around the park while a group of French people were talking each other about the hawkers outside the park who prepare traditional food to sell especially visitors at the movement.

The street in front of the High Court is the best place for vendors who mostly sell law-related books and different kinds of contracts on platforms on both sides of the street. It is difficult to walk along platforms on downtown roads because of street sellers. This is a main barrier for general public who always have to walk on car road instead of on platforms.

Owners of printing and copying shops opened in front of Yangon Region High Court located between Pansodan Street and Mahabandoola Park Street are operating their business without permission from the authorities.

From writer's point of view, to make the city more workable, it is necessary to remove street sellers on busy downtown roads which needs wide and clean footpaths for public safety.

*(Translated by
KhaingThandaLwin)*



Immanuel Baptist Church (right) seen on the Mahabandoola Park Street, in Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR



Tourists and local people seen at Mahabandoola Park in Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR

VP U Henry Van Thio meets with UNSG Special Envoy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Water

Myanmar Vice President U Henry Van Thio met with the United Nations Secretary General's Envoy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Water Dr. Han Seung-Soo at Myanmar's Mission office at the UN in New York yesterday.

The meeting focused on the UN's Special Thematic Session on Water and Disasters program and Myanmar's policy role around water resources and natural disasters in preparation for the Third Asia-Pacific Water Conference scheduled for December in Myanmar.

Afterward, the Vice Presi-

dent and his delegation visited to the residence of Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations and met with Myanmar mission office staff and their families. Earlier in the day, the Vice President, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye, Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations U Hau Do Suan and Myanmar delegation visited the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, which are historical sites of national immigration in New York.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Vice President U Henry Van Thio meets with UN Envoy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Water Dr. Han Seung-Soo at the Myanmar's Mission office in New York. PHOTO: MNA

Tube-wells handover in Nay Pyi Taw's maternity hospital



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than inspects the new water tank at the Maternity Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

SPEAKER of Amyotha Hluttaw, Mahn Win Khaing Than, spoke at a ceremony for handing over a water hand pump to a Maternity Hospital in Ottarathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

He said the government donated the tube-wells with the intention of promoting the health and education sector. The majority of people who come to the hospital are ordinary working class people and they are relying more and more on the hospital since it could provide them with much needed medicine. The Speaker said he is elated that the water

facilities will provide the necessary water supply for the hospital and its patients.

Afterwards, the Speaker and Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe signed records for the handover of the tube-wells. The Union Minister presented a commemoration certificate to the Speaker.

This was followed by the Executive Hospital Supervisor Deputy Administrator Dr. Yin Thandar Lwin and Head of the Hospital Dr. Khin Pyone Kyi presenting commemoration certificates to the donors of the tube-wells and those who helped

in the process.

The Speaker and Union Minister then inspected the water supply facilities including water tank and water pump donated by the Office of the Amyotha Hluttaw, the water tank and water pump were donated by Chairman of Soe Electrical Foundation U Soe Tint and his family. The Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation helped in digging the site and assembling the water system to the hospital.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Local police in Rakhine to increase traffic enforcement

LOCAL police in Rakhine State are organizing road safety workshops, surprise vehicle inspections and traffic enforcement actions in Maungtaw District to reduce traffic accidents in Maungtaw and Buthidaung townships, according to Police Lt. Col. Nyan Win Oo.

"Trucks, cars, motorcycles

and shoppers which enter the downtown areas of Maungtaw District are increasing day by day," said Police Lt-Col Nyan Win Oo. Police will check vehicle registrations and drivers' licenses and enforce motorcycle helmet requirements in Maungtaw, he said. —Myint Maung Soe/ Aung Kyaw Oo ■

Myanmar workers rescued

FROM PAGE-1

It's been two months since they arrived here and they still haven't been given any work," Ye Min, an AAC member, told 7Day. Another AAC member, Khaing Kyi, said: "[The police] have told us that they'll help them get back their passports. Thai authorities are currently conducting an investigation. They've said that they won't

arrest the workers, and will help them retrieve their passports and find work." The workers told authorities that there were two brokers — one Thai and one Myanmar. Thai police have the Myanmar broker in custody, and are currently on the hunt for the Thai national. Both will be tried under human trafficking charges.—GNLM and Soe Win ■

Tatmadaw True News Information Team, Ministry of Information hold talks

WITH a view to the development of Media Sector, discussion between Tatmadaw True News Information Team and the Ministry of Information's media relations team took place yesterday, at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw.

The meeting was led by Union Minister of Information Dr. Pe Myint, Chairman of Tatmadaw True News Information Team Major-General Soe Naing Oo and Ministry of Information Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung. At the meeting, matters of mutual understanding and trust-building among the government, the Tatmadaw and the media were discussed. The officials also discussed the timeliness of news releases and the development of the media sector. New negotiations with media



The two teams from the Tatmadaw and Ministry for Information discuss about the media sector in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

associations, including Myanmar Press Council, in cooperation with the Tatmadaw True News Information Team and the Min-

istry of Information's media relations team will be announced on 27 July.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Never lose interest just after the event ends!

By Khin Maung Oo

THE 70th anniversary of Martyrs' Day, 2017 has just come to an end. The whole populace from all age groups mournfully remembered the assassination of our national leader and architect of Myanmar's Independence Bogyoke Aung San and his colleagues. It was a gloomy and disgraceful event in Myanmar history. Generally, the deceased will disappear from the memories of the bereaved, as time goes by. This unforgettable day will always highlight remarkably the contradictions that we have to inevitably encounter —gratitude and ingratitude, sacrifice and ultra-opportunism, loyalty and betrayal, loving-kindness and hatred, wholesome deeds and unwholesome ones, liberation and dependency.

Except for certain periods of time,

Martyrs' Day had been held in previous years with a view for our future generations to develop the spirit of General Aung San and his admirable qualities by successive governments. Other contemporary leaders themselves unanimously recognized Bogyoke's qualifications. They all believed that any country full of youths endowed with Bogyoke's spirit of martyrdom would develop rapidly. Who will deny if we claim that every individual wants to be a Bogyoke Aung San? Why was such a desire conceived in our minds? It is none other than their wish to receive people's unique affection and their admiration for Bogyoke's straightforwardness and incomparable abilities to achieve the Independence the whole nation expected for a century or so. Even notorious villains might have admitted that they had emulated our

great leader's life and his qualifications. But, something or someone might have blackened them, changing their lives.

These days, Bogyoke's historic speeches occupied our dailies and periodicals, with social web pages included. His speeches are still touching our hearts and giving us courage and will power. His words of courage and moral strength will certainly linger in our ears for a long time. What we must strive to accomplish is for his words to remain in the hearts of the younger generations so that they will be ready to shoulder the heavy burdens of national development. Undeniably, youths must one day substitute our leaders and dying breeds of statesmen. Along with our elected government, we are all responsible to educate and train the youths of today so that they would become good and loyal citizens of Myanmar. Rome

cannot be built up in one day, but it can be destroyed in a moment.

Above all, we firmly believe that one of the most difficult tasks is to uplift the morality of our people. It will take time to do so. Only if we can make the spirit of martyrdom develop in youths starting from their childhood, will our nation be able to stand tall as a developed and modern Federal Democratic Union forever within the family of nations.

Briefly, it is of great importance for us not to lose interest in cultivating the spirit of Bogyoke Aung San in our youths after all the Martyr's Day official ceremonies have ended. Let us work hand in hand with the government's strategy for Youth Development by keeping in our minds a clear vision of the future that we all desire and aspire. ■

Foreign Direct Investment

By Kyaw Kyaw Hlaing (SMART)

FDI is desired by most of the countries as it can help in boosting the economic development of the country. Therefore almost every country tries to attract the foreign investment by offering the incentive such as tax incentive, tax grace period and etc. Our neighbouring country, India had amended the Foreign Direct Investment Law in 2014. Foreigner's limited shares were relaxed increasing from 26% to 49% in the insurance companies. Relaxations were made in 25 sectors of nation's economy. According to the international survey made in 2013 on FDI entering the countries, India was known to stand at 14, however in 2014 after amending the FDI Law India was promoted in standing from 14 to 9. The Financial Times internationally famous for its content on financial markets of the world stated that India surpassed China and America in 2015 in the respect of FDI coming into the country.

According to a source of a research of comparative study on per capita income of the countries, Singapore stands at 9th position in the world, with its per capita income being US\$ 52960. US\$ 50 billion of FDI rolled into Singapore in 2016. (It is 8 times that of our country) However it was US\$65 billion in 2015. Why it plummeted in 2016 was due to the 13% global decline in foreign investment.

The following table shows the FDI entering some Asian countries in 2016, Ease of Doing Business (EDB) and population.

Table (1)

Country	FDI US\$ in Bln	EDB Ease of Doing Business	Population in Million
Singapore	50.0	1	5.7
Indonesia	28.9	109	263
Vietnam	15.8	90	95
Malaysia	13.2	18	31
Thailand	11.2	9	68
Myanmar	6.8	167	54

Singapore has been the richest country of Asian countries and has the highest FDI. Why it has the greatest amount of FDI? There are many causes and the most important one is EDB. World Bank issues yearly announcement on the international grade in EDB basing on 10 criteria. The smaller the number is the better the Ease of Doing Business is. Singapore had been able to top the table from 2006 to 2016. However it had to give up its No. 1 position in 2017 and downgraded to No.2 position. We can take two lessons from this happening.

First lesson: Actually EDB in Singapore was not declining. New Zealand surpassed Singapore and got the top place by doing more relaxations and changes in economic policy.

Second lesson: Every country is now competing to get more FDI by relaxing rules and regulations as much as possible. If Myanmar doesn't do the proper policy relaxations and changes, EDB index will certainly be downgraded. Myanmar EDB was started to be included in World Bank EDB survey or assessment in 2014. In 2014 Myanmar's EDB index is 180 and a little bit up to 177 in 2015. It continued to rise up to 167 in 2016, but another dip occurred in 2017 with index 170.

The following Table 2 indicates the relationship between EDB and FDI index.

Table (2)

	2014	2015	2016	2017
EDB Ease of Doing Business	184	177	167	170
FDI US\$ Billion	4.1	8.01	9.48	6.8

The criteria used by World Bank in determining the Ease of Doing Business

1. Time, expense and required investment in registering a company.

In Canada it needs a piece of paper and takes only 5 days to register a start-up company.

According to the surveyed assessment in Chad with index 182 out of 185 countries it needs 9 steps and 62 days to finish a registration of a country.

2. Time and steps to undertake required to acquire a permit to construct the buildings such as factories and ware-house.
3. Time, volume of works and expense to get a regular and full-voltage electricity supply.
4. Time, volume of works and expense required to get permit regarding land acquirement and land use.
5. Easiness to get the loan from bank and to work with the banks.
6. Protection of the foreign investments.
7. Clear and easy system in paying the tax.
8. Time and paper works to get permit for import and export.
9. Reliability of the contracts.
10. Easiness to liquidate a company

Every country in the world are now trying to relax their rules and regulations of their economic policy. Poland had the index 76 in 2009 and after some considerable relaxations and changes in policy they came up to 45 in 2014 and again 24 in 2017. FDI entering Poland in 2009 is US\$ 9 billion that increased to 14.3 billion in 2014. Nowadays, per capita income of Poland is US\$26,003.

Our country, Myanmar is now at the lowest level in Ease of Doing Business. In other words it is too difficult to start a business in Myanmar. It is to be noted that according to 2017 EDB level list issued by World Bank, Myanmar is at 170 and the neighbouring country, Thailand stands at 46 and an emerging economic potential Vietnam is at 82. Myanmar government and its ministries have to cooperate for better EDB for start-up companies. Ministries should prioritize the people's benefit rather than the interests of the ministries. Ministries should relax their tight policy to attract more FDI that can lead to better socioeconomic condition of the people.

(Translated by Khin Maung Win)

Fish placed into pond in Rakhine state with ceremony



Officials from Rakhine State Fisheries Department release fishes into pond in Maungtaw. PHOTO: MNA

A fish pond was stocked with 3,000 carp in Maungtaw, Rakhine State by the Rakhine State Fisheries Department, according to a Myanmar News Agency report yesterday.

The local agency held a ceremony to establish Mawrawady fish pond, which is meant to be a food resource for local people.

The ceremony was attended by U Myint Khine, the administrator of Maungtaw township, U Tun Tin, the deputy director from the district fisheries department, U Thein Wah, head of the township agricultural

department and other government officials.

“A one-acre fish pond was dug in each of the five villages with state government funds,” said U Tun Tin, the deputy director from the district fishery department. “Our fishery department provided the technical assistance to dig the pond and also provide fishes.”

The fisheries department has already dug fish ponds in four villages including Khayemyine, Shwebaho, Mawrawady and Pharwutchaung

villages. Currently, the department is digging a fish pond in Aung Zeya village. The department will put Shwewah carp fish, Rohu fish, Tilapia fish into the ponds, he added.

Maungtaw is one of the best regions to breed the fresh water fish due to favorable weather conditions. Fish from Maungtaw region are exported to Bangladesh.

The Rakhine state government has plans for more fresh water fish ponds in other villages in the coming years depending on the budget.—MNA ■

Three suspects and 22 illegal guns seized in Mandalay Region

THREE suspects and 22 assault rifles were seized near the Kywe Tatsone toll gate on the Taunggyi-Meiktila road in Thazi Township, Mandalay Region on 19 July.

Acting on a tip, Myanmar security forces stopped and searched a two-door Toyota car heading to Mandalay from Loikaw, Kayah State near the Kywe Tatsone toll gate.

The officers discovered 20 MK-12 and two AK-47 assault rifles hidden among bags and a purse with Ks800,000.

Local police identified the driver as Nay Soe Min Htwe, also known as Ko Sai, 44, a resident of Mingalar ward, Loikaw. His passenger was identified as his wife, Mya Su Hnin, 46. Both were arrested.

Police have additionally arrested Maw Ya, also known as Kyaun Yan San, of Tarhan ward, Kalay Township, Sagaing Region on suspicion of asking them to transport the guns.—Khin Ko (Kyauk Dakhar) ■



Two suspects together with 22 assault rifles were seized in Thazi Township, Mandalay Region. PHOTO: MNA

U Maung Wai presents his Credentials to the King of Bhutan

U Maung Wai, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Kingdom of Bhutan, presented his Credentials to His Majesty King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan on 11 July 2017, in Thimphu.—Ministry of Foreign Affairs ■

U San Lwin appointed as Non-Resident Ambassador of Myanmar to the Holy See

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U San Lwin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Austria, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Holy See.—Ministry of Foreign Affairs ■

Suspects in Maung Na Ma Village murder caught

ON 18 July, security Forces in Buthidaung Township apprehended four people suspected of involvement in the murder of Abdhu Suwan in Maung Na Ma Village.

Abdhu Suwan was kidnapped and killed by fifteen masked people on 4 July. Security Forces apprehended Zaphaw Ulla, In-nus, Sawli Mulla and Nur Borshaw on suspicion of involvement in the murder. The investigation continues.—Myanmar News Agency ■

teen masked people on 4 July. Security Forces apprehended Zaphaw Ulla, In-nus, Sawli Mulla and Nur Borshaw on suspicion of involvement in the murder. The investigation continues.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Railway policy advisory project workshop held



Railway policy consulting projects workshop in progress. PHOTO: MNA

THE Korean government hosted a workshop to discuss railway modernization plans in Myanmar, at Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday.

Speeches and panel discussions covered various plans to develop a modern railway system in Myanmar. Former Korean Minister of Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs Mr. Kwon Do

Youp provided an opening address.

U Win Khant, the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Transport and Communication and Mr. Tae Young Lee Director General of Korea Export-Import Bank also delivered speeches.

The event was attended by other officials from both governments.—Myanmar News Agency ■

WORLD
BRIEFS

Russia's President Vladimir Putin sits next to US President Donald Trump during their bilateral meeting at the G20 summit in Hamburg, Germany on 7 July, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Trump and Putin did not have a secret G20 meeting — Kremlin

MOSCOW — The Kremlin said on Thursday that US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin did not have “a secret meeting” at the G20 summit earlier this month, but confirmed they did chat informally over dinner.

The Kremlin was responding to questions about a previously undisclosed conversation between Trump and Putin that caused alarm among some US politicians unhappy about Trump's handling of US-Russia relations.

Trump's interactions with the Russian leader at the summit in Germany were scrutinised

closely because of allegations that Moscow tried to meddle in the 2016 US presidential election to help Trump win the White House, something Russia denies.

When asked about the nature of the G20 dinner chat, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told a conference call with reporters: “There was no secret second meeting.”

The two men had chatted informally over dinner, said Peskov, and had discussed adoption.

Putin in 2012 approved a law that banned Americans from adopting Russian children in retaliation for a new US human rights law which he said was poi-

soning relations.

Peskov said there were no current plans for a new meeting between Trump and Putin, but there was a chance that such a meeting would occur “at some point.”

Russian news agencies earlier on Thursday had cited Peskov as saying it was “absolutely absurd” to describe the informal dinner conversation between Putin and Trump as secret or undisclosed.

“The use of a term like ‘undercover’ or ‘secret meeting’ raises eyebrows”, Peskov told state TV, according to the agencies.

“They had a bilateral meeting that had been officially agreed through diplomatic canals, then they repeatedly exchanged views and remarks on the sidelines. There were no undercover or secret meetings and to assert that there were is absolutely absurd,” Peskov was quoted as saying.

Trump, in a New York Times interview, said his conversation with Putin had lasted about 15 minutes and was mostly “pleasantries.”

Ian Bremmer, the president of political risk consultancy Eurasia Group, has said the meeting lasted about an hour.—Reuters ■

Anti-Maduro strike paralyzes swathes of Venezuela

CARACAS — Streets around Venezuela were deserted and barricaded on Thursday for a strike called by foes of President Nicolas Maduro to demand a presidential election and the abandonment of a new congress they fear would cement dictatorship.

Many businesses were also staying shut as the opposition sought a 24-hour national shutdown from 6 am to heighten pressure on the ruling Socialist Party.—Reuters ■

UK's Fox says important to steer US away from protectionism

GENEVA — Britain is looking at all bilateral tools for increasing trade ties with the United States, but it also wants to steer Washington from a trade policy that is too protectionist, British trade minister Liam Fox said on Thursday.

“It's very important that we keep the United States oriented towards an open free trading approach because it is the world's biggest economy and what happens there will affect everybody else,” Fox told an audience of diplomats and academics in Geneva.—Reuters ■

Syrian rebel ambush kills 28 members of gov't forces near Damascus — monitor

BEIRUT — The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that rebels had killed at least 28 members of Syrian government and allied forces east of the capital Damascus on Thursday.

The Britain-based war monitor said a large number of fighters, including officers, had been killed or injured as they tried to advance into the rebel-held enclave of Eastern Ghouta. It said the death toll was likely to rise.

The Syrian military was not immediately available for comment.—Reuters ■

Russia and US beginning strategic stability dialogue — diplomat

WASHINGTON— Russia and the United States are set to launch a dialogue on strategic stability involving both ministries in charge of foreign policy and other related agencies, a State Department official told TASS after a recent round of Russian-US consultations on the “irritants” in bilateral relations.

The 17 July round of talks in Washington aimed at eliminating various troublesome issues in bilateral ties was held

between Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov and US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Shannon.

After the meeting, the US State Department released a statement mentioning the talks on strategic stability and convening a new meeting of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) overseeing the implementation of the New Start Treaty. Moscow and Washington are “committed to holding

future New START Bilateral Consultative Commission and Strategic Stability Talks and will exchange scheduling proposals in the near future,” US State Department Spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement.

Ryabkov and Shannon “will exchange scheduling proposals in the near future,” the State Department official noted.

“The United States and Russia continue to implement the New START Treaty in a pragmatic manner,” he said.

“The Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) is the existing mechanism for implementation of New START. The BCC normally meets twice a year. The Thirteenth Session of the BCC under the United States-Russia New START Treaty was held in Geneva from 29 March to 11 April. The US and Russian delegations continued the discussion of practical issues related to the implementation of the Treaty.”—Reuters ■

After Mosul, Islamic State digs in for guerrilla warfare

MOSUL — Islamic State militants began reinventing themselves months before US-backed Iraqi forces ended their three-year reign of terror in Mosul, putting aside the dream of a modern-day caliphate and preparing the ground for a different fight.

Intelligence and local officials said that, a few months ago, they noticed a growing stream of commanders and fighters flowing out of the city to the Hamrin mountains in northeast Iraq which offer hideouts and access to four Iraqi provinces.

Some were intercepted but many evaded security forces and began setting up bases for their new operations.

What comes next may be a more complex and daunting challenge for Iraqi security forces once they finish celebrating a hard-won victory in Mosul, the militants' biggest stronghold.

Intelligence and security officials are bracing for the kind of devastating insurgency al Qaeda



Members of the Iraqi Army's 9th Armoured Division are photographed with an Islamic State flag, claimed after fighting with Islamic State militants in western Mosul, Iraq on 17 June, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

waged following the 2003 US-led invasion, pushing Iraq into a sectarian civil war which peaked

in 2006-2007. "They are digging in. They have easy access to the capital,"

Lahur Talabany, a top Kurdish counter-terrorism official, told Reuters. As part of the US-led

coalition, he is at the forefront of efforts to eliminate Islamic State.

"I believe we have tougher days coming."

Some Iraqi Islamic State fighters have roots dating back to al Qaeda's campaign of car and suicide bombs that exploded by the dozens each day and succeeded in fueling a sectarian bloodbath in Iraq, a major oil producer and key US ally.

When a US-funded tribal initiative crushed al-Qaeda, the hardcore regrouped in the desert between Iraq and Syria. They reappeared with a new jihadist brand that took the world by surprise: Islamic State.

Shortly after its lightning sweep through Mosul, the group outdid al Qaeda's brutality, carrying out mass beheadings and executions as it imposed its ultra-hardline ideology.

Unlike al-Qaeda, it seized a third of Iraqi territory, gaining knowledge of land that could come in handy as it hits back at Iraqi security forces.—Reuters ■

Iraq's Kurds, seeking independence, call vote hoping to ease row

ERBIL, (Iraq) — The president of Iraq's autonomous region of Kurdistan has called a parliamentary and presidential election for November which could help ease a long-running political row as the Kurds push for independence from Baghdad.

The elections will follow an independence referendum set for 25 September, a move that will strain Iraq's frayed federal unity and annoy neighbours Syria, Turkey and Iran, who also have sizable Kurdish populations.

The political developments take place as Iraqi government forces push back Islamic State militants from territory in northern Iraq, a campaign in which Kurdish peshmerga forces have played a vital role.

The Kurdistan region last held a presidential election in 2009 and a parliamentary election in 2013.

President Masoud Barzani won the 2009 poll but has said he will not stand again.

His term of office expired in 2013 and has been extended twice, during which time Kurdistan has suffered bouts of unrest and political disarray. The

parliament has not met since October 2015.

An aide to Barzani said the election was set for 1 November.

"All concerned parties are committed to do the necessary work and will support and co-ordinate with the Kurdistan Higher Independent Election Commission and Referendum to implement this decree," Erbil-based Rudaw TV quoted a decree as saying.

Following the 2013 parliamentary election, Barzani formed a broad-based government led by his Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) with the Gorran (Change) movement holding a number of posts, including the parliamentary speaker.

In an escalating political crisis, four Gorran ministers were removed from the cabinet in October 2015 and the speaker of parliament was barred from entering the capital.

The KDP accused Gorran, which had demanded a reduction of Barzani's powers, of orchestrating violent protests in which party offices were attacked.

The Kurdistan parliament

has not sat since. However, the KDP said this week it would drop its conditions for reconvening the parliament to help the independence referendum succeed, including allowing the speaker, Yousif Mohammed, to return.

Earlier this month, Barzani told Reuters there was no turning back on the bid to achieve an independent Kurdish state, but he would pursue it through dialogue with Baghdad and regional powers to avoid conflict.

Parties such as Gorran and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) all favor independence but not necessarily under the leadership of Barzani and the KDP.

Barzani has accused the Shi'ite Muslim-led Iraqi government, backed by Iran, of not sticking to a constitutional agreement of allowing the Kurds to have greater powers under a federal state set up after the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003.

About 5 million Kurds live in majority Arab Iraq, which has a population of more than 30 million. Most are in the north.—Reuters ■

Congo's Kabila and family worth millions, new report says

KINSHASA — Congo President Joseph Kabila and his family own stakes in more than 80 companies at home and abroad that are likely worth 10s of millions of dollars, a report by a US-based body said on Thursday.

The report by the Congo Research Group at New York University is based almost entirely on public records like land titles and incorporation documents. It is the most comprehensive mapping to date of Kabila and his family's fortune after two decades in charge of Africa's top copper producer.

Reuters was not immediately able to independently confirm the information in the report, which does not allege wrongdoing by Kabila. The president is barred by Democratic Republic of Congo's constitution from being involved in a professional activity but not from owning companies or making investments. "No one is barred from having assets because he is from the Kabila family," government spokesman Lambert Mende told Reuters.

"If someone thinks that (Kabila) committed an objectionable act related to those assets, (that person) can address

the justice system."

Before Kabila's father, Laurent-Desire, came to power in 1997, he and his family lived in exile in Tanzania, where, according to the report and other accounts, the family struggled financially.

Now, the Kabila family's holdings include over 70,000 hectares of farmland, a lucrative stake in Congo's largest mobile phone network and over 100 mining permits for diamonds and gold, the report said.

"A conservative reading of public documents suggests that their companies have had hundreds of millions of dollars in revenues since 2003, and that they own assets that are easily worth many tens of millions of dollars," the report said.

Kabila, who succeeded his assassinated father in 2001, refused to step down when his mandate expired last December, citing budgetary constraints and delays enrolling voters for an election to replace him.

Congo Research Group is a non-profit body directed by Jason Stearns, a former UN investigator in Congo and author of a well-known book about Congo's civil wars.—Reuters ■

Russia to offer MiG-35 planes at India's tender for light fighter jets

ZHUKOVSKY — Russia is ready to take part in India's tender for the supply of light fighter jets with its Mikoyan MiG-35 plane, Director of Russia's Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation Dmitry Shugayev told TASS on Wednesday.

"Principally, Russia is ready to participate in future aviation tenders in India. However, as of now, we do not have information on the opening of a tender and, correspondingly, on the plane's technical requirements set by the Indian side," he said.

The MiG-35 is Russia's most advanced 4++ generation multipurpose fighter jet developed on the basis of the serial-produced MiG-29K/KUB and MiG-29M/M2 combat aircraft.

The fighter jet features



MiG-35 plane. PHOTO: TASS

improved flight and technical characteristics, the most advanced onboard radio-electronic equipment and a wide arsenal of air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles. The plane can develop a speed of 2.23 Mach and its operational radius exceeds the range of

its predecessor MiG-29 by 50%. The flight tests of MiG-35 fighter aircraft began on 26 January and the plane's international presentation was held in the Moscow Region on the following day.

The United Aircraft Corporation announced in early February it had

signed a contract with Russia's Defence Ministry on the delivery of two such fighters in 2017-2018. According to a TASS source in the defence sector, a contract for more than 30 MiG-35 for the Defence Ministry may be signed in 2018.—Tass ■

EU, Britain end round of Brexit talks with little progress

BRUSSELS — EU and British negotiators found some common ground at the end of a first full round of Brexit talks but big differences remain over citizens' rights and uncertainty persists over the financial settlement and the Irish border.

At the end of four days of talks in Brussels, which focused on setting out positions on key issues, the

European Union's chief negotiator Michel Barnier said there was "a fundamental divergence" on how to protect the rights of EU citizens living in Britain and of Britons in the EU after Brexit.

He insisted that the European Court of Justice should guarantee citizens' rights after Brexit.

"Any reference to European rights imply their

oversight by the Court of Justice of the European Union," Barnier told a joint news conference with British Brexit Secretary David Davis.

He also called for more clarity on the British position on the financial settlement and on the Irish border.

Davis saw "progress" after talks and said the meetings in Brussels this

week provided "a lot to be positive about".

But he refused to confirm that Britain now accepts that it will end up making some kind of net payment to the EU on leaving.

"We're a country that recognises its international responsibilities and rights and that we will seek to exercise both in the future," he said.—Reuters ■

Gang leaders convicted in massive Italy "Mafia Capital" trial

ROME — Massimo Carminati and Salvatore Buzzi, leaders of a Mafia-style mob ring that plundered the city coffers of Rome, were convicted on Thursday at the end of one the biggest organised crime trials in the Italian capital.

Carminati, a one-time

member of Rome's notorious far-right Magliana Gang, was handed a 20-year sentence and Buzzi, a convicted murderer, was given 19 years.

The two were among 46 defendants in the so-called "Mafia Capital" trial that began in 2015 and which had become a

symbol of corruption in Rome.

Italian television broadcast the reading of the verdicts live.

Carminati, who lost an eye in a police shootout in the early 1980s, was accused of infiltrating Rome's city hall and getting his gang's hands on

lucrative public contracts, including for the running of centres housing immigrants.

The investigation laid bare systemic corruption in the city as politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen hooked up with mobsters to rig public tenders.—Reuters ■

Germany vows to defend firms doing business in Turkey

BERLIN — It is extremely difficult for German companies to make investments in Turkey under the current political climate in the country, German Economy Minister Brigitte Zypries said on Thursday.

"If respectable German companies are suddenly put on 'black lists' and branded as supporters of terrorism then this amounts to a climate that makes new business and investments in Turkey extremely difficult," Zypries said.

She added: "The German government and I would of course defend German companies from totally unjustifiable and incomprehensible accusations. This also applies above all to the employees of German companies."

Germany's BGA trade association said exports to Turkey would fall significantly should the government implement measures against Turkey over its arrest of a German human rights activist and a German-Turkish journalist.—Reuters ■

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India's BJP-backed candidate Kovind wins presidential election

NEW DELHI — Ram Nath Kovind, a low-caste politician backed by the ruling coalition, won India's presidential election on Thursday, tightening the governing alliance's hold on positions of power.

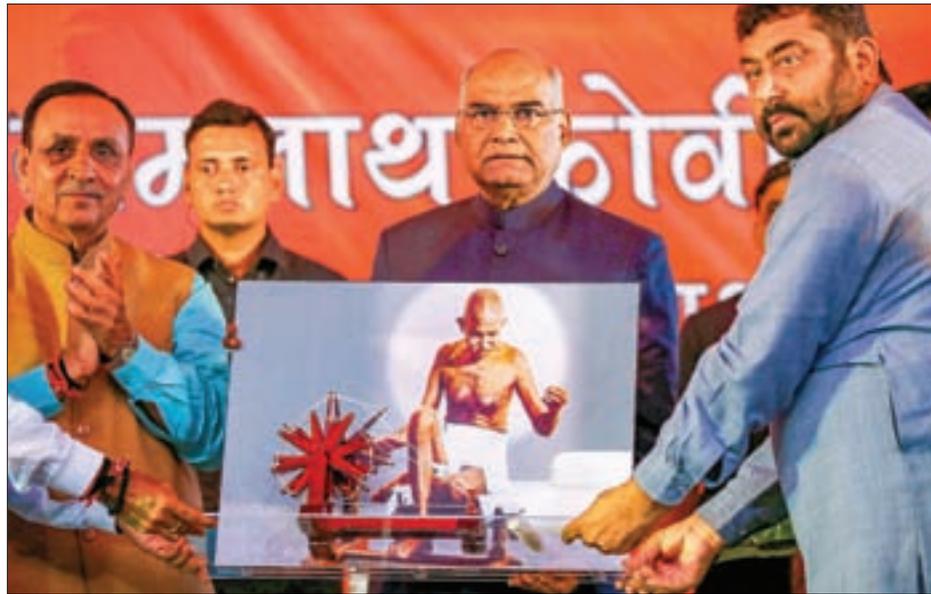
India's constitution provides a largely ceremonial role for the president, with the prime minister and his cabinet colleagues holding executive power.

But the president has a key role during political crises, such as when a general election is inconclusive, by deciding which party is in the best position to form a government.

Kovind, 71, gained an overwhelming majority to beat Meira Kumar, also a low-caste Dalit candidate, who was backed by the centrist Congress party.

Votes from 4,896 lawmakers in state assemblies and parliament were counted in parliament to elect the constitutional head.

"Kovind has secured a clear majority," said elec-



Ram Nath Kovind, nominated presidential candidate of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is felicitated with a memento during a welcoming ceremony as part of his nation-wide tour, in Ahmedabad, India on 15 July, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

tion officer Anoop Mishra. "I duly declare him as the president of India."

Kovind's ascent to the highest public office is the first for a leader reared in the powerful Hindu revivalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) or National Volunteers' Association, the ideological mentor of Hindu groups. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi himself was associated early in his career with the RSS, which has long propagated a vision of India that puts the country's majority Hindus first. Kovind's victory caps a series of top appointments by Modi, strengthening the grip of the Hindu right on public offices, such as governors, state chief ministers and the heads of universities.

Prior to his appointment Kovind said he was committed to upholding India's secular democratic constitution. "I respect the Indian constitution and no political interest can be above the rule enshrined in the rule book," Kovind, a lawyer and former governor of the eastern state of Bihar, told Reuters this month.—Reuters ■

Malaysia bans "Despacito" on state broadcaster for offensive lyrics

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia has banned the catchy summer dance song "Despacito" from state radio and television on Wednesday by Salleh Said Keruak, the communications and multimedia minister, but the song can still be played on private stations and online platforms. "As such, RTM will not be airing the song on any of its television or radio stations with immediate effect," the minister said in a statement to Reuters, adding that the decision followed complaints from the public.

"This decision applies only to RTM," he added. "All other TV and radio sta-

tions are guided by their own evaluation processes against the Communications and Multimedia Content Code." The women's wing of a Malaysian Islamist party, Amanah, had called for a ban over the song's "obscene lyrics".

"I see this as a serious matter as the song is being sung by young people without knowing the real meaning of the words," Amanah official Atriza Umar said in a statement. The song, first released in January in Spanish by Puerto Rican singer Luis Fonsi and rapper Daddy Yankee and then in a remixed version featuring Justin Bieber, has topped charts in 35 countries around the world and dominated radio. Its 4.6 billion streams on leading platforms make it the most successful Spanish-language pop song of all time.—Reuters ■

Philippine police arrest 43 foreigners for kidnap of Singapore woman

MANILA — Philippine police said on Thursday they had arrested 43 foreigners for kidnapping a Singaporean woman at a casino resort in the capital, highlighting security concerns that have scared high-stakes gamblers away from Manila. Police said the gang, including people from China and Southeast Asia, was believed to be a loan-shark syndicate targeting foreign high-rollers, with 11 similar cases reported since 2015. The Philippines is one of the fastest-growing casino hubs in Asia, after Macau and Singapore, with the opening of several resorts over the past two years. But security remains a major concern that has deterred big-spending gamblers from China, wary about kidnapping and extortion. The 48-year-old Singaporean woman was

losing heavily when she was approached and befriended by three men and a woman at the Solaire casino on 17 July who lent her money, police said. They later invited the woman to another casino but she was instead taken to a hotel where she was mistreated and video of her was taken which her captors showed to her family with a demand for \$180,000 for her release. National police chief Ronald dela Rosa said the woman was rescued the next day. Kidnapping complaints had been filed against two Malaysians and 41 Chinese nationals in connection with the case, de la Rosa said. Solaire, which is owned by Bloomerry Resorts Corp, said it did not tolerate loan sharks and was coordinating with and supporting authorities in the fight against crime.

"Solaire continues to

close safeguard all its patrons to ensure their safety from unscrupulous personalities and activities," it said in a statement.

Last month, a gunman who police said had gambling debts stormed Manila's Resorts World casino, and set a fire in which 37 people were killed. The kidnapping of the woman from Singapore would likely compound fears about safety in the Philippines, an analyst said. "This incident will make it even harder for the operators to entice the high-rollers to visit," said Shaun McCamley, a partner at Global Market Advisors based in Bangkok. The Philippines targets gross gaming revenue of 155 billion to 160 billion pesos (\$3.1 billion to \$3.2 billion) this year, up 4 per cent to 7 per cent from last year, data showed.—Reuters ■

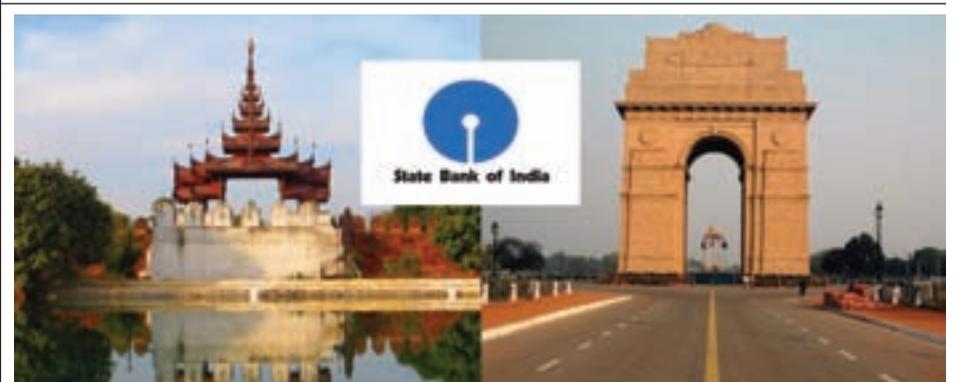
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(b) COMMODITIES & VOLUME	-	TEAK LOGS ABOUT (1212) TONS TEAK CONVERSION ABOUT(342)TONS HARD WOOD LOGS PYINKADO/IN/KANYIN/HNAW/THITYAR/ INGYIN/YEMANE/THINWIN/SAGAWA ABOUT (10156) TONS
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Ed Sheeran didn't quit Twitter over 'Game of Thrones'

LONDON—Singer Ed Sheeran insists he didn't quit Twitter because of the negative reaction to his "Game of Thrones" cameo and says it was just a coincidence.

The 26-year-old "Galway Girl" hitmaker says he isn't worried about what other people think of his role.

"Last I'll say on this. I came off Twitter Coz I was always intending to come off Twitter, had nothing to do with what people said about my game of thrones cameo, because I am in game of

thrones, why the hell would I worry what people thought about that. It's clearly awesome. Timing was just a coincidence, but believe what you want (sic)," reads a post on his Instagram.

This comes after the episode's director Jeremy Podeswa defended Sheeran's appearance. "I think Ed did a lovely job – he's a lovely actor and a lovely person. He was appropriate for the part because he needed to sing. —PTI ■



PHOTO: PTI

South Korea gives pop idol T O P suspended jail term for smoking weed

SEOUL—A South Korean court on Thursday handed K-pop sensation T O P a suspended 10-month jail sentence for drug use, after he pleaded guilty and sought leniency to avoid a prison term. The suspended term for the 29-year old, whose legal name is Choi Seung-hyun, followed his indictment without detention last month for using marijuana four times in October 2016 with a trainee singer at his home in the capital, Seoul.

The use of marijuana is illegal and considered a serious crime in South Korea, but the severity of punishment has eased from the past. "I admit guilt on all charges and deeply regret my action," Choi told reporters following the verdict, which he does not plan to appeal.

Before the verdict, the actor-singer had also offered a public apology for letting down his family and fans.

During investigation, the rapper denied some of the charges he faced but later pleaded guilty to all. Choi was also once taken to hospital after being found unconscious following an overdose of sedatives.

In 2011, G-Dragon, a fellow member of Choi's Big Bang group, also tested positive for marijuana, but was not formally prosecuted. At the time, he told South Korean authorities he had been offered what appeared to be a cigarette at a party in Japan, but had not realized he was being given marijuana, since he was unfamiliar with its distinctive smell.—Reuters ■



T O P, a member of South Korea's boy band Big Bang, leaves a court in Seoul, South Korea on 20 July, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Two new Harry Potter books to be released in October

LONDON — The Hogwarts universe is set to expand by an additional two new Harry Potter books, published in conjunction with a British Library event, in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the magical series.

The library exhibition titled, "A History of Magic," featuring the two books will be open from October 2017 to February 2018, British publishing house Bloomsbury announced on Tuesday.

Readers of "Harry Potter: A History of Magic – The Book of the Exhibition" will be able to explore the curriculum at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Potter's wizardry school, which includes



British author JK Rowling, creator of the Harry Potter series of books, poses during the launch of new online website Pottermore in London, England on 23 June, 2011. PHOTO: REUTERS

Herbology, Astronomy and Care of Magical Creatures. Mystical subjects includ-

ing unicorns, alchemy and ancient witchcraft will be explored in "Harry Potter – A Journey Through A History of Magic."

The books, both by the British Library, include unseen sketches and manuscript pages from author JK Rowling, magical illustrations from Jim Kay and artifacts from the archives at the library.

26 June marked 20 years since the release of "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone," the first of seven Potter books in a series that sold 450 million copies in 29 languages and sparked a \$7 billion movie franchise.—Reuters ■

Stan Lee honoured with handprint ceremony in Hollywood

LOS ANGELES — Popular comic book writer Stan Lee was honoured with a ceremony to imprint his hands and feet in front of the TLC Chinese Theatre.

The event was attended by Marvel head Kevin Feige, "Guardians of the Galaxy" director James Gunn, filmmaker

Kevin Smith, "Black Panther" star Chadwick Boseman, Star Trek's Nichelle Nichols and comic book artist Todd McFarlane, according to The Hollywood Reporter. "I thank you from the bottom from my heart, and I've always wondered about that expression," Lee said. "Why is

the bottom of your heart more important than the top of your heart? I thank you from my whole heart." For over seven decades, the 94-year-old legend has created some of the most iconic rosters of heroes and villains of the comic book page.—PTI ■

Floating cars motor past stately royal rowbarge on River Thames

HENLEY-ON-THAMES, England — Queen Elizabeth II's stately royal barge "Gloriana" found itself sharing the River Thames with some quirky amphibious motor cars.

As the rowbarge — an ornate, gold-leaf and crest-bedecked vessel powered by 18 rowers — oared its way down river like something from a Canaletto painting, a flotilla of small floating automobiles putted by in

the other direction.

The poles-apart meeting took place at the Thames Traditional Boat Festival in Fawley Meadows outside Henley-on-Thames in southern England. The annual festival also attracted clinker-built rowing boats, Edwardian steamboats, traditional slipper launches, wooden canoes and an armada of the "Little Ships" that braved the Channel in 1940 to rescue British and allied forces at Dunkirk.—Reuters ■

Shakespeare play accused of walking on the grave of England's Richard III

LONDON — A sold-out performance of Shakespeare's "Richard III" was set to go ahead on Wednesday despite attempts to stop the play taking place at the final resting place of the last English king to die in battle.

Richard, one of England's most controversial monarchs, was reburied at Leicester Cathedral in 2015 after his remains were discovered under a local authority car park some 530 years after he was slain at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485.

Shakespeare depicted him in his play as a cruel, sadistic, tyrannical hunchback responsible for one of the most notorious crimes in English history — the murder of his young nephews, "the Princes in the Tower".

His defenders believe his reputation as an enlightened king was unfairly smeared by Shakespeare's play which they say was a work of propaganda by the Tudor dynasty that ousted Richard from the throne.

Some 1,300 people have signed a petition to stop the production at the cathedral, saying it was wrong to perform it so

close to his tomb.

"The staging of Shakespeare's defamatory play beside the king's grave is not an appropriate or Christian act," said Philippa Langley, a historian who played a key role in recovering the dead king's remains in 2012.

However, David Monteith, the Dean of Leicester Cathedral defended the decision.

"The play will be seen again in this cathedral in a world where power continues to corrupt, where innocents are made victims and the reputation of the good is maligned," Monteith said in a statement.

Richard, who reigned for just 777 days, was the last of the Plantagenets, the line of English kings that originally descended from France.

Following the battle at Bosworth, his naked body was thrown on the back of a horse, taken to nearby Leicester and buried in a humble grave before his remains were

found in what experts described as one of the most significant archaeological finds in English history.—Reuters ■

Hualian Festival of Yi ethnic group celebrated in SW China's Yunnan



Tourists daub rice ash onto each other during the Hualian Festival in Qiubei County of southwest China's Yunnan Province on 18 July, 2017. The Hualian Festival is a traditional annual festival of the Yi ethnic group in Qiubei County where people express best wishes by daubing black rice ash on face to get good luck. PHOTO: XINHUA

Australian archaeological find rewrites human history

SYDNEY — Humans have been in Australia almost 20,000 years longer than previously proven, a finding that may prompt the rewriting of the earliest history of mankind, according to an article published Thursday in the scientific journal Nature.

The findings have implications beyond human history in Australia, by helping scientists estimate when humans first left Africa, research team

leader Chris Clarkson, an associate professor at the University of Queensland, told the Australian national broadcaster ABC radio.

Previously, researchers believed human settlement in Australia began 47,000 years ago. But the recent discovery of artifacts and sophisticated dating of sediment beneath a sandstone rock shelter in the Northern Territory show the Australian Aborigines' earliest ancestors

lived there at least 65,000 years ago.

"Previously we didn't have a good idea when people left Africa, only some sort of vague idea from genetics which suggested maybe greater than 50,000 years and less than 100,000 years ago," Clarkson explained.

"But because Australia sits at the end of this early migration route, we can now use this as a benchmark and we can use it to

say people must have left Africa earlier than this."

Around 11,000 human artifacts were excavated from the ancient campsite.

"The site contains the oldest ground-edge stone axe technology in the world, the oldest known seed-grinding tools in Australia, and evidence of finely made stone points which may have served as spear tips," Clarkson said in a press release.—Kyodo News ■

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(2 -7-2017 07:00am - 22-7-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News	10:26	Am	The Green Corner (Epi-13) Decorating Things
07:27	Am	Discovering Tribes: Zahau (Their Life and Customs)	10:36	Am	A Visit To Ye
07:49	Am	Safari World	10:56	Am	Dances of Myanmar (Pre Kayaw Traditional Dance)
08:03	Am	News	(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)-Thursday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm)-Today Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)		
08:26	Am	Ko Phoe Shan & His Craft	Prime Time		
08:42	Am	Myanmar Traditional Thatched Roofs In-Leaf	07:03	Pm	News
09:03	Am	News	07:27	Pm	Travelogue: To my dream city (Part-1)
09:26	Am	The Footprints Inheritance	07:51	Pm	Wet Markets in Yangon: Shwe Pa Dauk Fish Market
09:42	Am	The 110th Anniversary of Yangon Zoological Garden	08:03	Pm	News
09:53	Am	A Traditional Doctor	08:25	Pm	Myanmar National Poet And Literary Icon; Prolific Writer of Poems & Prose - Min Thu Wun (Ep-4) Political Life & Remembrance
10:03	Am	News	08:51	Pm	Beach Food Delivery
			(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm)-Today Repeat(09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)-Thursday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)		
(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)					

AFC U-23 qualifying to be continued today

Shine Htet Zaw

The second-day qualifying matches of the AFC 2018 U-23 will be held today, with the Myanmar U-22 national football squad to play against Brunei at 6 pm at Thuwanna Stadium.

Although Myanmar and Australia won earlier matches, both teams faced difficulties.

Myanmar attackers need more awareness than the previous matches, observers said, especially during today's decisive match.

If Myanmar wins against Brunei, Myanmar will have more chances to proceed to the next step of the 2018 qualifiers for the tournament that will be hosted in China.

Because Myanmar's striker Aung Kaung Man has



Myanmar U-22 players paying respect to fallen Martyrs during the match against Singapore. **PHOTO: SOE NYUNT**

been fined for careless clearance of the ball, he may not

be included in today's match. Australia will also play

Singapore at Thuwanna Stadium at 3 pm. ■

Chelsea keen to add to last season's success, says Kante

LONDON — Premier League champions Chelsea will fight on all fronts as they look to build on last season's success, midfielder N'Golo Kante said ahead of Saturday's pre-season friendly against FA Cup winners Arsenal in China.

The Frenchman was named Player of the Year after his stellar performances in 35 league appearances helped Chelsea seal their second title in three years and first under manager Antonio Conte, but Kante is hungry for more silverware.

"It was a very good season and I enjoyed it but we are starting a new season and we have to convince again," Kante told the club's website. (www.chelseafc.com)

"We are looking to do better and we know at a club like Chelsea a good season means to win titles. So we will try to win some titles. Win, win, win. We will win what we can win. We will fight for everything."

The London side lost to Arsenal in the FA Cup final but Kante has moved on from that

defeat and is focused on preparing for the next two meetings against the same opposition in Saturday's friendly and the Community Shield on 6 August.

"Arsenal played well, better than us and they deserved the victory. We have to take this game (in China) seriously because it will help us prepare well for the Community Shield, the first game of the season," Kante said.

Chelsea will also mark their return to the Champions League after the 2012

winners failed to qualify last season and Kante is excited to be making his debut in the tournament.

"I am looking forward to this competition," Kante added. "Until now, I've just been looking at it on TV. I'm happy to have this chance."

After the Arsenal match, the west London side will travel to Singapore to face German champions Bayern Munich on Tuesday and end their pre-season fixtures against Inter Milan on 29 July. —Reuters ■

Joined Man City to win silverware, says Walker

LONDON — England right back Kyle Walker has said he joined Manchester City from Tottenham Hotspur to win trophies, with the North London side sometimes lacking the edge to get over the line.

Mauricio Pochettino's Spurs have come close to clinching their first top division league title since 1961 but could only finish in the top three during the last two seasons. They are yet to win a major trophy since the League Cup triumph

in 2008.

"I am hoping with the world-class players we have here that we will go and lift a trophy, which is what I want to do in my career," Walker told the BBC.

"I was unfortunate at Tottenham. We made it so close in the last two seasons, it was just that sometimes we were unlucky. Sometimes we just didn't have that little bit of edge.

"I needed a new challenge. This would have been my ninth

season at Tottenham. Sometimes you need to come out of your comfort zone a little bit."

Walker, who was signed by City for 50 million pounds (\$64.92 million), according to British media reports, said he was excited to work with former Barcelona and Bayern Munich boss Pep Guardiola.

"The manager was a big thing for me (coming to City). I wanted to come and play under him," the 27-year-old added.

"He's worked with Dani

Alves and all the top players at Barcelona, plus (Philipp) Lahm at Bayern Munich, that was a big attraction for me."

Walker is set to face his former team mates on 29 July when City meet Spurs in a pre-season friendly in Nashville.

City, who finished third in the Premier League last season, visit newcomers Brighton and Hove Albion in the opening game of the new campaign on 12 August. —Reuters ■

Newcastle sign winger Murphy from Norwich City

LONDON — Newcastle United have signed England under-21 winger Jacob Murphy from Norwich City, the newly-promoted Premier League club said on Wednesday.

The 22-year-old scored 10 times in 41 appearances for Norwich City last season, including two goals against Newcastle in the Championship.

British media reported the transfer fee at 12 million pounds (\$15.63 million).

"He's a young and talented player and hopefully he can develop even more here," Newcastle manager Rafa Benitez said in a statement.

"We hope he can show us the passion, commitment and ability that he showed in the Championship last season."

Murphy, a boyhood Newcastle fan, represented England at the Under-21 European Championships last month where he helped his side reach the semi-finals.

Murphy is Benitez's third signing in the close season transfer window after adding winger Christian Atsu from Chelsea and defender Florian Lejeune from Eibar. —Reuters ■



Manchester City's Kyle Walker. **PHOTO: REUTERS**