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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Tuesday, 9 January 2018



This scene on Baho Road near Bagayar Street in Sangyaung was one of the intersections that flooded yesterday afternoon. The high water slowed traffic to a crawl and caused one truck to stall. Scattered rain is expected over several parts of Myanmar today. **PHOTO: MARK ANGELES**

Soaked in Yangon

AN unexpected rainstorm yesterday in Yangon flooded some streets, snarled traffic and caught some pedestrians without umbrellas.

According to reports issued at 2:30pm yesterday by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, a low pressure area over the southwest and south-east Bay of Bengal persisted throughout the day. The weather was generally fair over the north and west central Bay of Bengal, and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

There is an 80 per cent chance of continued scattered showers today in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago Region, eastern and southern Shan State, Kayah State, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions, and Kachin, Kayin and Mon states, according to the weather bureau.—GNLM ■

Towards a future federal Union

Central committee for organising Union Peace Conference holds meeting

A MEETING of the central committee for organising the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong was held yesterday afternoon in the meeting hall of the Ministry

of the Office of the State Counsellor.

At the meeting, Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Vice-Chairman of the central

committee, said the second session of the Union Peace Conference was successfully held in Nay Pyi Taw MICC-II from May 26 to 29, 2017. It was made possible by the combined

efforts and support of all the responsible officials, he added.

He further stated that in the Second Session of the 21st Century Panglong, agreement was reached on 37 points from

the Pyidaungsu Accord.

This agreement had been reached only after long hours of debate among the delegates to the Conference.

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'BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017'

Awarded by The Banker



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy Admiral Naris Phatoomsuwan in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives Chief of Defence Force of Singapore Armed Forces, Commander-in-Chief of Royal Thai Navy

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief, received Lt-Gen Perry Lim, Chief of the Defence Force of the Singapore Armed Forces with a Guard of Honour, in front of Zeyar Thiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and Chief of Defence Force of the Singapore Armed Forces received the salute from the Guard of Honour and then inspected the Guard of Honour.

Next, Lt-Gen Perry Lim signed the visitors' book and met with the Tatmadaw commander-in-chief in the meeting hall.

During the meeting, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief said the country was working with other member countries in the ASEAN. After 2011, the

hijacking of ships and other terrorist acts in the Strait of Malacca had significantly reduced with the cooperation of ASEAN countries, including Myanmar, and this will be maintained, claimed the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief.

The chief of the Defence Force of the Singapore Armed Forces spoke about his understanding of the Tatmadaw's role in protecting the nation in the Rakhine State affairs, the need for a timely response to terrorist attacks and his wish for peace in Myanmar and the region.

Next, they discussed and exchanged views on increasing friendly visits between officials of the two armed forces, such as sending the Myanmar Tatmadaw officers for training sessions in Singapore and increasing

cooperation between the two armed forces.

Later in the afternoon, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief received Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy Admiral Naris Phatoomsuwan, who is visiting Myanmar under the invitation of Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Tin Aung San in Zeyar Thiri Beikman, Nay Pyi Taw.

The two sides discussed matters related to increasing cooperation between their navies through friendly visits by naval vessels, working together to safeguard the territorial waters of both countries, exchanging sports and cultural troupes to enhance friendly relations between the two armed forces, and exchanging trainees. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw joint bill committee meeting held

A PYIDAUNGsu Hluttaw draft law joint committee met yesterday morning to discuss a 2017 bill, amending the Auditor General of the Union Law, which was sent by the President with a note.

The meeting, held in the second-floor meeting room, D Block, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, was attended by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw deputy speaker; Draft Law Joint Committee and Public Accounts

Aye Tha Aung; deputy chairmen, secretaries and members of the draft law joint committee and public accounts joint committee; legal affairs and special cases assessment commission members; and officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Planning and Finance, the Union Attorney General office, the union auditor general office and the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw office. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Supreme Court sits to pass judgment, hear cases

CHIEF Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo, along with Supreme Court judges U Tha Htay and U Myo Tint of the Special Appellate Bench, sat at Union Supreme Court, room number 1, yesterday

morning and passed judgment on two (Certiorari) criminal cases and three (Certiorari) civil cases, as well as heard five other (Certiorari) civil cases. — Myanmar News Agency ■

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Appointment as Permanent Secretary

The Union Government has appointed Director-General U Tin Win Aung from the Office of Pyithu Hluttaw, to assume the duties of Permanent Secretary.—Myanmar News Agency



Rehabilitation program for drug addicts opened by Department of Social Welfare in Mandalay. **PHOTO: MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS**

Rehabilitation course for drug addicts opened in Mandalay

A rehabilitation course for drug addicts was opened at a social rehabilitation center under the Department of Social Welfare in Mandalay yesterday.

The course will provide rehabilitation-focused medical treatment and counseling services for drug addicts. "We will offer physical and mental rehabilitation programs for drug users," said U Zaw Htike Lin, manager for the center. Accommodation and Ks. 1000 daily allowance will be given to the trainees. Around 20 train-

ees will be allowed to attend 35 day course. About ten trainees from Mandalay, Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw and Kengtung have already arrived at the center. "I hope the course gives me a rest and clears my mind," one of the trainees said. Nine drug rehab centers have been opened in Yangon, Mandalay, Myitkyina, Kawthoung, Tachilek, Kengtung and Lashio. Mandalay drug rehab center was repaired in December 2017 at a cost of more than Ks. 60 million by Daw Khin Kyi Foundation.—MDN ■

Hand-over ceremony of Assembled Board Houses (100) units held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE hand-over ceremony of the Assembled Board Houses (100) units was held at the Myanmar Industrial Port (MIP), Yangon, on Saturday morning.

Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing; Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye; Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin; Yangon Region Electricity, Industry and Transport Minister Daw Nilar Kyaw; departmental heads; and the Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. Hong Liang, along with embassy staff, invited guests and the media, attended the ceremony.

During the ceremony, the

Chinese Ambassador handed over the Assembled Board Houses (100) units to Union Minister for Construction and Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing, and they inspected the units together. Later, the Chinese Ambassador clarified the purpose of the handover and the process of humanitarian aid, on behalf of the People's Republic of China, to the Rakhine State. Union Minister U Win Khaing said China had donated 232 Assembled Board Houses to Myanmar in 2016, and all these units will contribute to the development of a medical care system in the region. He acknowledged and expressed

appreciation for the assistance of the Chinese government, as China has continually supported multiple sectors in Myanmar, including healthcare, to raise the standard of living in the region. Next, they signed the handover agreements for the Assembled Board Houses (100) units and took group photographs. To cope with poverty-related problems, many projects such as Assistant Board Houses and medical units are being undertaken in Taung Pyo Letwe Village, Maungtaw region. Some 17 Assembled Board Houses, together with five rooms, are being constructed.—Myanmar News Agency ■

State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaws receive PRC Buddhist delegation

State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaws, led by State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Chairman Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Bharmo Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa, received a Buddhist delegation from the People's Republic of China (PRC), led by the Buddhist Association of China Vice Chairman Abbot Huiming of Jing'an Temple, Shanghai, yesterday morning in Vijaya Mingalar Dhamma Hall on Kaba Aye Hillock.

The two sides discussed bilateral religious matters during the meeting, and the visiting delegation donated Ks2 million for medicines.

The Chinese Buddhist delegation then met with the teaching and administrative Sayadaws from Theravada Buddhist Missionary University and discussed religious matters with them. They donated another Ks2 million for "soon" (food).

Next, the Chinese Buddhist delegation met with the teaching and administrative Sayadaws of State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon), led by Rector Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Kumara, and studied their missionary works.—Myanmar News Agency



State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaws meeting with the Buddhist delegation from the People's Republic of China. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chinese Buddhist delegation presents K2 million donation for "soon" a day meal for monks through an official. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) Sayadaws led by Rector Dr. Bhaddanta Kumara meeting with the Buddhist delegation from China at Kaba Aye Hillock in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

Central committee for organising Union Peace Conference holds meeting

FROM PAGE-1

"We have the main responsibility of holding the 21st Century Panglong Union Peace conferences, so that federal principles can be laid down for a future federal union," he said.

The Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting meeting decided to hold the third session of the Union Peace Conference, to be organised by the 11 organising work committees formed for the second session.

All have been invited to discuss and offer suggestions on the tasks of the various work committees, based on the strengths and weaknesses of the tasks performed during the second session, so that the third session can be held successfully. "At the same time, the work committees have to prepare their tasks based on the outcome of today's discussions," stated U Kyaw Tint Swe.

Next, Union Minister for In-



The central committee for holding the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong holds a meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday for organizing a third session of the Union Peace Conference. **PHOTO: MNA**

ternational Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, on behalf of the Invitation Work Committee chairman; Reception and Lodging Work Committee chairman Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung; Transportation Work Committee chairman Deputy Minister for Transport and Communica-

tions U Kyaw Myo; Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung, on behalf of the Seating Arrangements Work committee chairman; chairman of Work Committee on Food Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung; Event Preparation Work Committee chairman Dep-

uty Minister for President's Office U Min Thu; Security Work Committee chairman Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe; Information Work Committee chairman Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint; Director General Dr. Daw Yi Yi Myint of Ministry of Health and Sports,

on behalf of the Healthcare Work Committee chairman; Finance-Work Committee chairman Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win; and Coordination Work Committee chairman Deputy Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Khin Maung Tin discussed the work processes and status of the work completed by the committees, as well as ways to improve these processes, based on last year's experience. Later, Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe gave his views and comments relating to the discussions and views expressed at the meeting and then gave his concluding remarks. The meeting was attended by the Union Ministers, the Peace Commission Chairman, members of the central committee for organizing the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, members of the work committees and officials. — Myanmar News Agency

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

Mandalay Zaygyo market to undergo repair

MANDALAY Zaygyo market, a main centre for marketing in the second capital of Myanmar will be renovated depending on budget available.

The facelift includes repainting of the whole building and repair of ceramic tile and its upper floors will be hired for those who want to run super markets.

A wide range of products and items are available at the unique market which is situated strategically in the upper capital of the country.—Myanmar Digital News ■



Mandalay Zaygyo market, most famous and Biggest wholesale market, to renovate depend on budget available. **PHOTO: MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS**



Cable car runs between Rathittaung station and Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda on the skyline. **PHOTO: MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS**

Cable car of Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda becomes popular among pilgrims

THE number of pilgrims who took cable cars plying between Rathetaung station and the precinct of Kyaikhtiyo Pagoda stood at 62000, said U Myo Wai, the adviser of Sky Asia Co Ltd.

According to U Myo Wai, there were 62000 pilgrims taking cable cars from 19 to 31 December 2017 including 600 foreigners

at the rate of K 3000 per head for local people and of five US\$ per head for foreigners. But it is free for monks and nuns.

The increase in the number of local and foreign pilgrims spending holidays makes the cable transportation systems popular among them—Tin Htut (Mawlamyine) ■

Construction of grandstand seating is 50% completed



Grandstand seating for spectators construction site at Myoma athletic field. **PHOTO: MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS**

CONSTRUCTION of grandstand seating for spectators at Myoma athletic field in Mahlaing Township, Mandalay Region, is now fifty per cent complete according to U Win Naing, assistant department head of Sports and Physical Education in Mahlaing Township.

"We started construction on November 12 in 2017. We had to knock down the old bleachers before beginning reconstruction.

As of now, we have completed more than 50 per cent of the construction process," said U Thet Swe Oo, engineer for Arthit Mandalay Company.

The old bleachers could hold just more than 30 people. The Sports and Physical Education Department in Mandalay Region allocated K71.25 million of regional funds to build the new reinforced concrete grandstand.—Bo Bo (Mahlaing) ■

1,590 hotels, guest houses operational in Myanmar

SOME 1,590 hotels and guest houses, renting out 63,978 rooms, were operational across the country, until the end of December 2017, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

To ensure tourists can travel in Myanmar conveniently, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has approved the licences after carefully scrutinising the hotels' applications.

There are some 387 hotels and guest houses with 20,123 rooms in Yangon, 205 hotels with 8,457 rooms in Mandalay, 64 hotels with 5,463 rooms in the capital Nay Pyi Taw, 141 hotels with 4,401 rooms in Taunggyi and Inlay, and 85 hotels with 2,919 rooms in Bagan and Nyaung U.

The number of hotels and guests houses that were

issued hotel licences by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has increased each month.

Meanwhile, the number of tourist arrivals is also likely to increase this year due to a master plan to promote the tourism sector, which is being implemented by the ministry.

Since 2011, the ministry has relaxed restrictions to encourage investment in the accommodation sector for international visitors.

To increase the number of tourist arrivals, the ministry has relaxed restrictions on visas and opened new tour gates at the border.

The ministry has granted some 2,593 travel agency licences, 2,534 transport licences, 4,371 tour guide licences and 3,449 regional tour guide licences to date.—Min Thu ■

Over 430 tonnes of avocados exported in first nine months of current fiscal year

MORE than 430 tonnes of avocados were exported to foreign countries in the first nine months of the current fiscal year (FY), according to a report in the Myanma Alin yesterday.

Myanmar shipped 46 tonnes of avocados to China via the sea route and border gates, 400 tonnes to Thailand through its border checkpoints, 0.24 tonnes to Hong Kong and 0.2 tonnes to Russia.

Avocado is a potential marketable fruit for Myanmar. To penetrate the export market, Myanmar's avocados must be relatively of the same size and of good quality, said an official from the Trade Department.

Besides being consumed, avocado is widely used as a value-added product in cosmetics and shower gels, among other things.

Avocado growers in Myanmar have been calling for



Workers pick avocados during harvest at a farm. PHOTO: MMAL

financial assistance and specific avocado zones, said U Sai Soe Naung, an avocado grower from Shan State. A think tank of the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association has been conducting educational courses for avocado growers. Avocado

groups are also being organised to share knowledge on growing methods among the farmers.

Myanmar's avocados are primarily grown in the Shan and Chin states, as well as the Sagaing Region and Pyin Oo Lwin areas in the Mandalay Region. —Zar Lin Thu (AMIA) ■

Untimely rain triggers onion price rise in Yangon market

DRIVEN by the unseasonal rainfall in the upper Myanmar, onion prices have soared to Ks3,250 per viss (1.6 kg), according to a report in the Myanma Alin yesterday.

More than 130,000 viss of onions have entered the Yangon market, but their prices are hovering on the high side.

The onion price in December was over Ks3,050 per viss. On 2 January, onion prices ranged from Ks1,800 to Ks3,000 per viss, depending on the varieties, while the price was up by Ks200 on 3 January, according to Bayintnaung commodity depot.

Untimely rainfall hit the onion crop in April, October, November and December in 2017, but there was no increase

in the price at that time. This time, it has surged exorbitantly and unreasonably, said Ko Kyaw Lwin, a wholesaler.

For the last five months, foreign onions have been flowing into the local market at a bargain price.

Locally produced onions fetch some Ks3,000 per viss, whereas the price of imported onions is some Ks1,000 per viss.

Despite the inferior quality, the price of imported onions is just one third the price of locally produced ones.

The onion price in the local market was on an upward trend between 2015 and early 2018. Thus, consumers expect the concerned authorities to tackle the now exorbitant price of onions. —Khin Saing ■

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Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Htin Kyaw

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

**From H.E Mr. Petro Poroshenko
President of Ukraine
Your Excellency,**

On behalf of the Ukrainian people and my own please accept my sincerest congratulations on the occasion of the Seventieth Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Ukraine is interested in strengthening cooperation and comprehensive development of the Ukrainian-Myanmar relations in the sake of welfare and prosperity of the peoples of our two countries.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I wish Your Excellency sound health, successes and new achievements in Your responsible state activity as well as peace, harmony and prosperity – to the friendly Myanmar people.

**From H.E Mr. Andrzej Duda
President of the Republic of Poland
Your Excellency,**

On behalf of myself, Polish Nation and the government of the Republic of Poland, I would like to convey to Your Excellency and People of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

The Republic of Poland attaches great importance to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as our partner in South-East Asia. Poland supports Myanmar's transformation and achievements toward building a modern, democratic state of reconciliation and peace.

I would like to convey to Your Excellency my best wishes of personal well-being and success to Your Excellency and to the Myanmar People my best wishes of

success and prosperity.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

**From H.E Mr. Alexander Lukashenko,
President of the Republic of Belarus
Excellency,**

Let me express my sincere congratulations to You on the occasion of the National holiday – Independence Day.

Would like to stress out my hope for further deepening of all-round cooperation between Belarus and Myanmar. I am confident that only through the joint efforts we would fully implement existing potential of the Belarusian-Myanmar cooperation.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my wishes of strong health, longevity and success to You, prosperity and wellbeing to the friendly people of Myanmar, as well as the assurance of my highest consideration. ■

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

**From H.E Mr. Mateusz Morawiecki
Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland
Your Excellency,**

On behalf of myself and the government of the Republic of Poland, I would like to convey to Your Excellency congratulations and best wishes for success in political and economic transformation.

The Republic of Poland attaches great importance to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as our partner in South-East Asia. Poland wishes to strengthen and expand bilateral relations on many platforms such as economic, scientific and cultural.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

**From H.E Mr. Witold Waszczykowski
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland
Your Excellency,**

On the occasion of National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I would like to extend to Your Excellency congratulations and best wishes.

Poland observes and fully supports the democratic and economic transformation that has been taking place in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Poland understands from its own experience, that this process is challenging and requires a lot of time. Myanmar has become a crucial partner of Poland on the Asian continent. We would like to wish the Republic of the Union of Myanmar a lot of success in political and economic transformations.

We do hope that 2018 will bring an optimistic development in reconciliation process and contribution to peace.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration and wishes of personal good health and well-being.

**From H.E Dato Sri Anifah Aman
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia
Your Excellency,**

I wish to extend my warmest greetings and heartiest congratulations to Your Excellency on this memorable occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Malaysia values highly its relations with Myanmar and considers Myanmar as a key partner in ASEAN in the pursuit of growth, peace and security in the region. In conjunction with the 60th anniversary of Malaysia-Myanmar bilateral relations, I believe that the future will bear witness to new areas of cooperation and opportunities between the two countries, as Myanmar develops further with visions of a better future.

In this regard, I look forward to working closely with Your Excellency to further enhance the existing close bilateral relations between Malaysia and Myanmar. At the same time, we look forward to the just, humane and equitable resolution of issues in the Rakhine State and beyond.

Please accept Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From H.E Mr Victor Ricardo Luna Mendoza,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Peru
Your Excellency,**

I have the honor of addressing Your Excellency in order to extend my warmest congratulations to you on the occasion of the commemoration of the Seventieth Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. I would like to take this opportunity to express my vows for the permanent progress of your noble People, as well as for the personal happiness of Your Excellency.

While renewing the bonds of friendship and cooperation that unite our two countries, allow me to express

to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

**From H.E Mr. Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar
Her Excellency,**

On the occasion of the National Day – the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I am pleased to communicate to Your Excellency my sincerely congratulations joined with my hearty wishes for you and your friend country to have an ample health and well-being, besides more of prosperous and development, since we are looking forward to working together in order to enhance and develop the bilateral cooperation between our friendly countries.

Kindly accept my deepest regards and respect.

**From H.E Mr. Vladimir Makei,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus
Excellency,**

Let me express my sincere congratulations to You on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Hope that due to the mutual unification of the efforts, all the agreements existing between Belarus and Myanmar in trade and economic spheres, scientific and technical cooperation, political and military-technical fields will only develop, thereby creating a solid foundation for further successful deepening of relations between our countries.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my wishes of strong health, happiness, wellbeing, as well as the assurances of my highest consideration. ■

UNFC willing to seek ways for reaching agreement on remaining points

THE United Nationalities Federal Council-UNFC would keep on seeking other ways for holding a meeting between the leaders of the two sides as part of efforts for signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA.

UNFC made this remark in its announcement released following the two-day meeting of the committee which ended yesterday in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

“... regarding the peace process, the DPN and the Peace Commission held negotiations over the nine points, and to achieve answers for

the remaining points, UNFC would continue to seek ways for holding a meeting between the leaders of the two sides,” said the statement.

During the meeting, they reviewed the works of UNFC and current measures taken by the Delegation of Peace Negotiation of the UNFC and discussions between the DPN and the Peace Commission over nine points proposed by the UNFC.

“The nine-points proposed by UNFC were aimed at signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. We review outcomes of every meeting. UNFC and Peace Commission also re-

viewed the latest development of the nine-points,” said U Tun Zaw, Member of the Central Committee of the UNFC.

“New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its central committee made a decision to sign the NCA. But, they did not say definitely when they will implement the decision. NMSP is a member of the UNFC. They made the remark to sign the NCA under the flag of UNFC,” he added.

The nine-points proposed by the UNFC have been discussed for more than 17 months between the DPN and the PC. — Ye Khaung Nyunt



United Nationalities Federal Council-UNFC members seen during the meeting in Chiang Mai. **PHOTO: MNA**

Rakhine State Chief Minister conducts field visit

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, along with Rakhine State Minister for Social Affairs Dr. Chan Thar and Rakhine State Minister of Agriculture, U Kyaw Lwin, as well as state level and Maungtown district level officials, made a field visit to the villages and police stations in Maungtown Township to assess the regional peace, stability and development works in the area.

The Rakhine State chief minister and officials first visited Mawyawadi Village, where they instructed the farmers to sell their harvested rice to buyers as soon as possible.

Next, they met with ethnic villagers in Thinbawkwe for whom they had some words of encouragement. They then went to Innadin Village and instructed the officials concerned on area security, regional peace and de-



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu makes a field visit in Maungtown Township, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG**

velopment.

Later, they inspected the Angumaw-Maungtown road section being constructed under the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development programme.

The chief minister and

his party then visited the Thawunchaung Police Station and Kotankauk Police Station, inspected the houses built in Kotankauk Village and met and encouraged the local populace, after which they left for Sittway via Angumaw. — Ne Win Tun, Zeya ■

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye receives Bangladesh Ambassador



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye shakes hands with Bangladesh Ambassador Mohammad Sufiur Rahman. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye received Bangladesh Ambassador to Myanmar Mohammad Sufiur Rahman in Maykhalar Hall at the Union Minister's office yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, matters related to preparation for the systematic repatriation of returnees; the construction of modular houses with the assistance of Japan and China; and the status of the shutdown of three relief

camps for displaced persons in Kyaukphyu, Yanbye and Pauktaw Kyeinnipyin were discussed. Myanmar also shared information on discussions held with camp leaders at the Sittway Thakkaypyin and Myebon relief camps regarding the closure of the camps, coordination with the Rakhine State government, and reductions in the legal and social limitations to allow freedom of movement for people staying in relief camps. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Technical Training School (Hpa An) conducts courses

THE Ministry of Border Affairs' Education and Training Department and Bridge Asia Japan (BAJ) are jointly conducting construction course no. 7, electrical course no. 7, vehicle and engine repair course no. 6 and welding course no. 5 for ethnic youths at the Technical Education and Training School in Hpa-an).

An opening ceremony for the courses was held at the school yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, Kayin State Minister of Security and Border Affairs Col. Myo Min Naung and Ministry of Border Affairs' Education and Training Department Director General U Thein Htay Oo

delivered opening speeches, and BAJ country representative Akiko Mori explained the courses.

The ceremony was attended by state government members, department heads, BAJ staff and trainees. Of the 90 trainees, 20 had signed up for the construction course, 20 for the electrical course, 30 for the vehicle and engine repair course and 20 for the welding course. The courses started yesterday and will be held until June 22. Training uniforms and accessories, board, lodging and a travel allowance for the trainees will be provided free of cost by the department. — Myanmar News Agency ■

State Counsellor's address on Youth Policy

At the ceremony to introduce the Youth Policy of Myanmar, State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi made an address on youths in Myanmar, in which one third of the population was said to be youths between the ages of 15 to 35. Thus it highlights the fact that the role of youths in the country is of great importance.

As stated by the State Counsellor, there may be differences in attitudes according to the nature of the generation gap between the old and new generations. Thus must be deeply understood in laying down a youth policy. At the same time, the State Counsellor's statement that the education system is of vital importance in upgrading abilities, qualifications and skills of the youths of the new generation must be taken into deep consideration. Moreover, the State Counsellor's noteworthy advice for youths to cultivate the practice of working together in groups in the new education system really fulfills a great need in our country for future national development.

By doing so, it will upgrade not only individual education and dignity but also the qualities and skills of all the youths in Myanmar society. To sum it up, the release of the Myanmar Youth Policy will go a long way to tap the talents, energy and innovative ideas of all youth in Myanmar. This will also enable them to take an active part in nation building.

As noted by the State Counsellor, he who shares knowledge gains knowledge. Our youths should bear this in mind as they participate in various youth projects and activities. Highly educated youths are expected to share their knowledge with those youths who do not have access to vocational training, as stressed by the State Counsellor. By doing so, it will upgrade not only individual education and dignity but also the qualities and skills of all the youths in Myanmar society.

To sum it up, the release of the Myanmar Youth Policy will go a long way to tap the talents, energy and innovative ideas of all youth in Myanmar. This will also enable them to take an active part in nation building. ■

Motor Vehicle Policy of Great Importance for the Nation

By Ti Kyi Maung

SINCE the time when motor vehicles were invented on the planet humans have been using vehicles more and more until now. With the advancement of techniques on motor vehicles, production and utilization of vehicles are increasing simultaneously. Being a sector of importance for every nation, emergence of strengthened laws, rules and policies on motor vehicles as well is very important for every nation.

Starting from 2012 when Myanmar entered the Era of the Myanmar Democratic Transition policies on imported vehicles were remarkably alleviated, and as a result myriads of various kinds of vehicles came into Myanmar car markets, making prices of cars plunge rapidly down.

Thus, many people from different classes of the society managed to drive their own cars. Yet, on the other hand Yangon populace is coming to suffer from problems of traffic jam and tremendously abundance of vehicles in the city because there are not yet any arrangements for construction of roads and car parking plots, almost every day.

Accordingly, it is of great importance to systematically make necessary arrangements after adjusting potential disadvantages concerning related sectors in implementing policies laid down for the convenience of the people.

According to the statistics from the government departments there were a total of 365000 cars registered in 2011, with more than 721000 vehicles registered in 2016.

Thus, the amounts of vehicle increased over 356000 within five years period. In other word, numbers of registered cars increased nearly two times within 5-year period.

It was estimated that there would be more than 2 million vehicles in 2020 according to the



motor vehicle manufacturers, being three times the amounts of registered cars in 2016. In addition to this, it is expected that there will be 4 million or so in 2025 and 10 million or so in 2030. If so, one every 6-7 persons will drive their own cars in 2030, according to the expected population of 60-70 million in 2030.

ASEAN regional countries are the 5th biggest vehicle market in the world, importing over 3 million vehicles annually, with China, US, EU countries and Japan preceding it.

As regards manufacturing cars, the ASEAN became the hub of the global car production, producing over 4 million vehicles annually.

According to the statistics of ASEAN Automotive Feder-

ation Thailand manufactured a total of 1944417 vehicles in 2016, ranking 12th in the world, it was learnt. Thailand stood first in the production of cars among the ASEAN nations, mainly manufacturing pick-ups and truck with one-ton load. Thailand exported half of its production to other countries. And it managed to get US \$ 7.6 billion as the national revenue from its car production.

It is in fact 12.5 per cent of the GDP. According to the statistics of the International Labor Organization (ILO), motor vehicles and its accessories production industries created more than 0.4 million jobs.

Indonesia stood second in production of cars among the ASEAN nations, producing 1177389 vehicles in 2016 with

1061859 sold out, it was learnt. Data of the ILO, in 2015 had showed that motor vehicles and its accessories production industries, Indonesia managed to create over 0.2 million jobs, followed by Malaysia ranking as the 3rd in ASEAN nations producing 545253 units and creating nearly 80000 jobs in 2016.

Vehicle manufacturing factories, car assembly plants and sale industries which achieve sustainable development are developing with great momentum in the regional nations including Myanmar. Under the situations of Myanmar's population and its area, Myanmar will still need to manufacture or import vehicles.

But, though the country is making efforts to produce cars presently, it was found

that there were not yet necessary arrangements by looking at potential impacts over up-gradation of standards of roads, systematic management, implementation of car parking construction, increasing need of lubricants and other related sectors.

There are advantages which will be beneficial in every sector including national economic development, human resource development, SMEs' development, convenience of social lives and creation of job opportunities by developing the sector of vehicle manufacture. But, unless policies and laws are rightfully laid down and implemented, disadvantages will be greater than advantages. Actually it is the sector that the State Government should take

it into consideration specifically.

Provided that Myanmar can implement for the greater development of motor vehicle production likewise the regional countries, Myanmar will be able to fulfill the needs of local markets with too much demands with reasonable prices as well as potential prospects for export to the global markets if internationally standardized vehicles can be manufactured. On the other hand, it is of great importance to take free competition in manufacturing sector which is a promising industry in Myanmar into consideration.

Today's technology is always developing. Bringing about the cutting edge technology can completely change social life patterns of the world. For example, emergence of IT Information Technology, invention of iPhone from Apple Company and establishment of Face-book are remarkable triumph of IT sector.

Similarly, industries of the global vehicle production technology are making researches by investing with the greatest lump sum for inventing electric cars and driverless cars.

If the currently used diesel and octane cars are out of date in near future, production of modern cars will rapidly soar up.

Accordingly, under the current situations Myanmar is following in the further back in the production of vehicles. But, if implemented through rightful plan and arrangement, it can push Myanmar toward the top, needing to firmly grasp the opportunity. Provided that it can be successfully implemented the sector of vehicle production can help for successful development of Myanmar's economy. To sum it up, the State Government should consult and cooperate with experts and professionals from home and abroad concerning the vehicle production. ■

Translated by
Khin Maung Oo

Cooperation to curb Asia's climate risks still too rare – scientists

By Saleem Shaikh and Sughra Tunio

KATHMANDU—When heavy monsoon rains triggered unprecedented flooding last August in the area around western Nepal's Babai and West Rapti rivers, the swollen waters crossed the border into India within a few hours.

But swift warnings from Nepali authorities to the downriver Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh allowed officials there to move people to safety, Indian officials say.

Without that advice from Nepal's Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, "there would have been no possibility for the Indian authorities to ensure timely evacuation of the people, which (would have) otherwise led to huge loss of lives," said Anand Sharma of the Indian Meteorological Department.

As climate change increases the risk of flooding, glacial lake outbursts and cyclones, as well as droughts and heat waves, experts say that sharing information across borders is crucial to save lives and ensure economic stability in Asia's Hindu Kush-Himalaya (HKH) region.

The region, which stretches from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east, includes over 1.3 billion people in eight countries.

They are connected by 10 river basins, including the Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Salween, Mekong and Yangtze, and some of the world's largest mountain ranges, the Karakoram, Hindu Kush and Himalayas, which are home to over 54,000 glaciers covering more than 60,000 square kilometres (23,000 square miles).

But the cooperation seen between India and Nepal remains too rare in the region, regional officials say.

Although countries face similar climate-related risks, political disagreements between countries, and a lack of legal arrangements for sharing information, are increasing the region's vulnerability to natural disasters, they say.

RISKS GROWING

David Molden, the director general of the Kathmandu-based International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), warned in an interview that HKH countries will suffer increasingly severe impacts from climate change-related disasters, particularly floods, cyclones, droughts and land erosion, if they do not cooperate in sharing information and early warnings.

But in a bid to boost the region's climate resilience, political leaders, government policymakers and scientists from the region agreed at a conference in Nepal in December to work harder to boost collaboration to tackle common disaster risks.

Such cooperation would likely focus on everything from improving joint management of river basins to better monitoring of glacial melting and glacial lakes prone to outburst floods, Molden said.

Lyonpo Yeshey Dorji, Bhutan's Minister for Agriculture and Forest, said he was confident that political leaders of the region would "join hands with scientists and policymakers to boost intra-regional collaboration in data sharing, knowledge and technology transfer for enhancing the region's ability to withstand fallouts of climate change".

Dorji added that countries needed to better understand the advantages that would be gained by exchanging data, local knowledge and technology.

Yusuf Zafar, chair of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council, agreed that cooperation between countries was urgently needed.

"Plugging the gap ... is vital to help people strengthen climate resilience, particularly those 210 million people in mountain areas," he said.—Reuters

Traditional puppet show performs at the Children's Literature Festival. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**Writer Chit Oo Nyo gives talk at the Children's Literature Festival. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**Students participate in the painting event. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**Students competing exercise with the hula hoop at the Children's Literature Festival. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**Children wearing traditional dress perform at the Children's Literature Festival. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

Third day of Children's Literature Festival continues in Yangon

By Zaw Gyi

The third day of Children's Literature Festival was attended by a large numbers of visitors including parents, teachers and school children at No.6 Botahtaung High School, Yangon, yesterday.

The festival opens at 9 a.m and closes at 8 p.m. Some 90,000 visitors participated in this festival.

Many interesting games and programs such as story-telling, impromptu talks, poem recitations, drawing pictures, coloring papers and jigsaw puzzles are being conducted in it.

Daw Mu Mu, a staff officer of Education office, Yangon Western District, explained, "They display booths on education and learning aids for the school children who are very interested in this festival. I think that it can enhance their education and general knowledge as well." Ma Ei Ei Moe, a student of No.4, Basic Education Middle School, Mayangone, added that they exhibit booths on Science laboratory, which is mainly shown

ozone depletion, in this festival. I have seen other booths which exhibited from other schools. It is amusing to see a variety of entertainments and other school children. We gained a lot of knowledge by watching these programs, and can apply to use it in our studies.

Daw Soe Soe Win, a parent form Pazundaung Township, said, "I've brought my son to see this festival with the aim of gaining general knowledge. It is very interesting to see many booths on education and other science laboratories.

I suggest that the authority should hold this kind of festivals very often."

Many students and parents including some 80,000 school children in the first day, and some 90,000 visitors in the second day participated in this festival.

In the individual competition, there are some 56127 children took part in the game-playing, along with 16,628 children on 6th January, 22,648 children on 7th January and 16,851 yesterday totalling 56,127. ■

Book shops are crowded with visitors. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

Prize awarding ceremony for sports competition winners in Children's Literature Festival (Yangon)

By Zaw Gyi

A FOOTBALL and tote-see-toe (a traditional children team game) competitions were held as part of the sports competitions in the Children's literature festival, exhibition and book sales Yangon jointly organized by Ministry of Information, Ministry of Education and Yangon Region Government. A prize awarding ceremony for the winners of the competition was held yesterday afternoon at the festival venue Basic Education High School No. (6) Botahtaung (Saint Paul) football ground.

The ceremony was attended by Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Information and Public Relations Department Director General U Ye Naing, Yangon City Development Committee secretary Daw Hlaing Maw Oo, Botahtaung Township Pyithu Hluttaw representative Daw Myint Myint Soe @ Daw May Soe, officials and invited guests.

Winner, runner-up and third placed teams of high school level under-16 football competition Yangon West District Team (A), Yangon East District Team (A) and Yan-



Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint presents the trophy to Yangon West District team. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

gon South District Team (B) respectively were presented with prizes by Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint.

Winner, runner-up and third placed teams of middle school level under-13 football competition Yangon East Dis-

trict Team (A), Yangon South District Team (B) and Yangon West District Team (B) respectively were presented with prizes by Information and Public Relations Department Director General U Ye Naing.

Winner, runner-up and third placed teams of high

school level under-16 tote-see-toe competition Yangon West District Team (B), Yangon North District Team (A) and Yangon North District Team (B) respectively were presented with prizes by Yangon City Development Committee secretary Daw Hlaing Maw Oo

while winner, runner-up and third placed teams of middle school level under-13 tote-see-toe competition Yangon East District Team (B), Yangon West District Team (B) and Yangon North District Team (A) respectively were presented with prizes by Botahtaung Township Pyithu Hluttaw representative Daw Myint Myint Soe @ Daw May Soe.

Teams members for football and tote-see-toe competitions were selected from basic education schools in Yangon Region townships and were made into district level teams A and B which compete in the district level competitions.

The knock-out phase of the competitions were held on the first day, semi-final matches on the second day and the final and third place competitions on the third day of the festival and prizes were awarded after the competitions were completed.

Similarly, in the afternoon, winners of the debate, paper folding and painting competitions held on the morning of the third day were awarded prizes by relevant officials in the Aung San Hall at the venue of the Children's Literature Festival (Yangon) it is learnt.

US Embassy condemns ARSA attack on Myanmar security forces

US Embassy is learnt to have issued a statement yesterday on the ARSA attack on Myanmar security forces in Rakhine State Maungdaw region on 5 January.

The statement says: We condemn ARSA's January 5 attack on Myanmar security forces in northern Rakhine State, and we express condolences to the injured and their families.

This act of violence only serves to further undermine peace and security in northern Rakhine State and the region.

We continue to urge all parties to ensure their rhetoric and their actions

contribute to establishing the conditions for the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of all those who have been displaced by violence to their places of origin.

According to a news release by Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Office a vehicle carrying a sick patient from Taungpyo to Maungdaw was attacked by about 20 ARSA extremists terrorists from a hill between Kyun Pauk Su Village and Trane (Mro) Village with IED and small arms around 10:10 a.m. on 5 January.

Two security personnel and a civilian was wounded it is learnt. — Myanmar News Agency

Long-term upgrading of Twantay Canal project to cost Ks9,000 million

THE long-term upgrade work on the Twantay Canal will cost Ks9,000 million, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Erosions occur on the banks of the canal every year, especially in winter, destroying houses and farmlands, according to the local residents.

"The government has allocated a budget for the long-term upgradation of the canal. We will implement the project within a year or two. We are also conducting surveys systematically," said U Myint Lwin, a Pyithu Hluttaw representative from Twantay Township.

A master plan has already been drafted. Although the canal is temporarily being conserved with gravel-filled retaining walls, it does not work well. Therefore, the Township General Administration Department and MPs are discussing a plan to temporarily upgrade the canal.—GNLM

Construction zones to be established in 15 townships

The Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) will designate 15 townships in the Yangon Region municipal area as high-rise construction zones, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

The YCDC decided to design-

nate specific zones as high-rise construction areas after it found that high-rise projects were not abiding by the law and had poor security and low quality.

Some five-to seven-storeyed buildings are being built in wards with 10-foot wide streets in some

townships. In a bid to carry out the systematic designation of high-rise construction zones, the YCDC conducted surveys on land utilisation, in cooperation with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency.—GNLM

Eleven dead after gun battle erupts outside Mexican beach resort

MEXICO CITY — The aftermath of a gunfight on the outskirts of the Mexican seaside resort of Acapulco that pit residents of a small town against members of a local, self-appointed community police force has left 11 dead, state officials said on Sunday. The exchange of gunfire took place in the farming community of La Concepcion, just south of Acapulco, after elements of the community police detailed a young man for disorderly conduct during town festivities early Sunday morning. Eight local residents were killed in that exchange. After Army soldiers and state police later moved into the town, three members of the community police were shot dead after resisting them, Roberto Alvarez, a state security official, told reporters. Another 30 members of the local police, which had been authorized by state officials to operate in the small town, were arrested in the operation. Acapulco is the biggest city in the southern state of Guerrero, one of Mexico's most lawless and a center of opium poppy production. Violence in the state has also been fed by turf wars over the distribution of drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine. The beach resort is one of Mexico's most famous and for decades served as a playground for Hollywood stars. In recent years, however, Acapulco has been roiled by vicious gang warfare and is now ranked one of the most murderous cities in the world. —Reuters ■

Rescue crews wrestle to tame China oil tanker fire; body of mariner found

BEIJING/SEOUL — Rescue crews wrestled to bring a blaze on an Iranian oil tanker off China's east coast under control on Monday as fire raged for a second day following a collision with a grain ship, while the body of one of the 32 missing crew members was found on board.

Concerns were growing that the tanker, which hit a freight ship on Saturday night in the East China Sea and burst into flames, may explode and sink, the official China Central Television (CCTV) said on Monday, citing experts on the rescue team.

Poor weather continued to hamper the rescue work, Lu Kang, a spokesman at China's foreign ministry, told a regular news briefing.

The extent of the envi-



PHOTO: REUTERS

ronmental harm and size of the oil spill from the ship were not known, but the disaster has the potential to be the worst since 1991 when 260,000 tonnes of oil leaked off the Angolan coast.

The remains of one of the 32 mariners on board was found on Monday after-

noon, Iranian and Chinese officials confirmed.

Mohammad Rastad, head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization, was quoted by the ISNA news agency as saying that the body had been sent to Shanghai for identification. The fate of the remaining 31 sailors is not known.

The Sanchi tanker (IMO:9356608) run by Iran's top oil shipping operator, National Iranian Tanker Co, collided with the CF Crystal (IMO:9497050) on Saturday evening about 160 nautical miles off China's coast near Shanghai and the mouth of the Yangtze River Delta. —Reuters ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BANDA VOY. NO. (076)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BANDA VOY. NO. (076) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9-1-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

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

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

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India sparks outcry over press freedom by naming reporter in probe on database breach

NEW DELHI — The Indian government named a reporter in a police complaint after she wrote an article alleging a data breach in a federal identity database, drawing criticism from a journalist group that accused officials of trying to muzzle free speech.

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which runs the world's largest biometric identity card scheme called "Aadhaar", started investigating a report

last week by The Tribune newspaper which said access to the identity database of more than 1 billion citizens was being sold for just 500 rupees, or \$8 (6 pounds), on social media.

UIDAI on Sunday said four people were named in its complaint to police in New Delhi to investigate the incident, including the reporter, and also her newspaper, which is based in the north Indian city of Chandigarh.

The Editors Guild of India condemned UID-

AI's action, saying it was designed to "browbeat a journalist."

"It is unfair, unjustified and a direct attack on the freedom of the press," the Guild said in a statement on Sunday.

The UIDAI said in a statement on Sunday that it respects freedom of press, adding that it was duty bound to name everyone involved in the incident, including the reporter.

"It does not mean that those who are named in

the report are necessarily guilty," the authority said.

The Tribune newspaper said it regretted the decision of the authorities.

India last year slipped three places to 136th in the World Press Freedom Index of 180 nations, compiled by Reporters Without Borders.

Journalists in India have increasingly become targets of online smear campaigns, with prosecutorial actions being used to gag journalists who are overly critical of the gov-

ernment, the group said.

The Tribune newspaper last week reported that it was able to buy login credentials to the government's Aadhaar database, allowing it to acquire information such as the names, telephone numbers and home addresses of millions of people.

The alleged breach is the latest in the Aadhaar programme which is facing increasing scrutiny over privacy concerns.

After the report was

published, the UIDAI said the "case appears to be an instance of misuse."

The Aadhaar scheme was introduced in 2009 to streamline welfare payments and reduce wastage in public spending. Since then, the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been keen to mandate the use of Aadhaar for everything from filing income taxes to the registration of mobile phone numbers and booking railway tickets.

—Reuters ■



Passengers on a Peace Boat ship, including survivors of the 1945 US nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, pose for a photo at Yokohama Port on 8 January, 2018, before leaving for an eight-nation tour of Asia and Oceania. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Peace Boat ship leaves Yokohama for Asia, Oceania tour

YOKOHAMA — A ship chartered by Japan-based Peace Boat, a nongovernmental organization working closely with last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, left Yokohama Port on Monday to promote nuclear disarmament. The boat will visit eight countries

through March including the Philippines and Australia. Terumi Tanaka, co-chair of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, is among the people on board. "Grassroots lobbying is an important activity. I am looking forward to meeting people of various towns in the countries we will visit," said Tanaka,

who is participating in the Peace Boat tour for the first time.

The boat carries on its side the logo of ICAN, a coalition of NGOs that involves about 470 groups from more than 100 countries. Akira Kawasaki, an ICAN international steering committee member, told a press conference, "We must work toward re-

alizing the goal of putting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons into effect."

The treaty was passed by 122 UN members in July last year but has not come into force. None of the nuclear weapon states or countries relying on nuclear deterrence, including Japan, endorsed the treaty. — Kyodo News ■

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT OF BRIDGE Invitation for Bids

Date: 9th January, 2018

EDCF Loan Agreement No.: MYA-10

Contract Title: Korea-Myanmar Friendship (Dala) Bridge Construction Project

1. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Ministry of Construction has received a Loan from the Export-Import Bank of Korea from the resources of the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) of the Republic of Korea in the amount of 137,833,000 in US Dollars toward the cost of the Korea-Myanmar Friendship (Dala) Bridge Construction Project (hereinafter referred to as the "Project") and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for which this Invitation for Bids is issued.

2. The Project Executing Agency now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the construction of the Korea-Myanmar Friendship (Dala) Bridge;

- Cable Stayed Bridge: 690m
- Dala Approach Bridge: 601m
- Yangon Approach Bridge: 576m
- Ramp A: 467m, Ramp B: 526m

3. Bidding will be conducted through Competitive Bidding (CB) among Korean companies and that the single-stage, two-envelope procedures specified in the [Guideline for Procurement under EDCF Loans](#), and is open to all eligible bidders that meet the following minimum qualification criteria.

- General construction experience in Bridge and Road field for 5 years.
- Specific experience in construction: satisfy the minimum requirement of having built cable-stayed bridges including access bridges and access road with main spans of 260 meters or more, with a value of at least 80 million US Dollars that are completed.
- A minimum average construction turnover of 100 million US Dollars for the last 3 years.
- Average Net Worth for last three years (2014, 2015, and 2016) and Net Worth in 2016 shall be positive.

The Bidder must also show that it has the personnel for key positions, key equipment and financial resources in terms of his latest years with working capital and lines of credit to meet the requirements of the contract bid and other current work commitments, as given in detail in the bidding documents.

In case of JV, refer to the qualification requirement specified in the bidding documents.

4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Department of Bridge under the Ministry of Construction and inspect the bidding documents at the address below from 10:00 A.M., 9th January, 2018 to 14:00 P.M., 9th February, 2018 (Myanmar Local Time).

5. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by any interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of 1000 US Dollars. The payment will be made by cash.

The document will be delivered directly to the Bidders from the Department of Bridge's office;

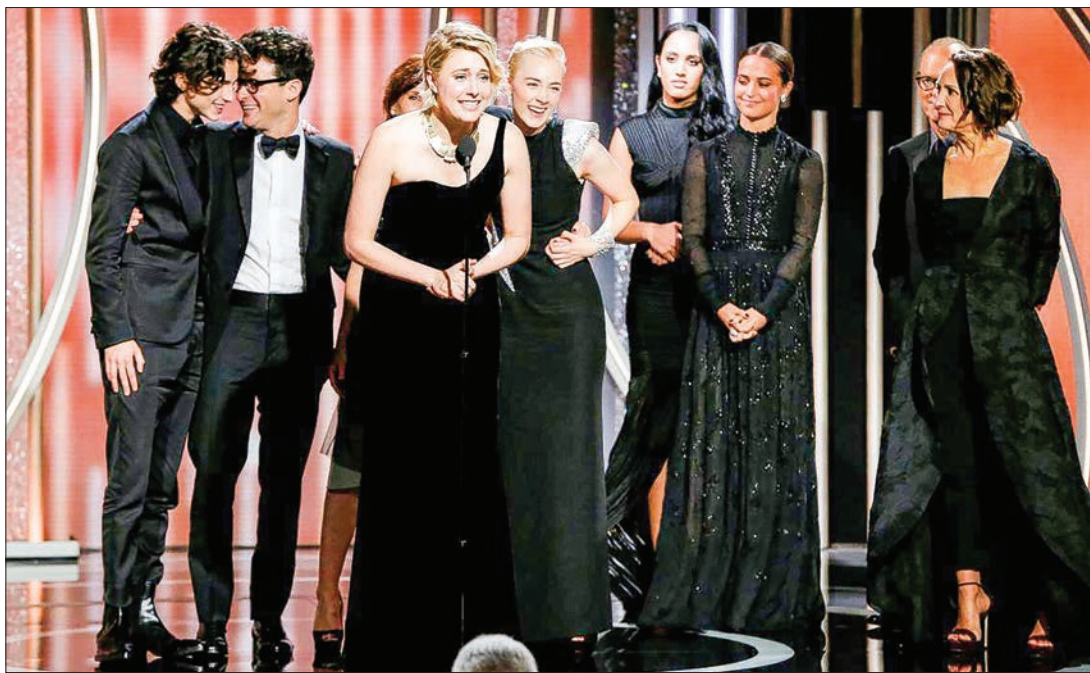
Attention: U Shwe Lay, Director General, Department of Bridge, Ministry of Construction.
U Kyaw Kaung Cho, Chief Engineer
Department of Bridge, Ministry of Construction
Telephone: +95 67 407069, +95 67 407465
+95 67 407514 (International Relation and Legal Sub Division)

6. Bids must be submitted to the address below at or before 10:00 A.M., 23rd February, 2018. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 3,000,000 US Dollars. Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the address below at 10:30 A.M., 23rd February, 2018 (Myanmar Local Time).

7. The Department of Bridge, Ministry of Construction will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by Bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of Bids.

8. The address referred to above is:

Department of Bridge, Ministry of Construction
U Shwe Lay, Director General
Building No. 11, Naypyitaw, Myanmar
Telephone: +95 67 407069
Facsimile: +95 67 407 514



Greta Gerwig director of *Lady Bird* accepts the award for Best Motion Picture Comedy or Musical at the 75th Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, California, US on 7 January, 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

‘Three Billboards’ wins big as Golden Globes power through sex scandal

LOS ANGELES — Dark drama “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri” was the big winner with four Golden Globes awards on Sunday on a night marked by scathing jokes about sexual harassment and passionate odes to those breaking their silence.

Mother-daughter comedy “Lady Bird” was named best comedy film and the indie A24 movie’s star Saoirse Ronan won for comedy actress.

Gary Oldman was named best drama movie actor for his role as British wartime leader Winston Churchill in Focus Features’ “Darkest Hour” and Frances McDormand took home the award for drama actress for her role as an angry mother seeking vengeance in Fox Searchlight’s “Three Billboards.”

James Franco won the comedy actor award for his cult movie homage “The Disaster Artist,” also from A24. Mexican director Guillermo del Toro won best director for magical fantasy “The Shape of Water.”

However, the night was dominated not by who took home prizes but by jokes and speeches about the sexual misconduct scandal that has rocked Hollywood.

“Happy New Year Hollywood! It’s 2018. Marijuana is finally allowed and sexual harassment finally isn’t,” quipped Globes host Seth Meyers in his opening remarks, bringing wild applause from the A-list audience in Beverly Hills.

Multiple allegations against actors, filmmakers and Hollywood agents since October 2017 have led to many of the accused being fired, forced to step down, or dropped from creative projects.

Referring to the male nominees gathered in Beverly Hills for the top television and movie awards, Meyers said: “This is the first time in three months it won’t be terrifying to hear your name read out loud.”

The evening began with the normally colorful red carpet transformed into a sea of black gowns as every actress

showed solidarity with victims of sexual harassment inside and outside the entertainment industry. Many have given their own harrowing accounts.

Women kept up the theme inside the Beverly Hilton ballroom. “This year, we became the story,” Oprah Winfrey said in a rousing speech while accepting the annual lifetime achievement award. McDormand said she was proud to be a woman in the industry. “It’s great to be here and be part of the tectonic shift in our industry’s power structure,” she said.

Laura Dern, a supporting actress winner for “Big Little Lies,” said: “May we teach our children that speaking out without retribution is our culture’s new north star.”

The HBO TV series was one of several female-driven winners on Sunday.

The Golden Globes ceremony, the first of the major awards shows in the run-up to the Oscars in March, marked the first big test for how Hollywood would handle the scandal. — Reuters ■

“Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle” ascends to top spot at North American box office

LOS ANGELES — Sony’s “Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle” sped past “Insidious: The Last Key” and “Star Wars: The Last Jedi” to the top spot at North American box office in its third weekend with an estimated 36 million US dollars.

The action adventure comedy film has brought in a massive 244.3 million dollars in total in North American theatres to date, according to the studio figures collected by comScore. Directed by Jake Kasdan and stars Dwayne Johnson, Jack Black, Kevin Hart and Karen Gillan, the sequel to 1995’s “Jumanji” follows four teenagers who are transported into the video game world of Jumanji and must work together to beat the game in order to return to the real world.

Universal’s supernatural horror film “Insidious: The Last Key” opened surprisingly in second place with an estimated 29.2 million dollars in its debut. The fourth installment of the “Insidious” series from Blumhouse Productions was

directed by Adam Robitel and stars Lin Shaye, Angus Sampson and Leigh Whannell. The film follows a brilliant parapsychologist, Elise Rainier, as she investigates a haunting in her childhood home.

Disney’s release of Lucas-film’s “Star Wars: The Last Jedi” landed in third place in its fourth weekend with an estimated 23.5 million dollars, pushing it total to a whopping 572.5 million dollars in North America to date. The film passed “Beauty and the Beast” as the top grossing film in North America in 2017 after only half a month of its debut. The eighth installment in the “Star Wars” saga has grossed around 1,205.2 million dollars worldwide through Sunday.

20th Century Fox’s musical biopic “The Greatest Showman” came in fourth with an estimated 13.8 million dollars in its third weekend. Universal’s musical comedy film “Pitch Perfect 3” finished fifth with an estimated 10.2 million dollars in its third weekend. —Xinhua ■



Cast members Dwayne Johnson (L) and Karen Gillan attend a news conference promoting their film “Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle” in Beijing, China on 4 January, 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

Akshay not bothered with possible clash of Padman, Padmavati

MUMBAI — There is a buzz that Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s “Padmavati” may hit the theatres the same day as “Padman”, but actor Akshay Kumar is hopeful that both the movies do well in the holiday weekend.

“Padmavati”, which missed its 1 December release date due to controversy over its plot, has

been finally given a go ahead by the censor board and according to grapevine the producers are planning 25 January release — the same day as R Balki-directed “Padman”.

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) recently gave U/A certification along with some modifications and

suggested to change its title to ‘Padmavat’.

Asked about his reaction on the possible clash of the two films, Akshay said, “It is not about competition, it is a very big day, a big week, so all the films can come. Both the films can release on that day.

“Every film has the right to

release whenever they (makers) want, and I am happy for them,” he told reporters.

Viacom18 Motion Pictures and Sanjay Leela Bhansali Productions are yet to announce the official release date of the film.

Akshay’s “Padman” co-star, Sonam Kapoor said she would wait for an official announcement

from the team of “Padmavati”.

Sonam said, “It is not announced officially, isn’t it? If it is, it is good. There is a need for competition when it comes to films and (it is) high time that the film releases.

Good cinema is good cinema, I don’t believe in competition. —PTI ■

Thousands of Belgians brave cold to take dip in wintry North Sea

OSTEND (Belgium) — Thousands of people braved the biting cold of a Belgian winter on Saturday to take a dip in the North Sea in Ostend's traditional New Year's plunge.

Undeterred by air temperatures of 6 degrees Celsius (43 degrees Fahrenheit) and equally chilly water, 4,500 people, many clad in fancy dress, ran down the beach in front of the city's neoclassical Royal Galleries.

While some did little more than wet their ankles, others took advantage of the presence of many lifeguards to take a proper dive into the chilly waves.

"When you go in, it's cold but once you are in longer, it's very good, very nice," said Joris, wearing a caveman outfit.

Organisers said the 27th edition of the New Year's plunge was average in terms of temperature and attendance, fol-

lowing an exceptionally cold 2017 edition when brisk winds pushed temperatures well below freezing.

"It's our fifth year now. We had to skip last year because it was on New Year's day and we would have been a little drunk from the day before," said Jordy Velders from the Flemish town of Lokeren, who, like his friends, was dressed up as a penguin. —Reuters ■



A participant holds a Belgian flag during the annual New Year's plunge event in Ostend, Belgium on 6 January 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

John Young, 'most experienced' US astronaut, dies at 87

NEW YORK — US astronaut John Young, who walked on the moon in 1972 and even smuggled a corned beef sandwich into orbit during a career that made him the only person to fly with three NASA space programmes, has died at age 87, officials said on Saturday.

Young, who went to space six times, died on Friday night

at his home in Houston following complications from pneumonia, National Aeronautics and Space Administration spokesman Allard Beutel said in an email.

The former US Navy test pilot was the ninth person to set foot on the moon, an experience shared by three others after Young. He eventually became one of the most accomplished

astronauts in the history of the US space programme.

He flew into space twice during NASA's Gemini program in the mid-1960s, twice on the Apollo lunar missions and twice on space shuttles in the 1980s. He was the only person to fly on all three types of programs. "Astronaut John Young's storied career spanned three generations of spaceflight. We will stand on his shoulders as we look toward the next human frontier," NASA Administrator Robert Lightfoot said in a statement. Young, described in a NASA tweet as "our most experienced astronaut," retired in 2004 after 42 years with the US space agency. The Apollo 16 mission in April 1972, his fourth space flight, took Young to the lunar surface.

As mission commander, he and crewmate Charles Duke explored the moon's Descartes Highlands region, gathering 200 pounds (90 kg) of rock and soil samples and driving more than 16 miles (26 km) in the lunar rover to sites such as Spook Crater. —Reuters ■



Looking aft toward the cargo bay of NASA's Space Shuttle Orbiter 102 vehicle, Columbia, Astronauts John Young (L) and Robert Crippen preview some of the intravehicular activity expected to take place during the orbiter's flight test, at Kennedy Space Center, on 10 October 1980. PHOTO: REUTERS



Maya Miyoshi, head of security firm SCC Co. in Koka, Shiga Prefecture, poses in her ninja-style uniform on 20 November 2017. SCC is enjoying success by dressing its security guards in the outfits in the city known as a birthplace of ninja. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Japanese security firm finds success with ninja-clad guards

OTSU, (Japan) — A security firm in a western Japanese city known as the birthplace of a prominent ninja school is enjoying success by providing guards dressed as the medieval martial arts warriors.

SCC Co in Koka has tapped into the city's growing fame for ninja tourism since its ninja-clad security guards debuted in a traffic control mission at the opening of a coffee franchise in the city in 2016.

The company's special ninja squad has continued to be hired for new jobs and its head, Maya Miyoshi, is now hoping to gain a contract to work for the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo.

"Ninja are world-class icons and we want people to feel familiar with security at sports facilities," said Miyoshi, who was dressed in the guise of a kunoichi, or female ninja.

Wearing a dark red judo-style uniform and armed with toy shuriken (ninja throwing blades) and a samurai sword-shaped truncheon, the 36-year-old said, "I've always liked to do something differ-

ent. I want to make a change in the security industry which appears to be old-fashioned and sober."

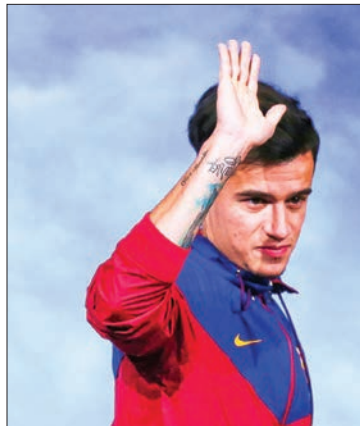
Miyoshi has surprised many in the industry since taking over SSC, a spinoff from a security unit of her husband's company, in 2011. Her experience of studying design in high school inspired unorthodox ideas such as dressing the security guards yellow uniforms.

SCC's ninja-clad security guards have been popular with the public, including high school students and foreigners, who have asked for photos.

Miyoshi's dream is to take her security ninjas to the 2020 Games in Japan's capital. "We want to contribute to the Tokyo Olympics. If we draw attention, it will cheer the industry as well."

The All Japan Security Service Association said the industry bloomed in the country after its success at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, when its work in guarding the athletes' village was widely acknowledged by the public and in the business sphere. —Kyodo News

Versatile Coutinho will be great asset for Barca, says coach



Barcelona's new signing Philippe Coutinho. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

BARCELONA — Philippe Coutinho's versatility makes him a great acquisition for Barcelona, coach Ernesto Valverde said on Sunday as the Brazilian made his first public appearance

at the Nou Camp following his 142-million-pound move from Liverpool.

"I think he will give us many things — he has a good goal-scoring record, he gives assists, he'll be able to help us a lot in attack and can play in the middle or on the wing," Valverde said.

The coach has yet to decide where the new signing will fit into his fluid side, who are unbeaten in the Liga and Champions League.

"He's versatile and we can make the most of that. We're going to see how he trains first and then we'll decide," Valverde said.

"I've seen him play in a lot of positions for Liverpool and for his country, although I don't

imagine we'll be putting him in goal."

Barca beat Levante 3-0 at home on Sunday with goals from Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Paulinho, to stay nine points clear at the top of the La Liga standings and after the game Coutinho put on a club tracksuit to pose for photographs at the Nou Camp.

Coutinho, who will sign his five-year contract with Barca and be officially presented to the media on Monday, is the third most expensive transfer ever after Neymar Jr and Kylian Mbappe, both at Paris St Germain, and ahead of new Barca team mate Ousmane Dembele, who cost the Catalans 105 million euros (\$126.35 million).

Barcelona midfielder Ivan Rakitic told reporters he was looking forward to seeing Coutinho play at the club.

"My opinion about his price doesn't matter, it went up a bit, the market dictates how much you have to pay, but we are the biggest club in the world, we want another player, and he is one of the best around," he said.

"The important thing is that every player feels welcome so we can fight for our objectives together. We will welcome him as one more member of the family. We all know all about him and we're going to really enjoy his football."

Coutinho was also welcomed to Barca by former Liverpool team mate Suarez, with

whom he spent two years at Anfield, coming agonisingly close to winning the Premier League title in 2014.

"I'm very happy as a team mate and a friend of his, I think he's going to contribute a lot to the team," Suarez said.

"Everyone knows how much quality he has, he has spent many years at the elite level. We will help make him feel at home and ensure he adapts well." Coutinho's Barca debut could be delayed due to a thigh injury which kept him out of Liverpool's last two games against Burnley and Everton, while he cannot play again in the Champions League this season after already appearing in the competition. —Reuters ■

Matsuyama drops to 12th at Tournament of Champions

KAPALUA, HAWAII — Japan's Hideki Matsuyama slid down the leaderboard into a five-way tie for 12th in Saturday's third round of the Sentry Tournament of Champions in Hawaii.

Matsuyama, who started the round four strokes off the lead and tied for eighth, had an up and down round featuring four birdies and three bogies, leaving him to card a 1-under-par 72. He sits tied for 12th at 7-under after 54 holes at Kapalua Resort's Plantation Course in Maui.

"There were some times when my putting felt good, but I didn't get what I expected," Matsuyama said. "Of course, they won't go in if you're anxious."

Matsuyama missed a putt to drop a shot on No 2 and gave up a golden chance for eagle when he missed a 4-footer on the fifth, settling for a birdie instead. He struggled on the 13th, bogeying after spraying his tee shot right, and again on No 16, where he narrowly missed an 11-foot attempt after consecutive birdies on 14 and 15.

"It's still a long (season) from here, the last day will be an important round. I want to



Hideki Matsuyama of Japan hits an iron from the fourth-hole rough during the third round of the Tournament of Champions in Kapalua, Hawaii on 6 January, 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

finish strong," Matsuyama said.

The 25-year-old is currently nine strokes behind the leader, world No 1 Dustin Johnson of the United States, who shot an equal Saturday best 7-under 66 for a

16-under three-round total. His compatriot Brian Harman is two strokes behind, and Spain's Jon Rahm is two shots further back in third after matching Johnson's 66. —Kyodo News ■

We feel like we are sinking, says Real's Marcelo

VIGO — Real Madrid players feel like their La Liga title hopes are "sinking" into a black hole after they let a 2-1 lead against Celta Vigo slip through their fingers in the final eight minutes, leaving them 16 points adrift of leaders Barcelona.

Real were leading with eight minutes to go against Celta after Gareth Bale's quick-fire double had overturned Daniel Wass's opening strike.

But Maxi Gomez's headed goal in the 82nd minute ensured the match finished in a 2-2 draw and piled more pain on Zinedine Zidane's side, who had lost 3-0 to arch rivals and runaway leaders Barca in their last Liga outing.

"It is how it looks from the outside — we are sad, angry and we feel like we are sinking," Brazilian defender Marcelo told reporters.

"It is one of the worst situations I've experienced here," added the 29-year-old who has been with the club for over a decade.

"We'll try to work hard and fight so we can win our next game but we don't like this situation at all, it's difficult because the more games you draw or lose the more pressure you are under." The last time Real were 16 points behind the Liga leaders was during Jose Mourinho's

tension-filled final campaign in 2012-13, when they finished 15 points adrift of Barca.

"There's nothing else we can do other than keep our heads up and fight and do our best to start winning again," added Marcelo, who has won four La Liga and three Champions League titles since joining Real in 2007.

"We can't do anything more, we're trying to play good football, to move the ball around and score goals but it's not coming off."

Real coach Zidane usually leaps to the defence of his players after negative results but he was not in a forgiving mood on Sunday.

"The main thing we lacked today was we didn't play the second half," said the Frenchman, who last season guided Real to their first Liga and European Cup double since 1958.

"We played very well in the first 45 minutes but not in the second half and a game lasts 90 minutes." Zidane also refused to comment on whether or not his side were out of the title race. "We're not going to talk about the league every weekend. If we keep losing points we're not going to get there. We have to focus on each game now and try to win them," he said. —Reuters ■