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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## State Counsellor visits Natma Taung National Park, cultural exhibits in Kanpetlet Township, Chin State



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) National Park in Kanpetlet Township in Chin State yesterday. **PHOTO: KO THAR BYAW**

**S**TATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) National Park and traditional cultural exhibits in Kanpetlet Township, Chin State, and met with Chin State government members, Hluttaw representatives, town elders and officials yesterday.

She was accompanied by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung and U Ohn Win, Deputy Minister U

Min Thu and departmental officials. They left Nay Pyi Taw by a special flight yesterday morning and reaches Mandalay Region, NyaungU at 8:25 a.m. The State Counsellor and party were welcomed by Mandalay Region Chief Minister Dr. Zaw Myint Maung, Region ministers, Hluttaw representatives and officials at NyaungU airport.

The party then went on to Chin State, Kanpetlet town

by Tatmadaw helicopters and were welcomed upon arrival by Chin State Chief Minister U Salai Lian Luai and wife, State Hluttaw Speaker U Zo Bawi, State Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aung Than, State ministers, Hluttaw representatives, cultural dance troupes, local people and officials.

Next, the State Counsellor and party went by motorcade to observe an exhibition in Kanpetlet town, Ward (2) where

traditional cultures artifacts of the various Chin ethnic tribes that lived in Kanpetlet Township were displayed. Next, an Assistant Director and officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture explained about the exhibits on display.

Afterwards, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and party went by motorcade to Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) and offered flowers, water, oil lamp and incense

sticks to the Buddha image at the Zina Mann Aung Pagoda.

From there, the State Counsellor viewed and raised detailed questions on the bio-diverse trees and species in the Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) National Park and a Forest Department Assistant Director explained and answered to detailed questions raised by the State Counsellor.

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## Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker meets with Shwe Koke Ko Myaing villagers

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than met with villagers from Shwe Koke Ko Myaing village, Myawady town, Myawady District, Kayin State in the village Basic Education High School assembly hall yesterday morning.

At the meeting Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than said he would explain about his experience in the Hluttaw during the Second Amyotha Hluttaw's first to ninth regular sessions so that the people would be fully aware about it. He would explain the stages of how a law came into being. The main responsibility of the Hluttaw was its legislative duty. The three pillars of administrative, legislative and judicial could also be seen in the Constitution. The three pillars do not interfere in the works of the other pillars but only check and balance the works of the other pillars, said the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker.



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than meets with villagers from Shwe Koke Ko Myaing in Myawady District, Kayin State yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Hluttaw had the power to enact laws. Laws required by the people are drawn up and enacted. Laws that are not in accord with the time and system are amended or revoked as required.

Hluttaw representatives were elected by the people to fulfill the people's requirement and Hluttaw representatives are doing this by raising questions and tabling motions.

That was why during the period when the Hluttaw was in recess, Hluttaw representatives come to meet with the people to resolve the difficulties people faced and fulfill the requirements

of the people. The Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker urged the people to openly talk about the difficulties they were facing, their requirements and added further that he would fulfill the best he can. Next, villagers spoke about their requirements in education, health, road/bridge transportation, water supply and other matters and district administrator, township administrator and relevant department officials provided explanations. Afterwards, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker gave comments and advice to ensure coordination on the matters raised by the people. Later the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker invited the people to visit the Hluttaw and then cordially greeted all those who attended the meeting people personally.

The meeting was attended by Pyithu Hluttaw and State Hluttaw representatives, District administrator, departmental officials and local villagers. – Htein Lin Aung (IPRD) ■

## Union Minister U Soe Win inspects Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank in Yangon



Union Minister U Soe Win greeting MFTB staffs in Kyauktada Township, Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

UNION Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win arrived the Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB) in Mahabandoola Garden Street, Kyauktada Township yesterday and met with Managing Director Daw Kay Thi, General Managers, Deputy General Managers, Assistant General Managers and officials, and commented on expanding new services of the bank.

The Union Minister inspected export and import trade financial support services, foreign currency transfer services, loan and guarantee services, status of opening foreign and local currency accounts and other services.

MFTB is a state-owned bank. It originated as Foreign Currency Department of the

State Commercial Bank which was established in 1954. In 1970, it changed its name to Foreign Currency Department of the People's Bank of the Union of Burma.

According to the 1975 Bank Law, its name was changed to Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank on 1 April 1976 and MFTB is organized with 12 departments and 452 staffs.

Even though its main function is foreign banking service and is based only in Yangon, it is now providing wide range of services by connecting with local banks as well. At the moment it is providing financial services by having connection with 262 banks in 84 towns in 49 countries. —Yi Yi Thant ■

## Talks on “Hidden Reality of Rakhine Situation Behind Media Mask” held

A DISCUSSION to shed light on the fake news reports on Rakhine State circulating in international media was held at Novotel Hotel in Yangon at 8 am yesterday.

The talks was primarily facilitated by Thayninga Institute for Strategic Studies (TISS) and held under the title “The Hidden Reality of Rakhine Situation Behind The Media Mask”.

Founder and Executive Director of TISS Dr. Naing Swe Oo delivered the opening speech, followed by a video-accompanied presentation by Mr. Rick Heizman, an observer of the situation in Rakhine State, and an explanation by U Maung Maung Nyein from the Joint Monitoring Committee of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement on field observations conducted in Maungdaw District.

In his opening speech, Dr. Naing Swe Oo said international media has been reporting false news regarding Maungdaw District. He said there are experts who have conducted field observation and have acquired correct information and he hopes it will be relayed in the day's

discussion.

U Maung Maung Nyein said he has read internationally written news on Maungdaw District and reports from international organizations as well. He said he travelled to Maungdaw District and discovered the true situation there. He said the situation portrayed by international media and organizations is very different from the actual reality, and that he is here to discuss what these differences are.

It was discovered in yesterday's discussion that TISS submitted amicus curiae (Friend of the Court) observations concerning Rakhine State to the International Criminal Court – ICC on 26 July of this year, but the appeal was rejected.

TISS Executive Director U Thein Tun Oo said that if issues are not addressed then the influ-

ence of western media can make our truth wrong. He said the ICC did not accept international reports submitted to them.

TISS states that within this year they have travelled to the villages in Maungdaw and Buthidaung Districts in Rakhine State that suffered terrorist attacks in 2016 and 2017 and interviewed the local Rakhine, Bamar, Mro ethnic nationals and the Hindus and Muslims regarding the terrorist attacks.

U Thein Tun Oo also said there were no problems between the communities that had always lived together. He said the situation looks like convicts from Bangladesh escaped into Myanmar and began predominating the area. He added that information like this needs to be delivered clearly to the world. —Min Thit (MNA) ■



**PHOTO: NAY LIN**





State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pays homage to the Zina Mann Aung Pagoda on the Natma Taung. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observes an exhibition showcasing Chin traditional artifacts and costumes in Kanpetlet, Chin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

## State Counsellor visits Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) ...

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The State Counsellor and party then arrived at the temporary briefing hall of Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) National Park where Forest Department Deputy Director General U Kyaw Kyaw Lwin and an Assistant Director explained in detail about Natma Taung National Park and the State Counsellor raised additional questions about the National Park.

The Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) National Park is 10,500 ft above sea level and is situated in Chin State, Mindat, Matupi and Kanpetlet townships covering an area of 176,202 acres (275.35 sq. miles).

The Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) mountain is the highest mountain range in Chin State with bio-diverse trees and species thriving in it.

The Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) mountain was designated as a Reserved Forest as well as protected wildlife area

tional Parks in Myanmar that were designated as ASEAN Heritage Park. The government has also nominated Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) National Park as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014 it is learnt.

After her visit to the Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M'

"priority is given to Chin and Rakhine states in the construction and upgrading of roads and bridges, upgrading of schools and hospitals," ...

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

in 1936. It is designated as a National Park on 2 December 2010. Furthermore, it is one of the seven Na-

Cong) National Park, the State Counsellor met with Chin State government members, Hluttaw rep-



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observes an exhibition showcasing Chin traditional textiles in Kanpetlet Town, Chin State. **PHOTO: KO THA BYAW**

representatives, town elders and officials at Kaung Kin Nantaw Hotel.

At the meeting Chin

State Chief Minister U Salai Lian Luai explained about regional data and status of conducting regional development works. Following the Chief Minister's explanation, town elders U Mya Maung and U Soe Myint explained about requirements in regional development.

Responding to the explanations, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said priority is given to Chin and Rakhine states in the construction and upgrading of roads and bridges, upgrading of schools and hospitals, providing and replenishing hospital equipment, coordination required between Union Government and state governments, setting up and implementing Myanmar Sustainable Development Program (MSDP) and status of assessing

Project Bank. The State Counsellor also said that Kyindwe Village will soon be upgraded to a town. The State Counsellor also spoke about the requirement for Chin State north and south to remain united as development projects were continuously conducted in accordance to set priority by the Union Government and urged the people of the State to value, maintain and protect the Natma Taung (Khaw Nu M' Cong) National Park cherished by the people of the State.

After the meeting, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and party left Chin State Kanpetlet Town by Tatmadaw helicopters for NyaungU, Mandalay Region, where they took a special flight and arrived back in Nay Pyi Taw in the evening. — MNA ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a photo together with Chin ethnic people in Kanpetlet Town, Chin State yesterday. **PHOTO: KO THA BYAW**



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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.

# More visitors flock to Phowintaung cave

MORE pilgrims visited Phowintaung cave temples in Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Region year over year, said U Cho Oo, head of Phowintaung pagoda trustees board.

The name means Mountain of Isolated Meditation. There are 446,444 Buddha images of varying sizes and styles and 947 small and large caves. Mural paintings can be seen in more than 120 caves.

Phowintaung received more pilgrims from Thadingyut festival in October to Tagu (the first month of Myanmar Calendar) which falls in April. There is only a small number of visitors in other months.

Phowintaung is situated 15 miles away from Monywa Town, 7 miles away from Salingyi Town, 12 miles from Pathein-Monywa Road for Bagan-NyaungU-Pakokku



People visiting to the Phowintaung caves temples in Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Region. **PHOTO: KO HTEIN (NGATHAYAUK)**

travellers. It has smooth transportation with free bus terminal for the visitors. The securities of the pagoda ensure systemat-

ic selling of the vendors for the monkeys.

The vast cave temples—Phowintaung and Shwebataung

are the hidden caves of Myanmar and they are located only kilometer away.—Ko Htein (Nga-thayauk) ■

## Heart, diabetes, hypertension patients to get free health care in Loikaw

FREE medical treatment will be provided for heart, diabetes and hypertension patients at Loikaw Township People's Hospital in Kayah State on 9 and 10 November.

A team led by Professor Dr. Nwe Nwe from University

of Medicine-1 will provide free medical checkup and treatment for two days in cooperation with five hypertension, heart and Cardiovascular Disease specialists.

They will also bring relevant healthcare machines,

equipment and medicines.

The free medical treatments will be given to provide access to high quality medical checkup and treatment to rural people. Free medical treatment will be provided from 8 am to 5 pm at the out patients de-

partment at Loikaw Township People's Hospital. Patients will be transported to Loikaw Township People's Hospital with the help of relevant departments, civil society organisations, INGOs and NGOs.—Sai Aung Zaw Lin (IPRD) ■

## Crime News

### Myanmar's highway accident death toll declines in nine months

MYANMAR'S highway accident death toll as of September this year was registered 65 people which is a decrease from 83 in the similar period of last year, according to news released by the Road Transportation and Administration Department.

Between January and September 2018, a total of 341 road accidents with 629 people injured and 65 killed were seen on the highway connecting commercial hub Yangon with the country's capital Nay Pyi Taw and the second-largest city Mandalay. Last year saw 400 road accidents with 617 people

injured and 83 killed.

Yangon witnessed the largest road accidents of 1,952 in nine months with 460 people killed, while death toll was the highest on Mandalay roads, with 564 people killed in 1,725 road accidents.

Over speeding is the main cause of the accidents on the country's roads and expressways. Other causes include reckless driving, unsafe vehicles and severe weather condition.

Thanks to traffic law enforcement on expressways, road accidents declined compared to last year. — GNLM ■

### Guests escape fire in Hotel Grand Jade in Myeik



OVER 120 guests safely escaped a fire that engulfed the third floor of Hotel Grand Jade on Baho Road in Myitnge Ward, Myeik Town, Taninthayi Region, on Thursday night.

At around 10:35 pm on 25 October, the fire allegedly caused by a cigarette of a person who visited a 10' x 10' clothing shop located in the third floor of the hotel owned by U Sithu Lin, leaving 18 people with minor injuries, according to Myeik District Fire Services Department.

The injured persons, including 10 guests of the hotel plus six firefighters, were taken to the Myeik People's Hospital. The loss due to the fire is estimated to reach approximately Ks950,000.

With the use of 14 fire engines, firefighters successfully controlled the flame at 11:35 pm on that day when members of Red Cross, police and Tatmadaw from local battalion also put out the blaze.

Police are still investigating the case.—Myint Oo (Myeik) ■



# Poor demand from China, excess supply in harvest season lead to significant decline in brown rice price

By May Thet Hnin

PRICES of brown rice have fallen significantly this harvest time as China has halted its rice imports from Myanmar, according to the rice market.

U Than Oo, secretary of Bayintnaung Wholesale Center, said: "For the time being, merchants have to rely on normal trade routes because Chinese authorities are putting restrictions on border export of rice when the global rice prices remains cool. Another point is that international traders have already observed the rice harvest season in Myanmar. Thus, the market sees excess supply and it is hard to sell a ton of rice for US\$300. Previously, traders got \$340 per ton of the same variety of rice."

Newly harvested rice is available in the market beginning in early October this year when a bag of brown rice was worth at around Ks24,000 which decreased to Ks19,500 per bag at the end of this month, according to the Bayintnaung Wholesale Center. At that time, the price of broken rice was Ks18,800 per bag which were approximately equal that of rice prices.

U Than Oo added, "The rice market is not in good condition as the selling prices of rice and



Workers carry bags of rice at the Botahtaung Jetty in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

broken rice are equal. The rice market for farmers may have disappeared in the long term. Farmers will be in debt."

At present, the Bayintnaung Wholesale Center sees arrivals of between 50,000 and 60,000 bags of rice daily and it is expected that over 100,000 bags of rice are likely to daily enter the market this harvest time, especially in November. How-

ever, rice growers and millers are worrying about the supply of their products as it is difficult to sell them in both normal routes and border routes.

U Chan Tha Oo, deputy chairman of Muse Rice Wholesale Center, said that currently rice trading has suspended due to China's crackdown at borders. An average of between 2,000 and 7,000 tons of rice previ-

ously entered the Muse border a day. For the time being, only around 1,000 tons of rice daily enter the border market.

Myanmar's economy is estimated to decline in the long term as 70 % of the country's agricultural products go to China which is still blocking Myanmar's major export items. The country could export 3.6 million tons of rice last year,

however, it is difficult to export 2.5 million tons of rice this year, he continued.

U Nay Lin Zin, joint secretary-general of Myanmar Rice Federation, said that currently, rice prices are declining not only in Myanmar but in the global market, including Thailand, Viet Nam and other rice producing nations. The prices of rice are estimated to continue to decline within the next one month.

During the period when Chinese merchants have suspended its rice imports from China-Myanmar borders, the normal trade routes are seeing an excess supply, resulting in a decline in number of rice exporters from about four to two. Rice traders say that they are worrying about the market.

The country's rice production this year is better than that of last year. Experts estimate that the current rice market is likely to much worse than that of the previous years.

Myanmar's export of rice reached a record high of over three million tons of rice and broken rice in the last 2017-2018 financial year. But, it could export around 1.3 million tons of the same in the six-month mini-budget period between April and September this year. ■

## Myanmar-Viet Nam trade increases by over \$40 million in five months

MYANMAR-Viet Nam trade between April and August this year topped US\$326 million, with exports worth \$119.8 million and imports worth \$242.3 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The current figures increased by \$40.5 million in comparison with the same time last year, when the bilateral trade totalled \$321 million.

When compared with the same period last year, this year saw a significant increase in value of bilateral exports by nearly \$ 50 million, however, the bilateral import value decreased by

\$8.5 million.

Myanmar imports car spare parts, computer parts, construction materials, steel, plastics, pharmaceuticals and other chemical products from Viet Nam.

Its exports to the Southeast Asian nation cover mineral, agricultural, forest and marine products.

Viet Nam's trade and investment in Myanmar have substantially increased each year.

The total bilateral trade in the last 2017-2018 fiscal year hit a record high of over \$714 million during the seven consecutive years.

According to the minis-

try's annual trade report, Myanmar-Viet Nam trade was \$494 million in the 2016-2017 FY, \$346 million in the 2015-2016 FY, \$321 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$281 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$155 million in the 2012-2013 FY and \$143 million in the 2011-2012 FY.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), Viet Nam's new investment in Myanmar this year reached \$50.4 million from three projects.

Myanmar received \$20.8 million worth of Viet Nam's investment in the 2017-2018 FY.—Khine Khant ■

## Imports of intermediate goods up by \$60 million in two weeks

MYANMAR'S imports of intermediate goods over the first 12 days of the current fiscal year exceeded US\$300 million, up by \$60 million as against the same period in the last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 and 12 October this year, the private sector imported intermediate products amounting to almost \$290 million whereas the public sector's import of the same totalled \$12 million.

When compared with the same period last year, this year saw an increase in value of the imports of semi-finished products by the two sectors. During the period, the private sector's import of the similar goods rose nearly by half while the

private sector's import of the same increased by \$55 million. Myanmar usually imports three major groups of products, involving capital goods, intermediate products and consumer goods. The country spent its over \$700 million on importing the groups of products within the first two weeks of this FY, covering capital goods worth \$231 million and consumer products valued at \$177 million.

Myanmar conducts external trade with international countries, including China, India, ASEAN member countries, European states and Western nations and African countries not only maritime routes but also land border points.—Swe Nyein ■



## Dr. Pe Myint inspects District IPRD, TV Substation in Thandwe

UNION MINISTER for Information Dr. Pe Myint arrived in Thandwe Township yesterday morning and inspected the District Information and Public Relations Department and the MRTV Re-transmitting Station.

The Union Minister arrived in Thandwe People's Hospital at noon and encouraged the patients in the hospital and then gave financial support to them.

He then inspected the status of preparations for the Children Literature Festival to be held at Dwayar Wadi Hall and discussed literature with

the writers gathered for the festival.

The Union Minister, along with Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, inspected the status of constructing a community centre in Thandwe.

Simultaneously, the Union Minister checked the preparations for upgrading the office and library of the District IPRD into a community centre.

Afterwards, the Union Minister inspected the MRTV Re-transmitting Station and gave necessary instructions.

—MNA ■



Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint inspects MRTV Re-transmitting Station in Thandwe yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Coordination meeting on holding Children's Literature Festival (Pathein) held

Ministry of Information, Ministry of Education and Ayeyawady Region Government held a final coordination meeting yesterday in Pathein in preparation for holding the Children's Literature Festival, Children's Literature Exhibition and Book Sales (Pathein) at a meeting hall in Pathein University.

At the meeting Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun said that only a week remains before the Children's Literature Festival begins and all are urged to openly discuss requirements from the ministry for holding the festival.

Next, organizing committee chairman and Ayeyawady Region Minister for Development Affairs U Kyaw Myint explained about arrangements made and funding status while officials from 11 sub-committees explained works done. Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun and officials then coordi-



Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun delivers the address at the coordination meeting for holding of Children's Literature Festival in Pathein. **PHOTO: MNA**

nated on the explanations and discussions made at the meeting.

After the meeting Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun, Region Minister for Development Affairs U Kyaw Myint and officials inspected the sites where the literature fes-

tival, exhibition, book sales and opening ceremony will be held.

The Deputy Minister then went to Pathein District Information and Public Relations Department office and met with staff there. — Pathein IPRD ■

## Children's Literature Festival begins in Thandwe

A CHILDREN'S Literature Festival, jointly held by the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education and the Rakhine State Government, will be held at the Dwayar Wadi Hall in Thandwe Township from 8 am to 5 pm today and tomorrow.

The festival will include book sales and exhibitions, competitions for poem recitals, storytelling, proverb composition, assembling toys, soccer, volleyball, htote-see-htoe (local game combining elements of hopscotch and tag), Sepak takraw, table tennis, singing and ad lib contests.

The festival will also include entertainment and performances by students from local schools in Thandwe and Kyaukse elephant dances. Literary talks are also planned for the festival with U

Tun Tin (Htike Tan-Thandwe) talking under the title "Flowers of the Future" and U Hla Myint Aung (Hla Myint Aung-Taungup) talking under the title "Fill in the Blanks".

The Ministries of Information and Education have collaborated with relevant departments and regional governments and have successfully held children literature festivals in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Taunggyi, Monywa and Yangon, while relevant regional governments, information and public relations departments, basic education departments, social organizations, fans of literature and geneours donors have collaborated to hold similar festivals in 33 major district cities. —Aung Min Han ■

## Man arrested with Yaba pills in Tachilek

POLICE discovered 40,000 Yaba pills hidden in motorcycle driven by a young man in Tachilek Township, Shan State on 25 October.

A combined team that include member of Anti-Drug Squad 30 based in Tachilek stopped a Honda Wave i (125) motorcycle driven by Kyalay,

18, on Aye Yeik Myaing Road, Edin Village, Tachilek Township on 25 October.

He left the motorcycle and ran away when the police stopped him.

The police chased and caught Kyalay in a rubber field about 3,000 yards away from where he left the motorcycle.

The combine team members searched the motorcycle in the presence of witnesses and found 40,000 WY brand Yaba pills in the tool box of the motorcycle.

Action is being taken against Kyalay by Tachilek Myoma police station. — Sai Aung Zaw Lin (IPRD) ■



Participants entertaining with dances at the Dwayar Wadi Hall in Thandwe Township yesterday. **PHOTO: TIN TUN OO**



## Nation Building

In the process of establishing a peaceful, prosperous and resilient nation, we must take account of the need to strengthen the mechanisms and institutions of government. It is of paramount importance to uphold rule of law, ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of our citizens, provide for equality of taxation, deliver basic services to our people, including education, health and social services, transportation, communication and infrastructure development, and to strengthen the administrative mechanisms of government.

(Excerpted from the report on the current work of the Union Government, delivered at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 19 September 2018)

## Union Minister U Thein Swe visits Toyoda Gosei Co., learning institutions in Nagoya, Chiba

UNION MINISTER for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe and his entourage traveled from Tokyo to Nagoya in Japan on the morning of 24 October and visited the CTEC, KTEC training schools.

The Union Minister met with Myanmar nationals taking internship and encouraged them to focus on their studies and to acquire more experience in the workplace so that they can build up confidence and increase productivity.

Next, the Union Minister visited the Toyoda Gosei Group TGAP Co. Ltd and observed the production site of car parts and met with the 13 Myanmar trainees there. In the afternoon, the Union Minister and his entourage travelled to Chiba City and visited the Advanced Polytechnic Center, which is opened under the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

In the center's meeting hall, Director-General Mr. Takiyara explained about the center's focus on providing training to the unemployed,



Union Minister U Thein Swe encourages trainees at the CTEC, KTEC training schools in Nagoya, Japan on 24 October. **PHOTO: MNA**

high school graduates and people in the workplace, providing advance technical training to people working in the industrial, construction and electricity sectors, how the centre conducts research for small-scale industrial businesses, providing capacity-building trainings and support for curriculum development, sending technical teaching experts, and cooperating with individual experts

and other centers.

The Union Minister spoke about technical trainings provided in Myanmar, how his ministry cooperates with other relevant ministries in providing training to different sectors, the technical schools and government technical institutes opened by the Ministry of Education and sending qualified individuals to technological universities. —MNA ■

### Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Notification 153/2018

2<sup>nd</sup> Waxing of Thadingyut 1380 ME  
(11 October 2018)

#### Reminder Notification on conducting election speeches and campaigning

1. With its Notification 121/2018 dated 24 August 2018, Office of the Union Election Commission had announced the campaign period of 60 days from 6 a.m. 3 September 2018 to 12 midnight 1 November 2018 for the 3 November 2018 by-election.
2. To ensure a free, fair and peaceful election where the constituents can vote freely, election speeches and campaigning are prohibited from 12 midnight 1 November 2018 to the completion of the by-election on 3 November 2018.
3. Campaign posters and advertisements are to be removed before midnight 1 November 2018. If the campaign posters and advertisements are not removed by midnight 1 November 2018, the township sub election commission will coordinate with relevant city development committee or township development committees to remove the campaign posters and advertisements. The cost of removing the campaign posters and advertisements are to be incurred by the relevant Hluttaw representative candidate.

*Chairman  
Union Election Commission*



Journalists interview local people at Thet Kel Pyin Camp in Sittway yesterday. **PHOTO: AUNG YE THWIN**

## Local, foreign media visit Thet Kel Pyin Camp in Sittway

JOURNALISTS from local and international media groups arrived in Sittway Township via Myanmar National Airline yesterday at noon.

The media group met with people living in Thet Kel Pyin Camp and asked and gathered news about the resettlement programs, their living condition, education and health.

Thet Kel Pyin Camp was established in 2012 and currently has 100 households and about 6,000 people living there.

The media group included journalists from Yomiuri

Shimbun, MIR, Mizzima Weekly, Channel 4 News, Swiss TV, MRTV, MITV and MNA.

Since the incident in October 2016, media groups have been allowed access to Rakhine State once in 2016, eight times in 2017, and seventeen times in 2018, making a total of twenty-six visits.

The Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State has planned for conducting two guided media trips per month within 2018. —Aung Ye Thwin ■



# Human rights issue should not be hijacked for political purposes

WHILE progress is being made toward resolving the complex problems in Rakhine State, the United Nations Security Council briefing by the chair of the U.N. Fact-finding Mission-FFM was held on 24 October.

We said repeatedly earlier that we objected to the establishment of the Fact Finding Mission because it is flawed, biased and politically motivated from its genesis and its report only half heartedly mentioned atrocities of the ARSA terrorist group.

The Union Government of Myanmar has resolutely rejected the International Criminal Court's ruling because the Court's decision is made on dubious legal grounds.

In fact, our country is conducting its own investigation. Myanmar will never accept any calls to refer it to the Court because the situation in Rakhine State in no way threatens international peace and security. The accusation is absurd and groundless. The report is full of prejudice, and totally unconstructive.

Sadly, we are witnessing the erosion of moral and institutional integrity of the United Nations as a result of the blatant attempt by some members of the Council to hijack the human rights issue for their political purposes.

History will judge you for what you said and what you have done in the Security Council. The people of Myanmar, no one else, will decide their own destiny.

Myanmar and imposition of politically motivated external pressure will be detrimental to the existing good will and cooperation of the Myanmar Government with the international community.

In dealing with the multi-faceted challenges facing our country as a nascent democracy, the Government of Myanmar places importance on working together with its regional and international partners, including the United Nations, adopting a fair solution-seeking approach.

In his UN Day message on 24 October, President U Win Myint reminded us that, "The value of the United Nations will be decided by how the organization and its member States utilize instruments at their disposal to promote peace, stability and harmony, and to mitigate harm and enmity. Objectivity, impartiality, professionalism, respect for national sovereignty- these are some of the keys to the success of the United Nations' mission".

On the same day he made the speech, hate speeches and provocations began to come right into the conference rooms of the United Nations where we should all work together for peace and harmony and for tolerance.

History will judge you for what you said and what you have done in the Security Council. The people of Myanmar, no one else, will decide their own destiny.

# Contributing to achieve food security and sustainable agricultural productivity

By K Zin Thit (Mandalay University)

THERE are several basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter which are of crucial importance for the survival of human beings. Among them, food is regarded as one of the indispensable elements in our lives, thus we should strive to produce food in sufficient quantities in order to meet these needs. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations, goal 2 states that we should end hunger and all forms of malnutrition around the world. We are all duty bound to achieve food security and improve nutrition while promoting sustainable agricultural productivity in the country. Moreover we all know that goal 12 ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns. As for nations and international organizations, efforts are being made to go hand-in-hand with strategies that can improve and achieve the SDG goals. It is found that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is working with the government and other international communities to reach the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

**World Food Day**

World Food Day is celebrated every year around the world on 16 October in honour of the date of the founding of the FAO of the United Nations. The day is widely celebrated by many countries around the world. The World Food Day's theme for 2018 is "Our Actions are our Future: A#Zeo Hunger world by 2030 is possible" which focuses on the importance of good nutrition for a healthy nation.

It is heartening to learn that the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has made a commitment to develop the socio-economic conditions of the country while exporting surplus agricultural commodities. Every citizen is duty bound to take part in the process because the sectors of agriculture and breeding of livestock have made great contribution to the basic requirements for us all. According to the data conducted in 2015, it was estimated that about 795 million people were suffering from chronic undernour-



ishment globally while the Asia Pacific region still has 490 million people who had to face the shortcomings of food security. The projections show that feeding a world population in 2050 would require raising overall food production by some 70 per cent.

**Conditions in Myanmar**

According to the Demographic and Health Survey conducted in 2015-2016, anemia was found to be prevalent in some 76.4 per cent of children from 6 months to one year old and 74.8 per cent of children from one year to two years old, malnutrition was prevalent in 29.2 per cent of children aged under five and seven per cent of children under five were wasted, 18.9 per cent of children were moderately underweight and 16 per cent of children aged from six months to two years were receiving the Minimum Acceptable Diet \_MAD. That's why we should make concerted efforts to boost doubling agricultural productivity and livestock breeding. In accordance with this year's theme of FAO, we ought to strive to work together for a future that can ensure easy access to safe, healthy and nutritious food and to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle that can change the world for the better.

**Agricultural Sector in Myanmar**

Although commodity prices such as vegetables and fruit have risen slightly in Myanmar, the country is in a position to achieve a balanced diet. Myanmar has exported various types of beans that have been fully sufficient for the domestic market. Myanmar's beans and pulses constitute an important sector for the country's economic development. Myanmar is self-sufficient in rice production and the country, as a whole, is in surplus of rice and self-sufficiency rate that is estimated to be about 168 per cent. According to the rice sufficiency data, it is found that there are 66 per cent in Mandalay Region, 98 per cent in Magway Region and 66 per cent in Chin State. Rice is the main staple food of Myanmar and there are some 17.282 million acres of paddy fields that have been cultivated in the 2017-2018 fiscal year. In this year, rice production has amounted to 3.518 million metric tons which is the highest record in 70 years, thanks to good water utilization management, use of machinery to innovate agricultural modernization, alternative Pest Control Methods for Agricultural Use, amendment of National Land Use Law, increasing cooperative

societies for seed production, financial support for agricultural sector, supply chain financing and nurturing.

**Livestock breeding**

Fisheries play a vital role in the culture and economy of Myanmar, and fish is second



PHOTO: PHOEE KHWAH

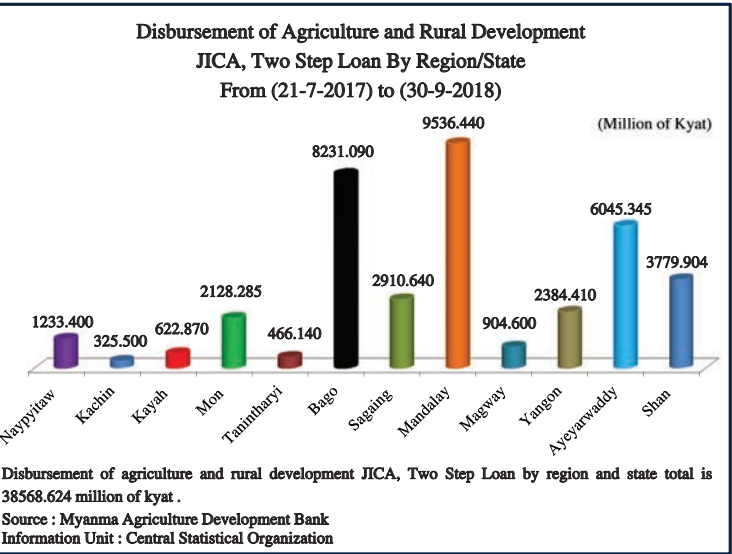
Moreover nine new types of rice species have been nurtured for generations by farmers throughout the country, aiming to promote Myanmar's rice sector through the cultivation of high quality rice that can enhance the living standards of the local farmers. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has made efforts to support technical assistances to cultivate rice, plant oil, ground nuts, sesame, tea leaf, mango, rubber and coffee.

only to rice in the Myanmar diet. Fishery sector serves as a major source of protein of the people who largely consume rice and curry as staple food. Myanmar has exported over 570,000 metric tons of fishery products, valued at \$ 711.717 million between 2017-2018 fiscal year, hitting a 20-year record high. In the sector of livestock breeding, efforts are being made to adopt advanced farming technologies to enhance the fishery export sector. According

to the data, there are a number of 16.6 million cows, 3.6 million buffaloes, 8.8 million sheep and goats, 319 million chickens and 29 million ducks that were bred in the country. Accordingly, Myanmar is implementing a program to export one million cattle every year, aiming to increase private investment and competition in the livestock breeding sector.

## Other sectors

With the creation of employment opportunities, cooperation is of vital importance to promote agriculture and livestock breeding sectors aiming to face challenges and priority actions along a path towards Zero Hunger by 2030, making sure all people – especially children – have easy access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round. This involves promoting sustainable agricultural practices: supporting small scale farmers and allowing equal access to land, technology and markets. It also requires international cooperation to ensure investment in infrastructure and technology to improve agricultural productivity.



## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued Friday 26 October 2018)

**SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs MST:** During the past (24) hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Sagaing Region and Kachin State, rain or thundershowers have been widespread in Eastern Shan and Kayah states, fairly widespread in Mandalay, Magway and Taninthayi regions, Southern Shan State, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago and Yangon regions, Rakhine and Kayin states and isolated in the remaining regions and states with isolated heavy falls in Mandalay Region. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Meiktila (1.66)inches, Manaung (1.50)inches, Wundwin (1.19) inches, Htilin (1.13)inches, Sinbyugyun (1.10)inches, Heho (0.91)inch and Pauk (0.87)inch.

**BAY INFERENCE:** Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 27 October 2018:** Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing Region, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions, Northern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states, fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Kayah states. Degree of certainty is (100%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4 - 7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of scattered to fairly widespread rain or thundershowers in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions, Shan, Chin and Rakhine states.

Call  
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Translated by  
Win Ko Ko Aung

■■■



### Khashoggi timeline: the diplomatic fallout

Accusations, denials and contradictions in the killing of the Saudi journalist

<b>Tuesday, Oct 2</b> <b>Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi</b> enters the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul to receive documents for his upcoming marriage. Khashoggi is an outspoken critic of Saudi Arabia's King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. <i>Photo: Khashoggi seen entering consulate, CCTV image released by Turkish media</i>	<b>Oct 3</b> The Washington Post reports that the journalist has not been seen since he entered consulate. Turkish authorities believe he is still being held there. <i>His fiancée Hatice Cengiz outside the consulate</i>	<b>Oct 4</b> Following mounting global concerns about his whereabouts, Saudi Arabia says he disappeared after he left the building. The Saudi ambassador is summoned to the Turkish foreign ministry. <i>Saudi Arabian flag consulate, Istanbul</i>	<b>Oct 5</b> <b>Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman</b> says that Khashoggi is not in the consulate and "we are ready to welcome the Turkish government to go and search our premises." <i>Handout photo of the Crown Prince, Saudi Royal Palace Sept 30</i>	<b>Oct 6, 7</b> Government source says <b>Turkish police</b> believe Khashoggi was killed inside the consulate. Turkey seeks permission to search the consulate. No search reported. <i>Saudi official at the consulate</i>	<b>Oct 12</b> <b>Saudi delegation</b> arrives in Turkey for talks on the disappearance of Khashoggi. <i>Diplomatic vehicle leaves Saudi consulate</i>	
<b>Oct 13</b> Saudi interior minister claims that <b>orders to kill Khashoggi were "baseless allegations and lies"</b> . <i>CCTV footage shows a jet alleged to have ferried a group of Saudi men at Ataturk airport on October 2</i>	<b>Oct 15</b> Turkish forensic officers enter consulate. US President Donald Trump sends Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to Saudi Arabia to discuss the issue. <i>Turkish forensic police in the consulate</i>	<b>Oct 16, 17</b> US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meets with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh, goes onto Ankara to meet Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. <i>Pompeo with the Crown Prince, Riyadh Oct 16</i>	<b>Oct 18</b> Senior ministers from Britain, France, the Netherlands, and US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin pull out of a major investment conference in Saudi Arabia. <i>The consulate Oct 17</i>	<b>Oct 20</b> Saudi Arabia admits that Khashoggi had been killed inside the consulate. Claims he died in a fistfight. Trump swiftly endorses Saudi explanation. <i>Demonstrators outside consulate</i>	<b>21 Oct</b> UK says Saudi explanation not credible. Trump backtracks, accuses Saudi Arabia of lies. Saudi foreign minister denies knowledge of body's location. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan vows to reveal the "naked truth" over the death. <i>Jamal Khashoggi in Bahrain, 2014</i>	<b>Oct 23</b> Turkish president Erdogan says the murder was "planned" days in advance and the video surveillance system was intentionally deactivated. He demands to know the location of the body and "who gave the orders" to the killers.

Source: AFP Photos/Demotix News Agency/Saudi Royal Palace/Sabah Newspaper/Turkish President's Office/Kayhan Ozar

Khashoggi timeline: the diplomatic fallout. PHOTO: AFP

## Saudi says Turkish probe shows Khashoggi murder 'premeditated'

RIYADH (Saudi Arabia) — Saudi Arabia said Thursday the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi appeared to have been premeditated, based on information from Turkey, backing away from an earlier claim that he was killed in a brawl.

It was the latest twist in the shifting official narrative of the October 2 killing inside the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul, which US President Donald Trump has derided as "one of the worst cover-ups" in history.

Saudi Arabia has sought to draw a line under the crisis, and a rights group said Thursday that authorities had allowed Khashoggi's eldest son Salah and his family to leave the country after lifting a travel ban. But the kingdom still faces mounting pressure from sceptical world powers demanding answers and to know the whereabouts of Khashoggi's body.

The Saudi public prosecutor said he was making the latest assessment on the basis of evidence supplied by Turkey, which has been the source of a series of grisly revelations about the government critic's death.

After first insisting Khashoggi left the consulate unharmed, Saudi authorities said he was killed in an argument that degenerated into a brawl before finally accepting what Turkey had said virtually from the start -- that he was killed in a premeditated hit.

"Information from the Turkish authorities indicates that the act of the suspects in the Khashoggi case was premeditated," the office of public prosecutor Sheikh Saud al-Mojeb said in a statement carried by the state-run Saudi Press Agency.

"The public prosecution continues its investigation with suspects... to complete the course of justice."

Khashoggi was the victim of an "extrajudicial execution" committed by the Saudi state, UN expert Agnes Callamard said Thursday, calling for an international investigation.

Separately, CIA Director Gina Haspel briefed Trump on the latest developments in the investigation of the killing after a fact-finding mission to Turkey.

As the new Saudi admission came on Thursday, Turkish For-

eign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Riyadh still needed to provide answers to remaining questions, such as who ordered the hit and what happened to Khashoggi's body. "Where is (the body)? You admit they did it, but why are they not saying (where)?" Cavusoglu said at a press conference in Ankara.

"His family also wants to know and pay their final tribute."

### Slow drip of admissions

The slow drip of Saudi admissions cast a pall over a showcase three-day investment forum that ended on Thursday, with organisers putting a brave face on the array of no-shows among big-name guests. The Saudi energy minister said foreign companies which boycotted the Future Investment Forum (FII) had "apologised" and vowed to restore normal relations.

"Some companies abstained from the conference due to political pressure as a result of an odious campaign directed from outside the kingdom which has failed," Khalid al-Falih told state-run Al-Ekhabariya news channel. —AFP ■

## Ethiopia appoints Africa's only female president

ADDIS ABAB (Ethiopia) — Ethiopia on Thursday appointed a woman to the largely ceremonial position of president for the first time, further increasing female representation in the government of Africa's second most populous nation.

In a unanimous vote, Ethiopian lawmakers picked career diplomat Sahle-Work Zewde, 68, to replace Mulatu Teshome who resigned in unclear circumstances.

Ethiopia's reformist Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed last week appointed a slimline 20-person cabinet in which half the posts are held by women.

They include defence minister Aisha Mohammed and Muferiat Kamil who leads the newly-created Ministry of Peace, responsible for police and domestic intelligence agencies.

"If the current change in Ethiopia is headed equally by both men and women, it can sustain its momentum and realise a prosperous Ethiopia free of religious, ethnic and gender discrimination," Sahle-Work said Thursday.

Sahle-Work, who was born in the capital Addis Ababa and attended university in France, has been Ethiopia's ambassador to France, Djibouti, Senegal and the regional bloc, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

Just prior to her appointment as president she was the UN's top official at the African Union. She is fluent in English and French as well as Amharic, Ethiopia's main language.

As president she is expected to serve two six-year terms. —AFP ■



Career diplomat Sahle-Work Zewde has been Ethiopia's ambassador to France, Djibouti, Senegal and the regional bloc, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). PHOTO: AFP

## Africa's largest train-making plant opens in Johannesburg

JOHANNESBURG (South Africa) — South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa on Thursday unveiled the continent's largest train manufacturing plant, a joint venture between the national rail firm and French transport group Alstom.

The factory is a part of a 51-billion-rand (\$3.5 billion, 3.1 billion-euro) deal between Alstom and the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) to produce a fleet of 580 six-car suburban trains.

The first train from the Gibela plant in Dunnottar, east of Johannesburg, is scheduled to roll off the test track by the end of this year. South Africa's economy has in recent years suffered low growth rates and this year slipped

into a recession, and Ramaphosa hailed the new investment in trains.

"This investment here signifies a new era in the modernisation of modern rail network," he said as he formally inaugurated the plant.

"Our railways must become the arteries of a growing economy that brings meaningful improvement in people's lives."

The president said the plant was a "major boost to our manufacturing capacity as a country."

"Manufacturing... is the real engine of economic growth."

When fully operational, the plant is expected to employ 1,500 people. At least 56 trains are to be built over the next two years. —AFP ■



# De Niro, Biden bring bomb alerts to 10, manhunt intensifies

NEW YORK — Hollywood megastar Robert De Niro and former US vice president Joe Biden were the latest targets in a spree of 10 devices and pipe bombs sent to opponents of Donald Trump, but a nationwide manhunt revealed no major public leads Thursday.

Hundreds of officers from the FBI, US Secret Service and dozens of other agencies are searching round the clock for the culprit or culprits behind the 10 suspect packages that politicians on all sides have branded “terrorism.”

Since Monday, crude, home-made bombs and other suspected explosive devices have been addressed to Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, CNN, liberal billionaire donor George Soros and other figures loathed by US President Donald Trump’s supporters.

Packages have been intercepted in New York, Maryland, Florida, Delaware and Los Angeles.

“It does remain possible that further packages could or have been mailed,” assistant FBI director William Sweeney said, confirming that “some” packages had been sent through the US postal system.

So far, no one has been hurt, but the attempted bomb-spree has frayed nerves and raised tensions.

On Thursday evening, New York police sent the bomb squad to investigate two unattended packages at the Time Warner Center, where CNN’s New York bureau was evacuated a day earlier after a pipe bomb was found in the mail room.

Police later issued an all clear and said the mall was being re-opened.

In Miami, also late Thursday, police sent a bomb squad to a US Postal Service facility to assist federal agents “as part of the ongoing investigation into suspicious packages” found elsewhere, the Miami-Dade Police said on Twitter.

US media report that at least some of the packages have been sent from Florida.

“We will identify and arrest the person or people responsible for these acts. Make no mistake,” New York police chief James O’Neill told a news conference, refusing to divulge any leads investigators may have.

“It’s an ongoing thing. We are discovering things by the hour,” he added.

## Pipe bomb threats in the US

US President Donald Trump attacked the media for “endless hostility” after a number of prominent people and a media outlet were sent pipe bombs and suspicious packages

Some of those targeted

The infographic features a map of the United States with lines connecting specific locations to portraits of individuals targeted by pipe bomb threats. The locations marked on the map are Los Angeles, New York, Washington, Miami (Sunrise, Ventura), and Chappaqua. The individuals and their associated threats are:

- Barack Obama:** Secret Service intercepted package addressed to Barack Obama.
- Hillary Clinton:** Package intercepted addressed to Hillary Clinton.
- John Brennan:** CNN evacuated after a pipe bomb found in mailroom addressed to guest commentator and former CIA director John Brennan.
- George Soros:** First package sent to the New York home of billionaire liberal donor George Soros on Oct 22.
- Robert De Niro:** Package sent to his TriBeCa Productions office.
- Eric Holder:** FBI said a wrongly addressed package sent to Obama’s former attorney general Eric Holder.
- Joe Biden:** and two to former vice-president Joe Biden.
- Maxine Waters:** Prominent Democrat Maxine Waters was sent two suspicious packages.
- Debbie Wasserman Schultz:** Two suspicious packages sent to Democratic Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz. Her name used as return address on a number of the packages.

Source: FBI, AFP Photos

Pipe bombs threats in the US. PHOTO: AFP

Early Thursday a retired police detective called the bomb squad to remove a suspected explosive device sent to double Oscar-winner De Niro at his Tribeca Productions company

in New York.

The 75-year-old star used an expletive to condemn Trump at the televised Tony Awards last June, receiving a standing ovation. Two additional packages

were addressed to Obama’s former vice president, Joe Biden, often rumored as a potential Democratic presidential candidate for 2020, in Delaware, the FBI confirmed. — AFP ■



Sentsov is serving a 20-year term over an alleged arson plot in Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. PHOTO:AFP

## EU prize awarded to Ukraine’s Sentsov in slap to Russia

STRASBOURG (France) — The European Parliament on Thursday awarded the Sakharov human rights prize to Ukrainian Oleg Sentsov and called for Russia to free the filmmaker, jailed after opposing the annexation of his native Crimea.

In bestowing the honour, the European Union’s elected assembly took Russian President Vladimir Putin again to task over what it sees as his illegal occupation of Ukraine.

Russia’s foreign ministry

slammed the award as “an absolutely politicised” move.

In announcing the prize, European Parliament President Antonio Tajani said Sentsov’s case reminded the assembly it has a duty to defend human rights everywhere. “Through his courage and determination, by putting his life in danger, the filmmaker Oleg Sentsov has become a symbol of the struggle for the release of political prisoners held in Russia and around the world,” Tajani said. — AFP ■

## Spain Supreme Court orders trial of former Catalan leaders

MADRID (Spain) — Spain’s Supreme Court on Thursday ordered 18 former Catalan leaders to stand trial over their role in last year’s declaration of independence. The trial is expected to start in early 2019 and will likely revive tensions between Catalonia and Spain’s central government, which have eased since new socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez came to power in June.

The court said nine of the jailed former leaders including Catalonia’s ex-vice president Oriol Junqueras should be tried for rebellion, which carries a prison sentence of up to 25 years.

But the region’s former president Carles Puigdemont — who is also accused of rebellion over his role in the separatist drive and is in self-imposed exile in Belgium — is not among the group because Spain does not allow trials in absentia. Catalonia’s parliament declared independence on October 27 last year following a banned secession referendum that was marred by violence as national police sent in from Ma-



Protesters marched in Barcelona last month demanding the release of Oriol Junqueras who faces charges of rebellion along with eight other Catalan separatist leaders. PHOTO:AFP

drid beat voters with batons and fired rubber bullets.

The move triggered Spain’s worst political crisis since the return to democracy following the death of long-time dictator Francisco Franco in 1975.

### Embezzlement, disobedience

Apart from Junqueras, the court ordered five other members of the Catalan government to stand trial for rebellion, along with the ex-president of the Cata-

lan parliament, Carme Forcadell.

The leaders of two powerful grassroots separatist groups, Jordi Sanchez of the Catalan National Assembly (ANC), and Jordi Cuixart of Omnium Cultural, were also ordered to stand trial for rebellion.

Amnesty International earlier this month called for the release of the two men who have been in jail since October 2017, saying their continued detention was “excessive and disproportionate”. — AFP ■





Ties between Beijing and Tokyo have rapidly warmed as Trump has slapped massive tariffs on China while also targeting Japanese exports in his effort to cut US trade deficits. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Japan PM Abe welcomed near Tiananmen Square in rare China visit

BEIJING (China) — Japan's Shinzo Abe inspected troops off Beijing's Tiananmen Square Friday during a rare visit to China as ties further improve and the two countries face trade challenges from US President Donald Trump.

Premier Li Keqiang greeted Abe as Japan's flag flew outside the opulent Great Hall of the People across from Tiananmen Square, and they reviewed an honour guard before going inside for talks.

Relations between Asia's two biggest economies have improved in recent years after they sunk to new lows in 2012 when Tokyo "nationalised" disputed islands claimed by Beijing.

The relationship has rapidly warmed up as Trump has slapped massive tariffs on China while also targeting Japanese exports in his effort to cut US trade deficits, despite tout-ing his personal bonds with Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Abe and Xi are expected to discuss how to boost economic cooperation between the world's second and third largest economies when they meet later Friday.

Abe brought along delegates from 500 Japanese companies, which are eager for increased access to China's massive market, while Beijing is interested in Japanese tech-

nology and corporate know-how.

"Though the US is quite an influential factor in China-Japan ties, the effect is limited," China's nationalistic Global Times said in an editorial.

"If Beijing and Tokyo intend to plan their future bilateral relationship based on Washington's attitude, they will only get lost," the state-run daily said.

### 'Safeguard free trade'

Abe and Xi are likely to focus on a range of potential deals, including joint investments in infrastructure in regional nations including Indonesia and the Philippines.

The last official visit to Beijing by a Japanese prime minister was in 2011.

Since an awkward 2014 encounter between Abe and Xi on the sidelines of a summit, there have been ministerial visits by both sides and a softening of rhetoric. Li visited Tokyo in May.

Abe's three-day trip, which began Thursday, sets up the possibility that Xi will visit Japan next year.

Abe and Li already met on Thursday during a reception to celebrate the signing of the treaty that put Japanese and Chinese relations back on track after World War II.

At the event, Li called for the countries to "jointly

promote regional peace" and "safeguard multilateralism and free trade," according to state broadcaster CCTV.

For his part, Abe said: "Japan and China play an irreplaceable role in the economic development of Asia and even the world" and both sides should work together to "promote world peace and prosperity," according to CCTV.

### Territorial disputes

Before heading to Beijing, Abe said he would also discuss North Korea and territorial frictions — calling to make "the East China Sea a sea of peace, friendship and cooperation."

Just days before Abe's trip, Tokyo lodged an official complaint after Chinese ships cruised around the disputed islands that Tokyo calls the Senkaku and Beijing labels the Diaoyu islands.

China has long denounced Japan for what it says is an insufficiently contrite attitude towards its role in World War II.

But ahead of the trip, Beijing has taken a more cordial stance than it has in the past.

Japanese media have reported Abe is hoping the visit will produce a soft power win in the form of some panda diplomacy, with zoos in Sendai and Kobe apparently angling for new additions. —AFP ■

## 2 Koreas hold military talks to check progress in easing tensions

SEOUL — High-level talks between the militaries of North and South Korea are under way Friday to check progress in implementing measures aimed at easing military tensions, as agreed to at last month's inter-Korean summit, according to the South's Defense Ministry.

The general-level meeting began at 10 a.m. at the northern side of the border village of Panmunjeom, with Maj. Gen. Kim Do Gyun representing the South's delegation and Lt. Gen. An Ik San

leading the North's side, according to the ministry.

Under a military agreement signed at the summit, the two sides are to disarm the Joint Security Area at Panmunjeom and remove some guard posts within the Demilitarized Zone dividing the Koreas.

Besides evaluating interim progress in carrying out the measures, the two delegations will also discuss what will be enforced in the future, Kim told reporters before departing for the meeting venue. — Kyodo News ■



Lt. Gen. An Ik San (l) of North Korea and Maj. Gen. Kim Do Gyun of South Korea shake hands ahead of inter-Korea military talks in Panmunjeom on 26 October 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO**

## Philippines reopens Boracay Island after 6-month clean-up

BORACAY ISLAND (Philippines) — The Philippines on Friday reopened its globally popular beach destination of Boracay Island to tourists after a six-month closure to address environmental problems.

"I feel happy. I think many people are here," Manila resident Jennifer Aguilera, 28, told Kyodo News upon stepping ashore the island from a ferry, joining a party of 10 returning visitors.

French tourist Pierre Rolland, 31, who arrived on the island with his Filipino girlfriend, said he expected to see a "cleaner" Boracay after undergoing "rehabilitation" since its April 26 closure.

German tourist Josef Fuchs,

61, echoed Rolland's thoughts. "Less crowded, more controlled (activities of tourists), and cleaner beach," are his expectations, he said.

The 1,060-hectare island, located some 310 kilometers south of the capital Manila, has been hailed as having one of the greatest beaches in the world. It was ordered closed by President Rodrigo Duterte after describing it as a "cesspool" of water pollution.

The bold decision was implemented despite the expected economic loss and the direct impact on tens of thousands of workers and local residents. — Kyodo News ■



Tourists walk on a pier after arriving in Boracay Island on 26 October 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO**





The corn crop affected by drought in Usulután, southeast of San Salvador in July, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Climate change swelling Central American migration to US: experts

PANAMA CITY — Deepening climate change will swell Central American migration to the United States, the region's environment ministers and experts warned Tuesday as a caravan of mostly Honduran migrants trekked towards the US border in defiance of President Donald Trump.

"The next migrants are going to be climate migrants," El Salvador's Environment and Natural Resources Minister Lina Pohl told reporters on the sidelines of a conference in Panama.

Delegates heard climate change had caused prolonged periods of drought and rain in the region, damaging or destroying the crops of poorer subsistence farmers who are often forced to leave with their families to search for new opportunities.

"Central America has had recurrent losses in agriculture, with populations increasingly faced with fewer opportunities for work and development," Pohl said.

Five Central American countries — Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic — are among the world's 15 most vulnerable states in the face of extreme climate change events, ministers at the meeting of the Central American Commission for Environment and Development said.

"The impacts of climate change are part of

the triggers of migration," they said in a statement.

"All countries have a problem — that if you do not have food security or the means to survive, it causes migration — and all Central American countries are suffering," said Elvin Rodas, Honduras' deputy environment minister.

"Independently of the caravan, the effects of climate change cause migrations, because you do not have sustainability in the place where you were born," said Rodas.

### Droughts and Rains

The Central American dry corridor, which runs through Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, was hit by one of the worst droughts in a decade in 2016. That left 3.5 million people needing humanitarian assistance, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

In Guatemala, this year alone, more than 100,000 families had been affected by the loss of the corn and bean crops due to climate variability, said Guatemala's minister Alfonso Alonzo.

Change in temperatures, prolonged drought and intensified rainfall mean that millions of Central American farmers who subsist on basic grains can see their crops wiped out.

"Climate change has no ideology, it has victims and we are seeing these victims suffering every day," said Alonzo. —AFP ■

## 'Big dry' drags on as Australia sets up drought-proof fund

SYDNEY (Australia) — Australia is setting up a billion-dollar fund to "future proof" the country against droughts, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Friday, as farmers struggle with a 'big dry' forecast set to continue for months.

Eastern Australia has been hit by a crippling drought — in some areas for several years — that has forced graziers to hand-feed their stock, sell them or even shoot them dead to stay afloat.

The unfolding crisis has sparked a raft of support measures from the government, including Aus\$1.8 billion (US\$1.3 billion) in financial aid for farmers and local communities launched in August.

Morrison said a new fund with a kitty of Aus\$3.9 billion would be established to pay for drought resili-

ence and water projects in the coming decade.

"(It) means we better future-proof against drought over the next 10 years and beyond," Morrison told commercial broadcaster Channel Nine ahead of a summit with agricultural leaders to discuss the drought.

"We are doing a lot to back the farmers in the ru-

ral communities. Focusing on relief, but also on recovery, build resilience into the future." The government's Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARES) said at the summit that the drought, while severe, covered a smaller area compared to a previous extreme dry in 2002-03.

But the bureau added

that in the east, home to important areas for livestock and crops, rainfall was 40 percent lower than the 20-year average. Even so, farm incomes were less likely to plunge as significantly as in previous drought periods amid "more favourable economic circumstances and other factors" such as improved productivity, ABARES said. —AFP ■



Eastern Australia has been hit by a crippling drought that has forced graziers to hand-feed their stock, sell them or even shoot them dead to stay afloat. **PHOTO: AFP**

### CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V LE HE

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V LE HE are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-10-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-4 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.

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

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The first phase of the project will see participating physicians prescribe up to 50 visits to the MMFA during treatment, each pass valid for up to two adults and two minors. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Canadian doctors to start prescribing museum visits

MONTREAL (Canada) — A group of Canadian doctors are to begin prescribing trips to an art gallery to help patients suffering a range of ailments become a picture of health.

A partnership between the Francophone Association of Doctors in Canada (MFdC) and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA) will allow patients suffering from a number of physical and mental health issues, along with their loved ones, to take in the benefits of art on health with free visits. The pilot project is unprecedented globally, according to its organizer.

The project will see participating physicians prescribe up

to 50 visits to the MMFA during treatment, each pass valid for up to two adults and two minors.

So far 100 doctors have enrolled to take part over the course of a year, Nicole Parent, head of the MFdC, told AFP Thursday.

The numbers offer proof that doctors have “a sensitivity and openness to alternative approaches if you want” Parent said, citing scientifically proven benefits of art on health.

The benefits are similar to those patients can get from physical activity, prompting the secretion of a similar level of feel-good hormones, and can help with everything from chronic pain to depression, stress and anxiety.

The pilot program will allow organizers to gather data and analyze results, allowing for the development of protocol for identifying patients.

Parent said she hopes other museums in Canada will follow the lead of the MMFA, which since 2016 has cultivated expertise in art therapy for people with a variety of health ailments.

“I am convinced that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, culture will be what physical activity was for health in the 20<sup>th</sup> century,” said MMFA director Nathalie Bondil in a statement. “Cultural experiences will benefit health and wellness, just as engaging in sports contributes to fitness,” she said. —AFP ■

## Poor Ivory Coast pupils’ ray of hope: solar backpacks

ALLEPILLA (Ivory Coast) — The equatorial sun has been up for about an hour as a gaggle of children set off from the Ivorian village of Allepilla on their hour-long trek to school.

Back home in the evening, eight-year-old Marie-France Amoandji Ngbessoo does her homework by the light of her backpack’s LED — captured by solar panels on her way to and from school.

The light can run for three hours. With insects flitting overhead, Marie-France points to the pictures in her textbook, identifying them: “Orange, plane...”

Allepilla, some 100 kilometres (60 miles) north of the West African country’s economic

The Ivorian government has set a target of ensuring electricity to 80 percent of the country.

“These rural children are poor. They use rice sacks or plastic bags to take their things to school,” Akoumian said. “The idea was to kill two birds with one stone: give them a backpack with a light to go with it.”

The entrepreneur stressed that the solar backpacks belong to the children: “So Dad or Mum can’t come and take the light from them... to use while they are cooking or doing housework.”

Sales are brisk and have reached 55,000. Akoumian’s company Solarpak already sells the backpacks in Gabon, Madagascar and Burkina Faso, as well as to



“These rural children are poor. They use rice sacks or plastic bags to take their things to school,” Akoumian said. “The idea was to kill two birds with one stone: give them a backpack with a light to go with it”. **PHOTO: AFP**

capital Abidjan, is a rural community centred on cocoa and coffee production.

A single pump supplies water to the village of around 400 inhabitants including 150 children, and, as is the case for thousands of villages and hamlets across the country — there is no electricity.

Instead, oil-burning storm lanterns and battery-powered torches are the only sources of light.

An Ivorian charity that promotes education for rural girls, Yiwo Zone, has raised funds to provide the backpacks — which cost 13,000 CFA francs (20 euros, \$23) apiece — to schoolchildren across Africa.

Computer salesman Evariste Akoumian had the idea for the solar backpack in 2015 when his car broke down as night was falling near Soubre, in the south-west of the country.

“At the same time, children were returning home from school,” he recalls. “I said to myself, ‘We must give them light so they can study. It’s not normal for rural children to be unable to do so.’”

charities in France and Germany.

Striving to keep up with demand, Akoumian seeking aid or loans so that he can set up an assembly plant in Abidjan and boost production.

### ‘Better marks’

“It may seem cheap, but these are large sums that the villagers don’t have,” said Anna Corinne Menet Ezinlin, head of Ywo Zone. “Here in this village some people can’t afford the school fees or even notebooks. Usually school is free, but there are always registration fees or (other) payments.” Last year, Marie-France’s 13-year-old sister Lucienne could not attend school at all because their mother was off work with an illness.

“It’s hard for the children,” said village chief Jean-Baptiste Kotchi Okoma, whose seven-year-old daughter Nethania received a solar backpack. “There’s not enough money here.”

He added: “I hope their marks will be better. Children are disadvantaged here. With the backpack, I hope they will all progress.” —AFP ■

## Highlights of China Fashion Week S/S 2019 in Beijing



in  
Picture

Models present fashion creations designed by Zhang Zhifeng during the China Fashion Week S/S 2019 in Beijing, capital of China, 25 October, 2018. About 150 designers from home and abroad will hold 96 shows at the nine-day fashion week. **PHOTO: XINHUA**



## Exercises may improve memory through a bone hormone



Exercises may improve memory through a bone hormone.  
**PHOTO: XINHUA**

WASHINGTON — American researchers revealed how a bone hormone reversed memory loss in the aging brain in mice, lending new insights into how exercise could positively affect the brain.

The study published on Tuesday in the journal *Cell Reports* showed that the naturally occurring hormone called osteocalcin worked with a protein to keep the memory.

It stands to spur further investigations into the molecular machinery that underlies memory and how that machinery can be manipulated to improve it.

“We are not only building a detailed understanding of how age-related memory loss originates in the brain, we’ve

shown how osteocalcin interacts with key proteins in the brain to boost memory,” said Eric R. Kandel, Professor of Brain Science at Columbia University. For many years, memory loss was treated as a singular disorder, but now scientists realized that Alzheimer’s disease begins in a part of the brain called the entorhinal cortex, which lies at the foot of the hippocampus while the age-related memory loss, a far more common memory disorder, began within the hippocampus itself, in a region called the dentate gyrus.

Kandel’s team identified a deficiency in a protein called RbAp48 protein, a significant contributor to age-related memory loss but not Alzheimer’s. The pro-

tein levels decline with age, both in mice and in people.

When they artificially increased RbAp48 in the dentate gyrus of aging mice, the animals’ memories improved, according to Kandel. Then, the researchers found osteocalcin had a positive effect on memory. In the new study, osteocalcin has been linked to RbAp48, showing that the key driver of the memory improvements lay in the interplay between these molecules.

In a series of molecular and behavioral experiments, the team found that RbAp48 controls the expression levels of two other proteins regulated from osteocalcin.

If RbAp48 function is inhibited, osteocalcin infusions have no effect on the animals’ memory. Osteocalcin needs RbAp48 to kick start the process.

These findings also provide further evidence in favor of what may be the best way to stave off, or even treat, age-related memory loss in people: exercise.

Studies in mice showed that moderate exercise, such as walking, triggers the release of osteocalcin in the body.

The researchers suggested that, over time, osteocalcin may make its way to the brain, where it encounters RbAp48. Eventually, this could have a long-term, positive effect on memory and the brain. — Xinhua ■

## Soyuz carrier rocket with spacecraft launched from Plesetsk spaceport

MOSCOW — Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket with spacecraft has been launched by the Russian Aerospace Defense Forces at 3:15am Moscow time from the Plesetsk spaceport, the Russian Defense Ministry’s press service said.

“The Soyuz-2.1b rocket launch was supervised by Commander of the Space Forces, Deputy Commander of the Aerospace Defense Forces Gen. Col. Alexander Golovko, who arrived to the spaceport to oversee preparations and launch of the spacecraft,” the press service said.

According to the defense ministry, all pre-launch operations were completed in the routine regime. The ground automated control complex oversaw the launch and flight of the carrier



This is the third launch of the Soyuz-2 carrier rocket from the Plesetsk spaceport in 2018. **PHOTO: TASS**

rocket.

This is the third launch of the Soyuz-2 carrier rocket from the Plesetsk spaceport in 2018. The latest launch was completed on June 17.

Trials of the Soyuz-2 carrier rocket started on 8 November 2004. Over the last 14 years, 34 Soyuz-2 carrier rockets of 1a, 1b and 1v modernizations were launched. — Tass ■



**PHOTO: AFP**

## Amazon quarterly profit rockets tenfold to \$2.9 bn

SAN FRANCISCO (United States) — Amazon reported Thursday that its profit in the recently-ended quarter rocketed to \$2.9 billion in a ten-fold increase from the same period last year.

Net sales at the e-commerce colossus climbed to \$56.6 billion in the third quarter, a 29 percent increase from the \$43.7 in sales reported in the third quarter in 2017.

However, analysts had expected an even stronger performance by Amazon, prompting shares to sink 8.8 percent to \$1,642.97 in after market trades that followed release of the earnings figures.

The Seattle-based company touted the growing popularity of Amazon Business, a service tailored as a source of all kinds of equipment and supplies for companies.

“Amazon Business has now reached a \$10 billion annual sales run rate and is serving millions of private and public-sector organizations in eight countries,” Amazon founder and chief executive Jeff Bezos said in a statement released with the earnings.

“And we’re not slowing down — Amazon Business is adding customers rapidly, including large educational institutions, local governments and more than half of the Fortune 100.”

Meanwhile, operating income from the Amazon Web Service cloud platform climbed to \$2.1 billion, nearly double that in the same quarter last year.

Amazon — which offers online shoppers a combination of ease, speedy delivery and choice that few can match — has faced criticism of its labor practices, including grueling working conditions and lack of job security.

It recently announced that effective November 1 its starting wage for US workers will be \$15 an hour, amid long-standing criticism of low pay, and that it would

advocate for a higher minimum wage nationwide.

The raise will apply to 250,000 employees and to the more than 100,000 seasonal workers the company expects to hire for the holiday shopping season, it said.

Bezos said the company — valued at nearly \$1 trillion — was heeding complaints about its pay structure.

### Rivals ramping up

Amazon has become an increasingly diverse company since its start as an online book seller nearly 15 years ago, expanding to grocery stores, streaming television, cloud services and more.

The company’s stellar growth apparently ramped up Wall Street expectations, with investors guessing Amazon would perform well and then selling off shares to pocket profits on the bet, according to independent analyst Rob Enderle of Enderle Group.

“Those kinds of earnings should have had everyone ecstatic,” Enderle said.

“I think we will find people will be more aggressive taking profit and locking in what they’ve earned because of uncertainty surrounding what the US administration might do next.”

Increasing a company bottom line ten-fold is a good sign, and while Amazon’s increasing diversity makes it tougher for investors to measure it also makes it more able to shrug off downturns in any one of its businesses, according to Enderle.

“As they move into more things, they will be better able to survive trouble,” Enderle said of Amazon. GlobalData Retail managing director Neil Saunders said that while Amazon had enviable numbers, its net sales growth showed the weakest growth in a year. —AFP ■



## Aung La N Sang thwarts former undefeated Karaki, defends middleweight title

MYANMAR'S greatest sporting hero ONE middleweight and light heavyweight champion Aung La N Sang successfully defended his ONE Championship middleweight title by beating Lebanon's previously undefeated fighter Mohammad "O Lutaador" Karaki, at the ONE: Pursuit of Greatness, last night, at Thuwunna Indoor Stadium in Yangon, Myanmar.

A technically sound fighter, Aung La N Sang really saved the day for the Myanmar crowd within the three minutes period.

Even in the start, Aung La assaulted and dropped Karaki with his continuous punches.

Karaki somehow managed to get back on his feet, but "The Burmese Python" knocked Karaki down a second time and forced the referee to stop the bout at the 2:21 minute-mark.

"This is just the beginning,"



Aung La N Sang celebrates after beating Mohammad Karaki at Thuwunna Indoor Stadium in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: SEIN LWIN AUNG**

Aung La said after the victory. "I'm gonna keep getting better and guarantee I'm gonna put on better shows."

In the co-main event, Keanu

Subba quieted the Myanmar crowd with a win over Phoe Thaw, the unbeaten local fighter, with a guillotine choke.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

## Myanmar defeated by Laos 4-3 in AFC U-19 Women's Championship qualifier

MYANMAR was defeated by Laos 4-3 in the first qualifying round of AFC U-19 Women's Championship 2019 Qualifiers at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

Myanmar lined up with goalkeeper Zu Latt Nadi, defenders Hnin Mya Thazin, Naw Htet Htet Wai, Zun Yu Ya Oo, Kyi Pyar Lin, midfielders Bawel Lyan Kane, Thander Win, May Phu Ko and Moe Moe Than and strikers San Thaw Thaw and Nwe Ni Win.

The Myanmar team was led by its Head Coach Daw Thet Thet Win.

Both teams played energetically from the kick off.

The battle was a good one, with back-and-forth efforts used by the young and

active players.

Myanmar earned the opening goal early on at the 9-minute mark with a quick score by striker San Thaw Thaw, whose strong kick could not be blocked by the Laos goalkeeper.

The goal forced Laos to play hard for their equalizer with open attacks.

Laos scored an equalizer by Apahatsala at 29 minute.

The first half ended with 1-1.

In the second half, Laos were apparently better and scored their winning goals at the 58 and 81 minute marks.

The consolation goal for Myanmar was scored by San Thaw Thaw at 90 minute.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

## Vonn targets Stenmark's mythical 86-win tally on World Cup bow

SÖLDEN (Austria) — Alpine legend Lindsey Vonn knows her impending retirement will come gift-wrapped with the knowledge she is already the most successful women's skier in history.

But the 34-year-old American intends on making her final World Cup season one for the history books as she targets the landmark of 86 victories on the circuit

set by Swedish legend Ingemar Stenmark.

Only four wins short of Stenmark's record, Vonn is adamant she will retire in March 2019 even if she fails in her bid to beat Stenmark's tally.

Giv- en her success over the years and

despite the increasing threat of compatriot Mikaela Shiffrin, few will be betting against the four-time World Cup champion reaching her target during the season which opens Saturday with a giant slalom in Soelden, Austria. "I know I'll get asked about Swedish skier Ingemar Stenmark's record of 86 World Cup wins, and that I never got to race against men, but I still am going to work hard to make both possible," Vonn said in a Sports Illustrated article.

The American, who will miss the Soelden race, is so dominant on the women's scene that she has repeatedly asked the sport's governing body, the International Ski Federation

(FIS), to participate in a men's World Cup race. To no avail. She added: "I still have one more season left and while I will take it all in and enjoy this year, I will also race with the same intensity and focus that I always have."

### Metal plates

Barring the kind of injuries that have seen Vonn go under the knife for two ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) reconstructions, multiple knee repairs and enduring the insertion of metal plates and screws all over her body, recent form suggests Stenmark's record is not beyond her.

Last season she won five World Cup races and although set to begin her season at the Lake Louise downhill in Canada, skipping the Soelden leg, Vonn could compete in about 20 downhill and super-G events.

Yet, as Vonn has

experienced, disaster can strike any time. Italian Sofia Goggia, the Olympic downhill champion, was ruled out until at least January after suffering an ankle injury while training last week.

And the American will also have to contend with the skier expected to take up her mantle, compatriot Shiffrin.

The 23-year-old ace has won the last two World Cup titles and, with 43 World Cup wins to her name, mostly in the technical events of the slalom, she looks destined to follow in Vonn's footsteps having won her first World Cup downhill, at Lake Louise, last year. With the media glare on Vonn, for Marcel Hirscher it should be back to business as usual — if the Austrian can keep his motivation levels high.

Hirscher has won a record seven World Cup overall crowns and, at the relatively tender age of 29, is expected to win an eighth on the men's circuit. A two-time Olympic champion who boasts four world titles and 58 World Cup wins, Hirscher evoked the possibility of retirement earlier this year before committing himself to another season of competition. — AFP ■



Lindsey Vonn will become the World Cup's most successful ever skier if she wins five times this season to surpass the 86-win mark of Swedish legend Ingemar Stenmark. **PHOTO: AFP**