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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Tuesday, 30 January 2018



Authorities check the aid stored for returnees in Maungtaung as the government is ready to launch the repatriation. **PHOTO: MNA**

## MPs discuss fund for the disabled, tax exemption

By Aye Aye Than

THE eighth-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the second Amyotha Hluttaw was held yesterday morning in the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall.

During the session, asterisk-marked questions were asked and answered, and a bill on invention copyright as well as literature and art copyright were discussed.

Responding to a question raised by Daw Ei Ei Pyone of the Ayeyawady Region constituency 8 on a plan to set up a separate fund to provide full rights as described in the law on the rights of persons with disabilities, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye said the National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (NCRPD) was formed on 14 September 2017 with the union government order 70/2017. A work committee on the rights of persons with disabilities will be formed with 15 members, which will include deputy ministers from government organisations, permanent secretaries, directors general and officials from the federation on persons with disabilities.

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## Camps are ready for repatriation

According to the bilateral agreement made by Myanmar and the Bangladesh governments, the relocation and resettlement programmes will be resumed in Taung Pyo Letwe, Nga Khu Ya and Hla Pho Khaung camps.

The coordination meeting and preparation works are being made by the authorities to accept the displaced people who fled to other places following the terrorist attacks in

Rakhine State.

Following are excerpts from replies given by governmental service personnel who are going to perform their duties in this area.

**Police Lt-Col Saw Zayar Lin**

Security arrangements are being made for the returnees who will come back to the temporary camps in the region. There are two parts to the se-

curity arrangements: personal security and location security. We are also making effective plans for the officials concerned who will perform their duties in their respective places and for returnees who are in need of protection.

**U Hla Myat Oo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

I was assigned to perform my duties as a liaison officer at the Taung Pyo Letwe camp, to-

gether with two other officials. Our main duty is to coordinate liaison issues with the Myanmar and Bangladesh governments, according to diplomatic protocol. There are three office staff members from our department at the Nga Khu Ya camp. As for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I will perform my duties as a liaison officer through the diplomatic protocol.

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**'BEST BANK IN MYANMAR'**

Awarded by EUROMONEY 2017

## Pyithu Hluttaw discusses road construction

By Mi Mi Phyto

THE eighth-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the second Pyithu Hluttaw was held yesterday morning in the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall, Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, a question-and-answer session was held, a motion was tabled and a bill was approved.

During the question-and-answer session, U Pe Than of Myebon constituency asked whether there was a plan to connect the two sections of Myebon-Kantha-Kapaing Road in Myebon Township and Minbya Township with the Pyunshay bridge in the 2018-2019 fiscal year (FY). Ministry of Construction Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin replied that new bridge and road constructions were being carried out based on priority and the allocation of union/state funds. In the 2018-2019 FY, a six-month budget, from 1 April to 30 September, of Ks200 million from the state reserve fund and Ks50 million from the union reserve fund were being requested to construct the Pyun-

shay bridge, and if the funds are allocated, it will be implemented, said the deputy minister.

Responding to questions raised by U Khin Maung Thi of Shan State Loilem constituency on the plan to continue the construction of the Loilem-Taunggyi union road section under the build, operate, transfer (BOT) system and the plan to find a new road axis while repairing and modifying the ascending and descending roads on Khauknwe Mountain, Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin said the Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek road section in Shan State (South) and the 60-mile-long Taunggyi-Loilem section are being constructed under the BOT system by Nay Min Yaung Company. The company has been instructed to lay asphalt concrete roads in Taunggyi Town and Hopong Town, widen the Hopong-Htansan road to a 24-foot wide asphalt road by June 2018 and to install road signs. The company is executing these works, replied the deputy minister. The ascending and descending roads on the Taunggyi-Loilem road section of Khauknwe Mountain is 19

kilometres long. From the 2011-2012 FY to the 2017-2018 FY, Nay Min Yaung Company has laid a 19-km-long and 5.5-metre wide road, widened the road shoulders by 10.36 metres for up to 1.81 km, installed 680 concrete road guard poles, installed 1,219 metres of aluminium guard rail, installed 64 road signs and built 36.57 metres of retaining wall. From the 2018-2019 FY to the 2020-2021 FY, the company will widen the narrow road sections of the ascending and descending roads of Khauknwe Mountain, making it a 7.3-metre-wide asphalt road, said the deputy minister.

Ministry of Construction Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin also replied to questions on the construction sector raised by Dr. U Min Thein of YeU constituency, U Tun Tun of Pwintbyu constituency, Daw Khin Than Nu of Mindon constituency, U Myint Lwin of Twante constituency and U Aye Min Aung @ U Min Min of Paungde constituency. Next, Daw Nan Kham Aye of Namtu constituency tabled a motion on union- and state/region-level departmental organisations when



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint. PHOTO: MNA

calling for tenders; handling the transport cost of work-related materials and works that the ministerial department does not need to do, due to technical issues, while not including those works in the tender; following the instructions and work guidelines from which the departmental organisations are deviating; and implementing fair competition by requiring the tender-competing companies to include rates for complete drawings and estimates prepared by the related ministerial department, in accordance with the region. Daw Nan Khin Saw of Kunhing constituency supported the motion and said the laws and instructions need to be followed not only by the (tendering) companies but also the departmental

organisations. Rules and regulations that are one-sided for the departmental organisations need to be removed, added the Hluttaw representative while supporting the motion. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint requested Hluttaw representatives to enrol their names to discuss the motion. Later, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker went through each clause of the bill on registering agreements, sent with amendments by the Amyotha Hluttaw, to obtain the confirmation of the Hluttaw, and then announced the confirmation of the bill, as amended by the Amyotha Hluttaw.

The ninth-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the Pyithu Hluttaw is scheduled for 30 January. ■

## MPs discuss fund for the disabled, tax ...

### FROM PAGE -1

As the NCRPD was formed, a separate fund for persons with disabilities will also be set up, said the union minister.

At the moment, the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities is being conducted with the ministry's fund. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year (FY), some 54 persons from Kachin State, Kayah State, Kayin State and Shan State disabled by mines were each awarded Ks200,000. A person killed by a mine in Kachin State was given Ks700,000. Six disabled persons who lacked support in Kayah State, Fruso Town, Taw Khu Village tract, were each awarded Ks500,000, while 31 other disabled persons were each given Ks200,000, and a sick disabled person was given Ks100,000. Once the fund for persons with disabilities is set up, full rights, as described in the law on the rights of persons with disabilities, will be provided.

The government had set up a law and rule for persons with disabilities, while arrangements are underway to set up a separate fund for persons with disabilities, and full rights will

be accorded to them, explained the union minister.

In reply to a question by U Kyaw Ni Naing of Shan State constituency 11 on the plan to officially set up a Kokang National Day in Kokang Self-administered Zone for Kokang ethnic nationals, Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin said determining a national day is not related only to a party, a

Therefore, to set up a national day for ethnic nationals, a steering group that includes all of them must be formed first, and the will and wishes of all the ethnic nationals must be obtained. A national day that is set up this way needs to be recognised by ethnic nationals and celebrated. It is appropriate for all Kokang nationals in the world and the country to estab-

Commercial tax, income and profit tax are collected by the Ministry of Planning and Finance, and the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Information took no part in it.

group, a regional organisation or an organisation that is in power. It is also related to the entire ethnic national community, as well as the will and wishes of the political organisation, cultural organisation, civil society organisations, religious organisations and all the ethnic nationals living in other states and regions.

lish a national day, and the government should not set it up, explained the union minister. U Ye Htut of Sagaing Region constituency 5 then asked whether there was a plan to exempt from commercial tax the entire service supply chain of books, literature and journals published by publishers who had applied



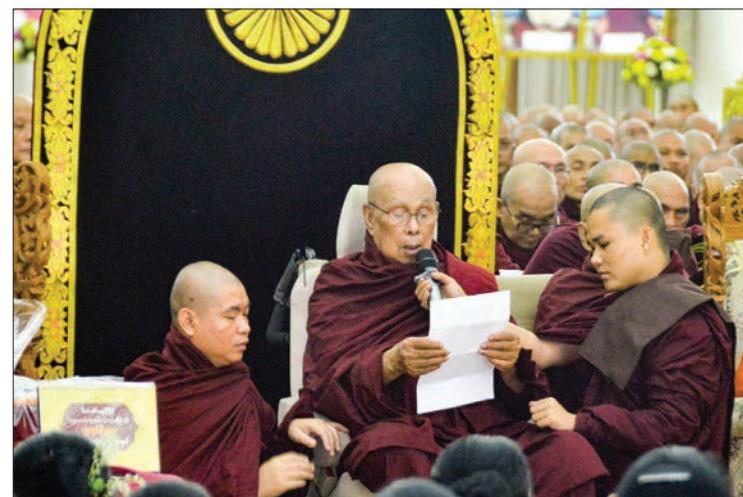
Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

and obtained recommendation letters from the Ministry of Information's copyright and registration department, as well as books, literature and journals that are imported through trade channels. Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun said the ministry only issued a recommendation letter to conduct printing, publishing and news agency works, and these entities need to obtain the necessary work permits from the municipality. Commercial tax, income and profit tax are collected by the Ministry of Planning and Finance, and the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Information took no part in it.

The ministry of information had only coordinated with the relevant ministerial department for exemption from commercial

tax. The Ministry of Planning and Finance had responded that although it is not included in the goods and services that are exempted from commercial tax, while the 2018 union tax law is being drawn, discussions should be made in the Hluttaw so that commercial tax is exempted for books and journals, and the Hluttaw's decision should be followed.

The Ministry of Planning and Finance must further take into account the loss in tax revenue if the exemption is provided. The Ministry of Information seeks the development of the publishing of books and literature that raise the knowledge of people and will support tax exemption and relief, but tax is not the domain of the ministry, explained the deputy minister. ■



Shwekyin Nikaya holds 20<sup>th</sup> conference (Left). Sayadaw Abhidaja Maharattha Guru Aggamaha Pandita Bhaddanta Vijota delivers the address. **PHOTO: MNA**

## 20<sup>th</sup> Shwekyin Nikaya Conference begins in Hmawbi

20<sup>th</sup> Shwekyin Nikaya conference was held at a monastery in Hmawbi Township, on the outskirts of Yangon yesterday.

Shwekyin Nikaya is the second largest monastic order of Sangha in Myanmar.

The Head of the Shwekyin Order, Sayadaw Abhidaja Maharattha Guru Aggamaha Pandita Bhaddanta Vijota, presided over the conference, which focuses on purifying, preserving and propagating Theravada Buddhism.

Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and Yangon Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein attended the opening ceremony of the three-day conference which will end on 31 January.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko expressed his delight for the gathering of the Buddhist monks for making decisions and suggestions for purification and preservation of Buddha Sasana.

He also pledged that the government would work together with the Members of the Sangha to preserve the Theravada Buddhism.

In the morning session of the conference, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein handed over K3 million donated by President U Htin Kyaw and First Lady Daw Su Su Lwin through Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Sayadaws attend the 20<sup>th</sup> Shwekyin Nikaya conference. **PHOTO: MNA**



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein presents K3 million donated by President U Htin Kyaw and First Lady to Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko. **PHOTO: MNA**



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko presents offertory to a Sayadaw at the 20<sup>th</sup> Conference of Shwekyin Nikaya. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Children's Literature Festival held in Thanlyin

CHILDREN'S literature festival was being held at No.2 B.E.H.S, Thanlyin Township in Yangon, yesterday morning.

The festival was held with the aim of providing opportunities for the children to grow their love for literature and culture so that their reading habits can develop gradually.

This festival was being took place in 14 districts including Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Mawlamying, Taunggyi and Yangon from 9a.m

to 5pm. Dr. Thida Tin, Deputy Director General of Information and Public Relations Department said, "The children can get many benefits such as enjoyment, higher thinking skills, love of reading and literature, patriotism, a spirit of serving the interest of the country, and full of vigour to overcome every obstacle in their life by celebrating this kind of festival." At the opening ceremony, Deputy Director General of Information and Public Relations Department

Dr. Thida Tin, Southern Yangon District Administrator U Myo Kyaw, Deputy Director of U Soe Thaik, Yangon Region Hluttaw Representative U Aung Naing Tun cut the ribbons. The students entertained variety dances.

Then, departmental heads and inviting guests looked around the children's literature festival together.

This festival is very amusing and will be held till 30 January 2018. —Min Thit (MNA)



Students observe the experiment in science laboratory at Children's Literature Festival in Thanlyin. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

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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.

# Discussion on installing cable-car at Mount Popa conducted

A DISCUSSION was held between local residents and DAMODAR ROPEWAYS & INFRA at the office of General Administration Department in Kyaukpadaung Township on 28 January. The talk was about installing a cable car at Mount Popa

The Regional Planning and Finance Minister U Myat Thu attended the meeting. Afterwards, the Vice President Mr. Shrawan Kumar Agrawal from

the company explained about the projects that will be undertaken. Also a representative of regional Hluttaw U Aye Khaing expressed the attitude of the regional government and how the project will be carried out in accordance with the public's desires.

When local residents were asked about their views and advice, Vice Chairman of Popa Lovers Association U Toe asked "whether the regional

government will make a bid on the cable car project or not in addition, whether to collect entrance fees from tourists or not.

U Toe also asked about receiving recommendations and advice from international environmental conservation organizations or keeping the project completely regional". The Regional Planning and Finance Minister said the project will be undertaken in a way that will be agreeable to the

public and it will be carried out in accordance with the proper rules and regulations.

An Indian Company examined the cable-car system that will be installed in Mount Popa. If the project is allowed, it will start at the bottom of the west face of the mountain.

The cable car system will go up to 350 meters in height and the cable cars will be equipped to hold 12 passengers. — Myanmar Digital News ■

## Ks. 5,000 million worth for water supply project in Falam

INSTALLATION of water pipelines and construction of water tanks are being executed to supply sufficient drinking water for locals in Falam, Chin State.

The project is being developed at a cost of Ks. 5,000 million from the government budget. Authentic Co, a tender winning company is overseeing the water supply project in Falam and is installing an eight-inch wide water pipeline to access water from Laiva Dam, about 25 miles from Falam.

The irrigated water will be stored in 100,000 gallon water tanks and supplied to the households from eight wards in Falam. The water tanks are being installed at four sites in Falam by a con-



Construction of water tank for sufficient drinking water in Falam, Chin State. PHOTO: MDN

struction company.

Water distribution systems will be managed on a siphon basis and the project is slated for

completion sometime in March. Upon completion, the residents in Falam will be furnished with inadequate drinking water, ac-

ording to a source from the Information and Public Relations Department.—Myanmar Digital News ■

## Ok mobile railway ticketing system to end 1 February

THE Ok mobile ticketing system used by passengers on the Yangon circular railway will stop operations on 1st February, according to a report in the Myawady Daily.

"The Ok mobile payment system, allowing for the purchase of tickets online, was introduced on 21 June, 2016. Currently, the current service contract will expire at the end of January. Therefore, if commuters want to buy train tickets, please buy them at the train station, as in the past,"

said U Zaw Lwin, the manager of Myanma Railways.

Using the the online payment system, users who had installed OK payment mobile application on their phones were able to purchase train tickets online.

But sometime users faced difficulties when they could not access wifi.

Currently, twenty-three trains operate daily, providing 215 rounds for the convenience of both local and foreign passengers.—GNLM ■

## MNA to fly Yangon-Phuket route in March

MYANMAR National Airlines introduced its fifth international flight service yesterday, announcing that MNA will fly the Yangon-Phuket route beginning on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

MNA will operate this route twice a week, on Friday and Sunday from Yangon International Airport Terminal-2 at 17:55, with Embraer-190/Boeing 737-800 NG arriving in Phuket at 20:15.

The round-trip fare for Yangon-Phuket will be approximately US\$ 250.

MNA has been providing passenger services since 1948. MNA has offered passenger

services to Singapore, Hong Kong and Bangkok. International services resumed to Singapore on 17 August 2015.

MNA then launched its second international service to Hong Kong on 4 December 2015, its third international service to Bangkok on 20 February 2016 and fourth international service to Chiang Mai on 4 November 2016.

Also, the Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Myanmar passport holders would be able to enter Thailand by air without a visa beginning 12 August.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Mandalay Myotha Industrial Park Project is being implemented on the 10,000 acre land with 90 per cent foreign direct investments and local and foreign joint venture investments. **PHOTO: KHINE SEIT WAI**



## Over \$500m worth of investments flow into Mandalay Myotha industry park project

LOCAL and foreign investments worth more than US\$500 million were pumped into the Mandalay Myotha industry park project in Ngazun Township, Mandalay Region, as of the second week of January 2018. The Mandalay Myotha Industrial Development (MMID) public company expects to house more than 100 plants within three years, said U Tun Tun Aung, managing director of MMID.

The Mandalay Myotha industry park project is being implemented on a 10,000-plus-acre plot, jointly by the Mandalay Region government and the MMID public company. Currently, five plants are operational, while two plants will be constructed in May.

Another 22 plants will be constructed in August. The project will be executed with 90 per cent foreign direct in-

vestments, besides local and foreign joint venture investments.

“Currently, authorities are designing the construction of three plants on a 20-acre plot. It will include an automobile assembly plant. A Japanese company has also invested in the Mandalay Myotha industry park project to construct a waste recycling plant,” he added.

Among the five plants that became operational currently, two are animal feed plants with investments from Indonesia and Denmark, a saw mill from Hong Kong, a concrete plant from Thailand, and a snow cookie plant from China. Some 24 plants are expected to invest within eight months, creating more than 20,000 job opportunities for the local people.

The opening ceremony

for a new plant project, with investments from China, was launched on 16 January. The new plant will include a hat factory, a garment factory, a shoe factory and electronic equipment factories. The entry of these plants into Myanmar will create more job opportunities for the local people, said U Tun Tun Aung.

The Mandalay Baoshan Myotha Industrial Development has invested more than \$390 million in the project. In the first phase, the project will be constructed on a 50-acre plot.

As of December 2017, the Myanmar Investment Commission has given the green light to 56 foreign investments, worth more than \$3.2 billion, and 141 local investments, worth more than Ks3.75 trillion, in the Mandalay Region.—Khine Seit Wai ■

## Onion prices unstable in Yangon market

ONION prices are unstable in the Yangon market, with their cost fluctuating according to their quality, the Bayinnaung wholesale market reported.

Over the last few days, the price of onions declined by Ks150 per viss, only to increase again. Some of the onion varieties are selling well in the domestic market.

However, the price of Myittha onions has increased, even though it is not selling well in the local market.

“The low-quality onions are selling well in the domestic market. The new onions are still raw and not good enough. They will be ready for use in March,” said an onion trader

Onion is a popular cooking staple due to its strong aroma and pleasing flavour.

The price of Myittha onions is between Ks1,150 and Ks1,200 per viss, while the price of Seikpyu onions is between Ks1,150 and Ks1,650 per viss, according to the Bayinnaung wholesale market.—Zwe ■

## Betel leaf price reaches record high in January

WITH betel leaf prices increasing, local betel vendors are finding it difficult to sell in the market, according to local vendors.

“The betel leaf price reached a record high of Ks 18, 000 per viss (1.6kg) in January 2018. Last year, the price of the betel leaf was between Ks 6,000 and Ks 8,000 per viss. This year, the price of the betel leaf has jumped to between Ks 16,000 and Ks 18,000 per viss. So, local betel vendors are selling three betel portions for Ks 200, which are not selling well,” said one of the betel vendors.

“The betel leaf “Kun Nu Wah” is grown in Mandalay, Monywa, Madaya, Kyaukse, Shwebo and Myinmu townships. Betel leaves “Kun Sein” are mainly sent to market from

Yangon, Hinthada and Zalun,” he added.

“The price of the betel leaf increases annually in December, January, February and March. We are facing difficulties in selling betel, also known as “Kun ya”, because the price of the betel leaf has increased. The size of the betel leaf is also different. This year, the price of the betel leaf is very expensive,” said a local betel vendor from Magway Region. “There are 450 betel leaves in one viss. Some of the betel vendors bought big leaves and cut them in the middle. We also have to buy other ingredients to make Kun ya for Ks 15,000. We can only make a profit if we can sell one viss of Kun ya,” he added.—Han Tha Lin ■



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**THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR**

သတင်းစာများကို ဤဆိုင်များတွင်ဝယ်ယူဖတ်ရှုနိုင်ပါပြီ

- Market Place by City Mart (6.5 Mile)
- Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)
- Market Place by City Mart (Junction City)
- City Mart (Aung San Stadium)
- City Mart (47th street)
- City Mart (Yankin)
- City Mart (China Town)
- City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)
- City Mart (FMI)
- City Mart (Junction Square)
- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
- City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
- City Mart (Junction 8)
- City Mart (St. John)
- Ocean North Point (9 mile)
- Ocean Shwegonedine

**Ocean City Supercenter** **City Mart Supermarket**

## Foreign Head of State sends felicitations to President U Htin Kyaw

The following is message of felicitations from Foreign Head of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

**From H.E. Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic  
President of the Republic of Croatia  
Dear Mr. President,**

On the occasion of the celebration of Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I

am pleased to extend most sincere congratulations and best wishes for the prosperity of your state and its citizens on behalf of the citizens of the Republic of Croatia and my own.

I avail myself of the opportunity to express hope in

further strengthening and enhancing bilateral relations between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

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## Camps are ready for repatriation

### FROM PAGE-1

#### U Ye Htoo, Deputy District Commissioner

For the repatriation process, there are many sub-committees under the supervisory board. Our duty is to combine the administration affairs that are in need of an ongoing process. We will arrange accommodation, transport and food for the returnees by the time they arrive at the camps.

#### Wai Wai San, police sub-inspector

My duty is to check the women and their belongings when they arrive at the camps.

#### U Aung Win Oo, Deputy Director Immigration Department, Taung Pyo Letwe

Our inspection team includes the Myanmar Police Force, CID and immigration departments. After scrutinising their physiological characteristics using the biometric system, the registration process and the national verification process will follow.

#### U Than Win, senior nurse, Taung Pyo Letwe camp

We will have to provide healthcare services when the returnees fall ill at the Taung Pyo



Police Lt-Col Saw Zayar Lin.



U Than Win, Senior Nurse, Taung Pyo Letwe camp.



U Thaung Shwe, Deputy Director of Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

Letwe camp. If necessary, we will send them to the hospital.

#### U Thaung Shwe, Director of Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

Our department will render help to the returnees, and plans



Wai Wai San, Police Sub-Inspector.

are being made to distribute longyis, blankets, t-shirts and soaps to men and women, according to their age groups. We will attend to the needs of the respective departments. We are ready to provide household utensils and temporary tents to the

returnees. We will try our best to fulfil their requirements and provide humanitarian assistance.

#### U Khaing Min Naing, Deputy-Superintendent of the Fire Services Department, Maung Taw Township

Being an in-charge person at the Taung Pyo Letwe camp, our duty is to provide safety from fire hazards. We will use a fire engine that can hold 1,600 gallons of water with four fire-fighters. We will try our best to ensure there is no breakout of fire in the camp.

#### U Win Khaing, Director of Immigration and Population Department, Nga Khu Ya camp

When the returnees arrive, we will have to scrutinise and check the displaced persons on the list. According to the agreement being made between the Myanmar and Bangladesh governments, we will have to scrutinise and check the list of displaced persons. Then, we will collect and record their bio data using biometrics. After that, we will issue national verification cards (NVCs) immediately, according to the standard procedures. After providing the NVC, they will have to be scrutinised

for eligibility. We will act according to the rules and regulations prescribed by the department.

#### U Win Zaw Htay, Deputy Director of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Department

We can divide the returnees into two categories: men and women, who are above 12 years. We have already made household arrangements for 1,000 men and 1,000 women. Arrangements have been made to provide electricity, office works and other necessary assistance. We are determined to perform our tasks dutifully.

#### U Thet Naing, an in-charge-engineer at Hla Phoe Khaung camp

As for the resettlement process, we are operating the CITS programme and planning to build 40 houses at the end of this month and some 100 houses by the middle of February. There are altogether 625 houses for 30,000 people. We are digging artesian wells to secure the water supply and connecting electrical wires to provide electricity with the help of EPC. Moreover, we are paving the way for a smooth transport system.—Aung Ye Thwin, Ko Min

## Union Supreme Court sits to hear cases

Union Supreme Court yesterday at Union Supreme Court room number 1 yesterday morning with Chief Justice of the Union U Htin Htin Oo and all Union Supreme Court judges heard six special criminal appeal cases. —Myanmar News Agency

## Ayeyawady dolphins' protection zone to be extended

THE Fisheries Department is planning to extend the dolphin protection zone along the Ayeyawady River to conserve the rare species more effectively.

Currently, the Ayeyawady dolphin protection area is 72 kilometres wide, extending from Mingun to Kyauk Muang in the Sagaing Region, as designated in 2005.

The department is planning

to extend it by another 118 kilometres from Hti Kyauk in Katha District of the Sagaing Region to Shwegu in Bhamo District of Kachin State.

“We agreed at the meeting in Mandalay to establish a new protected area, which will extend for another 118 kilometres.

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Irrawaddy Dolphin Conservation Group are



cooperating with us,” said U Myin Zin Htoo, Deputy Director of the Fisheries Department. According to the latest survey, there are some 68 dolphins in the protected area. The Ministry of Hotels and

Tourism has been developing community-based tourism in six villages in the protected zone, in cooperation with the WCS and the ministry of agriculture, livestock and irrigation.—GNLM

# Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends Swamkhan Pagoda donation and consecration ceremony

TATMADAW Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla attended the golden robe donation (application of gold) ceremony to Swamkhan Pagoda and the consecration ceremony of the pagoda in Kengtung, Shan State (South) yesterday morning. The event was graced by Sanghas led by Kyineyin Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadaja Bhaddanta Khemasara. Together with the Senior General were Commander-in-Chief (Navy), Commander-in-Chief (Air), senior Tatmadaw officers from Commander-in-Chief (Army) office, Commander of Triangle Command, departmental officials and invited guests.



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife donate offertories to Sayadaws at the golden robe donation ceremony. PHOTO: MNA

First, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and those who are in attendance took the five precepts from Kyineyin Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadaja Bhaddanta Khemasara, listened to

the sermon and recitation of parittas from the Sayadaw and the Sanghas.

Next, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and wife presented the Swamkhan (Swamtung) Pagoda and offertories to Kyineyin Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadaja Bhaddanta Khemasara. Afterwards, Tatmadaw senior officers donate offertories to the Sayadaw and Sanghas.

Ashin Pariyattidarika from Swamkham monastery presented the document of honor to Commander-in-Chief and a picture of the Swamkham pagoda.

Afterwards, Sayadaw and Sanghas consecrates the Swamkham Pagodo after which Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief, wife and members offered soon to the Sayadaw and Sanghas it is learnt. — Myanmar News Agency

# Ceremony in honor and remembrance of lawyer U Ko Ni and taxi driver U Nay Win

A CEREMONY in honor and remembrance of National League for Democracy legal advisor lawyer U Ko Ni and taxi driver U Nay Win was held yesterday afternoon in Taw Win Rose Hall, Bahan Township.

First the union flag was saluted and then Bogyoke Aung San and the fallen martyrs were saluted. Monks, peoples and students who had fell throughout the successive fights for democracy were saluted and

an eight seconds of silence was observed in honor and remembrance of lawyer U Ko Ni and taxi driver U Nay Win.

Next, on behalf of the event organizing committee (committee member) U Tun Kyi explained about the reason for holding the event and read the biography of U Ko Ni and U Nay Win.

Afterwards, leaders of the four main religions delivered speeches in honor and remem-

brance of the two men.

Message sent by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was then read by event organizing committee member Daw Ohnma Aye.

This was followed by speeches of US Ambassador Scot Marciel and peoples from all strata that were in attendance.

Former political prisoners and people from all strata who cherish truth and justice jointly organized the event with an aims for the development of truth and justice, acceptance and respect of differences, development of love for the country based on the people, aversion against terrorists and terrorism, unity of all religions and to live together peacefully.

The event was attended by leaders of religions, ambassadors and diplomats from embassies in Yangon, people from all strata and people who want justice and truth it is learnt.—Zaw Gyi ■



U Tun Kyi reads the biography of U Ko Ni and taxi driver U Nay Win at the ceremony in honor and remembrance of U Ko Ni and taxi driver U Nay Win. PHOTO: ZAW GYI

# U Han Thu presents credentials to President of Sri Lanka

U Han Thu, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on 23 January 2018, in Colombo.—Myanmar News Agency ■

# MoI donates 50 Set Top Boxes to Kawthoung

AS part of efforts for disseminating knowledge to the local people in Kawthoung Township, Myanmar Radio and Television of the Ministry of Information donated 50 Set Top boxes to Taninthayi Region Government yesterday.

At the donation ceremony in Kawthoung, Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint handed over Set Top Boxes to Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Le Le Maw.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint hands over Set Top Boxes to Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Le Le Maw. PHOTO: MNA

# A suspicious person caught dead near Maungni Village, Maungtaw Town

SECURITY personnel were conducting security operations near Maungtaw Town, Maungni Village at 7 p.m. on 26 January when they found three suspicious persons. The three fled through the gap cut in the border fence and a shot was fired against them. One was killed and two fled. Upon investiga-

tion of the scene, a 20 inch long ax, a hammer, a 9 inch knife, a chisel, 10 inch long screwdriver, a syringe, a scissor, a 13 inch knife and a hinge were found in a plastic bag. Investigation is conducted to identify the body and the body was sent to Maungtaw Hospital it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency ■

# Villager murdered in Buthidaung Township

A 71-year-old man from Ngetthay Village in Buthidaung Township was found dead in a nearby forest on 20 January.

The man was found with lacerations on his neck and head.

The man, identified as Mawlawi Ali Husaung, had left home to visit U Hla Pe Village at around 11 am on 20 January and had not returned by afternoon,

said his wife.

She then started searching for her husband and found his body in the forest.

The body was sent to Buthidaung Hospital.

His wife has registered a case at the Nyaungchaung police station, and the local police are investigating it. — Myanmar News Agency ■

## State Counsellor's visit that will fulfill national requirement

**T**HE State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit which marks the 25th year of ASEAN-India relations. In her speech on that occasion, the State Counsellor said Myanmar-India relations and ASEAN-India relations were tied with closely related traditions since time immemorial, being a kind of relations between regions with cultural similarities. Geographically, India-Myanmar relations is something that cannot be ignored. For India, Myanmar is the eastern gateway that will link India with the ASEAN region; at the same time for ASEAN, Myanmar is the western gateway that will link the ASEAN region with India. In other words, Myanmar is the land bridge between India and ASEAN.

Accordingly, I would like to say that the State Counsellor's attendance at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit which marks the 25th year of ASEAN-India relations leads to the fulfillment of Myanmar's national requirement.

thanks to India and Thailand.

The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project is a bilateral cooperation project that will be beneficial to both India and Myanmar. Under the project, arrangements have already been made for convenience of waterway transportation by dredging sandbanks along the Kaladan River from Sittway to Paletwa after upgrading the Sittway Harbour, and thence to link by road from Paletwa to Mizoram State, India. Due to the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project, the landlocked north-eastern part of India will have an exit to the Indian Ocean, whereas the less-developed Chin and Rakhine States in Myanmar will gain more chances to create job opportunities and to implement projects for regional development with great momentum.

To sum it up, India's policy on relations with the East, and ASEAN's policy on broader relations with countries in the West and Myanmar's policy on the broader cooperation with regional countries are supportive of each other, in harmony. Accordingly, I would like to say that the State Counsellor's attendance at the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit which marks the 25th year of ASEAN-India relations leads to the fulfillment of Myanmar's national requirement. ■

# After A Period of Time Went Past, Situations Are In Progress!

By Saw Myo Nwe

**T**HREE-YEAR period had swiftly passed. Much had been talked about agriculture when I met with my younger brother, some three years ago, being those who eke out our living by agricultural farming. During our conversation I said to him that I did grow mango trees, "Sein-ta-lone," since 3 years ago whereas my brother told me he was preparing to grow sterculia tree. Last month he called me to come to visit his plantation, saying that he was beginning to extract resins from sterculia tree stems.

To put it simply, I listened to him with surprise, albeit reluctantly to believe as to whether resin can be extracted from sterculia plant in 3 years. Instead, I happened to visit him with a view to performing 3 purposes in one time—paying a visit, paying a study tour and acknowledging his triumph.

Just prior to writing this, I felt that my present writing would be like following suit as sterculia tree plantation is these days very popular, or otherwise it would be tantamount to giving excessive encouragement to those desirous of growing sterculia plants. But, at last I decided to recount my personal experiences I myself witnessed in jute plantation, together with my study knowledge acquired at the vineyard plantation industries in Ywa-tan village, Yamethin Township some two years ago.

### Suitability is needed in soil and climate with kind to be planted

Almost every house in Ywa-tan village did viniculture on their farming land as their own business, selling their agricultural produce for sale in local markets and for export. There, we found they could manage to support their families by growing grapevine. That means, it would be of great benefit to grow vine, perennial plant suitable with soil and climate of the region in substitution for rain-fed crops. Seasonal crops frequently lose



potential benefits, due to climate change, market instability and rises in costs and expenditures. For saying so, I never mean it that farmers must hold an extreme idea of planting one kind only. For those who are satisfied with the idea that it is good enough just to have cows' feed at the end of the season, I hereby want to give some advices, to grow other crops that will be suitable for their region in substitution.

### Nothing venture, nothing have

Upon arrival at the village, I went straight to my brother's plantation. There I found some workers collecting resin from sterculia plants' stems holding steel trays in their hands, with some holding knives in hands. Plants had been grown with 15 feet each far from another plant but upper branches are touching with each other. The girth of a stem is estimated at 9 inches or so. Resins are collected

by notching stems. On seeing notches, resins have not been collected yet I found high-quality resins oozing out. While workers are busying themselves with collecting resins I had a chance to enquire about my brother's preparation for making this plantation.

According to him, there are over 20000 sterculia plants grown in his plantation farm. Ploughs and furrows were made about the whole land. Without digging up any holes on the land, plants had been grown along the tracks of ploughs and furrows. At the time when weeds need removing, they had been weeded while doing ploughs by tractors. Pesticides and fertilizers had never been sprayed on his farm. But, this year a little bit of urea had been put because they had tried extracting resins for the first time in the rainy season, it was said. It seemed to be easy as per his explanation. Whatever it is, I had to accept the idea that we would reach the goal

ultimately, if we really started our first step.

### Purification and classification

After leaving the plantation, we entered the shed where resins were purified. Workers were found removing dirt from resins in trays and thence classifying the purified resins and then resins were left under shade to become cool. When surfaces of resins became hardened, they were left to be dried up in the sun. After that, the hard resins had been piled up in the office according to their classification. According to my brother, special price for the special quality was estimated at over Ks one lakh per viss, with the regular price was round about one lakh paid. But, prices were less paid than the normal prices, once a year at least, it was said.

### Once in the past being in the dilemma of success

While taking tea in the office, we had a chat one thing

and another. I came to know that workers were from Ayardaw Township, coming here in families. As long as the industry had existed to run, they said they would work here because they were paid one third of the production as wages depending upon the amounts of the plants. If the plants amounted to less, they had to be paid half of the products. Workers tried their best not to have wastage, as they were paid depending upon the amounts of products.

I made a suggestion to expand the business as it has great prospects under the current situations, he replied to do so. He said he had a dilemma of the success at the very advent of the business, feeling fear whether he would be in for difficulties and troubles. I gave him words of encouragement not to bear such feelings, as promising signs are being seen at present. Despite the encouragement to him, I myself felt depressed, as suffered by the perennial plant growers.

### A period we will have yet to undergo

At the invitation of my brother, I arrived there to study his sterculia tree plantation, encouraging and simultaneously aspiring to emulate him. I witnessed successful production of resin in three years, before my eyes. And, I came to know that it could manage to recover the expenses in one year.

A thought "In case I had grown sterculia plant for mango trees," occurred to me. But, I am well convinced that we need to make the rightful choice, that is, to grow the plants suitable with the regional situations

I humbly made suggestions for our farmers to be able to take into consideration of growing sterculia plants so as to overcome difficulties of climate changes and huge expenses and for long-term benefits. ■

Translated by  
Khin Maung Oo

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Office of the President  
Order 11/2018  
13<sup>th</sup> Waxing of Tabodwe, 1379 ME  
29 January, 2018  
**Appointment of Region Ministers**

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 262 (f), article 264 (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 19 (c), section 82 (c) of Union Government Law and Section 8 (g), Section 56 (a) of Region or State Government Law, the following persons have been appointed as Region Ministers of the Ministries shown against each of their names.

**Bago Region Government**

(1) Dr. Saw Nyo Win	Ministry of Natural Resources, Forestry and Conservation
(2) Daw Nyunt Nyunt Htay	Ministry of Development Affairs and Social Affairs

**Ayeyawaddy Region Government**

(1) U Tin Aung Win	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
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Sd/ Htin Kyaw  
President  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Office of the President  
Order 12/2018  
13<sup>th</sup> Waxing of Tabodwe, 1379 ME  
29 January, 2018  
**Appointment of Judge for Taninthayi Region Judicial Hluttaw**

In accord with the provisions stated in article 308 section (b) sub-section (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, article 82 section (d) of the Union Government Law and article 50 of the Union Administration of Justice Law, article 18 section (d) of Region or State Government Law, Daw Paikae Paikae Aye has been appointed as Divisional Judge of Taninthayi Region Judicial Hluttaw.

Sd/ Htin Kyaw  
President  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Heads of Service Organizations transferred

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each their names from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(1) U Win Naing Tun Director-General Department of the Chief Security Officer Office of the President	Director-General Department of Rehabilitation Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement
(2) Dr Daw Yi Yi Myint Director-General Department of Traditional Medicine Ministry of Health and Sports	Rector (Medical Superintendent/ Medical Services) Yangon General Hospital Ministry of Health and Sports



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Brexit legislation under fire as it enters upper house

LONDON — British Prime Minister Theresa May faces a fresh challenge pushing her flagship Brexit law through parliament after lawmakers demanded changes only a day before parliament's upper house begins to debate the legislation.

The House of Lords Constitution Committee said in a report published on Monday that the legislation to end Britain's European Union membership has "fundamental flaws", including ministerial powers it considers

too sweeping.

"We acknowledge the scale, challenge and unprecedented nature of the task of converting existing EU law into UK law, but as it stands this bill is constitutionally unacceptable," said committee chairwoman Ann Taylor.

The legislation is likely to be given a rough ride by the largely pro-EU lawmakers in the upper house and comes as Prime Minister May battles rebellion within her own party over the best route out of the bloc, which Britain is

scheduled to leave in March 2019.

The Lords committee expressed concern that the government will use the Brexit process to reshape EU laws without proper parliamentary scrutiny as they move into British law.

"The bill grants ministers overly-broad powers to do whatever they think is 'appropriate' to correct 'deficiencies' in retained EU law," the report said. "This gives ministers far greater latitude than is constitutionally acceptable."

The committee also urged the government to reach agreement about which powers currently held in Brussels will return to Britain's central government and which will be devolved to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The legislation was cleared by the House of Commons this month and will begin its journey through the House of Lords on 30 January. It is expected to take until the summer for it to become law. —Reuters ■

## British government warned of legal action over DUP deal by campaigners

LONDON — Britain's government has been threatened with legal action by an anti-Brexit campaigner and a union over the deal Prime Minister Theresa May struck with a Northern Irish party to keep her Conservatives in power after her botched election last year.

Ministers have been sent a legal letter warning that 50 million pounds of funding for the province, part of a 1 billion pound deal agreed between May and the Democratic Unionist Party

(DUP) — was unlawful because it was made without parliamentary agreement.

The challenge has been brought by investment manager Gina Miller, who successfully won a court battle in 2017 to force the government to seek parliamentary approval before starting divorce talks with the European Union, and the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain (IWGB).

"It beggars belief that this government is once again put-

ting itself above the law and seeking to undermine the normal constitutional and legal processes," Miller said in a statement.

"Spending public money requires proper parliamentary scrutiny and accountability — and the making of these payments is no different."

May called a snap election last June but lost her parliamentary majority and now relies on support from lawmakers in the small DUP to govern.

Miller and the IWGB say the

government have broken an assurance given in August last year that payments to Northern Ireland could not be made without prior parliamentary approval.

Their lawyers have sent a letter demanding a response from ministers by 2 February that any payment allocated to the British province will be returned and no further sums will be made without the agreement of lawmakers, or they will begin court action against the government. —Reuters ■

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Kremlin says US sanctions move attempt to influence Russian elections

MOSCOW — The Kremlin said on Monday that a new US sanctions report expected to be released imminently was an attempt to influence Russia's presidential election in March, but would fail to influence the vote.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on a conference call that Russia would analyse the report once it was published. —Reuters ■

### Trump national security team sees building 5G network as option

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's national security team is looking at options to counter China that include the US government building a super-fast 5G wireless network, a senior administration official said on Sunday.

The official, confirming the gist of a report from Axios.com, said the option was being debated at a low level in the administration and was six to eight months away from being considered by the president himself. "We want to build a secure 5G network and we have to work with industry to figure out the best way to do it," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. —Reuters ■

### Amazon UK to create 400 jobs in a new fulfilment centre in Rugby

LONDON — Amazon UK said on Monday it would open a new fulfilment centre in Rugby, central England, increasing its 2,500-strong workforce in the Midlands by another 400 people. Rugby will be the fourth Amazon fulfilment centre in the region, and joins centres in Coalville and Daventry, which opened in 2016, and Rugeley, which opened in 2011, the US company said. —Reuters ■

## Militants attack army post near military academy in Afghan capital

KABUL — Gunmen attacked an army outpost near one of Afghanistan's main military academies on Monday and five soldiers were killed and 10 wounded before the attackers were subdued, the defence ministry said.

Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack near the Marshal Fahim military academy in the western outskirts of the capital, Kabul, according to the militant group's Amaq news agency.

It came two days after an ambulance bomb in the centre of the city killed more than 100 people and just over a week after another attack on the Hotel Intercontinental, also in Kabul, killed more than 20.

Both of those attacks were claimed by the Taliban.

Ministry of Defence officials said the five militants armed with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic rifles attacked the outpost near the well-defended academy just before dawn.

Two of the attackers blew themselves up, two were killed in fighting and one was captured, the ministry said in a statement announcing that the fighting was over. Five soldiers were killed and 10 wounded, it said.

"The Afghan National Army is the country's defence force and makes sacrifices for the security and well-being of the people," the ministry said.

While militants claiming al-



Afghan policemen keep watch near the site of an attack at the Marshal Fahim military academy in Kabul, Afghanistan on 29 January, 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

legiance to Islamic State operate in mountains in the eastern province of Nangarhar, little is known about the group and many analysts question whether they are solely responsible for the attacks they have claimed in Kabul and elsewhere.

The attack came as the president of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, was due to visit Kabul.

Indonesia has the world's biggest Muslim population and Widodo has proposed that Indonesian Islamic scholars could help promote Afghan peace, media reported recently.

Earlier, resident Moham-

mad Ehsan said he heard a series of explosions coming from the area beginning at around 5 am (0030 GMT) and lasting for at least an hour, with smaller blasts continuing at less frequent intervals.

In October, a suicide attacker rammed a car full of explosives into a bus carrying cadets from the academy, known as the Defence University, which is home to one of Afghanistan's main officer training schools, killing 15 of them.

The wave of attacks has put pressure on President Ashraf Ghani and his US allies, who have

expressed growing confidence that a new more aggressive military strategy has succeeded in driving Taliban insurgents back from major provincial centres.

The United States has stepped up its assistance to Afghan security forces and increased its air strikes against the Taliban and other militant groups, aiming to break a stalemate and force the insurgents to the negotiating table.

However, the Taliban have dismissed suggestions they have been weakened and said Saturday's bombing was a message to US President Donald Trump.

"The Islamic Emirate has a clear message for Trump and his hand kissers that if you go ahead with a policy of aggression and speak from the barrel of a gun, don't expect Afghans to grow flowers in response," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement, using the term the Islamist militants use to describe themselves.

Saturday's blast in one of the most heavily protected parts of the city, close to foreign embassies and government buildings, was the worst seen in the Afghan capital since a truck bomb near the German embassy killed 150 people in May.

With Ghani embroiled in confrontation with provincial powerbrokers defying central rule, pressure is mounting on the government to set aside political divisions and focus on security.

The United States and Afghanistan have accused Pakistan of helping the Taliban in a bid to undermine old rival India's growing influence in Afghanistan.

Pakistan, which denies accusations it fosters the Afghan war, condemned the attack and called for "concerted efforts and effective cooperation" to tackle militancy.

Afghanistan declared Sunday a day of mourning for the victims of Saturday's blast and said Monday would be a day off to allow care for the victims' families.—Reuters ■

## Nearly 1,500 evacuated in Paris region as rising Seine poses flood risk

PARIS — Nearly 1,500 people have been evacuated from homes in the Paris region, with authorities on alert for any major flood risk after the levels of the swollen River Seine rose further on Sunday.

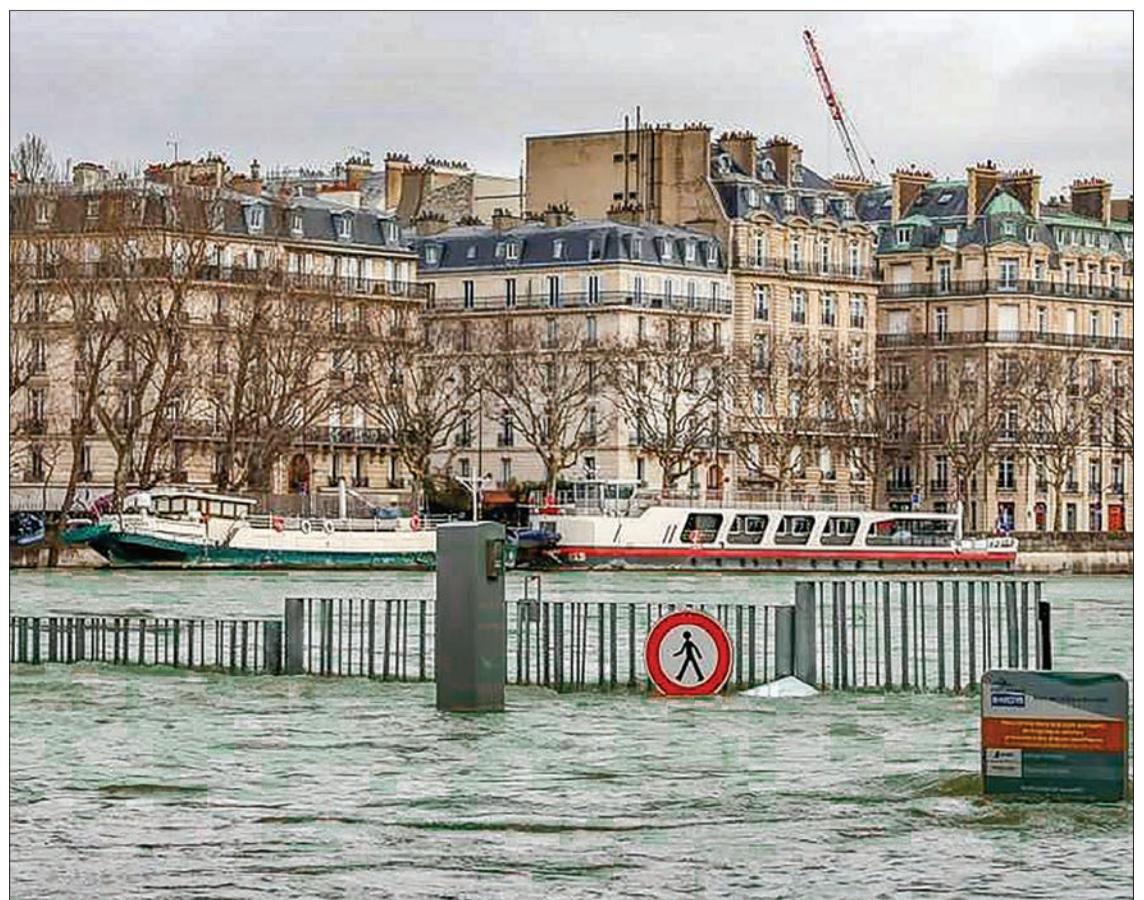
Michel Delpuech, head of the Paris police body, told reporters that around 1,500 people had been moved out of homes in the Ile de France region comprising the French capital and its suburbs.

"The waters will only go away slowly," added Delpuech.

The Seine's waters were set to peak later on Sunday or early on Monday close to levels which

led to similar flooding in 2016, authorities said. The overflowing waters have already engulfed riverside walkways in Paris and led the world-famous Louvre museum to close a basement display of Islamic art. Paris's "Bateaux Mouches" tourist boats have been shut down due to the high waters while swans have been seen swimming where there are usually pavements and rats forced up onto the streets.

Flooding caused destruction in Paris in 1910 when the Seine rose by 8.65 metres, although no deaths were recorded there.—Reuters ■



A view shows the flooded banks of the Seine River after days of almost non-stop rain caused flooding in the country in Paris, France on 28 January, 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Scientists use microbes to convert human waste into space food

LONDON — Scientists have found a potential food source for astronauts, using microbes to convert human waste into Marmite-like food, local media reported.

According to British online newspaper *The Independent*, researchers at Pennsylvania State University outlined a method to break down solid and liquid waste for producing protein and fat-rich substance from human waste in their study published in the quarterly scientific journal *Life Sciences in Space Research*.

“We envisioned and tested the concept of simultaneously treating astronauts’ waste with microbes while producing a biomass that is edible either directly or indirectly, depending on safety concerns,” said Christopher House, professor of geosciences and director of the Penn State

Astrobiology Research Centre.

“It’s a little strange, but the concept would be a little bit like Marmite or Vegemite, where you’re eating a smear of microbial goo,” the professor added.

Food supply is a major hurdle when planning lengthy space flights. Recycling waste into nutritious food is one solution to this problem.

According to House and his colleagues, the method involves anaerobic digestion, a process that refers to the breakdown of materials in the absence of oxygen. It is considered an efficient way of breaking down biodegradable matter.

The researcher said while their method is not ready for application yet, it provides a new model for creating food on board spacecraft.—Xinhua



Toilet used on the ISS's Soyuz spacecraft.



Mi-17A2 helicopter. PHOTO: TASS

## Russia's advanced Mi-17A2 helicopters successfully tested in extreme cold

MOSCOW — The Russian Helicopters Holding of the Rostec State Corporation has successfully completed trials of the latest multirole Mi-17A2 helicopters in extremely low temperatures of up to -50 degrees Centigrade, the company's press service has said.

“The results of the tests, held in Yakutia, have proven that main systems and avionics are operable [in extremely low temperatures]. Two Mi-17A2 helicopters have performed eight ground runs (when engines are switched on without taking off), and 36 flights under special programs,” the Russian

Helicopters said.

The tests confirmed that Mi-17A2 helicopters can operate in harshest climatic conditions.

Mi-17A2 design has 80 upgrades against the basic model, the Mi-8/Mi-17 helicopter family. The helicopter has VK-2500PS-03 engine (civilian option of engines mounted on combat Mi-28) with digital controls. Mi-17A2 is distinguished by a new carrying system against Mi-8/Mi-17 family. The helicopter has an upgraded X-shaped anti-torque rotor and the main rotor with all-composite blades of upgrad-

ed aerodynamic shape. Thus, the aerodynamic advantages increase the main rotor thrust of Mi-17A2 over 700 kg which improves all flight and technical characteristics.

Russian Industry and Trade Minister earlier described Mi-17A2 as “one of the most anticipated helicopter of the Russian helicopter industry.” In late 2017 contracts for two Mi-17A2 were signed with Indian and Kazakh companies. Another two helicopters are to be handed over in the spring of 2018 to UTair - Helicopter Services (a unit of UTair airlines) for test operations.—Tass

## Czech PM Babis says will continue talks on new government — Pravo daily

PRAGUE — Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis said on Monday he would continue talks with the three parties that may support his new government after President Milos Zeman's re-election won him more time for the negotiations.

Babis has been trying to form a government since his landslide victory in an October election but failed to secure parliamentary support for a minority cabinet this month as he also battles allegations of subsidy fraud. He denies any wrongdoing. The Social Democratic Party (CSSD), Communists and the far-right anti-EU SPD party have

said they might join a coalition with Babis' ANO party or support it from outside. “We will continue negotiations with (those three parties), only in the case of CSSD we want to wait for their convention in February so that we know who in fact represents the party,” Babis told Pravo newspaper in an interview published on Monday. The Communists have said they want some of their programme to be picked up by the government in exchange for their support, while the Social Democrats and SPD have said they will not back a government that includes a person charged with a crime.—Reuters

## Australia to spend \$3.1 billion to increase stake in global arms exports

SYDNEY — Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said on Monday Australian military equipment manufacturers will be offered government-backed loans as part of a A\$3.8 billion (\$3.1 billion) package to become one of the world's top 10 defence exporters.

Australia said in 2016 it would boost defence spending by A\$30 billion by 2021, purchasing frigates, armoured personnel carriers, strike fighter jets, drones and a fleet of new submarines — many of which would be built at home.

The defence industry has struggled to obtain finance from traditional lenders that

have been unwilling to fund the arms industry, so Australia has created a A\$3.8 billion loan scheme for companies seeking finance to export military equipment.

“Australia is around the 20th largest exporter. Given the size of our defence budget we should be higher up the scale than that,” Turnbull told reporters in Sydney.

“The goal is to get into the top 10,” he said.

Christopher Pyne, the minister for the defence industry, said Australia would target sales to the United States, Canada, Britain and New Zealand.

Australia's annual defence

budget was worth A\$34.6 billion this year.

The scheme is also meant to arrest a slide in Australia's manufacturing sector and provide some support for its economy, which has been hampered by record-low wage growth.

Australia saw a record number of jobs created in 2017 but its manufacturing sector has shrunk significantly following the end of domestic car manufacturing.

Employment in manufacturing peaked in mid-1989 at roughly 1.17 million, or 15 per cent of the entire workforce. That shrank to 877,000, or 7 per cent, late last year.—Reuters

# China says 'terror' risks in Xinjiang remains serious despite security push

BEIJING — Unrelenting risks of "terror" and separatist activity in China's far western region of Xinjiang require a prolonged security crackdown, state media said late on Sunday, after a year-long campaign that saw increased police deployment and heightened surveillance.

China says Xinjiang faces a serious threat from Islamic extremists and separatists who plot violent attacks and stir up tensions between the mostly Muslim Uighur minority who call the region home and the ethnic Han Chinese majority.

In response, the government has organised mass police rallies and rolled out new surveillance and anti-terror measures throughout the region, including thousands of newly installed street-corner police stations in cities and towns.



Security personnel stand in front of an armoured vehicle in Kashgar, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, China, March 24, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

A report first read at a government meeting on 22 January by governor Shohrat Zakir and

published on the official Xinjiang Daily newspaper said that 2017's campaign had made it clear that

stabilizing society in Xinjiang would require more measures. "There has been no fundamental change to

the situation of Xinjiang being in a time of regular violent terror activities, an intense struggle against

separatists and the painful throes of an intervention treatment," Zakir said.

He added that the long-term peace and stability of Xinjiang and its society must be the overall goal of the regional government for the "critical period" of the next five years.

To meet this goal, the government will continue to deepen severe specialist operations, such as guaranteeing absolute security of key areas and the "normalization" of preventative measures in society, Zakir said. China blames the violence in Xinjiang on Islamist extremists and separatists, some of whom it says have links to groups outside the country.

Rights groups and Uighur exiles say it is more a product of Uighur frustration at Chinese controls on their culture and religion. China denies any repression.—Reuters ■

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# On Grammys red carpet, white roses are the motif, women's equality the message

NEW YORK — Even the most outrageous outfits of feathers, sequins or lace included a simple white rose at the Grammy Awards show's red carpet on Sunday as the glitterati of the music world showed support for women's equality and freedom from sexual harassment.

The roses — worn or held by both sexes on the red carpet outside New York's Madison Square Garden — were a sign of solidarity with the Time's Up movement, spreading from Hollywood to the music industry.

Lady Gaga, nominated for best pop vocal album for "Joanne" showed up in a Goth-inspired Armani gown in midnight black with a high Victorian collar, sparkling lace and a voluminous train. Perched high on her shoulder was a demure nosegay of white rose buds.

Kelly Clarkson held a long-stemmed rose in her hand as she chatted on the carpet, its white contrasting with her black gown which included elaborate gold embroidered sleeves.

The rose, Clarkson said, "represents hope and peace and sympathy and peace, and I thought those are very lovely things for any human being to encompass."

"Girls Just Want to Have Fun" singer Cyndi Lauper, who launches a tour with Rod Stewart this summer, told E television network host Ryan Seacrest that



Elton John and Miley Cyrus perform "Tiny Dancer" in New York, US on 28 January, 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

women make up 51 per cent of the workforce.

"It's about time we're paid equally," said the pantsuit-clad Lauper, highlighting the movement's focus on gender-based salary disparities.

InStyle fashion news director Eric Wilson told Reuters the striking white dresses seen on musicians such as Hailee Steinfeld, Cardi B, Sza and Lana del Rey packed a more effective punch than the ubiquitous roses.

"The white rose as a visual cue is underwhelming in effect in the same way that the music industry's reaction to this crisis has been underwhelming," said Wilson. But the freestyle fashion spirit of the Grammys means its red carpet is "not about be-

ing the best dressed person, it's about having fun," Wilson said.

That was certainly the case with singer Pink, who found room for a white rose amid the flurry of fuchsia, electric blue and jet black marabou feathers making up her dress.

The bosom-exposing bodice of Bebe Rexha's La Perla gown appeared too scant to accommodate a flower. Rexha opted instead to put her rose on her clutch. Songwriter Diane Warren, meanwhile, wore gloves worthy of Wonder Woman, with the words "Girl" and "Power" scrawled across each set of knuckles.

The roses were not just for the women. Nominee Khalid wore a white rose on a cool white

jacket worn over a turtleneck in chartreuse, while Sam Smith's flower contrasted with his emerald green suit.

Sting, accompanied by musician Shaggy, looked dapper with a jaunty silk ascot, pink shirt and white handkerchief folded to resemble a rose in the pocket of his black jacket. Singer Joy Villa — who made headlines in 2017 with her "Make America Great Again" gown in support of President Donald Trump — made another highly charged statement. Eschewing the white roses worn by others, Villa showed off a white gown hand-painted with the image of a fetus in a rainbow-colored womb, accessorized by a "Choose Life" purse. — Reuters ■



Jennifer Hudson. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Jennifer Hudson to star as Aretha Franklin in biopic

LOS ANGELES — Jennifer Hudson is set to play Aretha Franklin in a new biopic after the "Respect" singer handpicked the actor herself. The announcement that Hudson would be taking on the role of the veteran singer was made during record producer Clive Davis' annual pre-Grammys party, reported Deadline. Hudson, 36, was introduced by Davis ahead of her performance at the party, and went on to perform Franklin's songs Think and Respect, before moving on to her own songs. Not many details about the film have been revealed but Franklin had previously said that the project has been in development since 2011. Producing the film will be "Straight Outta Compton's" Scott Bernstein and music producer Harvey Mason Jr. — Reuters ■

## "Maze Runner: The Death Cure" tops North American box office in opening weekend

LOS ANGELES — 20th Century Fox's film "Maze Runner: The Death Cure" topped North American box office in its opening weekend with an estimated 23.5 million US dollars, ending a three-week reign of Sony's "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle."

The dystopian science fiction action film, starring Dylan O'Brien and Kaya Scodelario, is the sequel to the 2015's "Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials" and the third and final installment in the "Maze Runner" film series. All three installments were directed by Wes Ball. The plot of the latest installment follows the thrilling rescue adventure of a group of the last of the "Glad-

ers" who are immune to the Flare virus that infected the world's population.

Sony's "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" moved to second place with an estimated 16.4 million dollars in its sixth weekend in North American theaters. The action adventure comedy film has brought in more than 338 million dollars to date in North America, according to the studio figures collected by comScore.

Directed by Jake Kasdan and starring 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



Actor Dwayne Johnson. PHOTO: REUTERS

must work together to beat the game in order to return to the real world. Entertainment Studio Motion Pictures' "Hostiles" landed in third place with an estimated 10.2 million dollars in its sixth

weekend but the first weekend of wide release, bringing its North American cume to 12.05 million dollars to date. Directed by Scott Cooper and starring Christian Bale, Rosamund Pike, Ben Fos-

ter and Timothée Chamalet, the western film follows a US Cavalry officer who must escort a Cheyenne war chief and his family back to their home in Montana in 1892.—Xinhua ■

## Philippines to phase out its beloved cheap but rickety jeepneys

MANILA — Jeepneys, the flamboyant passenger trucks of the Philippines, are nearing the end of their reign as the “Kings of the Road”, but they’re not going down without a fight.

Government moves to overhaul outdated public transport, making it safer and more environment friendly, will put the brakes on a mode of travel that has long been the surest and cheapest option in a country of 105 million people.

But the operators and drivers of the 200,000 jeepneys that have plied the nation’s roads and highways for decades are defiant, denouncing moves to oust them as “anti-poor” and a threat to their livelihoods.

“It is a big hassle to us poor people since we are the ones suffering,” said one jeepney driver, upset after traffic police pulled him over because his vehicle was belching black smoke.

Jeepneys have evolved from surplus army jeeps left behind by the US military after World War

Two to become brightly-painted vehicles festooned with religious slogans, horoscope signs or family names. At a cost of 8 pesos (\$0.16) for a journey of 4 km (2.5 miles) in Manila, the capital, they are easily affordable, but the ride is far from comfortable.

A typical jeepney packs in 10 to 16 commuters, sitting knee-to-knee on twin benches, and lacks air-conditioning or windows to shield occupants from the heat, rain and choking fumes.

In Metro Manila, one of Asia’s most gridlocked mega-cities, passengers can sit there for hours.

There are no seatbelts and commuters have only ceiling bars to keep from being thrown off their seats as drivers race to beat traffic lights or edge out competitors for waiting passengers. The government wants to force unsound and shabby jeepneys off the streets in favor of bigger, cleaner, safer and more modern replacements, some electric, others using cleaner fuel.

But drivers complain that

the newer units, priced around 1.8 million pesos (\$35,327), are prohibitively expensive, and government subsidies are paltry.

Some fear vested interests are at play. “They only want to kick out the operators so they could let corporations take over,” said George San Mateo, head of transport group PISTON, as he led a protest last week outside the transport regulator’s office.

“The government is using this crackdown on dilapidated and smoke-belching jeepneys to force poor operators to buy new ones they cannot afford.”

Regulators have said the plan, backed by President Rodrigo Duterte, aims simply to modernize public transport.

“There’s a lot of public utility jeepneys which are old and dirty, so we have to address it,” Martin Delgra, chairman of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, told reporters. “We cannot compromise safety when it comes to roadworthiness.” —Reuters ■



PHOTO: MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS

## Myanmar Rocker Zaw Win Htut to perform one man show in Mandalay

MYANMAR Rocker Zaw Win Htut will hold his one man show titled “The Journey” at Golden City Event Park in Mandalay from 6 to 11 pm on 12 February.

The ticket will be sold at Ks. 9,000 each. The tickets for Zaw Win Htut’s one man show

can be bought at the mini stores such as Line, 501, Tiger, Shwe Yarsu and Rock in Mandalay, commencing 1 February.

Gifts will be returned to the persons who buy the tickets for the event.—Myanmar Digital News ■

## Political satire by Lao She returns to stage

BEIJING — An acclaimed production of Lao She’s satire “Looking West to Chang’an” will be staged at the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in February.

“Looking West to Chang’an” is a five-act satire based on “the first political fraud case of the People’s Republic of China,” first shown in 1956. It depicts a relative nobody who swindles his way through bureaucracy to take official positions, later being found out.

“Corruption, egoism, bureaucracy and fetishism in the play remain in this day and age,” said Yuan Jinhong, stage director of this production.

The drama is highly ironic, and the more than half-centu-

ry-old story is still relevant today. In the play, the protagonist forges his resume, takes other’s identity, and claims to be a “combat hero.” Using his cunning, he wanders several domestic cities, obtaining positions in important state organs before others cotton on. The play was first staged by the former China Youth Art Theater in 1956. This NCPA production made its debut in September 2017 and will be performed for a third round from 8 February till 14 February.

Lao She (1899-1966) was a celebrated Chinese novelist and dramatist, best known for his novels “Rickshaw Boy” and “Four Generations under One Roof,” and the play “Teahouse.”—Xinhua ■



A row of jeepneys are seen plying a road in Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines on 20 January, 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Ireland ends nearly century-old ban on alcohol sales on Good Friday

DUBLIN — Ireland’s parliament agreed on Thursday to end the state’s prohibition of alcohol sales on the Christian holiday of Good Friday, saying society had changed significantly since the restrictions were put in place almost a century ago.

The shutting of bars and

banning of sales in shops on the day Christians commemorate Christ’s death have long been opposed by publicans and restaurant owners, who have argued that they lose business during the busy Easter holiday weekend.

Their battle ended up in the

courts eight years ago when a judge granted an exemption to pubs in the western city of Limerick to allow drinking during a match between two provincial rugby rivals.

The restrictions have largely been in place since the 1922 foundation of the Irish state and

their lifting is a further symbol of the changing face of once stridently Catholic Ireland.

“The Government believes the time is right to end the restrictions. We live in a very different society than that which existed when they were put in place,” Ireland’s

junior justice minister, David Stanton, told parliament on Thursday.

The legislation, originally introduced by an independent member of Ireland’s upper house of parliament, passed without a vote being required.—Reuters ■

## Leverkusen, Wolfsburg reap wins in German Bundesliga

BERLIN — Bayer Leverkusen moved to second place after beating Mainz 2-0, while Wolfsburg recorded a 1-0 win over Hannover to complete the 20<sup>th</sup> round of Bundesliga action on Sunday.

The “Werkself” recaptured the second position in the standings, as goals from Leon Bailey and Wendell were enough to move 2-0 past struggling Mainz.

Heiko Herrlich’s men controlled possession in the first half, but the hosts were unable to break the deadlock within half time as Mainz staged a well-positioned defence.

After the restart, Leverkusen’s possession paid off as Leon Bailey had all time and space needed to dance through Mainz’ defence and to hammer an unstoppable effort into the far post corner three minutes into the second half.

Mainz failed to gain a foothold in the game offensively hence the hosts continued to

dominate and sealed the deal with 68 minutes played when Wendell converted a hand ball penalty from the spot to make it 2-0 on the scoreboards.

“It is a well-deserved win. Mainz defended very well in the first half. After the break we improved our game,” Leverkusen head coach Heiko Herrlich said.

With their second win in row, Bayer Leverkusen climbed back to second place while Mainz remain on the 15<sup>th</sup> place and in striking distance of the relegation zone.

Elsewhere, Wolfsburg downed local rivals Hannover 1-0 in the Lower Saxony derby. The Wolves snatched a vital victory on the road as Turkish international Yunus Malli scored the only goal of the match to edge Hannover.

“I am happy about the win. It wasn’t an entertaining win but we had a bit of luck on our side today. The situation in the standings haven’t changed for



Kevin Volland (R) of Bayer Leverkusen vies with Jean-Philippe Gbamin of FSV Mainz during the German Bundesliga match between Bayer 04 Leverkusen and 1.FSV Mainz 05, in Leverkusen, Germany on 28 January, 2018. Bayer 04 Leverkusen won 2-0. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

us so the battle continues,” Wolfsburg head coach Martin Schmidt said. Wolfsburg stay

on 13<sup>th</sup> place with a six-point gap to the drop zone, while newly promoted Hannover continue

on the 10<sup>th</sup> position after suffering their seventh loss of the season.—Xinhua ■

## Messi and Suarez rescue Barca against strugglers Alaves

BARCELONA — Lionel Messi scored a spectacular free kick to give Barcelona a come-from-behind 2-1 win over struggling Alaves on Sunday, keeping the Catalans 11 points clear at the top of La Liga and preserving their unbeaten record in the league.

Alaves were the only team to win at the Nou Camp in the league last season and looked set to overshadow Philippe Coutinho’s first start for Barca when Sweden striker John Guidetti gave them a shock lead in the 23<sup>rd</sup> minute, falling over as he lashed the ball past Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

Luis Suarez finally levelled for the Catalans in the 72<sup>nd</sup> minute, scoring for the eighth league game in a row following wave after wave of attacks from Barca and a handful of impressive saves from visiting goalkeeper Fernando Pacheco.

The equalizer maintained

Barca’s status as the only unbeaten team in Europe’s top five leagues and Messi then gave them a seventh consecutive Liga win by curling a sumptuous free kick beyond the reach of the former Real Madrid keeper in the 84<sup>th</sup>.

Barca top the standings with 57 points, 11 ahead of nearest challengers Atletico Madrid and 19 ahead of champions Real Madrid. —Reuters ■

Barcelona’s Lionel Messi celebrates scoring their second goal at Camp Nou in Barcelona, Spain on 28 January, 2018. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

## Buffon undecided if he will retire this season



Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

MILAN — Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, who has said he plans to retire this summer, is undecided over his future

and will meet with club president Andrea Agnelli to talk things through, he told a television programme on Sunday.

Buffon’s contract runs until the end of the season and he had initially planned to retire following this year’s World Cup in Russia but Italy failed to qualify.

“The future is the least of my problems,” he said on a programme celebrating his

40<sup>th</sup> birthday on state broadcaster Rai.

“I will meet Andrea Agnelli shortly and I want, above all, to make the right choice.

“The president is someone who really cares about me so I’m sure with his help we will make the right decision for someone of my age, and for my possible role in the future.”

Buffon said he was not thinking about beating Paolo Maldini’s record of 647 Serie A appearances.

“I don’t think you should force things, you should be happy with what you have got,” he said. “I have plenty of records and if that one remains with Paolo, I would be happy as he deserves it.”

Buffon, who has been out of action with a calf injury for the last month, has made 629 Serie A appearances so would fall just short of Maldini’s total even if he played in every league match until the end of the season.—Reuters ■