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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Monday, 26 November 2018

## Final rites of Myaing Gyi Ngu Sayadaw to be held on 27 Nov



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye pays respects to a Sayadaw as he discusses with him preparation for final rites of Myaing Gyi Ngu Sayadaw which is planned to be held on 27 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye yesterday paid his last respects to Myaing Gyi Ngu Sayadaw, a monk renowned for his social and religious services in the interests of the nation and his native Kayin State.

Myaing Gyi Ngu Sayadaw Bhaddanta U Thu Za Na passed away at age 71 (Vasa 52) on 30

October. His remains are being kept at a temporary chamber in the Sone-nan-tha Myaing-sway town, Myaing Gyi Ngu region, Kayin State, so people can pay their respects.

The final rites and cremation ceremony will be held on 27 November.

Dr. Win Myat Aye offered food to monks and donated over Ks3.7 million during his visit

Myaing Gyi Ngu Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sujana passed away at age 71 (Vasa 52) on 30 October.

yesterday.

The Union Minister also donated 500 copies of Myaing-gyingu Sayadaw's biography, which details his services towards religion and peace.

Sayadaw U Thu Za Na passed away in a hospital in Bangkok and his remains were transported to his monastery in the town of Myaing Gyi Ngu in Kayin State.—MNA ■

### State Counsellor to pay official visit to Nepal

AT the invitation of His Excellency Mr. K.P.Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, will pay an official visit to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal in the near future. In conjunction with the visit, the State Counsellor will also attend the "Asia-Pacific Summit 2018" to be held in Kathmandu. — Ministry of Foreign Affairs ■

### Thandwe District receives Ks 1.3 bln in Maternal and Child Cash Transfer as of September

THANDWE District in Rakhine State received over Ks 1.3 billion between July 2017 and September 2018 under the Maternal and Child Cash Transfer - (MCCT) for pregnant mothers and children under two years old, according to the district's general administration department.

The list of supported mothers and children under two include 2,770 mothers and 3,009 children from 257 villages in Thandwe Township; 4,196 mothers and 4,102 children from 215 villages in Tungup Township; and

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## Union Minister surveys plantation, conservation work in Pathein Tsp

UNION Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, U Ohn Win, visited the Forest Department in Pathein Township, Ayeyawady Region on 24 November, and heard a report on work conducted by the department in 2018-2019.

During the meeting, the Union Minister spoke on the need to strictly observe the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) issued by the Forest Department, take responsibility and supervise work position-wise, apply systematic reforestation methods, and report findings.

The Union Minister and his team visited a forest plantation on the Thalukhwa reserve and looked into their requirements. They also visited a 200-acre plantation of Pyingodoe trees, inspected a 25-acre section for producing seeds on the Chaungtha reserve,

and private elephant camps in Pathein Township. Officials presented a report on establishing a grazing ground for elephants, provision of social needs for mahouts and their families, and the number of people visiting the camps. The Union Minister later looked into the requirements of a community-based mangrove forest conservation project conducted by the Myanmar Forest Association (MFA), with the cooperation of Ramsar Center Japan (RCJ) and financial aid from Toyota Environmental Grant.

He toured the area where 1,800 acres of mangrove trees are being planted and conserved in Pathein Township. Officials presented a report on conservation of rare tree species and progress of work to the minister. Afterwards, U Ohn Win planted a sapling in the area. — MNA ■



Union Minister U Ohn Win inspects the community-based mangrove forest conservation in Pathein.

PHOTO: MNA

## Thandwe District receives Ks 1.3 bln in Maternal and Child Cash Transfer as of September

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1,709 mothers and 1,529 children from 162 villages in Gwa Township. The general administration department and the Ministry of Health and Sports donated Ks1,309,920,000 to the townships.

Officials will also provide support of Ks45,000 for October, November and December 2018 for 890 pregnant mothers and 599 children under two years of age from three urban townships and 36 villages in Gwa Township. The total financial support is Ks 6,7005,000.

The MCCT project is one of the 8 prioritized under the social welfare and protection master strategic plan. It aims to provide

the required essential nutrition to mothers and newborns in the crucial first 1,000 days of a child's life.

This aid is an important investment in the country's future human resource development and is a State funded project intended to raise the morale of the public, said Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu.

The MCCT is available for mothers in Rakhine State who began their pregnancy after 1 July 2017, and is available in Chin State and the Naga Self-Administered Zone, with plans to expand services into Kayah, Kayin and Shan States and Ayeyawady Region in 2018.— Zin Oo (Myanma Alinn) ■

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



A mother receives the cash aid presented by officials of the Rakhine State Government. PHOTO THIHA SITHU

## Myanmar hosts IBSF meeting in Yangon



The annual general meeting of the International Billiards and Snooker Federation (IBSF) is in progress in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

MYANMAR hosted the annual general meeting of the International Billiards and Snooker Federation (IBSF) in Yangon yesterday.

“The International Billiards and Snooker Championship 2018 enabled Myanmar to study the records of global billiards and snooker players and broaden the scope of its own players,” said Union Minister for Health and Sports, Dr. Myint Htwe, at the meeting.

“The meeting will present a wide array of subjects that will benefit the billiards and snooker games of countries around the world. Presidents

of the federations of the respective countries will share their experiences and suggestions with their Myanmar counterparts.

The meeting will serve as a venue where players, federations, and presidents make contacts for further progress of billiards and snooker,” he said. He then promised the ministry's assistance for the development of billiards and snooker in Myanmar.

The President of IBSF, Mr. Mubarak Hamad MS Al-Khayarin, Vice President Mr. Joseph James Leacy, the President of the Asian Con-

federation of Billiard Sports (ACBS) Mr. Mohamed Salem AS Al-Nuaimi, federation presidents of Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, China, Chinese Hong Kong, Denmark, Germany, India, Iran, Iraq, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Latvia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, Qatar, Ireland, Romania, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, UAE, Viet Nam, Wales, and host Myanmar took part in the discussions.—MNA ■

(Translated by TMT)

## Union Minister U Win Khaing inspects factory, sub-power station

THE Union Minister for Electricity and Energy, U Win Khaing, yesterday inspected the Department of Hydropower Implementation (DHPM)'s natural pozzolan factory located near Nga Yant Gone village about two miles northeast of Popa town.

The factory's in-charge and DHPM Director-General U Chit Toe explained the process of natural pozzolan production and distribution to the minister. The minister urged the factory staff to consider the environmental impact of the project and surveyed work conditions inside the factory.

Up till now, the factory has produced 568089.9 tons of natural

pozzolan.

Natural pozzolans are typically used during the construction of concrete dams to control the alkali-silica reaction and lower the heat of hydration, and to reduce construction duration and costs.

Natural pozzolans are also mixed with cement to construct RCC dams (Roller Compacted Concrete dams). Two concrete dams in Myanmar, Ye Ywar and Ahtet Paunglang, were constructed using the mixture of natural pozzolans and cement. Additionally, pozzolan-mixed cement can be used to build a standard one-storey building, road, wall, or water tank at a lower cost.



Union Minister U Win Khaing and party inspect the 66kVA Pannaetaw sub-power station in Kyaukpadaung. PHOTO: MNA

Later in the day, the Union Minister visited the Kyaukpadaung 66kVA Pannaetaw sub-power station where he was

given the status of electricity distribution and power lines by the in-charge of the sub-power station. He also inspected the con-

trol room and the switchyard of the sub-power station. — MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

## International textile, garment expo to be held 6-9 December in Yangon

MORE than 12 countries are expected to participate at the 7th Myanmar International Textile and Garment Industry Exhibition scheduled to be held in Yangon from 6 to 9 December, according to the event's organizers.

The exhibition will be held at the Yangon Convention Center on the Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Mayangone Township from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The event is jointly organised by the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers' Association (MGMA) and the Myanmar Textile Manufacturers' Association (MTMA).

The four-day expo will showcase over 130 top brands from China, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Chinese-Taipei, Thailand, Viet Nam, and the Czech Republic.

Clothing, textiles, and modern machinery such as embroidery machines, sewing machines, printing machines, and flat knitting machines, will be displayed at the exhibition. In addition, the event will serve as a platform for knowledge-sharing on the latest machinery and techniques.

According to the event's organizers, the exhibition aims to build a well-connected and efficient communication platform for the domestic market.

Currently, Myanmar has more than 400 garment factories employing about 400,000 people and earning more than US\$2 billion from foreign markets per annum, said the organisers.—Khine Khant ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

## Gov't grants Ks18.6m for portable water supply to rural Kayin State



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye hands over Ks18.6 million to Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nan Khin Htwe Myint as assistance to help provide portable water to rural areas in the state yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE Union Government has provided Ks18.6 million to Kayin State as assistance to help provide portable water to rural areas in the state, which is located southeast of Yangon.

The Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement, Dr. Win Myat Aye, gave the donation to Kayin State's Chief Minister, Daw Nan Khin Htwe Myint, yesterday during a ceremony at the Kayin State cabinet office.

The Union government has given the aid to help sink a tube-well, build a brick tank, and erect a pumping station so that

the state can supply clean water to villages in the state, said Dr. Win Myat Aye.

"Every summer, some parts of Kayin State face water shortage due to extreme weather conditions occurring in certain areas of the country," said the Union Minister. "In case, El Niño occurs this year, the new facilities will ensure local people do not face a water shortage," he added.

The Union Minister attended another meeting on rehabilitation of drug addicts at the cabinet office. Addressing the participants at the meeting, he said his ministry's endeavors for ensuring

social protection include rehabilitation of drug addicts.

"Priority has been given to States where most of the ethnic people live in carrying out camp-based and community-based rehabilitation programs," he said.

The Union Minister also expressed his belief that by undergoing vocational training, former addicts can rejoin the society with fresh hope and self-confidence.

Afterwards, there was a general round of discussions. The Union Minister ended the meeting after giving the concluding remarks.—MNA ■

(Translated by TMT)

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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.

# Japanese-themed hotel opens in Yangon

A Japanese-themed hotel, Shin Ye Htut, was inaugurated in Yangon yesterday. With its theme and convenient location near the Japanese embassy, the Shin Ye Htut, will be a draw for visitors from Nippon, said a senior diplomat with the Japanese embassy.

"The hotel will provide a peaceful ambience to Japanese people visiting Myanmar for business or pleasure," said Counsellor (Economic & ODA) Mr. Kazuyuki Takimi from the Japanese embassy at the hotel's opening ceremony.

"We opened this hotel near the Japanese embassy to serve our friends from the Land of the Rising Sun, as Myanmar has already provided them visa exemption," said U Ye Htut, the chairman of the Shin Ye Htut

Japanese-themed hotel, Shin Ye Htut, was inaugurated in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Group of Companies.

"After business meetings at the ministries, they will need a place for complete rest in Yangon before leaving for home," said U Ye Htut.

"We expect many benefits

from the visa exemption program which came into effect from 1 October this year," said Mr. Kazuyuki Takimi at a follow-up press meet.

"But we need some time, as news about the visa exemp-

tion has not reached the entire Japanese public. Myanmar can be a favourite destination for Japanese people, and the number of visitors from Nippon will gradually increase," he told the media.

"If Myanmar wants to see a rise in the number of Japanese visitors, the country should improve its transport infrastructure and raise awareness on the visa exemption program," he said.

The Shin Ye Htut Hotel is located at No (1/B) on the Wingaba Road in Bahan, Yangon. It is the third hotel built by the Shin Ye Htut Group of Companies. The company is planning to open one hotel each in Magway and Bago, the two regional capitals lying north of the commercial city.—MNA ■

(Translated by TMT)

## Police arrests elephant poacher, seizes flintlock guns

THE Thabaung Myoma police station is investigating Saw Thein Han @ Kayin Lay @ Thein Han, 35, from Wa Ya Village; Kyaw Win Hlaing, 45, from Htauk Kyant Kwin Village; Thein Aung, 58, from Ward 1, Aung Zeya Street, Thabaung Town; Nga Mae @ Than Tun Aung, 34, from Taung Htan Village; and Nay Min Tun, 45, from Hnit Pada Village, Taungup Town. They have been suspected of killing a male elephant that was found dead in a forest some 26 miles west of Thabaung Town, Ayeyawady Region, in the afternoon of 22 November. The police found out that the elephant was

killed by Saw Thein Han @ Kayin Lay @ Thein Han with a flintlock gun made by Nay Min Tun and the gun was hidden by Kyaw Win Hlaing. The police personnel then went to the house of Kyaw Win Hlaing, along with him, and in the presence of witnesses, found the 42-inch-long flintlock gun used to kill the elephant and another 5-ft-long flintlock gun hidden in a bush behind the house.

The Thabaung Myoma police station has opened cases under the natural reserve protection law and weapon law.—Ko Lwin (Swa) ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Three suspects seen with weapons which were used for killing an elephant. **PHOTO: KO LWIN (SWA)**

## Men's slippers manufacturers in Kanbya Village face low demand

Myanmar traditional men's slipper manufacturers in Kanbya Village, Monywa Township, Sagaing Region, are experiencing downward demand, according to the manufacturers.

They have noticed decreasing demand for six years, when foreign-made slippers began to flow into the Myanmar market.

Regarding the slipper industry, a slipper manufacturer, U Myo Myint, said, "At the time when the slipper business was good, buyers needed to order by paying cash in advance. But now, manufacturers are waiting for customers and making their slippers in advance. Our

slipper manufacturing business was begun in the age of our grandparents. At that time, the business was quite good, but for now the demands are too low. Some slipper businesses are being closed, as they could not compete with foreign slipper manufacturers."

Slippers manufactured in Kanya village were well known for their quality among residents of the upper Chindwin Townships. But within the past six years, cheap foreign slippers entering the local market resulted in falling sales for local slippers.—Win Oo (Zeyya Taing) (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

A man making slippers for local market. **PHOTO: WIN OO (ZEYYA TAING)**

## Myanmar-Philippines trade increases slightly

BILATERAL trade between Myanmar and the Philippines from April through September this year reached US\$28.6 million, a slight increase of \$7.5 million, or 35 per cent, from the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar's imports from the Philippines, one of Myanmar's regional trade partners, usually exceed its exports.

During the six-month period this year, Myanmar exported \$11.46 million worth of goods and imported commodities worth \$17.2 million.

When compared with the same period in the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year, the value of both exports and imports saw an increase this year.

At this time last year, bilateral trade between the two countries stood at \$21.19 million, with exports valued at nearly \$7 million and imports totalling \$14.19 million.

According to statistics released by the Commerce Ministry, trade between Myanmar and the Philippines touched \$52.432 million in FY2017-2018, falling \$4 million from FY2016-2017.

The value of bilateral trade between the countries stood at \$28.998 million in the 2015-2016 FY, \$28.2 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$33.353 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$44.012 million in the 2012-2013 FY, and \$48.959 million in the 2011-2012 FY.

Myanmar imports capital goods, consumer products, and intermediate goods from other ASEAN member countries, Asian and African states, some European countries and Western nations.

The country mainly exports agricultural, animal, marine, and forest products, minerals, and manufactured goods.—Shwe Khine

*(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)*

## Border trade at Myawady registers over \$20-million rise

THE value of trade through Myawady, a border gate between Myanmar and Thailand, over the first 40 days of the current Fiscal Year 2018-2019 exceeded US\$90 million, an increase of \$21.3 million from the same period last year, the Commerce Ministry reported.

Between 1 October and 9 November this year, bilateral exports reached \$12.4 million, while bilateral imports exceeded \$80 million at the gate. During the same period in FY2017-2018,

the total value of trade through Myawady totalled \$71.7 million, with \$4.4 million in exports and \$16.9 million in imports.

Myanmar conducts border trade with neighbouring Thailand through seven border trade camps, namely, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekehe, Mawtaung, and Mawse.

According to the ministry's official figures, the total trade value at all the borders topped \$823 million this year, an increase of \$98 million from the same period

last year.

Thailand is one of the top foreign investors in Myanmar. According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, Thailand brought \$123.8 million worth of investment into Myanmar in the last FY2017-2018. Fresh investments from Thailand between April and September this year exceeded \$64 million. There were no new investments in the first month of this FY.—Swe Nyein *(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)*

## Gov't to spend over Ks900mn on projects in Kantbalu

THE Sagaing Region's government will spend Ks965 million, allotted by the Union government for the current financial year, to implement development projects in Kantbalu Township, according to the township planning department.

The development projects will include construction of a 100 kVA transformer, a workshop, construction of agricultural roads and village-to-village roads, work on paving new as-

phalt roads and extending old roads, development of 450 acres of teak plantations and 40 acres of watershed plantations, upgrade of school buildings, construction of 50 concrete water tanks and other facilities, staff housing, and electrification plans.

As part of the government's dry-zone greening project to protect the region from climate change, more than 10,000 saplings will be planted during this rainy season with the aim of

developing the best practices for planting and maintaining trees.

The Sagaing Region has been using both regional and Union budgets to continuously carry out development projects, including those for the improvement of livelihood, every year to improve the socio-economic status of residents.—Aung Win Nyein (Kantbalu)

*(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)*

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## Rakhine Chief Minister meets with local residents in Gwa Tsp

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu met yesterday with local residents of Alae Chaung and Yae Kyaw village tracts in Gwa Township to discuss developmental affairs.

In the meeting with the Rakhine State Chief Minister and party, local residents from the villages discussed matters related to upgrading the dirt roads connecting the villages, solving farmland disputes, and protecting farms from intrusions by wild elephants in Yae Kyaw Village tract.

They also discussed matters related to the continued flourishing of village libraries, fulfilling the need of rural health clinics in Palin Maw and Yamar Kyun villages, promoting the post-primary school of Thabue Chaung Village to sub-middle

school, the construction of rural roads, mainly for transporting goods, and assisting combine harvesters.

Further discussions included concerns about education, health, social and regional developments, which were coordinated by departmental officials.

The Rakhine State Chief Minister then provided two pregnant women and 35 children under 2 years in the two village tracts with cash assistance for three months. In addition, a donation of Ks 1 million each for the Maha Wizaya Pagoda in Alae Chaung Village and the public library in Yae Kyaw Village, and Ks 400,000 for the basic education sub-high school in Yae Kyaw Village, was also provided.—Zin Oo (Myanma Alinn) ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu meets with local residents in Gwa Township, Rakhine State yesterday. **PHOTO: DISTRICT (IPRD)**

## Fifth Film Analysis held in Yangon



The 5<sup>th</sup> Film Analysis being convened in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: PE ZAW**

THE 5th Film Analysis, an aspect of the Cinematheque Program, was held at the Film Development Centre under the Ministry of Information in Yangon yesterday. Film Promotion Committee member Dr. Aung Min spoke at the event, saying the films for analysis in this event brings ideas from the film into the mind of the viewer. He said the ideas are artistic and filmmakers don't need to follow traditional processes all the time. He said you need to just input your style into the film.

Attending the film analysis event were officials from the Film Development Centre, students from the Yangon University of National Arts and Culture, youths interested in filmmaking and students from external film schools.

Dr. Aung Min watched 'The Turin Horse' directed by Director Bela Tarr together with the attendants and then asked their personal opinions and interpretations based on the analysis process and then showed an interview with the director.

Writer Ko Naing Oo said youths need to create new works instead of repeating old films. He said they will need to research literature and new ideas.

The Turin Horse was explaining about the thoughts of an old man but was about feelings and is based on Turin City in Italy from 1889.

The next monthly film analysis will take place on 9 December and will select Art House films that are more relevant to Myanmar.—Zaw Gyi ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Sri Lanka president vows never to reappoint ousted premier

COLOMBO (Sri Lanka) — President Maithripala Sirisena on Sunday reignited the power struggle that has crippled Sri Lanka's government for more than a month, vowing never to reappoint arch-rival Ranil Wickremesinghe as prime minister.

Wickremesinghe's party has a majority in parliament and Sirisena's bid to bring back the country's former strongman Mahinda Rajapakse has already failed.

But Sirisena choked back tears in a meeting with foreign correspondents as he accused Wickremesinghe, who he sacked on October 26, of being "highly corrupt".

"Even if the UNP has the majority I told them not to bring Ranil Wickremesinghe before me, I will not make him prime minister," he said, referring to Wickremesinghe's United National Party.

"Not in my lifetime," he added.

Sirisena dismissed Wickremesinghe following a host of personality and political clashes since they formed a coalition in 2015. He named Rajapakse as new premier and tried to dissolve parliament but the Supreme Court and legislators blocked the president's moves.

Wickremesinghe, who occupies the prime minister's resi-



Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena addresses the Foreign Correspondents Association (FCA) in Colombo on November 25, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

dence, and Rajapakse, who has the premier's official offices, have both refused to back down.

But the country officially has no prime minister, heightening international fears about Sri Lanka's stability and looming foreign debt repayments.

Sirisena told foreign correspondents at his official residence that he will appoint a commission to investigate corruption under Wickremesinghe since January 2015.

"He is corrupt. His economic policies are not good for local industries. He pursued an extremely liberal form of government that is not compatible with our culture."

Sirisena fought back tears as he recalled how he asked

Wickremesinghe to step down in February when their respective parties were beaten in local council elections.

"I told him that we lost the election because his economic policies had failed. I told Ranil in this very room to step down, but he refused," Sirisena said.

He added that there had been "over 100 instances" of open clashes between the two and that their power struggle had become an open secret in the cabinet.

Sri Lanka's parliament meets on November 27 and 29 to discuss a motion by the UNP to cut off government spending.

Government finances will stall on January 1 unless a 2019 budget is passed.—AFP ■

## Partial reopening of Baghdad's Green Zone delayed: official

BAGHDAD (Iraq) — The partial reopening of Baghdad's high-security Green Zone to through traffic, planned for Sunday, has been postponed for several days, a government official said.

The enclave has been home to Iraq's parliament, government offices, United Nations agencies and western embassies since the US-led invasion that toppled dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003.

Earlier this week, Iraqi authorities began removing concrete barriers to ease access to a key route that cuts across the enclave, ahead of a planned opening on Sunday, reportedly at the orders of Prime Minister Adel Abdel-Mahdi.

But on Sunday morning, a government official told AFP that "the reopening will not take place before the next two days, or perhaps by the end of the week". "An important thoroughfare will be opened, but we must secure its surroundings and seal access to perpendicular streets," the official said on condition of anonymity.

The road leads from the banks of the Tigris River northwest through the Green Zone and into other parts of Baghdad.

Authorities say allowing through traffic would ease congestion in other parts of the city.—AFP ■



Angola is aiming to expand its agricultural sector, which could provide many with employment. PHOTO: AFP

## 'Green fuel': Bananas to help wean Angola off oil

CAXITO (Angola) — Boxes of still-green bananas were shifted one-by-one from a towering stack of crates into a refrigerated shipping container.

Stamped "From Angola, with love", the fruit is shipped to consumers 6,000 kilometres (3,700 miles) away and are part of Luanda's drive to diversify its economy and wean itself from its dependence on oil. Novagrolider, a privately-owned company, produces several dozen tonnes of bananas every week to be shipped to Portugal.

The firm, founded 10 years ago with Portuguese investment, has become a poster child for the economic transformation that the Angolan government is seeking.

At Novagrolider's Caxito 600-hectare (1,500-acre) plantation 60 kilometres northwest of Luanda, the banana plants, protected with blue plastic bags, bend under the weight of their fruit.

In a nearby hangar with a corrugated iron roof, two staff delicately dip the freshly-picked bunches into vast washing pools.

The bananas are meticulously sorted after being washed and weighed with as many as 4,000 boxes prepared daily.

The best-looking fruit is earmarked for dispatch to foreign markets with the rest kept for sale locally.

"We have two grades — domestic and export," said supervisor Edwin Andres Luis Campos as he watches the production line closely. "Domestic will be sold here in Angolan supermarkets in about four or five days. Export will be shipped to Europe in refrigerated containers that will arrive in Europe in between 20 and 25 days."

Novagrolider's output has grown exponentially in recent years and its parent company, Grupolider, which has interests in transport and property as well,

employs 3,500 people.

It grows mangoes, pineapples and watermelons as well as bananas on its four fruit farms in Angola. After a cautious start, company boss Joao Macedo's appetite and ambition grew rapidly.

"Two years ago we started exporting to the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo — but that wasn't viable because of the state of the roads," said Macedo in his air-conditioned office in Luanda.

### Bananas, our 'green fuel'

"Despite competition from South America, the quality of our products nonetheless allows us to sell in Portugal and Spain. And that's not all."

Macedo hopes to double production to 170,000 tonnes annually and establish a foot-hold in the lucrative South African market.

Back in Caxito, the province's top agriculture official shares Macedo's enthusiasm. —AFP ■

"We're financially encouraging small-scale farmers to increase the size of the areas they cultivate," said Eliseo Mateos.

"Until now they've mostly used their production for subsistence, but now we want them to grow more so they can sell their crops at market.

"Bananas are our 'green fuel' — here we have one possible way of diversifying the economy."

In the decade that followed the bloody 27-year civil war that ended in 2002, Angola enjoyed strong double-digit growth fuelled by oil, which accounts for 90 percent of Angola's exports and 70 percent of government revenues.

But the slump in the price of crude in 2014 shook the economic model of the country, which is one of the poorest in Africa, locking it into a vicious cycle of economic contraction. Unbridled inflation, recession, soaring debt and mass unemployment all followed. —AFP ■

## 22 dead, scores feared drowned after Uganda boat sinks

MUTIMA (Uganda) — Twenty-two people have died and more than 60 are feared drowned after a pleasure boat sank on Lake Victoria, Ugandan police said Sunday.

The vessel carrying close to a hundred revellers sank during bad weather on Saturday in the latest deadly incident to affect passenger boats on Africa's largest lake.

"Twenty-two bodies have been recovered and 26 people rescued," said Asuman Mugenyi, director of operations for the

Uganda police. "According to one of the survivors there were more than 90 people on board."

The boat, on which party-goers were drinking, dancing and listening to music, sank a short distance from the shore off Mutima in Mukono District, close to the capital Kampala.

Mugenyi said overloading and bad weather were likely to blame. "We expect (the number of passengers) is beyond the capacity of the boat.

It was overloaded and unfortunately people were drunk,"

Mugenyi said. "We suspect the mechanical condition of the boat and the weather contributed to the sinking." "A big storm hit," said local government official Richard Kikongo. "It can be fine on land but bad weather on the lake." Kikongo said first responders were among the victims. "Fishermen on two small boats could see that the boat was sinking and went to help. People tried to jump onto the boats but they were too many and those sunk. The rescuers died too," he said.—AFP ■



It is not uncommon for ferries to capsize on Lake Victoria and the number of fatalities is often high due to a shortage of life jackets and the fact many local people cannot swim. PHOTO: AFP

# Developing the business sector through reforms

**A**COUNTRY'S business sector will develop if there is ease of doing business within it. Business-related sectors have to adapt and evolve in order to accommodate smoother business conduct.

While conducting any type of business does depend on whether there is peace in a country or not, businesses are still required to operate through difficulties and challenges in order to support the livelihood of the people. It's important to create prospective opportunities for business.

There are several countries and small nations that are emerging as economic markets in the present age. Countries facing internal conflicts such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia, and small nations in the African continent are entering the list of countries with most development in ease of doing business. This can be attributed to practical and effective reforms.

These countries have realized that enabling smoother business conduct and transactions is critical to a country's development. In Myanmar, too, we can see the private sector and the Union government making gradual changes and reforms. The World Bank has estimated that in 2019, Myanmar will retain its global rank of 171 in ease of doing business.

A well-known economist remarked that if Myanmar manages to do well on at least three out of 10 indicators a year, it will be able to enter the top 100 ease of doing business ranking by 2020.

Currently, New Zealand ranks first in the Ease of Doing Business index, followed by Singapore. Malaysia ranks 15th and Afghanistan ranks 167th on the index.

Myanmar has the potential for conducting good business. It has only been a few years since Myanmar initiated economic reforms so there hasn't been any significant development as of yet. We need to speed up current economic reforms and put in combined efforts to enter the top 100 club on the Ease of Doing Business index ...

The Ministry of Commerce, relevant index leaders, World Bank advisors, and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry are studying the country's existing economic situation, short-term reforms, and sustainable development. So far, Myanmar has received US\$4.3 billion in foreign investment and US\$10 billion from local investors.

Ease of doing business and economic development are crucial elements for Myanmar's national development and this is why the Union government and business organizations are placing importance on the matter. We would like to urge everyone in the business sector to put in their utmost effort in the reforms.

# High risk countries and potential impacts on food security and agriculture

Food and Agriculture Organization

**I**N view of the potential impact of the 2018/19 El Niño on food security and agriculture, high risk countries in Southern Africa, Horn of Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America should be prioritized for further monitoring, analysis and early action.

This Advisory on the 2018/19 El Niño, issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), provides a historical impact overview and latest forecasts for a better understanding of the El Niño patterns and its potential effects on the agricultural sector in the different regions globally. It also offers specific early action recommendations to promote the understanding that impacts of El Niño can be mitigated before they generate large scale food security emergencies.

### What is El Niño?

El Niño is a recurrent global atmospheric-oceanic phenomenon associated with an increase



in sea surface temperatures in the central tropical Pacific Ocean and a sustained weakening of the trade winds. An El Niño event develops approximately every two to seven years and lasts any

where from 6 to 24 months.

A global El Niño event is declared after the central Pacific Ocean and the atmosphere show signs of certain atypical conditions for a prolonged period

of time, usually over a period of three months. Even if an El Niño event does not fully develop, sea surface temperatures and other large-scale climatic patterns can be put into motion, potentially

driving extreme weather events in certain areas of the globe.

An El Niño event increases the risk of heavy rainfall and flooding in some parts of the world, while in others, it increases

the risk of drought through reduced rainfall. The impact of El Niño on agriculture and food security can be severe. For example, the 2015/16 El Niño – one of the strongest on record – affected over 60 million people worldwide, resulting in 23 countries appealing for international humanitarian assistance worth over USD 5 billion.

The extent of impact of El Niño on agriculture and food security depends on a complex interplay of meteorological, seasonality and vulnerability factors.

As a result, impact patterns of global El Niño events are variable and do not necessarily materialize during every occurrence. While there is generally a relationship between the global impacts of El Niño/La Niña events and their intensity, there is always potential for even a weak or moderate event to generate serious impacts in some regions. To address this uncertainty, it is therefore crucial to consult regional and national early warning systems for a systematic analysis of weather forecasts, vulnerabilities and potential risks.

## Food systems: A powerful tool to prevent noncommunicable diseases



Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia

**T**HE causes of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are many and varied. Some are environmental, including indoor and outdoor air pollution. Some are genetic, such as for select cases of type one diabetes. Many more are the result of the decisions people make and behaviors they engage in, including tobacco use or the harmful use of alcohol. Whatever the root, every year NCDs kill 8.9 million people across the WHO

South-East Asia Region, with 4.4 million succumbing to them prematurely. That is of deep concern.

A critical factor in the battle against NCDs, which is one of the Region's Flagship Priorities, is the food systems people are part of and the outcomes they have. At the country, regional and global levels, for example, food systems define the food environment, which consists of the physical, economic, policy and socio-cultural conditions that shape people's dietary choices and nutritional status, including malnutrition of all types, whether underweight, overweight or obesity. In other words, food systems and the environments they create define the way in which risks associated with several NCDs – from diabetes to heart disease and hypertension to cancer – are managed and mitigated or allowed to grow.

In 2016, for example, Sri Lanka pioneered a 'traffic light' labelling system for all beverages sold

in the country, creating a simple way for consumers to be made aware of the sugar contained in pre-packaged drinks and make informed decisions to regulate their consumption. In the same year Maldives hiked taxes on energy and soft drinks by a massive 58% – the single greatest increase anywhere in the world. India has meanwhile reduced the amount of trans-fats permissible in food products to 5%, while Thailand has passed legislation in line with the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes. It is also working with industry to limit the salt content of a range of foods.

Though these and similar interventions are to be commended, further progress is needed to achieve the Region-wide target of a one-fourth reduction in premature NCD deaths by 2025 and a one-third reduction by 2030. As the Sustainable Development Goals outline, and as the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition emphasizes,

all countries have a unique opportunity to enhance multisectoral engagement to create more sustainable food systems that promote health and decrease the risk of NCDs throughout the life-course.

A great place to start is by communicating effectively to increase health literacy and improve dietary habits. This requires health authorities to identify key problem areas where changes in consumption will have optimal impact on health outcomes, be that by decreasing salt intake, reducing the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, cutting the intake of fatty foods, or simply promoting the benefits of a healthy diet. It also requires them to devise simple, comprehensible messaging that is culturally relevant, credible, actionable and accessible to all.

Member States should likewise consider new ways to engage food industries to public advantage. Governments have immense capacity, for example, to establish

norms and standards for the nutrients food and beverages contain, and to help reformulate their content accordingly. They should ensure this capacity is put to full use. Importantly, at the same time as disseminating these norms and standards and supporting manufacturers adhere to them, where appropriate, it is vital they are enforced and are not merely seen as 'opt-in' measures that can be adopted at will. Innovative measures to promote healthier street food should likewise be pursued.

Monitoring and evaluating efforts to adapt food systems should be a top priority. Clear indicators have been set in several areas to facilitate this, including the 2025 goals of achieving a 30% relative reduction in sodium intake, halting the rise of obesity and diabetes and reducing the prevalence of raised blood pressure by 25%. As part of this drive – and to gain a fuller picture of what is or isn't working – coun-

tries should also measure the impact their broader agri-food systems are having on NCDs, at the same time as considering how they can accelerate progress towards each of their targets.

WHO remains committed to working with Member States Region-wide – alongside key partners at all levels – to consolidate Member States' many gains, including via innovative policies that empower individuals, communities and countries.

That is, after all, what the food systems approach to NCDs is all about. More than anywhere else, food systems across the Region are changing, offering the potential to wipe-out hunger and underweight, but also increasing the risk of overweight, obesity and associated NCDs. That is both inspiring and cause for concern. Given this reality, harnessing the food systems approach to tackle NCDs is not simply a matter of good policy. It is a matter of need.



### Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 25th November, 2018)

**BAY INFERENCE:** Weather is a few cloud over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** According to the observations at (18:30 hrs MST today, the Tropical Storm (Usagi) over the South China Sea is centered at about (40)miles South-Southeast of Hochimin (Vietnam) and move to Northwestwards slowly.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 26th November, 2018:** Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Taninthayi Region, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Naypyitaw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Yangon Regions, Rakhine and Kayah States and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3-5) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Slight decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Shan and Chin States.

**FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th November, 2018:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th November, 2018:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th November, 2018:** Generally fair weather.

### EARTHQUAKE NEWS

A slight earthquake of magnitude (4.2) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (33)miles north-northwest of Hkamti), latitude 26.46°N, longitude 95.57°E, depth (10) kilometers about (135) miles northwest of Myitkyina, seismological observatory was recorded at (03)hr (33)min (46)sec M.S.T on 25th November, 2018.

## Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to [ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com](mailto:ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com) with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.). – Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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# Thai rubber farms stretched as US-China trade war saps demand



In this picture taken on 17 October, 2018 a woman cuts out stains from a raw rubber sheet at a factory in Rayong Province. They work in the pre-dawn gloom tapping trees for the “white gold” that has made their country the world’s top rubber producer — but as prices plunge due to the US-China trade war, Thai farmers are giving up the sap. **PHOTO: AFP**

BANGKOK (Thailand) — They work in the pre-dawn gloom tapping trees for the “white gold” that has made their country the world’s top rubber producer — but as prices plunge due to the US-China trade war, Thai farmers are giving up the sap.

Thai latex makes everything from tyres and condoms to baby pacifiers and surgical gloves, the fruit of the rubber trees cultivated across endless acres of the country. But the rubber trade is at a crossroads as a bitter dispute between the world’s two biggest economies ricochets across

Southeast Asia with unexpected consequences.

Countries like Viet Nam are benefiting as manufacturers migrate from China to avoid punishing tariffs on exports to the US.

But in Thailand, the price of rubber has slumped twenty per cent since June, as those same tariffs bite hard on demand from factories in China — the market for more than half its latex exports.

Some of Thailand’s rubber workers are being forced to abandon their plantation jobs for factory work.

“I couldn’t feed my children anymore,” said Annita, who used to work 10 hours a day harvesting latex in Chiang Rai, northern Thailand, making just \$7 a day, less than the minimum wage and half the going rate several years ago.

So she has taken a job at a packing plant earning around \$9 daily.

“Nobody wanted to stay. The plantation owner can’t find workers anymore — the work is too difficult for the wages,” she told AFP.

While the plight of US soybean farmers hit by the tariffs has grabbed the headlines — they face a 25 per cent levy to access China, the world’s biggest soybean market — other troubles are quietly brewing across the world.

The bottom has fallen out of the once-booming industry as Thai rubber prices plummet to about \$1.21 a kilogram — they were five times that in 2011.

## Too much rubber

Around one third of all the rubber in the world comes from Thailand’s forests, where latex is harvested at night or before dawn by tappers who make an incision and collect the sap as it

bleeds out.

The country currently produces about 4.6 million tonnes of rubber a year and the sudden drop in Chinese demand has compounded a longer term global oversupply crisis to push prices off a cliff.

“A climate of uncertainty” pervades the industry after US tariffs hit nearly half of all Chinese imports, according to Karako Kittipol, marketing manager at Thai Hua Rubber.

“Chinese companies don’t want to have too much rubber in stock,” he told AFP.

The value of the yuan against the US dollar has also dipped, making rubber more expensive for Chinese manufacturers to buy.

Thailand is a bystander in the trade war between the world’s two largest economies.

But the ruling junta is trying to address the supply-side issues and is aiming to reduce the area under cultivation for rubber by more than 60,000 hectares per year over the next five years.

## ‘Not the right solution’

At the same time rubber remains an intensely political issue in Thailand.

Farmers and tappers — the

majority of who come from the junta-aligned south — are notoriously quick to protest when times get tough.

So the government last week stumped up an initial handout — capped at roughly \$700 per plantation — to ease their immediate pain.

But farmers remain unconvinced.

“(It is) not the right solution,” said Apichit Duangdee, who felled a third of the trees on his small plantation earlier this year.

“Very few countries can produce natural rubber. It is a rare product and the Thai government should promote it better,” he said.

If it fails to, the knock-on effects could be massive.

Tyre giant Michelin buys 40 per cent of its natural rubber from Thailand, keeping vehicles on the road all over the world.

“If prices continue to fall, many farmers and processors will lose interest in latex and quality could fall,” Lionel Dantiacq, Michelin’s president for Asia and Oceania, told AFP.

“If prices go too high, the tyre industry will suffer... with repercussions for the consumer.” —AFP ■

## Holiday season business impacted for Italian luxury brand caught in China row: reports

NEW YORK — Business for Italian luxury brand Dolce & Gabbana, recently caught in a racism controversy that angered many in China, is also impacted in Manhattan as local Chinese Americans and visitors from China seem to be boycotting the brand.

Only a few Chinese or Chinese American customers could be spotted entering into the D&G stores or patronizing the Italian fashion designer’s special counters in Manhattan in New York City in recent days, the Chinese language newspaper *The China Press* and the Chinese language TV news channel Sinovision both reported on Saturday.

“After nearly three hours of waiting at the entrance of the Fifth Avenue D&G store on Black Friday, I barely saw any Chinese faces going in,” a Sinovision reporter said in a news program run by the channel.

The Black Friday, which

falls on the day after Thanksgiving, marks the start of the biggest sales and shopping season in the United States.

A female Chinese American, identified as a Miss Wang, told *The China Press* that she used to like the D&G brand a lot, but the latest controversy “changed my perception,” which made her “quit visiting the D&G stores this holiday season.”

“Although D&G and its designers have apologized for what happened, it seems to me that they did so just to save their markets and were not sincere enough,” Wang added.

According to the newspaper, sales staff at the D&G stores and counters in Manhattan have been reluctant to comment on the recent controversy or its impact on their business, but some have insisted that they are still expecting an increase in customer flow and sales revenues for this holiday season. —Xinhua ■

## Transneft dispatches billionth tonne of liquid hydrocarbons from Primorsk Port



Primorsk Port is the largest Russian oil loading port on the Baltic Sea and the endpoint of the Baltic Pipeline System. **PHOTO: TASS**

PRIMORSK — Russia’s oil pipeline company Transneft has dispatched one billion tonnes of liquid hydrocarbons (oil and diesel fuel) for export via Primorsk Port in Russia’s north-west since loading its first tanker in 2001.

“The landmark billionth tonne of oil was shipped on 23 November, 2018 to Mastera tanker en route to Porvoo Port (Finland),” Transneft said on

Friday.

A total of 901.2 mln tonnes of oil were shipped and 9,099 tankers were handled from the start of operations at Primorsk Port as of 23 November. Diesel fuel shipments totaled 98.8 mln tonnes, with 3,361 tankers handled. In total, 12,460 tankers and 1 bln tonnes of oil and oil products were handled.

Achieving such a landmark of oil throughput is a step to-

wards establishing the futures market, Deputy Vice President of Transneft Vladimir Nazarov said. “A roadmap is currently present, with activities implemented within its framework to create futures agreements or contracts for oil and diesel fuel from Primorsk Port,” the top manager says. “We cannot speak about the futures market without the commodity market. These are merely interrelated things. We should offer a continuous flow of oil and oil products of standard quality to the market — this is exactly what we have achieved at this terminal,” Nazarov told reporters.

Primorsk Port is the largest Russian oil loading port on the Baltic Sea and the endpoint of the Baltic Pipeline System. The shipment capacity of the port is 60 mln tonnes per year for crude oil and 25 mln tonnes per year for oil products. A total of 37.7 mln tonnes of oil and 15 mln tonnes of oil products are planned for shipment in 2018. —Tass ■

# EU leaders approve 'tragic' Brexit deal

BRUSSELS (Belgium)—European Union leaders on Sunday approved a historic Brexit deal, holding out hopes of close future ties even as one declared Britain's withdrawal after four decades a "tragedy".

The 27 leaders of the bloc met without Prime Minister Theresa May to endorse the agreement, which sets the stage for Britain exit from the bloc on 29 March. "EU27 has endorsed the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration on the future EU-UK relations," European Council President Donald Tusk tweeted, as the leaders waited for May to join them.

Arriving for a special summit in Brussels, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, head of the bloc's executive arm, said it was a "sad day". "To see a country like Great Britain ... leave the EU is not a moment of joy nor of celebration, it's a sad moment and it's a tragedy," he said. Michel Barnier, the former French foreign minister who negotiated the deal on behalf of the bloc, added: "We will remain allies, partners and friends." May, who arrived in Brussels on Saturday evening for final talks with Tusk and Juncker, was due to join the other leaders later in a highly symbolic moment. Forged during 17 months of tough negotiations, the withdrawal agreement covers financial matters, citizens' rights, Northern Ireland and arrangements for a 21-month post-Brexit transition phase. A short political declaration that accompanies the text sets out hopes for future security and trade ties. But it is not the final stage, as the House of Commons in London must still approve



A general view of UE leaders with Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May (background) during a special meeting of the European Council to endorse the draft Brexit withdrawal agreement and to approve the draft political declaration on future EU-UK relations on 25 November, 2018 in Brussels. PHOTO:AFP

the deal—and many MPs have warned they will not back it. Until the agreement is approved, all sides are still planning for the potentially disastrous possibility that Britain leaves the EU with no new arrangements in place.

## No renegotiation

Media reports in London on Sunday suggested some of May's own ministers were secretly working with EU diplomats on a "Plan B" in case parliament rejected the agreement next month. But Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency, said: "It is important that everyone in the UK is aware that the result that is now available is the result. "It will certainly not be renegotiated and there will be no further room for manoeuvre."

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte added: "Overall, I think

this is the max that we can all do, both Theresa May and her government as well as the European Union. "No victors here today, nobody winning, we're all losing—but given that context, this (agreement) is acceptable."

## 'Reduce risks and losses'

Tusk said on the eve of the summit that "no-one will have reasons to be happy" when Brexit happens, but he said the terms agreed would "reduce the risks and losses". In London, eurosceptics in May's Conservative party and their Northern Irish allies warn they will not support the agreement, which they argue keeps Britain too close to the EU.

But in an open "letter to the nation" on Sunday, May said it delivered on the 2016 referendum vote to leave, and was a "deal for a brighter future". Britain remains deeply divided over the decision,

but the prime minister said that finally leaving could be "a moment of renewal and reconciliation". "To do that we need to get on with Brexit now by getting behind this deal," she said.

## Tensions on Gibraltar, fishing

The summit risked being derailed by a late objection to the deal by Spain over the British territory of Gibraltar. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez threatened to reject it unless his country kept a veto over future changes to EU ties with "The Rock", which borders Spain and which it has long claimed. The impasse was resolved when Britain promised to continue bilateral talks with Madrid after Brexit—although that itself caused further tensions. Sanchez claimed that discussions would cover the "co-sovereignty" of Gibraltar, but May rejected this. — AFP ■

# Italy PM 'confident' Rome can avoid EU sanctions over budget

ROME (Italy) — Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said he was "confident" Rome could avoid unprecedented EU sanctions over its big-spending budget, rejected by Brussels, following talks with European Commission head Jean-Claude Juncker.

Rome's coalition government insists its 2019 budget will help kickstart growth in the eurozone's third largest economy and reduce debt, but the EU says the country risks "sleepwalking into instability" and increasing its already massive debt burden.

After dinner on Saturday

in Brussels with Juncker, Conte told Italian television: "I am confident that dialogue can avoid an infringement procedure."

The EU's rejection of the budget on Wednesday was widely expected after it had sent it back to Rome for reconsideration in a historic first for the bloc. Italy refused to back down, setting the stage for Wednesday's final opinion that deplored "a marked backtracking" on past reforms.

Conte, who was accompanied for the working dinner by Finance Minister Giovanni Tria, said: "It was not a conclusive meeting but a meeting which

reaffirmed, with mutual respect, the opening of a dialogue that we must preserve in everyone's interests." He insisted that his government — made up of Matteo Salvini's League and Luigi Di Maio's anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S) — does not intend to reverse course on the budget.

He said earlier this week: "If it is in the interest of Italians, we are not willing to give up anything."

The EU says the budget, which includes a basic monthly income for the unemployed and a pension boost, will not deliver the

growth promised while increased spending will only increase Italy's debt. Italy wants to run a public deficit of 2.4 per cent of gross domestic product in 2019 — three times the target of the government's centre-left predecessor — and one of 2.1 per cent in 2020.

Brussels forecasts Italy's deficit will hit 2.9 per cent of GDP in 2019 and 3.1 per cent in 2020 — breaching the EU's 3.0 per cent limit. EU member states now have to decide whether to allow the commission to trigger the excessive deficit procedure, a lengthy process that could lead to fines. — AFP ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Trump confirms refugee deal with Mexico

WASHINGTON (United States) — President Donald Trump on Saturday announced migrants seeking asylum in the United States via its southern border would need to wait in Mexico while their claims are processed, appearing to confirm a report regarding a new bilateral deal.

"Migrants at the Southern Border will not be allowed into the United States until their claims are individually approved in court," he tweeted. "All will stay in Mexico."

The tweets came after The *Washington Post* reported the US had reached a deal with Mexico's incoming government that would represent a major overhaul of border policy. — AFP ■

### French govt says 81,000 'Yellow Vests' demonstrate

PARIS (France) — Nearly 81,000 "Yellow Vests" had taken to the streets by mid-afternoon Saturday to protest against higher motor fuel taxes, about a third of the previous week's number, the French interior ministry said.

Of the total about 8,000 demonstrators — named for their bright yellow high visibility safety jackets — were in Paris where there were clashes with police who fired tear gas and water cannon on the Champs-Elysees.

The ministry said there had been 35 arrests nationwide, with 18 in the capital, while eight people were hurt, including two police, compared with 106 injured Saturday last week. — AFP ■

### 47 US-backed fighters killed by IS in Syria over two days: monitor

BEIRUT (Lebanon) — At least 47 US-backed fighters have been killed in counter-attacks by the Islamic State group in eastern Syria over the past two days, a Britain-based monitor said on Saturday.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights raised the death toll from an earlier figure of 24 after it said IS jihadists launched three fresh assaults Saturday. — AFP ■

## Viet Nam's central, southern regions brace for Typhoon Usagi

HO CHI MINH CITY— Viet Nam's central and southern localities have employed many measures to brace for Typhoon Usagi, which is forecast to make landfall on Sunday morning.

The steering board for disaster prevention, and search and rescue of Ho Chi Minh City has instructed all ferries in the locality to suspend operation as from

Saturday evening in anticipation of the typhoon, Viet Nam News Agency reported. The municipal Health Department has asked all hospitals in the city to stand ready for any emergency.

As of Saturday morning, about 1,000 offshore fishing boats in the southern province of Tien Giang had been asked to sail out of dangerous areas and keep

contact with inland competent agencies.

The central coastal province of Khanh Hoa has evacuated more than 2,840 households with over 12,000 people to safer places, and encouraged 2,210 farmers at aquaculture breeding cages at sea to move inland.

Meanwhile, authorities of the central coastal province of

Phu Yen encouraged local residents to move to safe places. Soldiers, policemen and militia-men in the province are working round the clock to cope with the typhoon.

Other localities such as the central province of Binh Thuan and the southern province of Long An provinces have also completed preparations for Us-

agi, the ninth typhoon to hit the South China Sea so far this year.

In 2017, typhoons claimed the lives of 386 people in Viet Nam, damaged more than 600,000 houses and caused economic losses of about 60 trillion Vietnamese dong (2.6 billion US dollars), according to the country's agriculture ministry.—Xinhua ■



FUKUSHIMA, Japan - Vegetables produced in Fukushima Prefecture are withdrawn from the shelves of a supermarket in the city of Fukushima on 23 March, 2011. PHOTO: KYODO

## Fukushima farmers see need to better publicize food safety

FUKUSHIMA (Japan)—Farmers and fishermen in Fukushima called for further efforts to convince the public that their food is safe to eat on Sunday after Taiwan decided to maintain its import ban on Japanese food from areas affected by the 2011 nuclear disaster. Taiwan's public voted in a referendum Saturday to maintain the ban on agricultural products and other food from Fukushima and four other prefectures. "All we can do is to work harder until people understand that our products are safe," said Masao Koizumi, a rice farmer in Fukushima.

The prefectural government

of Fukushima has been conducting radiation checks on all rice produced in the prefecture. Since 2015, all shipments cleared the screening, with radioactive cesium levels below the 100-becquerel-per-kilogram limit set by the central government.

"When people see the inspection readings, they will know that there is no threat of radioactive materials," Koizumi said.

Tetsu Nozaki, the head of an association representing fishery cooperatives in the prefecture, said, "We are disappointed, but we just need to make sure that we keep communicating the safety of our products."—Kyodo News ■

## Friendship run held in Malaysia to promote ties with China



People take part in the friendship run in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia, 25 November, 2018. PHOTO: XINHUA

KOTA KINABALU (Malaysia)—Nearly 2,000 people joined a friendship run here Sunday to mark the establishment of bilateral ties between Malaysian and China as well as to promote greater relations among the two peoples. The event was held in the capital of Malaysia's Sabah state in North Borneo, of which the beautiful beaches, tropical rain forest, mountain trails and cultural diversity are increasingly attracting tourists from China.

Oh Ei Sun, president of the Sabah Malaysia-China Friendship Association that hosted the event, said the great participation showed the local government and people were keen to further ties with China, and to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative. "We hope such healthy and positive event could help the participants to have deeper understandings on the friendship between China and Malaysia, especially with Sabah," he said. Liang Caide, Chinese consul-general in Kota Kinabalu, said the event is a meaningful way to mark the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Malaysia.—Xinhua ■

## Police face-off with tribe in missionary killing

PORT BLAIR (India)—Indian officers had a nervous long-distance face-off with the tribe who killed an American missionary, in their latest bid to locate his body on a remote island, police said on Sunday. The police team, who took a boat just off Indian-owned North Sentinel island on Saturday, spotted men from the Sentinelese tribe on the beach where John Allen Chau was last seen, the region's police chief Dependra Pathak told AFP.

Using binoculars, officers—in a police boat about 400 metres from the shore—saw the men armed with bows and arrows, the weapons reportedly used by the isolated tribe to kill Chau as he shouted Christian phrases at them. "They stared at us and we were looking at them," said Pathak. The boat withdrew to avoid any chance of a confrontation. Police are taking painstaking efforts to avoid any disruption to the Sentinelese—a pre-neolithic tribe whose island is off-limits to outsiders—as they seek Chau's body. The death of the 27-year-old on 17 November has cast a new spotlight on efforts to protect

one of the world's last "uncontacted" tribes whose language and customs remain a mystery to outsiders.

Fishermen who took Chau to North Sentinel—which is one of the Andaman and Nicobar islands in the Bay of Bengal—said they saw the tribe burying the body on the beach. The Sentinelese normally attack anyone who

goes to the island and Pathak said police are monitoring to see if there is a repeat of an incident after two fishermen who strayed onto the island were killed in 2006.

One week after their deaths, the bodies of the two Indians were hooked on bamboo stakes facing out to sea. "It was a kind of scarecrow," Pathak said. "We are studying the 2006 case. We are

asking anthropologists what they do when they kill an outsider," the police chief added. "We are trying to understand the group psychology."

Though Chau's death is officially a murder case, anthropologists say it may be impossible to retrieve the American's body and that no charges will be made against the protected tribe.—AFP ■



A lack of knowledge of the Sentinelese, who 13th century adventurer Marco Polo called "brutish and savage", is the main handicap to recovering a body. PHOTO: AFP

# Climate change could cost US 'hundreds of billions' a year: study

TAMPA (United States) — Climate change is already hurting the global economy and will cost the US hundreds of billions of dollars annually by century's end unless drastic action is taken to cut carbon emissions, a major US government report warned on Friday.

"With continued growth in emissions at historic rates, annual losses in some economic sectors are projected to reach hundreds of billions of dollars by the end of the century — more than the current gross domestic product (GDP) of many US states," the latest edition of the National Climate Assessment

week appeared to confuse weather with climate when he tweeted: "Brutal and Extended Cold Blast could shatter ALL RECORDS - Whatever happened to Global Warming?"

Trump also yanked the United States out of the landmark 2015 Paris climate accord, signed by more than 190 nations to limit carbon emissions.

David Easterling, director of the technical support unit at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information, said there had been "no external interference" in the report.

lease, which came on the Friday after Thanksgiving, a national holiday when many people are traveling and shopping.

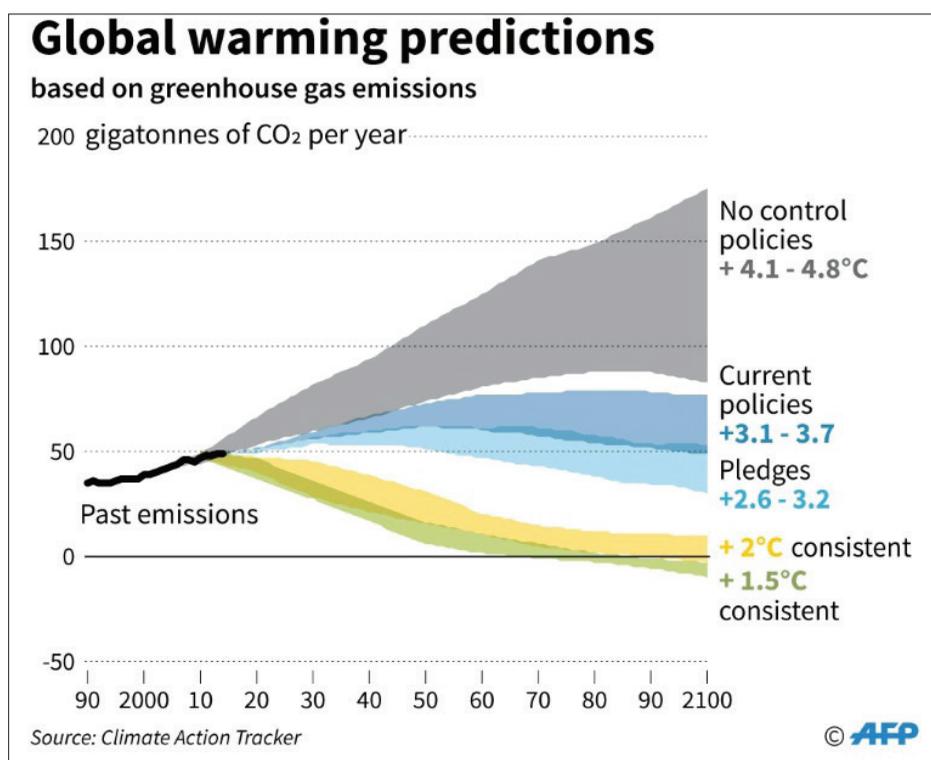
A NOAA spokeswoman said the report was "out earlier than expected" and was released ahead of two major scientific meetings on climate change in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, the report warned that even if major cuts are made to harmful greenhouse gases (GHGs) like carbon dioxide and methane, the damage will linger for years.

"Because several GHGs, in particular carbon dioxide, reside in the atmosphere for decades or longer, many climate-influenced effects are projected to continue changing through 2050, even if GHG emissions were to stop immediately," said the report.

Sea levels are continuing to rise, and extreme events like heavy rain and floods continue to increase worldwide, which will "cascade across economic sectors," Easterling said, warning of "substantial net damage to the US economy."

The report said it was "very likely that some physical and ecological impacts will be irreversible for thou-



Global warming predictions. PHOTO: AFP



Climate change is expected to cause growing losses to American infrastructure and property and impede the rate of economic growth, according to a major new study. PHOTO: AFP

said. "Without substantial and sustained global mitigation and regional adaptation efforts, climate change is expected to cause growing losses to American infrastructure and property and impede the rate of economic growth over this century," it added.

The effects will spill over into global trade, affecting import and export prices and US businesses with overseas operations and supply chains, it added.

Some of these impacts are already being felt in the United States, the report said, and recent extreme weather and climate-related events can now be attributed "with increasingly higher confidence to human-caused warming."

Compiled by more than 300 scientists, the Fourth National Climate Assessment Volume II is a congressionally mandated report that spans more than 1,000 pages.

US President Donald Trump dismissed last year's report, and just this

Scientists found "clear and compelling evidence that global average temperature is much higher and is rising more rapidly than anything modern civilization has experienced," he told reporters.

"And this warming trend can only be explained by human activities, especially emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere."

### Cascading effects

Reporters questioned the timing of this year's re-

sands of years, while others will be permanent."

The publication is designed to inform policy makers but does not make any specific recommendations on actions to take.

"In light of the report's findings, it's critical that federal, state and local governments take aggressive action to protect US residents by both reigning in emissions and helping communities adapt to the climate impacts that are now inevitable," said Brenda Ekwurzel, the director of climate science at the

Union of Concerned Scientists and one of the study's authors.

Rush Holt, chief executive officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Sci-

ence, said the economic warning shows that "policymakers can no longer afford to dismiss or ignore the overwhelming scientific evidence of climate change." —AFP ■

The Asahi Shimbun Japanese Leading Newspaper requirement: fluency in english, under 35 years old content of the contract will be consulted work: interpret, translate, arrange interviews 09780640884

**MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS**  
**MYANMA RAILWAYS**  
**INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER**

1. Open Tenders are invited for supply of the following items in Euro:

Sr No	Tender No	Description
1.	12(T)4/MR (YUG)18-19	Spare Parts for Locomotive (17) Items
2.	12(T)5/MR (RBE)18-19	Spare Parts for RBE (256)Items (KIHA 40, Niigata)
3.	12(T)6/MR (RBE)18-19	Spare Parts For RBE (449)Items (Transmission Parts DW 10, CDW 14, CDW 15)

Closing Date & Time – 27.12.2018 (Thursday)(14:30)Hrs

2. Tender documents are available at our office starting from 23.11.2018 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Deputy General Manager Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of 51th Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung, Yangon. Phone: 95-1-291985, 291994

**CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE**  
**M.V AS SOPHIA VOY. NO. (1815/1816)**  
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V AS SOPHIA VOY. NO. (1815/1816) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-11-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.  
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.  
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.  
**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**  
**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**  
**AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT**  
**(S'PORE) PTE LTD**  
Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE**  
**M.V MCC HALONG VOY. NO. (1829/1830)**  
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC HALONG VOY. NO. (1829/1830) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-11-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.  
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.  
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## Harry and Meghan announce move to Windsor in early 2019



Britain's Prince Harry and his wife Meghan. **PHOTO: AFP**

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Prince Harry and his pregnant wife Meghan Markle will move into a historic cottage on the royal family's Windsor Estate early next year, Kensington Palace said on Saturday.

The couple, given the titles the Duke and Duchess of Sussex after marrying in Windsor in May, will live in Frogmore Cottage, a two-storey stucco-faced house in Windsor Home Park close to the castle.

They will relocate to their new home, around 20 miles (32

kilometres) southwest of London, "as they prepare for the arrival of their first child," the palace said in a statement.

"Windsor is a very special place for their royal highnesses and they are grateful that their official residence will be on the estate," it added.

Prince Harry and Meghan, who returned earlier this month from a 16-day tour Pacific tour, currently live in Nottingham Cottage on the grounds of Kensington Palace in west London.

Described as cosy and

"modest", it consists of two reception rooms and two bedrooms.

The Palace said the couple's office would remain there.

It provided no further details on the new official residence.

Historic England, a public body which maintains a register of old buildings given special protections, lists Frogmore House in its Grade II category.

The status is awarded to just 5.8 percent of approximately 500,000 listed buildings in England, marking them out as particularly important sites.

The organisation dates the cottage back to the early 19th century but does not detail how many bedrooms it contains.

It sits on the grounds of the far grander Frogmore House, built in 1680-84 and a royal residence since 1792 — and where Harry and Meghan had their evening wedding reception.

"The name derives from the preponderance of frogs which have always lived in this low-lying marshy area," according to the royal family's website. —AFP ■

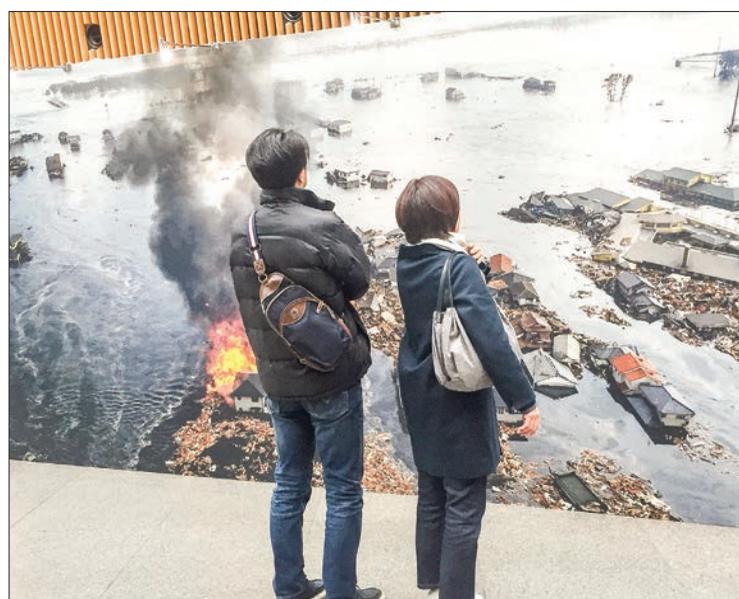
## Photo exhibition highlighting 30-year Heisei Era opens

TOKYO — A photo exhibition chronicling major episodes during Emperor Akihito's 30-year reign opened at Tokyo International Forum on Saturday before his scheduled abdication in April next year.

On display at the exhibition titled "Footprints of *The Heisei Era* - A news agency as eyewitness" are about 130 photos, taken after Emperor Akihito, now 84, ascended the Chrysanthemum throne in 1989 upon the death of his father Hirohito, posthumously known as Emperor Showa.

These photos include the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Emperor Akihito's historic trip to China in 1992, the Tokyo subway gas attack in 1995 and the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami in 2011, as well as many other natural disasters and sporting events.

The photo exhibition, which runs through 2 December, is the 10th and latest in a series of photo exhibitions organized by the nonprofit Japan Press Research



A couple look at a photograph of the aftermath of a huge tsunami triggered by the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 at an exhibition entitled "Footprints of *The Heisei Era* - A news agency as eyewitness" at Tokyo International Forum on 24 November, 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Institute since 2012.

A limited version of the Heisei Era photo exhibition will be also held at the Japan Newspaper Museum, popularly known as Newspark, in Yokohama from July to September next year.

Kyodo News has assisted

the institute in this exhibition project.

Emperor Akihito will abdicate on 30 April next year, and his 58-year-old elder son, Crown Prince Naruhito, will succeed to the throne the following day. — Kyodo News ■



People celebrate in Osaka on 24 November, 2018 after the Japanese city was picked to host the 2025 World Expo. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

## Osaka, Japan picked to host 2025 World Expo

PARIS — The western Japanese city of Osaka was selected Friday to host the World Exposition in 2025 that is expected to attract tens of millions of visitors, beating Ekaterinburg in Russia and the Azerbaijani capital Baku.

Osaka won the final run-off against Ekaterinburg. It has vowed to stage an event from 3 May and 3 November, 2025 focusing on health and medical technologies.

It is the second time for Osaka Prefecture to host the World Expo. The 1970 World Expo was held there and attended by around 64 million people, the second most in history after the Shanghai Expo in 2010.

Japan expects the 2025 expo to attract 28 million visitors and boost the local economy by 2 trillion yen (\$18 billion), underpinning growth after the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

"We'll strive to make the expo a success. There is a big responsibility because this is everyone's expo," Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko told reporters in Paris where the voting took place by member countries of the event's governing body, the Bureau International des Expositions.

Osaka Governor Ichiro Matsui said the expo in the Japan's second-largest metropolitan area will "shock the world."

Under the theme "Designing Future Society for Our Lives," Osaka aims to spur a global effort to achieve sustainable societies.

Osaka hopes to bring people and ideas together in the pursuit of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals — 17 objectives to be achieved by 2030, including no

poverty, zero hunger, gender equality, sustainable cities and communities and climate action.

Baku, sitting on the Caspian Sea in oil-rich Azerbaijan, offered as the theme of its proposal talent, vitality and achievement of humanity.

Ekaterinburg, located near the Ural mountains and Russia's fourth-largest city, based its bid on the idea of future technological innovation as a catalyst for improved living conditions.

Neither Azerbaijan nor Russia has ever hosted an expo.

Known officially as International Registered Exhibitions, expos are held every five years, their themes based on the great challenges of the time.

The French government had sought to host the 2025 exposition in Paris, but withdrew its candidacy earlier this year, citing financial concerns.

Japan most recently hosted the event in 2005 in Aichi Prefecture, a vibrant area of central Honshu where the city of Nagoya is located and Toyota Motor Corp is headquartered.

The next expo will take place in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, in 2020, while the most recent one was held in Milan, Italy in 2015.

Earlier Friday, the three candidates made their final presentations at the general meeting.

Japan's Seko somewhat nervously took the stage and extended an invitation to visit Osaka from which he hails, after which the "Pokemon" character Pikachu introduced a short video showing the planned site for the 2025 expo on the man-made island of Yumeshima in Osaka Bay. — Kyodo News ■

# Shimadzu to commercialize new blood test for colon cancer screening

OSAKA—Shimadzu Corp will soon commercialize a blood test designed to detect early stage colon cancer, which tends to go unnoticed until symptoms become apparent at a more advanced stage. The precision equipment maker introduced the new diagnostic method on a trial basis at a hospital in Kyoto in October and plans to start a commercial screening service in 2019, aiming to offer it across the country in a few years.

A stool examination to detect signs of bleeding in a digestive tract is commonly used to diagnose colon cancer in Japan, but the method is not very accurate. The new method can detect colon cancer with 96 per cent accuracy by measuring eight types of biomarkers in blood, according to Shimadzu.

The company plans to apply the latest method to diagnosis of early stage breast cancer and pancreatic cancer in the future.



Precision instrument maker Shimadzu Corp unveils its Cell Picker device developed to automatically remove unnecessary cells during preparation procedures for iPS cells, in Kyoto on 19 March, 2018. PHOTO:KYODO

Colon cancer is one of the most common causes of death in Japan, according to the National

Cancer Centre Japan. There are other approaches to detecting cancers in their

early stages. Hitachi Ltd is developing a diagnostic method using urine samples.—Kyodo News ■

## Probiotics no help to young kids with stomach virus: study

CHICAGO—A major US study led by Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis showed that a commonly used probiotic is not effective in improving symptoms in young patients with gastroenteritis. The study involved 971 children aged three months to four years that treated between July 2014 and June 2017 in the emergency departments at St Louis Children's and nine other geographically diverse US academic medical centers. Participants were eligible if they had come to the emergency room with symptoms of gastroenteritis: watery stools, vomiting, diarrhea or other signs of acute intestinal infection. They also had to have not taken probiotics in the preceding two weeks.

Half of the children in the study were randomly assigned to receive a common probiotic known as *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG, or LGG, twice daily for five days, while the others took a similarly looking and tasting placebo. Otherwise, the children received standard clinical care. Neither the researchers nor the parents knew which children had received the probiotics. Regardless of whether the children took a placebo or probiotic, their symptoms and recovery were nearly identical. The data showed that diarrhea in both groups of kids lasted about two days and the kids missed an average of two days of day care. "We tested many different scenarios - infants compared with toddlers, whether the patient had taken antibiotics, whether the gastroenteritis was caused by virus or bacteria, and how long the diarrhea had been going on before the treatment was given. We also had the probiotic independently tested for purity and strength. Every time, we reached the same conclusion," said the study's lead author David Schnadower, a Washington University professor of pediatrics and a physician at St Louis Children's Hospital. "LGG did not help," Schnadower said. A similar study in Canada evaluated effectiveness of a different probiotic, *Lacidofil*, in children with gastroenteritis, and the findings of that study mirrored those in the US study. There are no treatments for pediatric acute gastroenteritis other than giving children fluids to prevent dehydration and, sometimes, medication to relieve nausea. Gastroenteritis accounts for 1.7 million pediatric emergency room visits and more than 70,000 hospitalizations each year.—Xinhua ■

## From parcel delivery to security, Singapore bets big on drones

SINGAPORE—Hi-tech Singapore is planning to roll out a swarm of drones for tasks that include delivering parcels, inspecting buildings and providing security, but safety and privacy concerns mean the initiative may hit turbulence. Companies have already started testing the devices for commercial use, mainly in an area of over 200 hectares (500 acres) dotted with high-rise buildings and shopping malls, specially designated by the government for the trials.

It is part of the affluent city's

drive to embrace technological innovation, as well as an effort to tackle a manpower shortage in a country of just 5.6 million, which relies on foreign migrant workers in many low-paying sectors. Commercial use of unmanned aerial vehicles is already taking off around the world, in areas as diverse as crop-spraying and surveying for insurance claims, but Singapore's push represents a particularly ambitious bet on the technology. Singapore's civil aviation authority has got behind the project, saying it recognises the potential for

drones "to transform mobility and logistics", and is working with industry players as it seeks to shape regulations for the sector.

During recent tests, a drone buzzed through the air, snapping pictures of a tower block's facade, trials for a system that could see laborious human inspections of the city's ubiquitous high-rises replaced by automated checks. "Today's existing building inspection process is extremely slow, expensive, tedious, prone to accidents, fatigue and human error," said Shawn Koo, chief technical officer of H3 Zoom, a unit

of the firm H3 Dynamics, which is behind the tests.

Such inspections are typically carried out by workers from South or Southeast Asia, who hang precariously outside buildings on platforms suspended by ropes. The new system will see high-resolution images taken by drones and analysed to check for defects, with inspections taking a few days rather than a few weeks, as they do at the moment. H3 Zoom hopes to fully launch the inspections next year.

### Robotic guards

Drones are also being tested as robotic guards by local firm ST Aerospace. At its command centre, screens show a simulated security breach in a fence. A black drone is deployed, which chases an intruder while transmitting live images that direct security officers towards him to make an arrest. Tests have also been carried out for drone parcel delivery while a hospital operator plans to use the devices to transport blood samples and specimens between its hospitals and central laboratory. But transforming the futuristic vision into reality faces hurdles. The prospect of having a drone suddenly whizz by your apartment or office has sparked privacy concerns in the land-scarce city.—AFP ■



This photo taken on 17 October, 2018 shows a Singapore Technologies Aerospace owned drone on a mobile landing and charging station during a demonstration in Singapore. PHOTO:AFP

## Football festival for children kicks off in Taunggyi

THE Grassroots Football Festival which aims to identify and nurture young talent from Myanmar was organized at the Taunggyi Stadium in Taunggyi yesterday.

The festival was supervised by the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

Officials from Taunggyi, the MFF, players, and coaches from basic education schools in Taunggyi took part in the festival yesterday.

The event was well-attended, with children kicking balls into the net, eager to flaunt their skills.

The festival concluded in the afternoon after extensive

training by instructors and coaches.

Grassroots Football Festivals are being organised to use the power of soccer to educate, inspire, and mobilise youth in Myanmar to overcome health challenges, live productive lives, and be agents of change in Myanmar's communities, said Dr. Myo Tun, Shan State Minister for Social Affairs.

Grassroots Festivals have been held in Yangon, Mandalay, and Mawlamyaing, said a source with the MFF.

The MFF plans to hold similar events later in other cities in different states and regions.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■



Children taking part in the Grassroots Football Festival at Taunggyi Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: MFF

## Shan United head coach eyes young talent for AFC Cup

SHAN United plans to use talented young players in some crucial matches, including the upcoming AFC Cup, which starts 26 January, said head coach U Min Thu.

"I want young players to get big match experiences. If they try, they will become worthy of playing in such matches. By using them in some big matches, my team can narrow the gap between senior and young players," he said.

In the previous 2018 AFC Cup, Shan United suffered a big loss: five defeats and one win out of six matches played.

"Targeting every home plays is important. We will grab full marks in home play," said U Min Thu. Shan United was placed in Groups G during the drawing ceremony of the 2019 AFC Cup held on 22 November at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Shan United will compete together with Viet Nam Club BecamexBinh Duong, a club from the Philippines Cere Negros or Davao Aguilas, and the champion or third place team from the Indonesian club.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■



Shan United head coach U Min Thu. PHOTO: SHAN UNITED FC

## Ronaldo, Mandzukic on target as Juventus ease past SPAL

ROME (Italy)—Cristiano Ronaldo continued his hot form for Juventus on Saturday as he and Mario Mandzukic scored both goals in the second consecutive game to help the Serie A leaders open up a nine-point lead at the top of the table with a 2-0 win over struggling SPAL.

Ronaldo slotted home Miralem Pjanic's free-kick after 29 minutes in Turin to join Genoa's Krzysztof Piatek at the top of the Serie A scoring charts with nine goals, before Mandzukic sealed the three points on the hour mark in a simple warm up for Tuesday's crucial Champions League visit of Valencia. The pair also scored both in Juventus' 2-0 win over AC Milan before the international break, and Ronaldo's strike was his seventh in as many games in all competitions for his new club, for a total of ten goals this season. "Cristiano does things that catch opponents off guard and that's exactly what we need," said coach Massimiliano Allegri. "Sometimes we play one pass too many and the moment is lost.

"Cristiano moves and thinks so quickly, he saw Douglas Costa coming out the corner of his eye and pulled the pass back. We need to all improve in that sense, being able to think ahead to the next move." SPAL, fighting relegation, were no match for Allegri's reigning champions who are nine points ahead of Napoli, with Carlo



Cristiano Ronaldo goes joint top of the Serie A scorers with his ninth goal this season. PHOTO: AFP

Ancelotti's side gunning to close the gap when they play bottom club Chievo on Sunday. Following his opener, 33-year-old Ronaldo sent wide a chance for a brace after the break.

But he played a role in the second goal scored by Mandzukic, who was wearing the captain's armband for the first time. Ronaldo latched onto a long ball and pulled it back for Douglas Costa, whose shot was cleared into the path of Mandzukic and gobbled up by the Croatian. "The opening goal changed the game and I was very angry that we were slow to react and allowed Ronaldo to go clear," said SPAL coach Leonardo Semplici.

"It's the first time I've seen Ronaldo up close and my forwards should learn from the attitude that a champion like this

puts into every game. "We need to improve on the details if we want to avoid being put under pressure." Roma suffered a setback ahead of Tuesday's Champions League game against holders Real Madrid at the Stadio Olimpico, falling to a 1-0 defeat at Udinese.

Eusebio Di Francesco's side were sluggish against the hosts, who pulled away from the relegation zone thanks to Argentine Rodrigo De Paul's 54th-minute goal. "When you have almost 80 per cent possession in the first half, what you lack is determination to finish the game," Di Francesco said after his side drop to seventh, 18 points behind Juve.

Later on Saturday third-placed Inter Milan take on second-from-bottom Frosinone.—AFP ■