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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Monday, 7 January 2019

## Kayin New Year celebrations held in Einme, Ayeyawady Region

**T**HE Kayin Ethnic Affairs Ministry of the Ayeyawady Region Government, and the Kayin National Literature and Culture Steering Committee held a ceremony to mark the Kayin New Year day, which falls on the first waxing day of the Pyatho, Kayin Era 2758, in Einme, Ayeyawady Region yesterday.

The New Year and the new harvest festival of the Kayin ethnic people held at the Taungsu Village in Ywathit Village-tract in Einme Township was attended by Mahn Win Khaing Than, the Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw, and his wife, Daw Nant Kyin Kyi.

Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin, Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Hla Moe Aung, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Kyaw Khaing, Region Hluttaw representative Mahn Jonny, Kayin Ethnic Affairs Minister Gar Moe Myat Myat Thu, Karen National Union Chairman Saw Mutu Sae Po, and Vice Chairman Padoh Saw Kwe Htoo Win opened the ceremony by beating the Kayin Frog Drum (Pha-si).

Union Ministers Dr. Pe Myint, Thura U Aung Ko, South-West Command Commander Brigadier General Ye Win Oo, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation, U Hla Kyaw, region ministers,



Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, beats the Kayin traditional drum to launch the Kayin New Year celebrations.

**Kayin national leaders also pledged that they would serve the interests of the country without selfishness and fear and without racism and religious extremism : Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than**

Hluttaw representatives, and invited guests were also present at the ceremony. Afterwards, Union Minis-

ter Nai Thet Lwin read out the Message of Greetings from the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for the Kayin New Year.

At the ceremony, the Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw said the Kayin New Year is an auspicious and historic day for Kayin nationals. In 1881, during the British rule in Myanmar, the Karen National

Association was established. Thanks to the efforts of Kayin leaders including Dr. Tee Than Pyar to promote Kayin literature, culture, education, society, and health, the bill on the designation of Kayin New Year Day was approved on 2 August 1937 by the Parliament of the colonial era.

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## Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Win Myint

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Win Myint, on the occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Hilda C. Heine, Ed.D  
President of the Marshall Islands

On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, I wish to express our sincere congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and the people and Government of Myanmar on its 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Independence Day.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands shall remain committed to supporting our partnership and mutual friendship by enhancing our areas of collaboration and fu-

ture aspirations in the bilateral and international levels. As you celebrate this auspicious national day, I wish Your Excellency continued prosperity and success for many years to come. Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Khaltmaagiin Battulga  
President of Mongolia

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

allow me to extend my sincere considerations to Your Excellency and to the friendly people of Myanmar.

It would be my great pleasure to continue collaborating with Your Excellency in further expanding and strengthening Mongolia-Myanmar relations to the mutual benefit of our two peoples, as well as to that of the regional development and promotion of our shared values of democracy.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes for your good health and well-being, as well as for the progress and prosperity to the friendly people of Myanmar.

## SWRR Ministry provides aid to families displaced from Pyapon fire

THE Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Dr. Win Myat Aye, encouraged residents of Chaungwa Village in Dedalu village-tract, Pyapon Township, who lost their homes in a fire, and provided them with necessary support, yesterday.

Local residents of Chaungwa Village lost their 178 houses to a fast-spreading fire on 3 January. The Union Minister and entourage inspected the destroyed houses and provided rice, clothing, blankets, mosquito netting, school books and stationery, construction materials, galvanized iron sheets for roofing, and solar powered lamps to the fire-stricken residents.

The Union Minister told the residents that the support is provided by the Union government and requested them to cooperate with each other so that everyone affected receives the aid they need. He also expressed his gratitude to those philanthropic organizations, foundations and private donors who provided assistance.

The support provided by the Union government includes



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye meeting with residents of Chaungwa Village in Dedalu village-tract, Pyapon Township yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

K8,280,000 in rice rations, K510,000 in monetary support for 17 elderly residents, K360,000 in monetary support to 12 pregnant women, K510,000 as funding for one maternity circle, K19,350,000 to purchase construction materials, 7,200 galvanized iron sheets, 360 plain roofing sheets, 375 male longyis, 375 female longyis, 708 mosquito nets, 708 cotton blankets, 154 school uniforms, 154

dozen exercise books, 250 solar powered lamps, and 178 cases, with each containing 16 pieces of family rescue equipment.

Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Thein Swe spoke of his gratitude for the support provided. Also, the Union Minister offered robes and offertories to the monks of Sasana Takhon Monastery in Chuangwa Village. The fire victims are currently

residing in the monastery.

A direct-to-the-public mobile service team, headed by the Pyapon Township General Administration Department (GAD), is providing services to renew national registration cards, household registrations and fisherman identity cards to the residents. They have also opened a health protection clinic and a Tatmadaw mobile specialist clinic.

In related news, the Union Minister and entourage visited Thamein Hta Village, also in Pyapon Township, and met with its local residents in Kone Tan Monastery. The Union Minister provided social pensions to elderly residents, funds for people living with disabilities, and funds for five maternity circles. He also demonstrated proper ways to dispose of litter, which can be systematically taught to children in the maternity circles, and then provided nutritional food and toys.

The total amount of monetary support to the residents of Pyapon Township in Ayeyawady Region is K79,930,443. The amount of funds for social protection processes in Pyapon Township is K44,788,100. Yesterday's monetary support was K124,718,543.

Accompanying the Union Minister were Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, Ayeyawady Regional Minister for Social Affairs Dr. Hla Myat Tway, Hluttaw representatives and ministry officials. —MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Elderly in Maungtaw Tsp get social pension

OFFICIALS from the Department of Social Welfare and the Township General Administration Department disbursed social pension to senior citizens above 85 years of age directly at their homes in Maungtaw Township yesterday.

A total of 12 recipients, including two elderly residents in Kyi Kan Pyin village-tract, eight in Lay Mine ward, and two in Myo Thu Gyi village-tract, received a stipend of Ks30,000 each.

The Department of Social Welfare provides a stipend to

elderly citizens once every three months. The department will continue disbursing stipends to elderly citizens in the rest of the township's villages, said U Aung Kyaw Sein, the department's focal point in Maungtaw.

He said the department gave K500,000 to the family of a man in Thit Tone Nar Kwa Village of Maungtaw Township who was killed while he was out driving cattle in September last year.

On 4 January, the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of Public Health,

and the General Administration Department provided vaccinations, public health education, and K45,000 each to 128 mothers with children under 2 years of age in Maungtaw Township. The departments provided these services to 62 mothers in Indin Village, 26 women in Kyauk Pandu Village, and 40 mothers in U Daung Village.

The Department of Social Welfare, operating under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement, has provided monetary support to mothers with children under 2 years



The official from the Social Welfare Department presents social pension to a senior citizen in Maungtaw. PHOTO: TIN SOE

of age in Rakhine State, Kachin State, and Naga Self-Administered Zone. This is part of the department's eight-point plan

to support mothers so they can live with dignity from pregnancy to old age.—Mawsi, Ko Min ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



“Let us strive collectively to create such a nation as was envisaged by the architects of our independence: a nation practicing pure principles that guarantee justice and freedom, and equal rights that enable all our people to live in peace.”

*(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the Government on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2018.)*



Phan Khon game, a Myanmar traditional game.  
PHOTO: KYI MYO THE T



Chairman of Kayin National Union  
Saw Mutu Say Poe.



Union Minister for Information  
Dr. Pe Myint.



Union Minister for Religious Affairs and  
Culture Thura U Aung Ko.



Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs  
Nai Thet Lwin.

## Kayin New Year celebrations held in Einme, Ayeyawady Region

### FROM PAGE-1

Thalay Htaikhokepho on Kayin Era 2678, the first waxing of the Pyatho, AD1938 December 21, was designated as the Kayin New Year day and the first ever new year address was broadcast on 21 December, 1938.

He said the first ever address pledged to strengthen the unity of Kayin nationals and all Kayin nationals are committed to building a unified Myanmar.

Kayin national leaders also pledged that they would serve the interests of the country without selfishness and fear and without racism and religious extremism, said Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

“The speech vividly expressed the Kayin national leaders’ farsightedness, selflessness, and willingness to work for the development of the country, and also showed they held no grudges,” he said.

“The Kayin people are honest and faithful, and they rely on agriculture for their livelihood. The families of the Kayin ethnic people and their relatives reunite when the new crops are harvested and pray for each other,” he said.

“The celebrations of the Kayin New Year and the harvest season are held on a grand scale, and today’s ceremony marks the 81st anniversary of the new year and shows the unity of Kayin people,” said

Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

He urged the Kayin people to cooperate with other ethnic people in the State’s peace efforts to bring about national reconciliation, ceasefire, and equitable development in hilly and plain areas, and to overcome the challenges of the peace process.

He wished the Kayin ethnic people a strong place in the Union while preserving the fine tra-

ditions of Kayin prestige and traditional customs, and marching towards a federal democratic country based on peace, stability, and development.

Afterwards, the Chairman of the Kayin National Union Saw Mutu Sae Poe urged the Kayin to conserve their traditional customs.

He also expressed his appreciation of the Kayin people’s dedication and perseverance to hold their

annual festival since days of yore.

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint expressed his delight to see the festival which had pulled in a significant crowd, and called the harvest festival the origin of cultural events of all ethnic groups.

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko wished the Kayin ethnic people unity, happiness, and a bright future. Afterwards, the Ayeyawady Region Chief

Minister and the Command Commander greeted the people.

The Amyotha Hlutaw Speaker and his wife, and attendees then visited exhibitions on Kayin traditional dress and utensils, Kayin literature and musical instruments, and the efforts of Kayin leaders and Kayin nationals who participated in the independence and peace processes.— Min Thit (MNA) ■



Kayin people enjoy traditional feast to celebrate the Kayin New Year Day.



Kayin ethnic men and women participate in the Kayin New Year and harvest festival in Einme in Ayeyawady Region yesterday.



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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.

## Tropical storm Pabuk veers away from Kawthoung, travel services restored

THE Taninthayi Region's authorities reopened border gates and island resorts, which were suspended due to tropical storm Pabuk crossing near Kawthoung, after the weather bureau lifted its warning on the storm yesterday.

Local tourism businesses returned to normal yesterday, with motorboats providing ferry services to local and foreign travelers to island resorts. Ferry services between Kawthoung and Ranouh also resumed yesterday. The Meteorology and Hydrology Department announced yesterday that cyclonic storm Pabuk over the Andaman Sea has weakened into a Deep Depression. The storm



Travel services resume in Kawthoung yesterday. PHOTO: KYAW SOE

is centred at about 160 miles south-southwest of Coco Island, 280 miles south-southwest of Hainggygyun (Myanmar) and 10 miles south-southeast of Port Blair (India). The department

has forecast there will be a few clouds over the Bay of Bengal, and weather will be partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea. —Kyaw Soe (*Kawthoung*) ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

## Mason suspected of stealing from Swedish diplomat arrested

THE police have arrested a 23-year-old mason on charges of stealing cash and items belonging to the first secretary of the Swedish embassy and her family from their residence in Yangon. At 7 a.m. on 21 October, the diplomat found K50,000 missing from her purse, Euro210 and K23000 missing from her husband's wallet, Baht4200, US\$250, and a Sony Xperia XA2 handphone missing from a table in their bedroom, an iPad Mini missing from the ground floor parlour, and a bicycle missing from the compound of their house, located in the Shwewuthome housing complex of Bahan Township.

A Myanmar citizen who lives in same residence together with the diplomat and her husband reported the matter to the Bahan Township Police Station. Under the directive of the Yangon Region police chief and supervision of the Yangon West District police chief, a combined team comprising members of the Criminal Investigation Department and the Bahan Police Station launched a search. They identified 23-year-old Naung Naung, a mason who had taken part in renovations at the house, as a suspect. When police reached Naung Naung's home on Thila Street in Ward 87 in Dagon (Seikkan) Township,

they found he had already gone to Myitkyina in Kachin State, over 700 miles north of Yangon.

Acting on information that he would travel to Mandalay by train, the combined team joined forces with their counterparts in Myanma Railways and arrested Naung Naung on the train. During interrogation, he confessed to stealing the cash and items from the diplomat. The police have retrieved the bicycle, handphone, and iPad, and are trying to recover the cash. They have also filed a case against Naung Naung, according to Myanmar Police Force.—GNLM ■ (Translated by TMT)

## Police console families of staff killed in action in Rakhine

POLICE officials yesterday offered their condolences to the families of staff slain by AA insurgents in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State, on 4 January. The officers were posted to the Township to ensure security, rule of law, and communal peace.

On 5 January, a team of police officials led by the Deputy Chief of the Magway Region Police Force, Police Col Khin Maung Latt, visited the bereaved family of Police Maj Sai Bo Han at their home on Aungsetana (A) third street in Magway. They presented K1 million, provided by the Myanmar Police Force, to the officer's widow, Daw Thida Oo.

A team led by Police Maj



Police officials offer their condolences to the families of staff killed by AA insurgents in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State, on 4 January. PHOTO: MNA

Thet Naing Tun of Maubin District police chief's office in Ayeyawady Region visited the family of Deputy Police Inspec-

tor Myint Lwin at their home in Ward 9, Nyaungdon, and presented K1 million, provided by the MPF, to his widow Daw

## Sarpay Beikman distributing Myanmar classics

The Sarpay Beikman, under the Printing and Publishing Department of the Ministry of Information, is currently distributing the first three volumes of Myanmar classics and preparing for the publication of new volumes, according to the ministry.

The Sarpay Beikman, or the literature house, has been compiling the best works of Myanmar literature with the aim of making them available for posterity, so people can enjoy academic and aesthetic literature, and cherish and understand the value of Myanmar literary works, and to enable foreign researchers to study Myanmar's characteristics, way of life, way of thinking, culture, customs, traditions, language and literature.

The literature house is currently distributing Volumes 1, 2, and 3 of the 100 planned volumes of Myanmar classics.

These volumes include novels written by renowned writers in 1904, 1907, 2014, 2017, 1920, and 1921. Prominent writers have written introductions to the volumes, which are priced at Ks1200.—MNA ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Moe Moe Khaing. A team led by Police Lt-Col Tin Shwe, Staff Officer (Grade-1) with the Kayah State Police chief's office, visited the bereaved family of police constable Ko Ko Latt in Loikaw, and presented K1 million, provided by the MPF, to his elder brother Ko Kyaw Htoo Aung.

A team led by the Chief of Taunggyi Township Police Force, Police Maj Than Htay, visited the family of police constable Phar Pha in Naunghlyan (2) village, Kengtung Township, and presented K1 million provided by the MPF, K 500,000 provided by the Shan State Police Force, and K200,000 provided by the Taunggyi District Police Force, to his father U Ar Chay.—MNA ■ (Translated by TMT)



## Two more fish processing plants get permission to export to EU

TWO fish processing plants — TT Cold Store Factory and A&N Foods (Myanmar) Co. Ltd — were recently granted permission to export their products to the European Union. However, the factories can only export fish caught in the wild.

The Fisheries Department, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation, is working with fish processors and exporters to ensure Myanmar fishery products meet the rules and regulations of importing countries, including the EU.

About 21 local fish factories

have so far obtained permission to export their products to EU countries. TT Cold Store and A&N Foods were permitted to place their products in the EU market after they passed a screening. Myanmar has not allowed exports of farmed fish because of a lack of guarantee on their being free from biochemical residues. According to the National Residue Monitoring Plan, residue tests have to be conducted at each stage of production, including hatching, farming, feeding, and processing. To meet EU import standards, fish-

ery products must be produced by only those hatcheries that are compliant with Good Aquaculture Practices (GAQP)

Myanmar exports products such as fish, prawn, and crabs to 40 foreign countries, including countries in the European Union, China, Saudi Arabia, the US, Japan, Singapore, and Thailand.

There are 480,000 acres of fish and prawn breeding farms across the country. Myanmar earned over US\$717 million from fishery exports in the last fiscal year.—GNLM ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Workers weighing fishery products in a fish processing plant. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

## Tinsmiths struggle to survive amid rising demand for fiber, plastic goods

WITH cheap fiber and plastic goods giving stiff competition to tinware in the market, artisans using tin are struggling for survival, said tinsmiths from the Nyaunglebin Town of Bago Region.

“We have been struggling for three years now. We have run into financial difficulties. Plastic producers have grabbed a large share of the domestic market. There are several kinds of plastic household items currently being sold in the market. As a result, the market for tinware has shrunk

and tinsmiths are finding it hard to earn a living,” said Ko Bo Bo, who makes tin-coated items.

“Plenty of plastic items such as containers, baskets, pipes, and household goods can be found in the market. The consumers are choosing them as they are cheaper and easy to use. Tinsmiths, who have been left with fewer options, are now trying to make articles for which plastic and fiber are not currently used,” he said.

There was a time when tin products were in high demand. Now, with only one tin box sold a

month, artisans have been forced to think of shutting shop. Some have already turned to other businesses.

There were about 10 stalls of tinware in the Nyaunglebin market earlier. Now, only one shop survives, and only three or four tinsmiths can be found in the town. Due to the fierce competition in the market, they are forced to sell their products themselves, instead of waiting for purchase orders.—Ye Myanmar (Nyaunglebin) ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Gold and jewelry on display at a shop in downtown Yangon.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

## Myanmar gems, jewelers body forms central market implementation committee

BY Nyein Nyein

THE Myanmar Gems and Jewelry Entrepreneurs Association has formed a gold and gems central market implementation committee with the aim of working with and lending support to the state-led Gems and Gold Market Implementation Committee, said U Kyaw Win, the chairman of the association.

He made the remarks at the 16<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the association, held at the Panda Hotel yesterday.

“The Myanmar Gems and Jewelry Entrepreneurs Association has been helping its members develop their business, in line with the economic policy of the country. The association has formed the gold and gems central market implementation committee to assist in the work of the Gems and Gold Market Implementation Committee. As a public-private partnership, we will collaborate with them to develop the gold sector,” said U Kyaw Win.

The gold and gems central market implementation committee, which includes state and regional gold entrepreneurs, was formed in late 2018, said Dr. Ye Thu Aung, the managing director of a public gold firm.

“The gold and gems central market implementation committee will initially work to

make the central gold market compliant with the principles of best practice followed internationally. We will also make efforts for other metals to enter the central market,” according to the Myanmar Gems and Jewelry Entrepreneurs Association.

“It is vital that market participants have confidence in the integrity of their respective gold market in global trading hubs. This would help small and medium-sized gold enterprises (SMEs) to develop and bring in reliable investments. It is hard to invest in production when there is no market. The Myanmar Gems and Jewelry Entrepreneurs Association is working with the state-led association to improve the gold sector,” said U Kyaw Win.

Additionally, the association is planning to standardize gold quality and measuring units, after negotiations with the concerned ministries. It is also planning to discuss ways to ensure the smooth movement of gold within the country with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The association will work with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation to help businesses and conduct discussions on gold trading and gold refining licenses for businesses. ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## High price of glutinous rice leads to inflow of foreign-sourced rice

THE price of glutinous rice in the last week of December — the time of harvest — touched a high of K50,000 per bag, which led to the inflow of sticky rice from Thailand, said traders.

Rice imported from Thailand was priced at K48,000 per bag in the local market, said a rice trader at the Bayintnaung depot.

After rice harvested in Mawkyun area in late 2018 en-

tered the Yangon market early this year, the price has dropped to K40,000 per bag, and sticky rice imports have slowed.

In the first week of January, the Ayeyawady Pawsan variety

of rice has fetched K35,000-40,000 per bag, while Shwebo Pawsan is priced at K47,000 per bag.

Glutinous rice from Patheingyi Town has commanded the highest price in the market.

It is normal that foreign goods flood the market at cheaper prices, when the price of local goods is on the rise, said a market observer.—Maung Sae Aung ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



## Kayin New Year celebrations held in Einme, Ayeyawady Region



Kayin people and guests enjoy the feast to celebrate the traditional Kayin New Year and harvest festival in Einme, Ayeyawady Region.



Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife Daw Nant Kyin Kyi celebrate the traditional Kayin New Year and harvest festival together with dignitaries in Einme, Ayeyawady Region.



Kayin ethnic people led by the elderly arrive to celebrate the traditional Kayin New Year and harvest festival in Einme, Ayeyawady Region yesterday. Thalay Htaikhokepho on Kayin Era 2678, the first waxing of the Pyatho, AD1938 December 21, was designated as the Kayin New Year day and the first ever new year address was broadcast on 21 December, 1938.



Kayin ethnic people celebrate the traditional Kayin New Year and harvest festival in Einme, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday.

## Downtown Yangon launches smoke-free awareness campaign

KYAUKTADA, a township located in the heart of Yangon Region, launched a smoke-free awareness campaign at the Maha Bandoola Park in the commercial city

yesterday afternoon.

The Chairman of the Yangon City Development Committee, Major U Maung Maung Soe, Township administrator U Htoo

Kyaw, and the Chair of the Public Health Foundation, Dr. Than Sein, formally opened the campaign.

After the Mayor delivered his address, songs and dances were performed as part of the awareness campaign. The Mayor and officials of the Regional Public Health Department and the foundation attended the performances.

The Mayor and his team also attended the knowledge-sharing programme against tobacco smoking and consumption and visited booths on adults and children living with disabilities. They also stopped by the educative booth put up by the Information and Public Relations Department.

The campaign is not meant

for infringing on the rights of smokers, but for creating a smoke-free environment which protects the general public from health hazards of tobacco smoke.

Second-hand smoke (SHS) causes numerous health problems in infants and children, including more frequent and severe asthma attacks, respiratory infections, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Second-hand smoke has more than 7,000 chemicals, of which at least 70 can cause cancer. SHS causes lung cancer, even in people who have never smoked. There's also evidence to suggest it may lead to cancers of the larynx (voice box), pharynx (throat), nasal sinuses, brain, bladder, rectum, stomach, and breast in adults.

Second-hand smoke can be harmful in many other ways. For instance, it affects the heart and blood vessels, increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke in non-smokers. Some studies have linked SHS with mental and emotional changes, too. For instance, some studies have shown that exposure to SHS is linked to symptoms of depression.

In Myanmar, 33 percent of women and 20 percent of men are victims of SHS. Smoking and tobacco consumption is killing more than 65,000 persons every year, which is 17.6 per cent of the mortality rate of the country.

The current campaign is designed for realizing the provisions of the control on smoking and consumption of tobacco product law. — Ko Ko Zaw ■



People gather at the smoke-free awareness campaign at Maha Bandoola Park in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN**



# Hamas arrests 5 over Palestinian government media raid

GAZA CITY — Hamas authorities in the Gaza Strip arrested five men on Saturday over a raid at the Palestinian Authority's media headquarters, in which valuable equipment was destroyed.

Five armed men attacked the offices of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation in Gaza City on Friday, trashing equipment worth thousands of dollars.

The media centre is funded by the West Bank-based Palestinian government and houses Palestine TV and the Voice of Palestine radio station.

Staff and a PA official initial-

ly blamed the raid on Hamas, which runs the Gaza Strip, but the Islamist movement said disgruntled PA employees were responsible.

All five arrested are "employees of the Palestinian Authority whose salaries have been cut recently," the Hamas-run interior ministry in Gaza said.

"It turned out that one of them was a Palestine TV employee whose salary was cut last month."

Hamas seized control of Gaza from the PA in 2007, a year after winning parliamentary elections that were rejected by much of the international com-



A damaged studio at the offices of the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation in Gaza City after a raid on 4 January, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

munity.

Despite losing power in the enclave, the PA continues to pay

tens of thousands of civil servants there.

But it has reduced salaries

in recent years due to financial shortfalls, causing much ire among its employees. — AFP ■

# Iran's arbitration body approves bill on joining UN convention on combating financing of terrorism

TEHRAN — Iran's Expediency Discernment Council (EDC) on Saturday approved a bill on joining a UN convention on Combating the Financing of Terrorism (CFT), official IRNA news agency reported.

Gholam Reza Mesbahi Moqaddam, a member of the council, announced "the endorsement of the bill... with new amendments."

The bill will be sent back to the parliament speaker for a parliamentary vote, he said. The EDC is an assembly to resolve disputes between the parliament and the high legislative body of the Guardian Council of the Constitution. On 7 October, 2018, the Iranian lawmakers approved a bill on Iran's accession to CFT standards set by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter-governmental body established in 1989 to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

However, the Guardian Council rejected the bill on joining the convention on the CFT in November 2018, citing the ambiguity of the CFT bill and its breach of the religious law and the Constitution.

The bill was then sent to the EDC for arbitration.

The final passage of the bill by the Iranian legislation will boost Iran's engagement in the international business and with financial bodies amid the US re-imposition of sanctions against the Islamic republic over the past months. The FATF has set a deadline for Iran to complete reforms, which would "bring it into line with global norms or face consequences." The CFT treaty was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December, 1999, and is designed to criminalize financing of terrorism, in addition promoting cooperation to prevent and investigate the financing of such acts. — Xinhua ■

# Egypt police officer killed defusing church bomb: security source

CAIRO, (Egypt), — A policeman was killed while trying to dismantle an explosive device outside a Coptic church in Egypt on Saturday, a security source said.

Two other officers were also wounded in the explosion as security personnel attempted to defuse the device in Nasr City on the edge of Cairo, the source added.

It had been hidden inside a bag that was searched by police. The policeman who was killed, Mustafa Abid, was a specialist in mine clearance.

Coptic Christians, who account for around 10 per cent of Egypt's population, have been targeted in a string of attacks by the Islamic State group in recent years.

The latest attack comes ahead of Christmas mass on

Sunday when President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi is due to inaugurate the Cathedral of Nativity in Egypt's New Administrative Capital, 45 kilometres (28 miles) east of Cairo.

Security has been reinforced in the capital in recent weeks ahead of Christmas, which Egypt's minority Coptic Christians will celebrate on 7 January.

The country's leader since 2014, Sisi often presents himself as a defender of Christians against extremists.

But activists and some analysts accuse the state of discriminating against them and not providing enough protection.

More than 100 Copts have been killed in jihadist attacks since December 2016.

IS claimed an assault in

early November which killed six Copts and one Anglican in the central province of Minya.

The police later said 19 suspected jihadists linked to the attack had been killed in a shootout.

IS also killed more than 40 people in twin church bombings in April 2017, and an IS gunman in December that year killed nine people in an attack on a church in a south Cairo suburb.

Hundreds of police and soldiers have also been killed in attacks, and last week three Vietnamese tourists and their Egyptian guide died when a homemade bomb exploded on their bus on the outskirts of Cairo.

The country has been under a state of emergency since April 2017. — AFP ■



Egyptian Coptic Christians celebrate Christmas Nativity Liturgy, the start of Christmas, at the Coptic Orthodox Church of St. George on 6 January, 2014, in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. Like the Eastern Orthodox Church in Russia, Copts still use the Julian calendar and thus celebrate Christmas on 7 January. PHOTO: AFP

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# Unity is our strongest weapon

THE peace and happiness enjoyed by our country's people, including ethnic nationals, has been evident of late. The entire country celebrated the New Year's Day and the Independence Day, two occasions relevant to all citizens, peacefully. Everyone also took part yesterday in the New Year celebrations of the Kayin, who are among the ethnic families of our country.

Myanmar is a Union with Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan, and other ethnic races spread across different states and regions. The fact that they live harmoniously with each other, while representing their respective region or state, shows that our country is indeed a Union. In addition, each ethnic culture is at liberty to celebrate their significant occasions, which points to the freedom and unity enjoyed in our country.

"Such good traditions and customs are very valuable resources for the establishment of a democratic union. At such an important time like this when we are facing internal and external challenges, the abilities and spirit of each and every ethnic national are indeed very important. The united consolidated strength of all of us constitutes a very powerful weapon for the defence and security of our country," said State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her message for the Kayin New Year on 6 January.

When we are facing internal and external challenges, the abilities and spirit of each and every ethnic national are indeed very important. The united consolidated strength of all of us constitutes a very powerful weapon for the defence and security of our country," said State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her message for the Kayin New Year on 6 January.

able to keep our Union intact for thousands of years and establish an independent country.

While our ethnic brothers and sisters are able to freely observe their culture and traditions, there are those who are facing the horrible consequences of internal armed conflicts. We sympathize with them. Their condition has strengthened our belief that we need to strive for peace that is inclusive.

We believe every ethnic national will be able to display the same set of skills and courage that the honest and calm Kayin people manifest in the peace process and endeavor for national reconciliation.

We would like to urge each and every citizen of this country to continue the noble traditions our ancestors passed down, with foresight, for the perpetuation of the country, over the course of thousands of years, so they are upheld for generations to come. This cohesive unity is the strongest weapon that can help safeguard our beloved country.

"The art of teaching and the educational profession are considered more appropriate and suitable to women, and this notion has been embedded in the collective psyches of many countries in the world"

Dr. Win Aung, Member of National Education Policy Commission

## Roundtable discussions on Educational Reforms

By Nandar Win, Win Win Maw PHOTO: WIN WIN

(CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY)

The Myanmar Radio and Television broadcast a program in collaboration with the Department of Alternative Education (Non-formal Education and Lifelong Learning) on the role of teachers and additional recruitment of male teachers. The panelists are Dr. Than Oo, Director-General (Retired), Basic Education Department, Ministry of Education; U Ko Lay Win, Director-General (Duty), Basic Education Department, Ministry of Education; Dr. Aung Aung Min, Deputy Director-General, Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education; Dr. Win Aung and U Tun Hla, Members of National Education Policy Commission; U Soe Tun Tun Naing, Principal, Basic Education Middle School number (9), Insein Township, Yangon Region; U Lin Lin Htaik, Senior Assistant Teacher, Basic Education High School number (4), Thingangyun Township, Yangon Region; Maung Arhman Htet, Fifth Year Student, Yangon University of Education.

**Moderator: Please explain on the difficulty with regards to shortage of teachers.**

**U Soe Tun Tun Naing:** Everyone knows that male teachers are more capable in class control than female teachers; and on the other hand, female teachers edge over male teachers in terms of motherly love. They have enormous strength in motherly tenderness towards children.

However, in the management for the control of the class, male teachers have more capability, and therefore, more male teachers are needed in the management of school discipline. Looking at the teaching paradigm, we are heading towards multifaceted development covering five strengths, and therefore, the teachers could not instruct the students just to learn this and to learn that. The male teachers are more proper in extracting the creative thinking



than the female teachers. This is one of the drawbacks in teaching as we are lacked in male teachers.

**Always on my mind**

In our schools, we are going ahead with the multifaceted development and five strengths education, where the female teachers participated with all the enthusiasm, however, the achievement is far less than the male teachers. Evaluating the school sports activities, I feel that our nation's sports level is down, perhaps due to the fact that we do not have adequate male teachers in our schools. I am of the view that our sports level of the nation is down as we do not have male teachers.

**Coordinator: What is the reason that the number of male teachers was decreased?**

**U Lin Lin Htaik:** In the everyday school life, we have the teaching part, the relationship part among the teachers, the relationship between the teachers and the school principal, and all these dealings need to be smooth and agreeable. It is quite true that in some schools, there are only one or two male teachers, and a lot of people are talking about the future prospect of the male teachers. As the male is the bread earner and the household head, he is required to have substantial income to support the family members. Most

of the male teachers talked about their lesser income, and that might be one of the reasons that they changed their jobs to another profession.

**In keeping the male teachers in the loop**

Despite the fact that the male teachers loved in teaching profession, they are not happy to be in the present class room atmosphere, as the class room setting have been changed in the present time.

In the past, the male teachers were happy to arrive inside the class room, but now, they wanted

As part of the reform agenda in Myanmar, we need to change the work environments of teachers and promotion policies so male teachers can take a leading role. Otherwise, men would turn to other livelihoods.

to run away from the class to get rid of the anxiety. It is related with the relationship with the students and the teachers, and that if we could reverse the situation, then we could keep the male teachers at the school.

**Coordinator: Please tell us why you have chosen the profession of teaching.**

**Maung Arhman Htet:** I have chosen this profession out of my dream that I had cherished and aspired since my childhood. Not necessarily to be a teacher, but I am interested in teaching.

As my parents transferred from one place to another on duty, I also had to transfer many schools during my school days. I had changed to seven schools in my life and had met only on male teacher up till Matriculation class.

I have had the feeling that the image of male teacher is not in my mind and soul, and mistook the concept that male is not suit-

able for teaching profession. This thought was in my mind until I attended fourth standard.

As I wanted to be a teacher, my parents supported my aspiration and dream. When I passed the Matriculation Examination, I did not catch up the marks to enter the University of Education, and therefore, I enrolled the Educa-

and suitable to women, and this notion has been embedded in the collective psyches of many countries in the world. This concept has now become out of date across the world.

When we look at the World Bank statistic, Myanmar had (55) per cent female teachers assigned at the Basic Education High Schools in 1980. In the year 2000, the female teachers rose to (75) per cent. Now, it is (82.5) per cent composed of female teachers.

The outlook and attitude of the public over the teaching profession should be altered and changed. The Ministry of Education and the stakeholders must put this teaching profession under limelight and draw the attention of male and female in taking up as valuable and esteemed career.

In making the teaching profession as a firm, sound and solid occupation, we are prescribing and laying down standard norm and criteria at the initiative of the Ministry of Education. As part of the reform agenda in Myanmar, we need to change the work environments of teachers and promotion policies so male teachers can take a leading role. Otherwise, men would turn to other livelihoods.

**Already prescribed**

Our rules and regulations being applied in the education sphere in the past had increased the number of female teachers out of proportion, and therefore, we need to change with straightforward ways in the posts of the teachers in all schools.

Such prescriptions are already incorporated in the National Education Law, where the teachers shouldering various subjects are not to be discriminated among themselves, and that all the treatment should be updated into reform program.

Moreover, in addition to the ranking of the posts of the teachers in the education sphere, other outlets and separate lanes for future prospects and careers should be opened up for them. These are the factors and aspects to be considered for the teachers in the field of teaching.

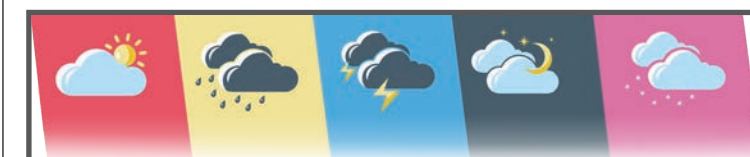
(TO BE CONTINUED)

Translated by UMT (Ahlon)

### Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Press Release No. (1/2019)

1. On the morning of 4 January 2019, a combined force of AA (Arakan Army) insurgents launched a coordinated attack on 4 police outposts in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State. The attack has killed 13 police personnel and wounded 9 others. In addition, there are reports that the attack resulted in the destruction of local resident's houses and livelihoods, and loss of their livestock.
2. The Union government is working for perpetuating peace, stability and development in Rakhine State from all sectors. During such a time, these acts of violence complicate the situation and result in the loss of lives and livelihood of all ethnic nationals. This can cause negative impacts to the peace and stability in Rakhine State and can significantly affect the national reconciliation and peace process performed by the Union government.
3. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission publicly and strongly denounces such acts of violence in this press release.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission  
6 January 2019  
(Unofficial Translation)



### Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 4:00 pm Sunday 6th January, 2019)

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observations at (15:30) hrs M.S.T today, the Cyclonic Storm "Pabuk" over the Andaman Sea weaken into a Deep Depression. It is centred at about (160) miles South-Southwest of Coco Island, (280) miles South-Southwest of Hainggyigyun (Myanmar) and (10) miles South-Southeast of Port Blair (India). Weather is a few cloud over the Bay of Bengal and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 7th January, 2019:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, scattered in Kayin and Mon States and isolated in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, (Southern and Eastern)Shan and Kayah States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Chin State and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Occasional Squalls with rough seas will be experienced Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon -Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8-10) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon -Taninthayi Coasts and about (4-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Scattered to fairly widespread rain or thundershowers in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7th January, 2019:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7th January, 2019:** Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7th January, 2019:** Generally fair weather.



## BMW to recall 279 vehicles in China

BEIJING—German automaker BMW has announced a recall of 279 vehicles due to defects with drive shafts, according to China's top market regulator.

The recall, which started

on 29 March, involves a portion of imported vehicles including M3 and M4 models made from 29 June to 30 September in 2016, according to a statement on the website of the State Ad-

ministration for Market Regulation.

The defects with drive shaft may bring abnormal noise from the chassis or keep the vehicle from being able to

accelerate, resulting in safety risks, the regulator said.

The automaker will check all recalled vehicles and replace defective parts free of charge.—Xinhua ■

## Crude shocker can be rude shocks for economy: RBI economists



The RBI study says crude price shock will increase inflation, if the price increase is passed on directly to the final consumers. **PHOTO: PTI**

MUMBAI—A sudden surge in crude prices can upset the nation's key macro-stability parameters, as it can sharply spike the current account deficit (CAD), inflation and the fiscal numbers, whittling the benefits of higher growth, warns an RBI study.

Since the country is heavily dependent on oil imports to the tune of over 80 per cent for meeting its domestic demand, it remains susceptible to global crude price shocks.

Besides CAD, rise in crude prices can also impact infla-

tion and fiscal deficit, says the report.

The international crude prices increased by around 12 per cent between April and September 2018.

The mid-year spike in crude prices happened mainly due to spurt in demand, on the back of global growth revival, and partly due to geopolitical risks that led to supply-side shocks.

However since mid-November 2018, the crude prices have declined significantly but they remain volatile.

“An increase in crude price worsens the CAD and this adverse impact cannot be significantly contained through a higher growth. So, a crude price shock will be followed by high CAD to GDP ratio,” says the latest issue of the Mint Street Memos titled ‘The Impact of Crude Price Shock on CAD, Inflation and Fiscal Deficit’ pencilled by in-house economists at the central bank.

The finding shows that in the worst case scenario, when crude prices hit USD 85/barrel,

the deficit on account of oil balloons to USD 106.4 billion, which is 3.61 per cent of the GDP.

“Every USD 10/barrel increase in crude prices leads to an additional USD 12.5 billion deficit, which is roughly 43 bps of the country's GDP. So, every USD 10/barrel increase in crude price will shoot up the CAD/GDP ratio by 43 bps,” it says.

The study says crude price shock will increase inflation, if the price increase is passed on directly to the final consumers.

“Under the most conservative estimate, we quantify that a USD 10/barrel increase in crude price at the price of USD 65/barrel will lead to a 49 basis points increase in headline inflation. A similar increase at USD 55/barrel gives around a 58 bps increase in headline inflation,” it says.

Further, if the government decides on a zero pass-through to the final consumers, a USD 10/barrel spike in crude prices could increase the fiscal deficit by 43 bps. This zero pass-through scenario allows us to put an upper band on the amount of fiscal slippage, it adds.

The actual inflation and fiscal deficit will finally depend on the level of government intervention (changes in tax and subsidy) in the domestic oil market, the study concludes.—PTI ■

## Experts expect Fed to raise interest rates once in H2

NEW YORK—The US Federal Reserve (Fed) is expected to raise interest rates once in the second half of 2019 amid political pressure and financial volatility, experts said here Saturday.

The Fed has to wait several quarters before the market stabilizes, and could raise interest rates in the second half of 2019, said Kevin Chen, chief economist at Horizon Financial, at the 2019 Outlook Forum jointly hosted by alumni associations of China's Peking University and Wuhan University in the greater New York region. Chen said US federal fund rates are still relatively low and the Fed is preparing itself for another possible crisis by continuing to raise interest rates.

The Fed would raise interest rates at least once in 2019 and though the interest rates have been raised several times, they are still low from a historical point of view, according to another panelist from the global investment management company BlackRock. If interest rates are raised too fast, it would significantly contain economic expansion, harm expectations for economic growth and result in lower profitability for enterprises, Liu Zhidan, head of the treasury department of the New York Branch with Bank of China, told Xinhua.

The Fed said in December 2018 that it forecast two interest rate hikes in 2019 in comparison with three as previously projected.

Chairman of the Federal Reserve Jerome Powell recently said the Fed would be patient on rate hikes, indicating a pause.

US President Donald Trump has harshly criticized the Fed for raising interest rates in the last few months and the financial market became more volatile recently partially due to uncertainty over the Fed's monetary policy.—Xinhua ■

## China's express delivery sector expands fast in 2018

BEIJING—China's express delivery sector has handled 50.5 billion parcels in 2018, up 25.8 percent year on year, data from the State Post Bureau (SPB) showed.

Gross business revenue of the sector increased 21.2 percent year on year to hit 601

billion yuan (about 88 billion US dollars) last year, according to the SPB.

The express delivery sector supported annual e-commerce sales of nearly 6.9 trillion yuan and cross-border e-commerce businesses of over 350 billion yuan while cre-

ating more than 200,000 new jobs in 2018.

“There are about 100 billion parcel deliveries worldwide each year. China accounts for half of them,” said Ma Junsheng, head of the SPB. In rural areas, 92.4 percent of towns have been

covered by express services, said Ma.

A total of 12 billion parcels were delivered in rural areas last year, supporting a total value of more than 700 billion yuan of goods transactions between urban and rural areas.—Xinhua ■



# America's youngest congresswoman launches term with radical plan

WASHINGTON (United States)—Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez began her term as the youngest woman ever elected to the US Congress with a bang this week by proposing to tax the ultra-rich at 60 or 70 per cent.

The daughter of hard-scrabble working-class parents, the 29-year-old New Yorker was working toward making good on a campaign promise.

"People are going to have to pay their fair share of taxes," she told CBS television's "60 Minutes," in excerpts released ahead of its Sunday broadcast.

The proposal is part of an ambitious tax plan dubbed the "Green New Deal" that aims to eliminate carbon emissions by 2030. The self-described Democratic Socialist nicknamed AOC suggested taxing the ultra-wealthy up to 70 per cent in order to finance the plan.

"It's going to require a lot of rapid change that we don't even conceive as possible right now. What is the problem with trying to push our technological capacities to the furthest extent possible?" she asked.

To pay for the plan, Ocasio-Cortez floated the idea of tax rates as high as 70 percent on the ultra-rich.

She referred to the



US Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Democrat of New York, leaves a photo opportunity with the female Democratic members of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress outside the US Capitol in Washington, DC on 4 January, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

progressive taxation system that was in place in the 1960s before Ronald Reagan took office as president when the top earners paid 70 per cent in taxes. That rate then gradually dropped. "You look at our tax rates back in the 60s and when you have a progressive tax rate system, your tax rate, let's say, from zero to \$75,000 may be 10 per cent or 15 per cent, et cetera," Ocasio-Cortez said.

"But once you get to, like, the tippy tops, on your 10 millionth dollar, some-

times you see tax rates as high as 60 or 70 per cent. That doesn't mean all \$10 million are taxed at an extremely high rate. But it means that as you climb up this ladder you should be contributing more."

The top marginal tax rate is now 37 per cent, following President Donald Trump's fiscal reforms. It was previously at 39.6 per cent. Even though it has little chance of success, the proposal backed by the young lawmaker has already garnered signifi-

cant support. It landed her on the front page of the New York Daily News, an image of which Ocasio-Cortez was quick to retweet.

A Washington Post analysis found that if the approximately 16,000 Americans who earn more than \$10 million each paid 70 per cent income taxes for any revenue above that marker, the federal government would rake in around \$72 billion per year.

But the sum would likely be much lower because individuals falling in that

bracket would find ways to avoid the heavy tax burden. In a New York Times op-ed, Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman backed Ocasio-Cortez, rejecting "the constant effort to portray her as flaky and ignorant." "On the tax issue, she's just saying what good economists say," he added.

## Undeterred by her youth

Ever since her surprise victory during Democratic primaries in June over Joseph Crowley, who

had run unopposed for more than a decade and was seen as a contender to become the next speaker of the House of Representatives. The victory has made her a key figure of the liberal wing of the party, and Ocasio-Cortez has demonstrated more than once that she can respond swiftly to her detractors.

When Republican campaign consultant Ed Rollins called her a "little girl" on a conservative television talk show, Ocasio-Cortez shot back on Twitter: "If anything, this dude is a walking argument to tax misogyny at 100%."

On Friday, a video released online by a detractor showing a young Ocasio-Cortez dancing with fellow Boston University students to the Phoenix song "Lisztomania" in a remake of a mashup of scenes from the Brat Pack movies. But rather than embarrass Ocasio-Cortez, the release ended up having the opposite of its intended effect.

The congresswoman, who has a strong social media presence, responded by posting a new video of her dancing in front of her office on Capitol Hill, writing: "I hear the GOP thinks women dancing are scandalous. Wait till they find out Congresswomen dance too!" —AFP ■

## Trump says little progress as govt shutdown in third week

WASHINGTON (United States)—Talks aimed at ending a partial US government shutdown which entered its third week on Saturday made little progress but were to continue on Sunday, President Donald Trump said. An impasse with lawmakers over Trump's demand for billions of dollars to pay for a wall on the border with Mexico has shut 25 per cent of the government since 22 December. Vice President Mike Pence on Saturday met with representatives of Chuck Schumer, the top Democrat in the Republican-controlled Senate, as well as Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives which since last Thursday is under Democratic control.

"VP Mike Pence and team just left the White House. Briefed me on their meeting

with the Schumer/Pelosi representatives. Not much headway made today. Second meeting set for tomorrow," Trump said on Twitter. Under the previous Republican-controlled Congress, the Senate unanimously passed a measure to fully fund the government until 8 February, allowing more time for debate on issues including border security. That measure was also under House consideration but Trump on 20 December reversed course and rejected it under pressure from ultraconservative lawmakers and media personalities.

While the US military and other major agencies are still fully funded, the impasse has left 800,000 government workers from other departments furloughed or working without pay.—AFP ■

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## IN Picture

## Scenery of Kunming Waterfall Park in SW China's Yunnan



Aerial photo taken on 5 January, 2019 shows scenery of Kunming Waterfall Park in Kunming, capital of southwest China's Yunnan Province. The park features a grand manmade waterfall, which is 12.5 metres in height and 400 metres in width. The waterfall is part of the project diverting water from the Niulan River into Dianchi Lake. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

## Gov't considering anti-terror experiment at Tokyo train station

TOKYO—The government is considering conducting luggage inspections at a Tokyo train station as an experiment as it explores ways to strengthen public security in advance of the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics, sources close to the matter said on Saturday. The experiment is planned for February at Tokyo Metro's Kasumigaseki Station in Chiyoda Ward, one of the busiest stations in Japan and which was attacked by the AUM Shinrikyo cult group with nerve gas in 1995. Around 150,000 passengers use the station daily.

Concerns about terror attacks on public transportation infrastructure have also mounted after incidents aboard bullet trains in recent years.

In 2015, a self-immolation on a shinkansen bullet train killed an unrelated passenger, and last year a man with a knife went on

a rampage, killing one passenger and injuring two others.

The government hopes the planned experiment will help it identify potential problems with the measure and consider its feasibility. While hand luggage inspections on trains are common in some countries, Japan does not do them. There is strong opposition among railway companies that argue inspections are inconvenient because they increase transit time for commuters. They also say it is difficult to find space dedicated to that purpose inside stations.

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism has asked security companies and manufacturers of security equipment to suggest ways of conducting the experiment. It has also requested cooperation from the Japan Railway group and other operators. —Kyodo News ■

## Australia PM slams 'ugly racial protests' in Melbourne

SYDNEY (Australia)—Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Sunday slammed "ugly racial protests" in Australia's second-largest city, after some far-right demonstrators were seen making Nazi salutes.

An anti-immigration rally at St Kilda Beach in Melbourne drew hundreds of demonstrators and counter-protesters on Saturday, but a large Victoria Police presence was broadly successful in keeping the two groups apart.

"I thank Vic police for their efforts dealing with the ugly racial protests we saw in St Kilda yesterday. Intolerance does not make Australia stronger," Morrison tweeted.

"Australia is the most successful migrant country in the world... Let's keep it that way, it makes Australia stronger."

Victoria Police Superintendent Tony Silva said on Saturday there was three arrests but no officers or member of the public were known to have been hurt.

Immigration remains a hot-button issue in Australia amid concern about jobs and overcrowding in major cities.

Nearly half of Australia's 25-million population was either born overseas or has at least one

parent born abroad.

The rally was organised by founders of the United Patriots Front, which conducts anti-immigration demonstrations in Melbourne from time to time.

They said Saturday's protest was against alleged African gang violence and youth crime in the city. The location of their protest, the inner city suburb of St Kilda, and nearby Caulfield, have sizeable Jewish populations.

Far-right independent senator Fraser Anning—who demanded "a final solution" to immigration in his maiden speech to the Senate last year—attended the St Kilda rally and said it was the "start of something bigger".

Morrison, whose conservative Liberal-National coalition is struggling to hang on to power in a minority government, last year pledged to slash Australia's permanent migration intake to address congestion in the big cities.

But critics of the government said it was pandering to the views of the coalition's right-wingers and other far-right politicians ahead of national elections that have to be called by mid-May.—AFP ■

## Abe orders steps over Japan firm assets in S Korea forced labour case

TOKYO—Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has directed ministries to look into countermeasures after plaintiffs in South Korea took legal steps to seize the local assets of a Japanese steelmaker that has refused to comply with a court order to pay compensation for wartime forced labour.

"It is extremely regrettable. I directed related ministries to consider specific measures based on international law to show our resolute stance" in regard to the matter, Abe said in a TV programme aired on Sunday, although he did not elaborate.

Lawyers representing the South Korean plaintiffs have launched procedures to seize assets belonging to Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corp in the country, according to an official statement on Wednesday. In response to the action, Japan's Foreign Minister Taro Kono urged Seoul to prevent Japanese companies from being treated unfairly. South Korea's top court in October ordered the steelmaker to compensate four South Koreans who were victims of forced labor during Japanese colonial rule. The decision brought an immediate rebuke from Japan, which maintains that the right to seek compensation was terminated under a 1965 treaty signed between the two countries. In an-



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe speaks at a New Year press conference in Ise, Mie Prefecture on 4 January, 2019. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

other wartime forced labour case, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd faces a similar order by a South Korean court.

Meanwhile, Abe said during the NHK TV programme that he believes a post-World War II peace treaty with Russia would benefit the United States by contributing to regional peace and stability. "The Japan-US alliance is the basis of Japan's diplomatic and security policies."

The Japanese premier is expected to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin later this month to advance talks on a treaty after the two leaders agreed in November to accelerate their negotiations based on a 1956 joint declaration. Moscow promised in the declaration to hand over two of the four disputed islands between the countries once a peace treaty is signed. —Kyodo News ■



## 'Orange' alert for Andaman due to cyclone 'Pabuk'

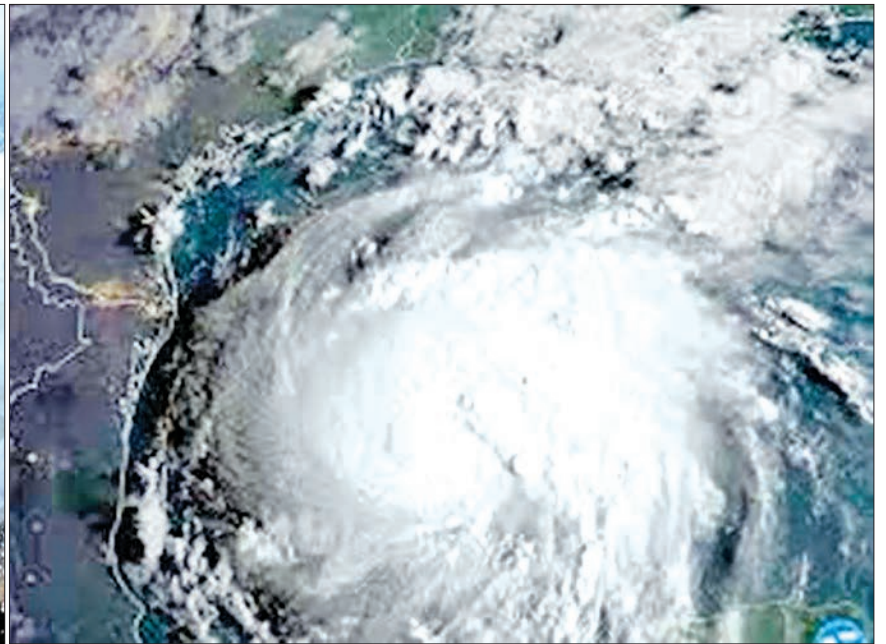


PHOTO: PTI

Cyclone 'Pabuk' moves towards the Andamans; yellow alert sounded. PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI—The Centre has sounded an "Orange" alert for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which is facing a cyclonic storm, officials said on Sunday.

Cyclonic storm "Pabuk" is approaching the archipelago and

currently hovering over the Andaman sea and the neighbourhood, they added.

An "Orange" warning had been issued for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a home ministry official said, quoting from a weather bulletin.

An "orange" weather warning means people should "be prepared" and there is an increased likelihood of bad or extreme weather, which may disrupt road and air travel and threaten life and property.

"Pabuk" is now over

the Andaman sea and its neighbourhood and it has moved north-northwestwards at a speed of 20 kmph in the last six hours.

It lays centred near latitude 11.0 North and longitude 95.5 East, about 310 km east-southeast of

Port Blair, the capital of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The cyclonic storm is very likely to continue to move north-northwestwards and cross the Andaman islands by Sunday night with a wind speed of 65-75 kmph, gusting to

85 kmph, the official said.

Thereafter, it is very likely to move north-northwestwards and then recurve north-eastwards, towards the Myanmar coast, and weaken gradually thereafter, he added, quoting from the bulletin.—PTI ■

### Rain to hit south China, smog to hit north and east

BEIJING—Parts of southern China will be swept by heavy rain from Monday to Friday, while parts of northern and eastern China will be shrouded in smog, said the country's national observatory on Sunday.

The National Meteorological Centre (NMC) forecasts heavy rain or rainstorms accompanied by thunder in parts of Yunnan, Guangxi and Guizhou from Monday evening to Friday. From Tuesday evening to Friday, snow is likely in northwest and central regions, according to the NMC. On Sunday morning, smog envelops parts of Hebei, Shanxi, Shandong, Henan, Hubei, Anhui and Shaanxi. Visibility dropped to less than one kilometre in parts of Henan and Hubei. Smog will continue in central and southern parts of north China, western parts of the Yellow and Huaihe rivers, Fenhe-Weihe Plain and Ji-anghan Plain.—Xinhua ■

## Death toll from Philippine storm, landslides climbs to 126

MANILA (Philippines)—The death toll from a storm that devastated the Philippines shortly after Christmas rose to 126, authorities said on Sunday, adding landslides caused by torrential rain were the top cause.

The storm hit central and eastern Philippine islands on 29 December and caused massive flooding and landslides. More than 100 people

died in the mountainous Bicol region southeast of Manila, regional disaster officials said.

While the Bicol region is often hit by deadly typhoons, many people failed to take necessary precautions because the storm was not strong enough to be rated as a typhoon under the government's storm alert system, according to civil defence officials. Officials

also said that many residents were reluctant to leave their homes during the Christmas holidays.

"In two days alone, Usman poured more than a month's worth of rainfall in the Bicol region," national disaster agency spokesman Edgar Posadas told AFP, using the local name for the storm which had weakened into a low pressure area.

"Our search and re-

trieval operations are ongoing but the sticky mud and the unstable soil are a challenge." The death toll was likely to climb further with 26 people still missing, Posadas added.

More than 152,000 people were displaced by the storm and 75 were injured, according to the national disaster agency.

President Rodrigo Duterte visited the storm-hit areas on Friday and

urged officials to build evacuation centres instead of using schools as shelters for the displaced.

About 20 typhoons and storms batter the Philippines each year, killing hundreds of people. The deadliest in recent years was Super Typhoon Haiyan which left more than 7,360 people dead or missing across the central Philippines in 2013.—AFP ■

### Prague experiences hottest year on record

PRAGUE (Czech Republic)—The Czech capital Prague has experienced its hottest year since records started in 1775, the weather institute said on Saturday.

"In 2018, the average annual temperature in Prague-Clementinum was 12.8 degrees Celsius (55.04 Fahrenheit), or 3.2 degrees more compared to the average between 1775-2014," the Hydrometeorological Institute said in a statement that referred to its historic Clementinum weather station at a former Jesuit college in the Czech capital. The institute described this year's temperature as being "extraordinarily above nor-

mal". The previous record annual average temperature in Prague, 12.5 degrees Celsius, was set in 2014 and 2015. The institute had already noted record heat this summer, with average daytime temperatures hitting 22.7 degrees Celsius (72.5 Fahrenheit) at its Clementinum weather station. A summer drought affected 94 per cent of the central European country, causing widespread crop damage. Farmers across Europe, including in usually wetter northern regions such as Sweden and the Baltic states, also suffered from record heat and drought this summer.—AFP ■

#### INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Sealed bids are invited by Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports for the supply of Medical and Laboratory Equipment by the loan of Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the (2018-2019) Fiscal Year.

Tender documents are available during office hours at the Procurement and Supplying Division, Department of Medical Services office No. (4), Ministry of Health and Sports commencing from (7.1.2019).

Sealed bids are to be submitted to the Office not later than (7.2.2019), 15:00 hour, after which no bid will be accepted. No telegraph/telex proposal will be accepted.

For detail information please contact the phone No. 067-3411510, 067-3411544, Procurement and Supply Division Office, Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports.

Procurement and Supply Division  
Department of Medical Services  
Ministry of Health and Sports



# US fashion group calls for more diversity in model size

NEW YORK (United States)—A trade group representing hundreds of America's designers has called on the fashion industry to showcase women of greater size diversity, such as plus-size models Ashley Graham and Candice Huffine.

Graham, of Nebraska, in 2016 became the first plus-size model to make the cover of "Sports Illustrated." She also appeared on the cover of "Vogue," helping to break down barriers in the notoriously snooty fashion world.

"We are beginning to see signs of fashion moving in the right direction," Marc Karimzadeh and Nicky Campbell wrote on the website of the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), which says it represents more than 500 men's and women's designers as well as jewelry and accessory designers.

"Designers such as Michael Kors and Christian Siriano are casting models that defy tradition," they said in a reference to the fashion world's longstanding preference for slimness.



In this file photo taken on 11 February, 2018 model Ashley Graham walks the runway for Prabal Gurung during New York Fashion Week: The Shows at Gallery I at Spring Studios in New York City. PHOTO: AFP

"Body Positivity is important in fashion and we want to see more designers and companies embrace this in 2019," the CFDA communication officials wrote.

A movement to recognize alternate body types started in 2017

at New York Fashion Week, with runway shows by Prabal Gurung, Christian Siriano and Michael Kors. In September, the CFDA launched with plus-sized brand Dia&Co the #TeeUpChange campaign to encourage greater

diversity in size among young creators. It also collaborated last year with Universal Standard, a brand that offers to exchange a piece of clothing in the year following its purchase if the customer's size changes. —AFP ■

## Co-produced animated film to hit theaters

BEIJING — "White Snake," an animated film co-produced by Light Chaser Animation in China and Warner Bros. Pictures in the United States, will hit the big screen in China on 11 January.

The film is set 500 years before the Chinese folktale it draws its inspiration from, "Legend of the White Snake," which features the romantic tragedy of a young man named Xu Xian and the white snake maiden Bai Suzhen.

As a folk legend remembered and celebrated by the Chinese people for centuries, it has seen various film adaptations through the years.

Rather than being another adaptation of the tale, the film aims to reveal to the audience how destiny ties the two leading characters in the tale together hundreds of years ago, said Zhao Ji, one of the directors.

This is the first time Warner Bros has participated in a co-production animated film project. It is also the first Warner Bros film that tells a Chinese folk story. —Xinhua ■

## Streaming has elevated the bar for cinema, says Sandra Bullock

LONDON—Sandra Bullock believes showbiz is changing for the better following the arrival of streaming services and it has encouraged films to up their game.

The 54-year-old actor, who stars in Netflix's acclaimed thriller "Bird Box", said the digital platform has provided more working opportunities to women and people of colour.

"Cinema is not going anywhere, streaming has elevated the bar. Before, if you were a superhero, you were able to get a movie made; anything else was not getting made.

"Now, with streaming, we have all kinds of work available. The movie business is changing, and providing so many more opportunities for women and for people of colour," Bullock told The I Paper.

The Oscar winner, whose last film was "Ocean's 8", said there has been an evident change in the attitude towards women before and after filming the all-female heist movie.

"We started that film before #MeToo and we ended it during I



Sandra Bullock. PHOTO: PTI

saw a noticeable difference," she said. Bullock said having Susanne Bier as "Bird Box" director made a difference on the sets of the Netflix film.

"Because the boss was a woman, I did see a lot of fear in our crew members. The men were walking on eggshells so I said 'Guys you're allowed to joke I'll tell you when you've gone too far'," she said.

The film follows a woman (Bullock) who, along with a pair of children must cross a forest and river blindfolded to avoid supernatural entities which cause people who see them to die by suicide.—PTI ■

## 'A Star Is Born' expected to win big at Golden Globes

LOS ANGELES (United States)—Box office hit music romance "A Star Is Born" is the frontrunner going into Sunday's Golden Globes, the first Hollywood awards gala of the year—and usually the sassiest of them all. Tinseltown's A-listers will strut down the red carpet for the first time this awards season at the Beverly Hilton, in the run-up to the all-important Oscars on 24 February.

Hosting the gala—which begins at 5:00 pm (0100 GMT Monday)—will be actress Sandra Oh and comedian Andy Samberg. As the only awards show where booze is served, the evening is usually more colorful than showbiz's other big nights.

"It's going to be great. I think people are ready and could use a little smile," Samberg said in an interview with The Hollywood Reporter. Even though Dick Cheney biopic "Vice" leads the film nominations with six, "Star"—and its power duo of Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper—is the movie with the most buzz heading into



US actor Bradley Cooper poses during a photocall to promote his film "A star is born" during the 66th San Sebastian Film Festival in the northern Spanish Basque city of San Sebastian on 29 September, 2018. PHOTO: AFP

Sunday night, and most critics predict it will take home the coveted best drama film honours.

"We're expecting "A Star Is Born" to take it down in the end, solidifying its Oscar frontrunner status," industry trade publication Variety said in its predictions.

"A Star is Born' has everything going for it including box office and critical success," Paul Dergarabedian, a senior

media analyst at industry data firm ComScore, told AFP.

But he cautioned that the Globes—which are handed out by the 90-odd members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association—are notoriously unpredictable.

"This year's nominees across the major categories are all incredibly deserving so anything could happen," Dergarabedian said.—AFP ■



# Forty-five rockets produced by Roscosmos to be launched in 2019, says source

MOSCOW—It is planned to launch rockets produced by enterprises of Russia's space corporation Roscosmos 45 times in 2019, a two-fold increase compared with 2018, a source in the aerospace industry told TASS.

"Rockets produced by the state corporation will be launched 45 times this year, according to the schedule. That number includes both the launch of space rockets and ballistic (missile) test-firing," he said, adding that "out of 45 planned launches 32 will be space rockets with various space vehicles and spacecraft."

Roscosmos head Dmitry Rogozin said in late 2018 that the state corporation carried out 22 launches of various rockets last year.—Tass ■



According to the source, that number includes both the launch of space rockets and ballistic test-firing. PHOTO: TASS

## Chinese experts set foot in 6 G research

NANJING—Southeast University in eastern China's Jiangsu Province said on Thursday that a team has begun to research 6G mobile networks.

You Xiaohu, a professor with the university and the team leader, said they have set sights on the early research and development of 6G mobile networks, based on the 5G technologies.

You said that compared with 5G technologies, 6G will cover a wider range of fields with higher speed and greater security. The early research and development will mainly focus on intelli-

gent mobile communications, massive wireless communications, millimetre wave/submillimetre wave wireless communications, optical wireless communications and broadband satellite mobile communications.

"There's still a long way to go in applying 6G technologies into our daily life. Experts predict that 6G technologies will go into commercial operation by 2030. However, the 6G competition has already begun among many enterprises," You said.—Xinhua ■

## US Congress to see push to regulate Big Tech in 2019

WASHINGTON (United States)—The newly installed US Congress is expected to see a fresh effort to develop new regulations for big technology firms, with a focus on tougher enforcement of privacy and data protection. The wave of data scandals that have hit Facebook and other online platforms has prompted growing calls for action by lawmakers looking to curb abuses of how private information is used and give consumers more clarity.

Significantly, most tech companies are pledging to willingly accept new regulations to set a uniform standard in the United States following a sweeping set of rules that went into effect in the European Union in 2018, although few have offered details. Federal regulations could pre-empt the enforcement of legislation enacted in California, which was modeled after the EU's General Data Protection Regulation. "Whether big tech and little tech like it or not, 2019 will be a year of regulation," said Doug Clinton of the investment firm Loup Ventures, in a recent blog post. The analyst said he expects the US to consider "the most important points" of GDPR including consent, access, portability and erasure of personal information.

### Protecting data

Senator Brian Schatz and 14 other Democrats have endorsed a bill aimed at requiring online firms to safeguard personal information and stop the misuse of data. "People have a basic expectation that the personal information they provide to websites and apps is well-protected and won't be used against them," Schatz said in a statement last month. "Just as

doctors and lawyers are expected to protect and responsibly use the personal data they hold, online companies should be required to do the same." Another proposal unveiled in December by the Centre for Democracy & Technology, a digital rights group in Washington, in consultation with industry and activist groups, covers consumer rights to access and correct data held by online firms, data portability, and limits on third-party access to data. Significantly, it limits the kinds of data that companies can collect to what is needed for their services. "Many apps collect your location information even if it has nothing to do with the service they are providing," said Michelle Richardson, head of data and privacy for the organization. "We want to fundamentally change how companies collect and use data." Since the revelations over the hijacking of personal data of tens of millions of Facebook users by the political consultancy Cambridge Analytica, tech firms have come under heightened scrutiny from lawmakers and privacy activists.

### Cooperation, or not?

Instead of pushing back, big tech firms have offered to cooperate with lawmakers on a national privacy bill—although skeptics say this may be an effort to limit the reach of tougher state laws. Google chief executive Sundar Pichai told a hearing in mid-December, "I'm of the opinion that we are better off with more of an overarching data protection framework for users, and I think that would be good to do." Apple CEO Tim Cook early this year called for federal privacy legislation, while assailing the "weaponized" use of private data that is bought and sold online.—AFP ■

## US scientists chart maps of world regions of possible origin of Zika virus

SAN FRANCISCO—US scientists from University of California, Davis (UC Davis) have worked out "hot spot" maps of regions in the world that can help health authorities detect potential wildlife hosts of viruses mostly spread by mosquitoes and ticks.

A study by UC Davis researchers, which was published recently in the journal *Nature Communications*, said the maps recorded information about wildlife species that have been identified as the most possible host of flaviviruses such as Zika, West Nile, dengue and yellow fever.

These viruses are the known culprits of major epidemics and widespread illness and death across the globe.

The UC Davis researchers examined all the published data on wildlife species tested positive for flaviviruses by establishing a machine-learning model that processed about 10,400 avian and 5,400 mammal species to figure out the most likely species to host viruses.

The artificial intelligence (AI)-driven tool was so powerful that it recognized 138 previously unrecognized dengue virus out-

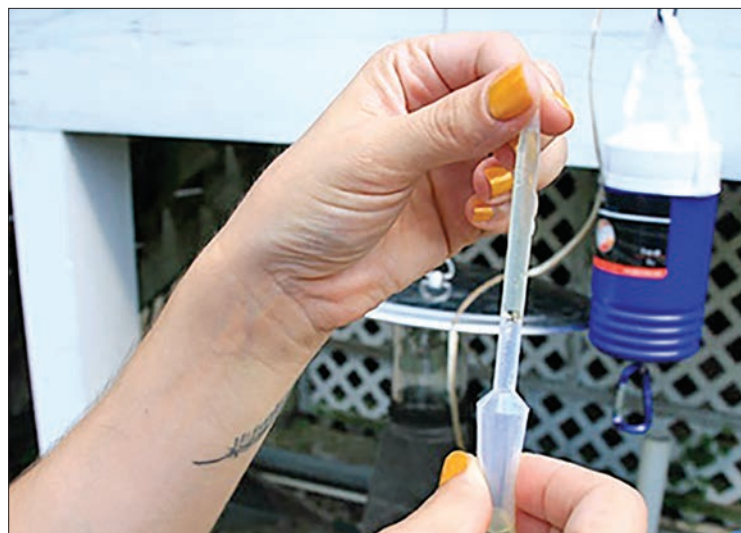


PHOTO: XINHUA

of 173 host species.

"Tomorrow, if there's an outbreak anywhere in the world, we now know which wildlife species are most likely to be infected in addition to humans," said lead author Pranav Pandi, a scholar with the School of Veterinary Medicine at UC Davis.

The study identified Europe as one of the regions in the world that has very diversified varieties of potential Japanese encephalitis hosts, including many common bird species.

It also predicted wildlife hosts in South America and

Southeast Asia have the capabilities of spreading Zika virus in nature. UC Davis professor Christine Kreuder Johnson, co-leading author of the study, said the AI-powered model developed by the UC researchers has identified nine of 21 primate species to be host of yellow fever or Zika virus.

Johnson said scientists hope to rely on the modeling technique to detect the most likely hosts for these viruses in their natural habitat, which is vital to global health and wildlife conservation.—Xinhua ■



## Shan United beat Yangon to win MFF Charity Cup 2019

At the MFF Charity Cup 2019 match, held yesterday afternoon at the Aung San Stadium in Yangon, Shan United beat Yangon United 5-4 during a penalty shootout after the teams were tied 1-1 post 90 minutes of play.

Both teams used strong players right from the kick-off. Shan United displayed their strength early in the match, with expatriate player Maycon scoring an icebreaker with a direct free kick into the net at the 25th minute.

Shan United managed to dominate the first half, showcasing their football skills. In the second half, Yangon United changed their tactics and

launched a powerful attack, with expatriate player Moukailou scoring the equalizer in the 52nd minute.

Later, Yangon United tried hard for the winning goal, but the massive defense of Shan United prevented any ingress.

None of the teams scored any more goals till the final whistle, resulting in a penalty shootout, where Shan United scored 4 goals and Yangon United scored 3 goals.

Shan United brought happiness to its fans, securing the Charity Cup 2019, the opening cup of the new season of the Myanmar National League.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



Yangon United player Kyi Lin (No. 10) vies for the ball with a Shan United player during yesterday's Charity Cup 2019 match at the Aung San Stadium in Yangon. PHOTO: MNL

## Man Utd enjoy fifth straight win after beating Reading 2-0 in FA Cup



Manchester United's Spanish midfielder Juan Mata (l) battles with Reading's English midfielder John Swift (c) during the English FA Cup third round football match between Manchester United and Reading at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on 5 January, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

LONDON—Manchester United won their straight game under caretaker manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer after beating Championship side Reading 2-0 in the FA Cup third round at Old

Trafford on Saturday. Solskjaer, a former United forward from Norway, wrote himself into the club history books, becoming the first manager to win the opening five matches of his tenure after

Matt Busby in 1946. Juan Mata opened the scoring on a penalty and Romelu Lukaku made it 2-0 in the injury time of the first half.

United will fly Dubai for warm weather training before facing Tottenham in the Premier League on 13 January.

Chelsea, who had beaten Manchester United in the final to win the FA Cup champion, beat Nottingham Forest 2-0 thanks to two goals from Alvaro Morata.

Cesc Fabregas, who is expected to join Thierry Henry's Monaco, had a penalty kick saved by Luke Steele after Danny Fox fouled Ruben Loftus-Cheek.

Fabregas, who wore the captain's armband for the day, received a standing ovation when he was replaced in the 85th minute. Arsenal advanced by beating League One side Blackpool 3-0 with teenager Joe Willock scoring twice.—Xinhua ■

## Three-day Lethwei contest to be held in Kayin State

A new generation lethwei competition, to include Myanmar and Thailand fighters, will be held in Taung Ga Lay, Kayin State on 7, 8 and 9 January.

The three-day long contest will be broadcast live on the Canal Plus channel, according to the Myanmar Lethwei (ML) webpage. There will be 38 bouts during the three-day contest, which comprises three, four and five round bouts. On 7 January in the three round bout, Soe Naung Oo will fight against Yan Paing.

In the four round bout, Naw Ohnmar Soe (Myanmar) will fight against Homsit (Thailand).

In the five round bout, Saw Min Aung (Taung Ga Lay) will

fight against Chanalut (Thailand). On 8 January in the three round bout, Ye Thway (Taung Ga Lay) will fight against Suu Sha Aung (Taungzalot).

In the four round bout, Su Hlaing Oo (Myanmar) will fight against Homhtoung (Thailand).

In the five round bout, Saw Ngaman (Myanmar) will fight against Phalinya (Thailand). On 9 January, in the three round bout, Tha Tha (Tung Ga Lay) will fight against Aung Aung (Yan Sit Nyein). In the four round bout, Va Ro Ni Ka (Myanmar) will fight against Phithtel (Thailand). In the five round bout, Pyan Tway (Myanmar) will fight against Dayli Sanhtayan (Thailand).—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■

## Real Madrid confirm Bale out for at least a fortnight

MADRID—Real Madrid have confirmed that Gareth Bale has suffered an injury to the soleus muscle in his left calf and will be out of action for between two weeks and a month.

Bale picked up the injury shortly before halftime during his side's 2-2 draw away to Villarreal on Thursday night and was

replaced by Isco for the second half of the game.

It is the 22nd injury he has suffered during his Real Madrid career and the 14th time he has had to be replaced during a game due to physical problems.

The club carried out tests on Bale on Saturday morning

and then published the results shortly after. Despite the Welshman's long history of injury problems, it is the first time Real Madrid have published a medical report on him in 15 months.

The injury means that in the best case scenario Bale will miss Sunday's Liga Santander

game at home to Real Sociedad and their difficult trip to play Betis the following weekend and he will also be unavailable for both legs of their Copa del Rey last 16 tie against Leganes.

If the injury sidelines Bale for more than a fortnight and his injury history doesn't invite optimism, he could also miss

league games against Sevilla and Espanyol and the quarter-finals of the Cup if Madrid get past Leganes.

Bale joins Marcos Llorente, Mariano Diaz and Marcos Asensio on the Madrid injury list and his injury could give a chance to young Brazilian Vinicius Jr or Isco.—Xinhua ■