

## NATIONAL

Staff from election sub-commissions receive skills for updating voting list

PAGE-2

## NATIONAL

Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government meets GAD staff in Kachin State

PAGE-5

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All ethnic nationals should work in unity for the total cessation of internal armed conflicts and achievement of genuine durable peace

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Office of the President

Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint on the occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> Anniversary celebrations of Kachin State Day (10 January 2019)

Dear esteemed ethnic brothers and sisters living in Kachin State,

Today, the 10<sup>th</sup> of January is the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Kachin State Day, a day of great importance, blessed with significance and auspiciousness for all ethnic brothers and sisters living in Kachin State.

SEE PAGE-2



President U Win Myint shakes hands with outgoing Laotian Ambassador Mr. Lying Sayaxang at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

## President U Win Myint receives outgoing Laotian Ambassador

PRESIDENT U Win Myint received the outgoing Ambassador of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to Myanmar, Mr. Lying Sayaxang, at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They cordially discussed promoting bilateral relations and friendship

between Myanmar and Laos, and increasing cooperation regarding trade, investment, cultural exchange, and tourism between both countries.

Present at the meeting were Union Minister for International Cooperation, U Kyaw Tin, and other officials. —MNA  
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrives to attend the inauguration of Upper Namhtwan Hydro Power plant in Putao, Kachin State yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

## State Counsellor inaugurates Upper Namhtwan Hydro Power plant in Putao

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races, attended a ceremony to open the Upper Namhtwan Hydro Power Plant in Putao, Kachin State yesterday.

At the ceremony, State Counsellor

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi unveiled the inscription of the hydropower project which is equipped with 3.2 MW to produce 14.3 million kilowatt hours per year and will supply 10 wards in Putao, four wards in Machanbaw and 23 villages around the clock.

SEE PAGE-3



## Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint on the occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> Anniversary celebrations of Kachin State Day

### FROM PAGE-1

I am very happy to have this opportunity to extend this message of greetings to this event of great importance and significance. At the same time I send good wishes to all ethnic brothers and sisters living in friendship and harmony in Kachin State as well as to all those brothers and sisters living all across our Union for their auspiciousness and wellbeing.

After gaining independence on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1948, at the very first Kachin State Council meeting, the Kachin State Government was formed. Thus 10<sup>th</sup> January, the date on which the Kachin State Government was established has been designated as "Kachin State Day" and celebrated annually and this year marks the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary.

The Ayeyawady river which is the life blood of Myanmar has its source in this place which is rich with valuable natural resources, has snow-capped mountains and beautiful natural environments. Kachin State is the home of not only the Kachin, Shan and Myanmar racial groups but also a state where other ethnic national races

have all been living together cordially in close friendship.

As a consequence and result of the internal armed conflicts which have not ended, the image and development of our country is still at a low level among the countries of the world and in the region. This is a fact known by all. In our country which is so diverse, it is my belief that armed conflicts will end and our Union will endure in perpetuity only when all national races are able to coexist in harmony and equality. That is why, in accordance with this belief, our Union government has been striving for the establishment of a Union based on democracy and a federal system in order to get national reconciliation and durable internal peace.

I want all of you to visualize how much Kachin State will develop significantly with momentum within a period of ten years if armed conflicts cease in Kachin State. Ethnic nationals within Kachin State have been hoping for many years to realize their dream of a peaceful, happy and developed Kachin State. All are waiting to see representatives of Kachin State participate in the Union Peace Conference - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Panglong

meetings.

Now is the opportune time for all ethnic nationals to take lessons from their past experiences. All ethnic nationals should work in unity for the total cessation of internal armed conflicts and achievement of genuine durable peace with the spirit of brotherly and sisterly love.

I wish to solemnly urge all ethnic brothers and sisters living in Kachin State to strive with firm Union spirit and unity, and hands joined firmly together, as we walk on the path of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar towards establishment of a Democratic Federal Union.

I send this Message of Greetings and good wishes in friendship and cordiality on this auspicious and significant occasion of Kachin State Day to all those living in Kachin State for their happiness and wellbeing and with the hope that they would be able to build the Democratic Federal Union successfully.

Sd/-  
(Win Myint)  
President

## Staff from election sub-commissions receive skills for updating voting list

THE Training of Trainers for Voters List Update jointly conducted by the Union Election Commission and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), launched in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday with opening remarks by UEC Chairman U Hla Thein.

UEC members U Aung Myint, U Soe Yel, U Tun Khin, U Hla Tint, U Myint Naing, U Than Htay, officials from the UEC office, officials from IFES and 147 trainees from Region/State Election Sub-commissions were present in the opening ceremony.

In his opening remarks, UEC Chairman U Hla Thein said the trainees would receive skills for updating the compiled voting lists for the General Election 2020.

The training is following up the coordination meeting related to works of compiling voter



Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein delivers the opening speech at the opening of Training for Trainers for Voter List Update in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



list held with election officials from Region/State Election Sub-commissions on 18-19 December 2018. The UEC is also preparing to compile a handbook for polling.

"The year 2019 is considered a specific year for compiling voting lists. This training is very

important for trainees as they will receive computerize skills for making voting lists. The trainees are urged to work hard to run the operations skillfully as they would become trainers when they return to their respective areas to share the skills to other staff," said U Hla Thein.

It will be more efficient and reliable when the data is placed into new software. The course is essential to correctly compile polling for the General Election 2020. The perfection and correction of the polls list are important and officers from Region/State Election need to be consistent.

Afterwards, Country Director Mr. Paul Guerin OBE from IFES explained the aims of the course. The trainees will be divided into three groups and the course will be held until 11 January. —MNA ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

## Myanmar Orchestra with Japan Concerts to be held in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw this month

THE Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra with Japan Concerts 2019 will be held on 18 and 23 January in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw respectively.

The concert will be reinforced by the Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra from the

Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) and 15 Japanese artistes led by Japanese famous conductor and composer Mr. Yunosuke Yamamoto.

The concert in Yangon will be held at National Theatre (Yangon) at 6 pm on 18 January and

the concert in Nay Pyi Taw will be held at the Myanmar International Convention Centre -II (MICC II) in Nay Pyi Taw at 6pm on 23 January. People can enjoy the concert free of charge said an official.—Maung Maung Myo ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

## Assembly on combating elephantiasis held in Nay Pyi Taw today

A national level assembly concerning the Ministry of Health and Sports' treatment for elephantiasis in 2018 will be held at the meeting room of the disease eradication office at the Department of Public Health in Nay Pyi Taw, today. Relevant

officials will explain about their undertakings in combating elephantiasis, including providing medication, with the attendees. They will also show a TV Spot on eradicating elephantiasis. —Maung Maung Myo ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



## State Counsellor inaugurates Upper Namhtwan Hydro Power plant in Putao

### FROM PAGE-1

“Roads and infrastructure are important for connecting all of us and for developing our economy. As I mentioned just now, achieving electrification will not just develop our lives, but also open the path to better opportunities for generations to come,” said State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in her opening speech.

“Now that I’m here in Putao, I have seen many different ethnic races living here and this has strengthened the Union spirit deep in my heart. We have to stand together true to this spirit. We are not a powerful or rich country. Not yet. But our country will one day become prosperous and powerful thanks to the efforts of the people and the children of the nation. We will stand with courage and faith at the center stage of the world. Achieving electrification supports communication efforts within the country and with the whole world,” she added.

“While this power plant is not large by global standards, it is quite important for our country because it is in a central location. With Putao being in the northern and highland region, establishing an electric power plant here highlights the technological advancement of the country. It also shows everyone the *cetana* (goodwill) and care we have for all ethnic nationals of the Union,” said the State Counsellor.

“It’s a joyous occasion to be able to open a power plant,



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi unveils the inscription of the Upper Namhtwan Hydro Power Plant in Putao, Kachin State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



even more so for me to be here in person. I am especially pleased to meet with the local residents here. The entire country is working to achieve full electrification. To explain the reason behind this monumental task in a few short words, it is to bring light into the lives of our citizens and the sons and daughters of our Union. By this, I don’t mean just the light of electricity, but the light of future opportunities brought by the achievement of electrification.”

“Having access to electricity will light up the lives of both children and their parents. It will be a guide for their future. There will also be more opportunities for businesses to grow. We are not trying to achieve electrification with a simple-minded approach; we are proceeding with the open-minded view to achieve

benefits for our nation.”

“I saw the icy mountain quite clearly on my way here. It wouldn’t be visible if a fog or the rains were present, or if it were dark. We could only see it clearly if there is light and we can gaze at its beauty and wonder about its composition. People living in the highlands are some of the sturdiest people in the world. They are robust, courageous and live in harsh surroundings.”

“There is a poem written by people far away from our country. The poem says by looking at the mountains, one can receive courage, hope for the future, strength to lead, trust and faith. The poem points out to the mental benefits gained from mountains. But we cannot solely rely on mental benefits. We need support from our physical aspects

too. We are prioritizing building roads and electrification for our people from the highlands so that their physical wellbeing can develop on par with their mental aspects of courage, trust and faith.”

“We need to be able to see *cetana* for what it is. No matter how much goodwill we have in our hearts, if it cannot be seen or acknowledged then it will not be as beneficial as we intend it to be. Only when the goodwill is apparent will a close bond form between the giver and the receiver. I want everyone to know that the Union government places *cetana* and loving-kindness on all the people and children of our Union. I don’t say this to take pride for ourselves. I mean to strengthen the existing relations between us all. No matter how big or small a project is, the main drive behind it is *cetana* and correct conduct.”

“I trust that the Ministry for Electricity and Energy confidently fulfill their duties and responsibilities. I want to say something for the workers here. I understand your difficulties and hard work in carrying out your duties in regions such as this one. We value your commitment and ask you to take pride in yourselves for this. Not everyone receives this kind of opportunity to perform important work for the country. Your work enables all ethnic nationals to bond closer and strengthen their loving-kindness with one another.”

“This is why I want every worker to take pride in what they are doing and what they have done here. Please, firmly place it in your memory that you have personally done something for

your country and national development. It is important during your time working here to get to understand the needs, worries and hopes of the local residents so that you can disseminate the Union spirit among them. This is the duty of all civil servants, who are in a way staff of Kachin State, and Nay Pyi Taw. You cannot discriminate. You cannot have the mentality of just being staff of Nay Pyi Taw or the local area.”

“All of you are staff of the entire nation. Each and every one of you have to be loyal to the whole Union, and share responsibility towards it. From the common workers and civil servants working on transportation in Putao to the project workers and staff, every one of you is important.”

“Every citizen is valuable to the nation. That is why I want to impart some words to the children of our Union while I am here. We are all truly living on one land and drinking from the same water. A place like Kachin State and Yangon Region in the south are different, but we are taking the same path into the future. Everyone in the country is on this same path. I want the path we all take to be well lit, both from the electric lighting and our spirits.”

“I want our hopes to be big enough to light our way too. Everyone shares this responsibility and the opportunities that come with it. If you use your opportunities correctly then you can fulfill your responsibilities completely. That is why while we are here, I have come to better understand the hopes and challenges of our people.”



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits the biodiversity booth in Putao. PHOTO: MNA

SEE PAGE-4



Seeing different ethnic races living here has strengthened the Union spirit deep in my heart

FROM PAGE-3

“We came here to find out the difficulties and hopes of the people here. It is the duty of those carrying the responsibility of government to discover methods to remove challenges and realize the hopes of the people. As I’ve mentioned before, carrying out the duty of the government falls on the shoulders of the President, down to the most junior civil servant.”

“We are all working towards the development of the nation, its future, security, and stability. I want all our citizens to build trust, feel reassured, and build bonds akin to close siblings when interacting with civil servants. This duty lies on civil servants too.”

“We do not work as civil servants to become rich. You go into business for that. That’s why it is not suitable for people to come into government positions to attain wealth. I mention this because our citizens do not have 100 per cent faith in the civil servants yet. We have to strive for 100 per cent. When the people have complete trust in the civil servants then our country can truly be called a developed country. Some people calculate the development of a nation by looking at its financial situation and per capita income; they try to find if a nation is rich or poor. But we cannot calculate in the same way. We need to see how united a country is first. That is why I take every opportunity I get to urge all of you to seize the opportunities for achieving unity.”

“I want to urge all of the citizens, sons and daughter of this country to do so. And I also urge



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomed by local people as she arrives Nagmon, Kachin State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

the civil servants of this great nation, who are born from the same place as its citizens. On this day we have achieved electrification, and on similar days, I kindly request all of you to use the opportunity present before you to bring in more light into the lives of all the people in the country. And with that I conclude my speech. Thank you.”

The ceremony was formally opened by Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing, Chief Minister of Kachin State Dr. Khet Aung, Chairman of Electricity Development Committee U Kyi Moe Naing,

members of the Kachin State cabinet U Win Nyunt and U Wai Lin, Deputy Speaker of Kachin State Hluttaw U Khan Lin and officials.

The State Counsellor visited the plant and viewed the electricity generation process.

Following the ceremony, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited the Khakaborazi National Park’s Environmental Conservation Booth where Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win, Director-General of the Forest Department Dr. Nyi Nyi Kyaw and Administrator of

the Khakaborazi National Garden U Aung Maung reported on conservation efforts.

The Khakaborazi National Park was established on 10 November, 1998, on 1,472 square acres. It was included in the list of ASEAN heritage on 18 December, 2003.

The Phonkanrazi Wildlife Sanctuary was established on 1 December 2003, on 1,044 square acres. It is a home for 36 species of mammals, 370 bird species, 360 butterflies and 82 species of reptile and amphibians.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor visited the Yawen National

Park and visited the Yawen National Museum.

Afterwards, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her entourage flew to Nagmon frontier camp of the Khakaborazi National Park.

At the camp, Deputy Director of the Forest Department Dr. Naing Zaw Tun reported on measures being taken for nominating the Phonkanrazi Wildlife Sanctuary for World Heritage List, condition for research works, prospects for nature-based tourism services and recreation.

SEE PAGE-5



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meeting with representatives of the Tran ethnic tribe in Myitkyina, Kachin State, yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presents aid to local ethnic people in Nagmon, Kachin State, yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



## Seeing different ethnic races living here has strengthened the Union spirit deep in my heart

### FROM PAGE-4

Following the visit, State Counsellor DawAung San SuuKyi met with MPs, town elders and local people.

Speaking at the meeting, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi encouraged the local people saying that the region has prospects for development as it has valuable human and natural resources.

Myanmar lagged behind the development in comparison with neighboring countries and other

ASEAN countries, but we can take lessons from their weaknesses when they were working for development, she said.

“Taking lessons from them, we can put our country on the right path to development. Just development is not enough. The right type of development is important,” said the State Counsellor, stressing the need to conserve the country’s natural resources and to pass it down to the next generation as a good heritage.

She also stressed the im-

portance of good transportation access to be able to provide the people with educational opportunities so that they have mental and physical maturity.

The State Counsellor reiterated the basic five points presented by the people to be fulfilled, saying that health is the most important point in the five points which include drinking water, transportation, electrification and education.

She encouraged the local people in Nagmon not to feel inferior because they have a

bright future as long as they are physically and mentally mature.

At the meeting, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presented rice, cooking oil, salt, beans, dried fish, dried noodles, garlic and onions to the people.

Following the meeting, the State Counsellor flew to Putao by Tatmadaw helicopter.

From there, she left for Myitkyina by air.

At the Palm Spring Hotel, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met with U Hson Dan Di Sarh and U Htalar Nam Sin

of Maliikhun Village in Putao Township, U Hson Dam Yon San and U Htalar Nam Min of Layyinkwin Ward, Maung Zon Pali Phone Ze and Maung Hson Dam Aung Tan, Maung Ayom Dam Khin, Maung Hson Dam Sarh Yam and Ma Zonpali Nan Bay of Ayondam Village, Pan-nandin.

At the meeting, the State Counsellor heard the requirements of the ethnic people and pledged to fulfil their needs as soon as possible. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Union Minister for Office of the Union Government meets GAD staff in Kachin State

U Min Thu, Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government, on his visit to Myitkyina in Kachin State, met with staff of the General Administration Department (GAD) from township, district, and state level offices, yesterday.

Firstly, U Myint Lwin, the Head of Kachin State GAD, introduced the Union Minister to everyone in attendance. He then explained about the State GAD’s processes and performances. Union Minister U Min Thu then delivered a speech.

Speech by Union Minister U Min Thu

The Union Minister said the General Administration Department has been agreed to be transferred to the Ministry of the Office of the Union Government during Union Government Meeting No. (23/2018). He explained that the reason for the transfer is to establish an administrative mechanism that is in line with the political system the country is working towards, and for the emergence of good governance.

He mentioned that President U Win Myint said he will undertake government reforms and decentralize institutions in his speech on Myanmar New Year in April 2018.

The Union Minister said reforming governance requires adherence to the following principles:

- To start from the grassroots
- To work with collective strength of the people
- To emphasize the will of the people
- To make changes in areas not coherent with reforms

He added that decentralization needs to be carried out in



Union Minister U Min Thu greets staff from General Administration Department in Kachin State yesterday.

PHOTO: MNA

accordance with the following:

- To change what is needed
- To implement changes without jeopardizing stability
- To work for the transition process based on the standards of transparency, openness, accountability and responsibility at all levels.

Union Minister U Min Thu said the GAD needs to be stable and always open to community-based amendments and reforms. He said this is why they

reform process. He instructed the civil servants to adhere to the policies and processes of the Ministry of the Office of the Union Government.

The Union Minister said that as Heads of the GAD in respective states and regions and Nay Pyi Taw council area assume the task of executive secretary of the respective cabinet, they must ensure the administration system is smooth, fair, just, free of corruption, and

and village-tract levels, GAD staff have to meet with the general public on a daily basis. This means GAD staff have to be mindful of their actions and words as they deal with public issues almost every day.

The Union Minister said he has heard of GAD Heads contributing much to the community they are assigned to and have received praise from the people. He said the reform has to start at the bottom, meaning each staff member has to change their mindset, remove unnecessary red tape, and to do away with old habits that no longer serve any purpose. He urged the GAD staff to work together with the people, respect them and value them, and to use their strength to initiate reforms.

The Union Minister said the administrative system has been established since the colonial era and has since been viewed as a sort of authoritarian class. He urged GAD staff to protect the rights of the people in there

assigned area and to carry out their duties for the benefit of the nation.

The Union Minister concluded by laying down two points he wished for GAD staff to consider.

**The first point is to cast away any worries concerning the General Administration Department’s transfer to the Ministry of the Office of the Union Government, said the Union Minister. He said the administrative system needs to be stable first before initiating reforms. He told the staff to continue working as normal, fulfilling their duties, while adhering to the law, rules and regulations in place. He instructed them to carry out reforms in line with any changing policies and instructions.**

**The second point, said the Union Minister, is to carry out reforms and changes while considering the goodwill and benefit of the people.**

He said the GAD needs to be always ready to carry out the needs of the public. He requested GAD staff to be responsible in their duties as they are working closely with the public and have a lot of trust placed on them.

**The Union Minister concluded his speech by wishing peace of mind and happiness to the GAD staff in their efforts to bring about swift reforms. He urged them to work hard to the point people extoll ‘The model for reform begins from the GAD’.**

Afterwards, the Union Minister and officials listened to reports and opinions of the GAD staff, and gave necessary instructions and guidance to fulfill their requests. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

The second point, said the Union Minister, is to carry out reforms and changes while considering the goodwill and benefit of the people.

listen to both experts and staff experience so that they can systematically each stage of the

operates with transparency.

He said as the GAD has branches down to the ward



## 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 Abdelaziz Bouteflika**  
President of Algeria

It is with great pleasure on the occasion of celebration of the National Day of the Republic of Union of Myanmar; that I to extend to you on behalf of the People and the Government of Algeria and on my behalf my warmest congratulations and best wishes of good health and happiness to your Excellency as well as continuous progress and prosperity to the friendly people of Myanmar.

I also would like to seize this happy occasion, to reiterate my commitment to work with you to further develop the relations of friendship and cooperation that link our two countries for the mutual benefit of our two friendly peoples.

Please accept, Excellency the President, the expression of my highest consideration.

From Abdel Fattah Al Sisi  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

It is indeed my pleasure to extend to Your Excellency my heartfelt congratulations on the anniversary of the

Independence Day of your country, wishing you and the friendly people of Myanmar all success in fulfilling your hopes and aspirations.

I wish you all the best of health and happiness and your people all progress and prosperity.  
Highest consideration and appreciation.

**From Frank-Walter Steinmeier**

President of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Mr. President,

On the occasion of your country's Independence Day, allow me to offer you and the people of Myanmar my sincere congratulations and those of my fellow Germans.

Democracy and freedom are key prerequisites for a country's peaceful development. Germany will continue to be a reliable partner at Myanmar's side and support the country on its path towards greater stability, prosperity and democracy. I hope that your country will soon find domestic peace for all citizens, which is vital for achieving this.

Allow me to wish you all the best and every success

for the tasks that lie ahead.

From Maithripala Sirisena  
President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

On behalf of the Government and people of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and that of my own, it gives me great pleasure to convey warm felicitations to you, the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day Commemoration of Myanmar.

Sri Lanka and Myanmar are bound by fraternal bilateral ties based on deep rooted religious and cultural ties that span many centuries. I am confident that the existing relations will continue to flourish for the mutual benefit of our nations.

I look forward to working towards forging enhanced cooperation between our two countries.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year-2019.

## Foreign Head of State sends felicitations to Vice President U Myint Swe

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

**From Phankham Viphavanh**  
Vice President of Laos

I have the great pleasure to express my warmest congratulations and best wishes extended to Your Excellency on the auspicious occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> An-

niversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am confident that the good friendly ties and traditional close cooperation between our two countries and peoples will be further strengthened in the years ahead both at bilateral and multilateral for the mutual

benefits of our two peoples.

On the occasion of the New Year 2019, I would like to extend my best wishes to your Excellency good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks as well as for the continued prosperity of the Myanmar people.

## Foreign Head of State sends felicitations to Vice President U Henry Van Thio

The following is messages of felicitations from Foreign Head of State / Government sent to Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Henry Van Thio, on the occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

**From Phankham Viphavanh**  
Vice President of Laos

I have the great pleasure to express my warmest congratulations and best wishes extended to Your Excel-

lency on the auspicious occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I believe that the friendly relations and the traditional close cooperation between our countries and people

will be further strengthened and enhanced in the coming years for the mutual benefits of our two countries.

On the occasion of the New Year 2019, I would like to extend my best wishes to Your Excellency good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks.

## Union Minister U Thein Swe receives ILO Project Manager

THE Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population, U Thein Swe, received Ms. Marielle Phe Goursat, Project Manager from International Labour Organization (ILO), at his ministry's meeting room in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed the ongoing processes

for reforms undertaken by the Social Security Board, which is one of four of their reforms, ongoing and future processes for medical reform, increasing healthcare services for insured workers, and cooperation with the ILO. —MNA ■

(Translated by Su Mon Khaing)



Union Minister U Thein Swe meets with ILO Project Manager Ms. Marielle Phe Goursat in Nay Pyi Taw.  
PHOTO: MNA



## Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint receives Japanese State Minister for Communications

Dr. Pe Myint, Union Minister for Information, received a Japanese delegation led by State Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Dr. Yukari Sato yesterday at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to capacity building assistance being given to the staff of Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV), providing various equipment required for production of television programmes, Japan's cooperation with Myanmar in broadcast and film industry, the successful establishment of Dream Vision Company in Myanmar in collabo-

ration between Japan's NHK and Shwe Than Lwin Media Co., Ltd., promotion of Japan-Myanmar cooperation, making documentaries and exchanging content so as to promote mutual understanding between the peoples of two nations.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun and officials, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Ichiro Maruyama, Director-General Mr. Mabitto Yoshida of Global Strategy Bureau, Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and officials.—MNA ■  
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint poses for the documentary photo with Japanese State Minister for Communications Dr. Yukari Sato in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Coord meeting on holding Mekong-Lancang Cultural Exchange Youth Camp held



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko addresses coordination meeting of Mekong-Lancang Cultural Exchange Youth Camp. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE work coordination meeting to hold Mekong-Lancang Cultural Exchange Youth Camp was held yesterday morning in the Lawkanat Hall of the Ministry of Religious

Affairs and Culture's office, where Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko delivered an opening address.

In his opening speech, Un-

ion Minister Thura U Aung Ko said that the cultural exchange programme was held with the aim of enhancing cooperation between cultural groups and youth artists from six Mekong-Lancang countries, including Cambodia, Lao, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Thailand and China.

He added that arrangements would be made to invite the youth artists from six Mekong-Lancang countries to attend the meeting and the Mekong-Lancang Cultural Exchange Youth Camp was launched with the use of Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Fund.

Moreover Directors-General from the Ministry of For-

eign Affairs and the Ministry of International Cooperation would act as chairs in order to carry out the implementation process of the Mekong-Lancang cooperation. In addition to this, plans were under way to set up the Mekong-Lancang coordination team made up of representatives from other relevant ministries. Thus all the attendees from the ministries were urged to take part in ensuring the smooth work process.

Also present at the meeting were Chairman of Coordination Committee Deputy Minister U Kyi Min and its members, Chairman of Mekong-Lancang Cooperation and officials from relevant

sub-committees and departments.

Artists and Participants from the regional countries discussed the matters concerning the paper reading, art gallery and handicrafts display from the youth training schools, security, invitation, accommodation, preparation, transportation, communication, healthcare, and production and broadcasting of Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) programmes.

Following this, the Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko coordinated the requirements of the attendees at the meeting.—MNA ■

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

## SWRR Union Minister provides humanitarian assistance to sanctuary, IDP camp in Myitkyina

THE Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Dr. Win Myat Aye, traveled to Myitkyina, Kachin State, yesterday where he provided social protection and humanitarian assistance at Metta Yin Kwin humanitarian sanctuary and Lea Gon Baht Lin IDP camps.

The Union Minister and entourage first arrived at the sanctuary and met with the children there. He told the children the Union government is implementing the rights of children. He said everyone needs to work together with the Union spirit to achieve peace in Myanmar as a lot of different ethnic races call it home.

The entire country needs to be developing at the same pace, he said. The Union Minister then provided humanitarian assistance to the sanctuary including K2,344,000 as education stipend for college students and primary students and K18,360,000 for purchasing rice, food and clothing. The Kachin State government also provided t-shirts, longvis, and school uniforms.

The Union Minister then met with children playing in the children's fun ground, donated by the Orphans Reduction and Protection Association, and gave them nutritional snacks and toys. He then inspected the dairy farm

in the sanctuary.

Next, the Union Minister and entourage arrived in Lea Gon Baht Lin IDP camp and met with the camp's residents. The Union Minister provided humanitarian assistance to the IDP camp including K2,618,000 as education stipend for college students and primary students, K6,826,875 for a month's worth of rice, edible oil, salt and lentils, K4,857,500 for supporting basic and advanced sewing classes, computer classes, and driving lessons, and K1,005,000 as assistance for children under 5 years of age, pregnant mothers, and families led by women. The Union



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye presents cash assistance to residents at Lea Gon Baht Lin IDP camp in Myitkyina, Kachin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

Minister also distributed nutritional snacks for the children. The Union Minister then met with ward administrators in the IDP camps.

The total amount of yester-

day's monetary assistance is K36,056,375. Accompanying the Union Minister were the Kachin State minister for social welfare and ministry officials.—MNA ■  
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



# Paving the way for close relations, unity

“PAVING roads such as this one is mainly for our regional development. But more importantly, it also brings all ethnic nationals closer to each other. It's not easy to meet one another without any roads connecting us. Development is important for a country but even more important is the strength gained from unity,” said State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in her speech at the opening of the Maggwayza-Mt. Sanlutchet road section in Nagmon Township, Kachin State, two days ago.

Northern Myanmar is not just far, it also has dense forests and poor roads that hamper travel to and from the region. Because travel is inconvenient, it is not easy for people living in Northern Myanmar to keep in touch with people from other areas, or to form and maintain close bonds. The region lags in development and efforts to build unity entail much difficulty. But now, the State has opened a new road to connect the region with the rest of the country. We believe this will bring about more development and unity.

The State Counsellor summarized the motive for opening the road section and said: “We want everyone to enjoy the same living standards. It is a matter of national pride to see every citizen living life at the same standard.”

Challenges and shortcomings in the basic infrastructure of a region can bring about an imbalance in the distribution of wealth in a country. They can restrict its relations with the rest of the country and put development opportunities out of reach, and result in disparities between urban and rural areas, and urban areas and highlands.

Equality and equal opportunity are necessary for building trust and unity, especially in the highlands

and border areas. We decided to ensure justice and equality in the nation during our struggle for independence. But due to lack of transportation and infrastructure, and unrest, we have not been able to implement development goals in the highlands and border areas.

This is why successive administrations have always prioritized developing border areas and the lives of ethnic nationals. The new administration is paving new roads in the highlands so that they do not fall behind in the trek to development. It has been building roads and bridges, and even in the most remote regions, paths have been laid for motorcycles. It has gotten much easier to travel around Myanmar than in the past.

We need to make use of the opportunities that will be coming our way with the new roads connecting us to the rest of the country. The Maggwayza-Mt. Sanlutchet road marks the beginning of better and smoother transportation to the beautiful and bountiful northern reaches of Myanmar, where we will work hand-in-hand to bring about unity and peace.

“When a person really devotes himself to a life of teaching, then he knows he is making a positive contribution to his nation, and will never think about quitting his job”:

U Ko Lay Win, Acting Director-General

## Roundtable discussions on Educational Reforms

By Nandar Win,  
Win Win Maw  
PHOTO: WIN WIN

(Continued from previous article appeared on the issue of 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2019)

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, Acting Director-General, 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.

**Coordinator:** Please tell us a possible solution with regards to scarcity of male teachers.

**U Tun Hla:** I would like to add this issue into the broader arrangement, which should be implemented through the township, district and region levels in long term plan in seeking the solution for scarcity of male teacher.

**Coordinator:** Do you have more to add?

**Dr. Win Aung:** I am of the view that the previous concept and notion that the teaching profession is quite appropriate and suitable with the women must be altered and changed first. In changing this idea, the male teachers and the female teachers must prove that their vocation and job is based on skill and proficiency and that it is to be projected to the public and draw the attention to recognize the utility of the teaching profession.

**Ideal showcase**



Secondly, the male teachers in the education sphere must step forward and showcased himself as ideal person on behalf of all the teachers and the students.

Thirdly, all the teachers must show their talents and powers towards the nation with focus on the role of male teachers with the drive in filling up the male teachers in the teaching workforce at all schools. Such fine perception on the role of male teachers must be disseminated among the public.

**U Ko Lay Win:** I would like to share my point of view on the issue of scarcity of male teachers which is mostly related and based on the benevolence, hobby and sacrifice.

When a person really loves and devotes himself in a life of teaching profession, then he knows his orientation of being a countryman who makes a positive contribution for his nation, and would never ever think about quitting his teaching job. I am now (56) years old, and that I have devoted (14) years as a teacher, and then transferred as Education Planner.

The first priority is to organize the youth with the concept to be embedded in their mindset that they have the main responsibility of taking part in the education sector.

Those students who are attending the pre-service training courses must be injected with the notion of finer quality of benevo-

lence, hobby and sacrifice so that they would have high impression in the teaching profession, and would never ever quit the job.

Before actually attending the teachers training courses in my younger years, I have no desire at all working as a teacher; however, the training course had changed my mind as the lessons that I learned had full of aspiration and finer objective of the life of a teacher. This should be included in the teacher's training perspective.

**Review**

Another point is in keeping

Before actually attending the teachers training courses in my younger years, I have no desire at all working as a teacher; however, the training course had changed my mind as the lessons that I learned had full of aspiration and finer objective of the life of a teacher.

the teachers in the teaching domain, and that the task is connected with the Basic Education Department. We need in drafting the career pathway for the teachers in creating Continuous Professional Development or Professional Development in the process of Lifelong Learning.

We must also think about their

promotion, and the issue is on the agenda.

Lastly, I would like to talk about the marketing model that is very much vital and essential to be implemented while the students are still in the classrooms. Moreover, the community and the society as whole must understand and appreciate the valuable service in becoming a teacher in the country, which is the lifeline of the nation.

This information and message is to be conveyed to the parents in the country, and that the media must keep in mind to con-

fer the relatives and friends are amazed and surprised. It is related with our culture.

The educational colleges conferred only diploma and there is a requirement two years in getting the job as Primary Assistant Teacher. If one wanted to become a Junior Assistant Teacher, the person needs to take up a degree at the University of distance Education in acquiring a B.Ed, and that is why, the students are not enthusiastic in attending our educational colleges.

**Uplifting degree colleges**

The University of Education is preferred by the students as the pathway is straight ahead that of five years schooling, that of getting B. Ed degree, and that of becoming a Senior Assistant Teacher. That might be one of the reasons our colleges are not preferred.

In coming December 2019, our educational colleges would be upgraded to four years status, and then we would confer university degree certificate after four years stints. Therefore, the students are not required to change other universities.

We would be offering Primary Assistant Teacher (Special) and Junior Assistant Teacher (Special), and that the posts are re-structured into promotion system. Our existing promotion system is not from one level to other level such as from PAT to JAT, and then

from JAT to SAT. The pay scale within the JAT would be enhanced to higher scale, and that we need to discuss in detailed on this matter with other ministries.

**With teacher's moral principles**

Another factor is that we need to equip our educational colleges with more attraction and desirability.

Moreover, we need to make research work with regards to the teaching of female teachers such as that of the number of primary schools with only female teachers without a single male teacher; that of middle schools with only female teachers without a single male teacher; that of the capability and competence of the students coming out of such schools compared to students of other schools that have equal ratio of male and female teachers.

Only then, we would be able to assess and evaluate whether the excess number of female teachers resulted with good results or otherwise.

The ground reality is that we need to conduct a research project.

There was a paper reading session at the basic education seminar in connection with the same issue, and that majority of the participants were of the common and sensible view that the most important element was to select the person with the mindset of a teacher.

However, we are now selecting on the basis of mark achievements and on the origin of being local residents of the area.

The participating teachers at the seminar asked for students with the state of mind of a teacher, and that no other factors are necessary.

If one has the mentality and outlook of a genuine teacher and then join the teaching profession at the Basic Education Department, then things would be fine and smooth in their functioning. These are the points that the participants at the seminar had voiced on the issue. Thanks for all the arrangements.

Translated by UMT (Ahlon)

## Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

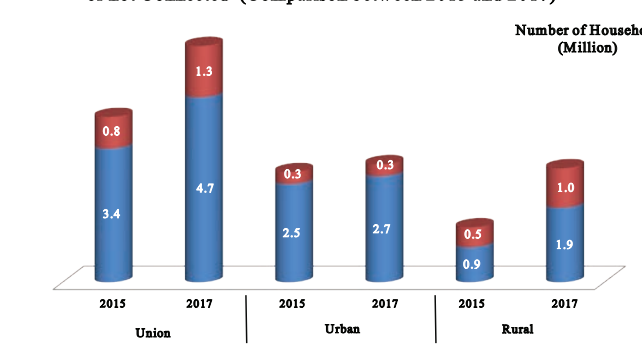
THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr. Tim Enderlin as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Switzerland to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Mr. Tim Enderlin was born in November 1966 in Seoul. He obtained a Law Degree at the University of Zurich, Switzerland. From 1994 to 1997, he had served at the Zurich District Court.

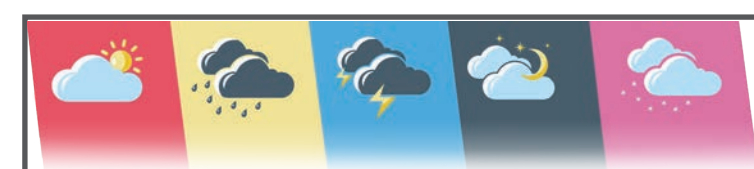
Since then, he served in various capacities at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and as Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland in Islamabad. From 2011 to 2015, he also served as Ambassador and Diplomatic Advisor to the President of the Swiss Confederation, Head of the Division Presidential Affairs and Protocol. Since August 2015, he has been serving as Regional Director for the Mekong Programme, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation based in Laos.

He can speak Rhaeto-Romanic, German, English, French and Italian languages. He is married and has two children.—MNA

Number of Households Living in Village or Wards Connected to the Public Electricity Grid Whose Households is either Connected or not Connected (Comparison between 2015 and 2017)



Data from Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (2017).  
Source : Central Statistical Organization  
Information Unit : Central Statistical Organization



## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2019)

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 10 January, 2019:** Rain will be fairly widespread in (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Mon states and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Northern Shan and Chin states.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 10th January, 2019:** Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 10th January, 2019:** Isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 10th January, 2019:** Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).



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**DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR**Aye Min Soe  
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

**SENIOR TRANSLATORS**Zaw Min  
Zaw Htet Oo  
Win Ko Ko Aung**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,  
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),  
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),  
nwenwe9131@gmail.com**TRANSLATORS**Khaing Thanda Lwin,  
Hay Mar Tin Win,  
Ei Myat Mon  
Kyaw Zin Lin  
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**May Thet Hnin,  
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com  
Nyein Nyein Ei,**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

**COMPUTER TEAM**Tun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,  
Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe,  
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,  
Sanda Hnin, Thein Htwe**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01) 8604529,  
Fax - (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,  
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,  
Hotline - 09 974424848  
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com  
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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.

# Sagaing Region gov't disburses social pension to 79 senior citizens

THE Sagaing Region government disbursed social pensions to the tune of K2.370 million to 79 citizens, aged 85 and older, in the Wuntho Township of Katha District in a door-to-door delivery on Wednesday.

Officials with the government handed a sum of K30,000 to 23 senior citizens in the

Shwewunthida Ward, 13 senior citizens in the Sawbwagyi Ward, 28 senior citizens in the Sitkawgyi Ward, and 15 senior citizens in the Kyamainggyi Ward.

The Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, which is responsible for the care of the elderly, has disbursed

K10.38 million in social pensions to 346 senior citizens in Wuntho Township between October and December.

The department provides door-to-door delivery of pension every three months.

As part of its attempts to improve services to the country's senior citizens, the government

of Myanmar enacted the Myanmar Older Person Law in 2016 to protect elderly people from neglect, abuse, or deprivation, and to improve their living conditions.

According to the 2014 census, the country has over 230,000 citizens aged 85 and above.—  
Kyaw Myaing ■ (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

# Pilgrims can do elephant riding tour to visit Alaungdaw Kathapa

PILGRIMS visiting the Alaungdaw Kathapa Pagoda will now be able to ride to the pagoda from the car park on elephants, said U Maung Maung Naing, the administrator of the Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park.

"We are making arrangements for ferrying the pilgrims up the mountain on elephants. Priority will be given to the aged, people suffering from obesity, and young children. We are making arrangements to engage 10 elephants from the National Park and another 10 elephants from the Forest Department.

The elephants will carry pilgrims twice a day — in the morning and in the evening. More elephants will be engaged during the pagoda festival season," said U Maung Maung



Pilgrims take elephant ride to Buddha Vihara of Alaungdaw Kathapa Pagoda. PHOTO: WIN OO (ZAYYARTINE)

Naing.

The park will charge K8,000 per person for the elephant

rides. The rides will be offered from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the morning and 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

in the evening.—Win Oo (Zayyartine) ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

# Shop houses to be sold in Yangon, Patheingyi

A sale of two-storey shop houses will take place in Yangon and Patheingyi cities, simultaneously, on 12 and 13 January.

The sale will be conducted by iMyanmarHouse.com, Myanmar's number one real-estate website, in the promotion area on the ground floor of the Junction Square on Kyun Taw Road

in Yangon and at the BIG office at Mya Kyun Thar Housing in Patheingyi.

The two-storey shop houses are located adjacent to the Junction Square Centre in Patheingyi Town. The opening ceremony for the shop houses will be held at 11:30 a.m. on 12 January.

The two-storey shop hous-

es are over 2,000 square feet wide. The sale area project includes a JCGV cinema, a shopping center, restaurants, a playground, a car park, a generator, and self-transformers.

"The two-storey shop houses in Patheingyi are set to become one of the largest shopping areas in the Ayeyawady Region and will draw large crowds.

So, businessmen must invest in them. Customers will get a 20-per-cent discount on the first day of the sale expo.

Some shops will be sold under an instalment plan, wherein no interest will be charged for two years," said U Nay Min Thu, the managing director of iMyanmarHouse.com.—GNLM ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

# Motorcyclist hit by cargo truck, dies

A 29-year-old motorcyclist was killed after a cargo truck struck his motorcycle from the rear in Mohnyin Township of Kachin State on Tuesday, according to a police report.

The accident occurred

around 4:30 p.m. on 8 January on the Mandalay-Shwebo-Myitkyina Union Highway near Hsemiley-wathit Village. The driver of the cargo truck has been identified as Zin Ko Ko, 25, from Hopin Town in Mohnyin Township. The

motorcyclist has been identified as Phoe Shwe from Kanbalu Township of Sagaing Region.

They were both headed to Mohnyin Town, when the cargo truck hit the bike. Phoe Shwe sustained serious injuries on his

abdomen and left leg and died on the spot. The police have filed a case of reckless driving against Zin Ko Ko under Section 304 (a) of the Penal Code.— Ni Toe ■ (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)



# Kyat strengthens against US dollar

By Nyein Nyein

THE US dollar has been sliding against the Kyat in the local currency market, with the exchange rate touching a low of K1,533 per dollar yesterday, a decline of K9 from 2 January, said money exchangers.

In October last year, the dollar exchange rate hit a high of K1,600. Thereafter, the dollar has been falling in the local currency market.

"It is normal for the dollar to depreciate against the Kyat during this time of the year. The dollar rate is likely to remain cool and it seems it may not climb



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

up," said Dr. Soe Tun, a money exchanger.

The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) bought over US\$11 million from private banks over

three days in late 2018 (24, 26, and 27 December) when the dollar exchange rate was around K1,540-1,560 in the local currency market. The CBM again bought

\$5 million from private banks at its set rate on 3 January.

"It is good that the CBM buys and holds dollars. It would be better if the CBM could directly buy dollar from exporters," said Dr. Soe Tun.

The CBM set the exchange rate at K1,537 per dollar on 9 January.

In the second half of 2018, the minimum and maximum exchange rates were K1,345-1,407 in June, K1,384-1,443 in July, K1,442-1,570 in August, K1,538-1,650 in September, K1,515-1,600 in October, K1,565-1,595 in November, and K1,510-1,577 in December. ■  
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## Gov't allows company to export Tragacanth gum herb to China (Taipei)

THE Ministry of Commerce gave its approval to MBM Company in Monywa Township, Sagaing Region, to export 1,000 kilograms of Tragacanth gum herb (locally called Saekalamat) to China (Taipei) on 21 December, according to an online news release from the Ministry.

The herb is selling well these days. A kilo of Tragacanth gum herb is fetching US\$40, said an official with the MBM Company.

The Tragacanth gum herb produced in the Sagaing and Mandalay regions is popular among buyers.

As Tragacanth gum has a legitimate trade channel, growers need to ensure a sustainable market and quality control by setting up bodies. Chinese merchants come to Myanmar to buy Tragacanth gum when there is demand. Found naturally across the country, the sap of the thorny

shrub can be classified into three types depending on the color.

Currently, growers in Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway, Bago, and Taninthayi regions are taking up gum cultivation on a commercial scale. There are 13,633 acres of commercial gum plantations, especially in the Mandalay and Sagaing regions. Myanmar gum, Karaya, is currently being exported to China. Japan has also shown an interest in it, but it wants only

organically grown gum.

Sterculia gum or Karaya gum grown in many countries can only be used as an industrial raw material. But the variety grown in Myanmar can be consumed. Therefore, there is a high demand for Myanmar sterculia gum. To supply Myanmar sterculia gum to other countries, local farmers need to ensure it is of high quality.—GNLM ■  
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## Export of manufactured goods up 33% in Oct-Dec

MYANMAR'S exports of manufactured goods exceeded US\$1.9 billion in the first three months of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, an increase of \$491 million, or 33 per cent, compared with the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

Over the first 89 days of this FY, the public sector exported manufactured goods worth over

\$643 million, a decrease of \$135 million compared with the same period of the 2017-2018FY.

The private sector's exports totalled \$1.3 billion, an increase of \$626 million from the previous fiscal.

In the first three months of the previous FY, the country's exports of manufactured goods totalled \$1.486 billion, with public sector exports pegged at \$778

million and private sector exports valued at \$708 million.

According to the ministry, Myanmar exported manufactured goods worth \$4.533 billion in the mini-budget period between April and September, 2018, with the public sector earning \$1.6 billion and the private sector fetching \$2.932 billion.

The country earned \$6.9

billion from the export of manufactured products in the 2017-2018FY, \$5.7 billion in the 2016-2017FY, \$6.5 billion in the 2015-2016FY, \$4.6 billion in the 2014-2015FY, and \$4.4 billion in the 2013-2014FY, according to the ministry's annual statistical report.—Shwe Khine ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

## Trade at Muse gate plunges by \$562 mln in Oct-Dec

THE value of Sino-Myanmar border trade through the Muse checkpoint declined by US\$562 million in the October-December period, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

The drop in trade has been attributed to China's trade suspension and tight confiscation policy at the border, along with the closure of the Kyin San Kyawt gate near Muse.

Muse is the major border trade gate in Myanmar and handles the largest trade volume. Between 1 October and 28 December, trade at the gate totalled \$928 million, with exports of \$535 million and imports valued at \$393 million. During the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year, trade conducted through the gate was pegged at \$1.4 billion.

Myanmar conducts border trade with China through the Muse, Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Kanpiketee, and Kengtung gates.

Between 1 October and 28 December, trade totalled \$40.3 million at Lwejel, \$149.9 million at Chinshwehaw, \$18.2 million at Kanpiketee, and \$1 million at Kengtung.

Myanmar exports rice, sugar, pulses, sesame seeds, corn, dried tea leaves, fishery products, minerals, and animal products to China, while it imports agricultural machinery, electrical appliances, iron and steel-related materials, raw industrial goods, and consumer goods.—GNLM ■  
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## Three foreign firms allowed to invest in Yangon, create over 1,100 jobs

At a meeting held yesterday, the Yangon Region Investment Committee (YRIC) permitted three foreign businesses with an estimated capital of US\$3.4 million to invest in the Yangon Region. The businesses will help create 1,167 jobs, according to a press statement released by the YRIC.

Since its establishment, the YRIC has approved 141 domestic and foreign businesses in the manufacturing, hotel services, and other services sectors from

China, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Viet Nam, India, China (Taipei), Malaysia, British Virgin Islands, and Seychelles to invest in the region.

During the 2017-2018 fiscal year (from August to March), the YRIC allowed 39 foreign businesses with a capital of \$56.6 million and 9 domestic projects with a capital of K23.06 billion in Yangon Region, creating 22,481 jobs.

Between April and September 2018, the investment com-

mittee permitted 44 projects, including 34 foreign businesses with a pledged amount of \$72.5 million and 10 domestic enterprises with a pledged amount of K21.2 billion. The projects helped create 21,173 jobs.

Between 1 October and 9 January in the current FY, the YRIC okayed 43 foreign businesses with a capital of \$56.2 million and 6 domestic projects with capital of K10 billion, creating over 23,250 jobs. In the current fiscal

year, the manufacturing sector attracted a capital of \$7 million, while domestic investment in the sector totalled K479.98 million.

The manufacturing sector attracted the most foreign investments in Yangon Region, with investors focusing on pharmaceuticals, vehicle, container boxes, and CMP (cut, make, and pack) garments businesses.

At present, the Yangon Region has absorbed 60 per cent of the total foreign investments

in the country, Mandalay has attracted 30 per cent, while the other regions and states have received only a small portion of the investments, according to statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

The region and state investment committees are allowed to grant permissions to investment proposals worth up to \$5 million (K6 billion).—GNLM ■  
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



## Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung receives Japan's Deputy Minister for Communications

U Thant Sin Maung, Union Minister for Transport and Communications, received a Japanese delegation led by Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs and Commu-

nications Dr. Sato Yukari yesterday at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw. During the meeting, they discussed matters related to bilateral cooperation between

Japan and Myanmar in ICT technology, communication, cyber security technologies and postal sector. — MNA ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

## Workshop on Cyber Security held in Nay Pyi Taw

WORKSHOP on Cyber Security in Myanmar was held yesterday at the Ministry of Transport and Communications in Nay Pyi Taw, and which was held with the aim of empowering the cyber security for the Chief Information Officer (CIO). The workshop was convened in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport and Communications and Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication. Deputy Minister for Transport and Communications U Thar Oo delivered an opening

speech at the workshop.

The workshop was attended by Director-Generals and managing directors from the Ministry of Transport and Communications, officials from three Hluttaws, central departments, ministries, and CIOs from the states and divisions in Myanmar.

At the workshop, Mr. Taro Hashimoto from MIC, Japan read a paper entitled, "Cyber Security Policy in Japan," Mr. Hiroto Yamazaki from JICA, Japan read the paper entitled, "Technical Cooperation in

Cyber Security", Director of the Information Technology and Cyber Security Department U Ye Naing Moe read a paper entitled, "Current Cyber Security Status and Challenges in Myanmar", Mr. Tatsuya Kawahara from Fujitsu, Japan read a paper entitled, "Introduction to Cyber Security Trend and Fujitsu Initiatives", and Ms. Miho Naganuma from NEC Corporation, Japan read a paper entitled, "NEC's Approach to Cyber Security".—MNA ■ (Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)



Deputy Minister for Transport and Communications U Thar Oo delivers the opening speech at the workshop on Cyber Security in Myanmar held in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

## Police seizes equipment, precursors for producing drug in Muse

A LOCAL anti-drug police squad in Muse seized equipment and precursors used in producing drug from a purified water plant in Taine Lone Village, Muse Township in Shan State on Tuesday, according to the local police source.

The police raided the hidden drug site behind the Ngwe Nga Ghar purified water factory in Taine Lone Village on 8 January after receiving information from two suspects arrested with illegal chemicals

used for producing drug on 5 January.

The police inspected the plant and seized some 8,960 liters of ethyl ether and 2,080 liters of methanol in plastic containers from the back of a 12-wheeled vehicle parked in the compound, and equipment used in drug production including 14 glass inner steamed pots, 2 steel boilers, 3 mixer machines, 3 mixing tanks, one steel inner steamed pot, 3 water coolers, 3 plastic mixing containers and a wooden

box. The two suspects are identified as driver Tom Yin Yein and Ran Sai Hlyn.

They were arrested for carrying of 4,250 kilos of caffeine powder, 1,750 kilos of ammonium chloride powder and drug-production equipment in their Isuzu 12-wheeled vehicle at Ho Naung Village Lankwe in Muse Township.

Police are taking investigation into the case to arrest those who involved in the crime.—GNLM ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Religious leaders from different faiths attend the Interfaith Dialogue for state peace and interfaith friendship in Myawaddy on 8 January. PHOTO: MNA

## Interfaith Dialogue Group leaders meet in Myawaddy

RELIGIOUS leaders from different faiths in Kayin State convened at the meeting hall in Cantonment 4, beside the Thaug Yin River, Ward 3, Myawaddy Township on 8 January.

Patron for Interfaith Dialogue Group of Kayin State and also Chairman of Sassana Notegaha Association, U Saw

Moke Thone, said, "We discussed ways for developing our country, to perform tasks peacefully, within the legal framework, and for all religions to cooperate with unity."

At the meeting, 38 religious leaders, from Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, participated in the discussions.

The interfaith dia-

logue aims for state peace, interfaith friendship, and people from the interfaith who lived in the country to walk in accordance with the policy of the country and to unite for the development of the country by promoting collaboration between the four great religions.—Min Thit (MNA)

■ (Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

## Media invited to cover 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Private Sector Development Committee in Yangon

MEDIA are invited to cover the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting between Private Sector Development Committee and Myanmar businesspersons that will be held on 12 January, according to UMFCFI-Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting be-

tween Private Sector Development Committee and Myanmar businesspersons will be held in UMFCFI, starting from 9am on 12 January (Saturday).

The media persons who will attend the meeting are urged to contact UMFCFI not later than 11 January, together with a letterhead form included

name, position, the name of the media they are working for.

Media persons are requested to bring their media ID cards or ID cards (original), and to wear their respective company's uniform or Myanmar traditional dresses.—Mg Mg Myo ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

**Myanmar Statistical Yearbook 2018** has been published by Central Statistical Organization as international statistical bulletins. It is mentioned the methodology sheets on statistical sources, a glossary and an analytical index. It can take the better response to the information scope and depth of user needs. It is available Hard copy as well as CD-Rom two-volume prices at the kyat (22,000/-), if you buy a single CD-Rom (12,000/-) will be sold out. It is available for the purchase, starting from 2nd week of January in 2019 at Central Statistical Organization, Office No(32), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, Central Statistical Organization Yangon Branch, No(4/6), 3rd Floor(Right), Byamaso Road, Corner of Thila Street, Su Paung Office Compound, Ward (4), South Okkalapa Township, Yangon Eastern District, Yangon Region, and SarPayBeikMan Store (Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon).  
Phone : +95 673 406325, 673 406329, 673 406468, 01-8500887



# Energy-related carbon emissions rose in US in 2018: study

WASHINGTON United States — Carbon dioxide emissions significantly increased in the United States in 2018, according to a study released on Tuesday by research firm Rhodium Group.

Analysts estimate that energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions grew 3.4 per cent from 2017 to 2018, which would be the largest increase in the United States since 2010.

The estimate was based on US government energy statistics and other public and private data on oil consumption and power generation for the first eight to nine months of the year.

Coal continued to lose momentum, with 2018 setting a record for coal-fired power plant closures, according to the study.

But natural gas — not wind

turbines or solar power — replaces coal in most cases. Natural gas emits less greenhouse gas than coal, but has fueled most of last year's rise in electricity demand, beating solar and wind. Fuels consumed by the transport sector were for the third year in a row the largest source of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States.

Emissions have increased because of trucking and air travel, while CO<sub>2</sub> pollution from individual cars was stable compared to 2017.

The report covers CO<sub>2</sub> emissions linked to energy, which accounts for about three quarters of the total greenhouse gas emitted in the United States (methane, for example, is another gas that contributes to global warming).

Official figures of total greenhouse gas emissions will



A front-end loader dumps coal at the East Kentucky Power Cooperative's John Sherman Cooper power station near Somerset, Kentucky on 19 April, 2017. PHOTO: AFP

not be published until 2020 by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The trend is clear, however. "The US was already off track in meeting its Paris

Agreement targets. The gap is even wider headed into 2019," the report said.—AFP ■

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0114 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0114 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/H.P.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 ADVANCE CONTAINER  
LINES

Phone No: 2301185

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ANAN BHUM VOY. NO. (234 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ANAN BHUM VOY. NO. (234 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of 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.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (085 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (085 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

## INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited by Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports for the supply of Medical Products, Consumable in the (2018-2019) Budget 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 (14.1.2019).

Sealed bids are to be submitted to the office, not later than (15-2-2019), 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  
Ministry of Health and Sports

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V NESHAT VOY. NO. (SPL1061)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NESHAT VOY. NO. (SPL1061) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10-01-2019 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 LAND AND SEA SHIPPING  
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO. (903 N/904S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO. (903 N/904S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10-01-2019 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.

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



## Japan film festival coming to theaters in Yangon, Mandalay

JAPAN film festival is coming to theaters in Yangon and Mandalay from 25 January to 10 February.

Japan Film festival will be held at JCGV cinema in Junction City and Nay Pyi Taw cinema in Yangon from 25 January to 3 February, and Win Lite

Cinema in Mandalay from 8 to 10 February.

The films will be shown with Myanmar subtitles. The festival will showcase 13 Japanese films free-of-charge for movie lovers. —Maung Maung Myo ■ (Translated by Su Mon Khaing)

## 5<sup>th</sup> Japan –Myanmar cultural festival to be held in Yangon

THE 5<sup>th</sup> Japan –Myanmar cultural festival will be held at the Thuwunnabumi Event Park in Yangon on 3 February.

Entertainment programmes will be included in the festival.

Artistes from Japan and Myanmar will entertain with

songs and dances during the festival said an official.

Japanese cultural souvenir booths and booths for Japanese food will be also showcasing in the festival.—Maung Maung Myo ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

## Japan's youngsters prefer coming of age celebration at 20: survey

TOKYO—More than 70 per cent of youngsters prefer to celebrate their coming of age at 20 even though the age of legal adulthood in Japan will be lowered to 18 in April 2022, according to a recent online survey by a Japanese think tank. The Nippon Foundation survey, conducted in December targeting 800 people aged between 17 and 19 nationwide, showed 74 per cent of the respondents considered 20 as an appropriate age for attending the Coming-of-Age ceremony organized by local governments, compared with 23.9 per cent preferring 18.

Asked why they remain in favour of the conventional legal adulthood age of 20 in a multiple-choice question, 62.8 per cent said a celebration at 18 would interfere with their preparations for entrance exams for universities and other schools, while 23.8

per cent said they would be busy hunting for a job. Some 70.6 per cent responded they would like to attend the ceremony, with many citing reasons such as getting reunited with former classmates and marking a new chapter in life.

Japanese municipalities hold ceremonies for new adults around Coming-of-Age Day, designated as the second Monday of January. Many women wear lavish kimono to mark the day, while some drunk participants have disrupted the ceremonies in the past. The Nippon Foundation has been holding surveys on work, marriage and other topics targeting youngsters in the country given Japan will lower the legal adulthood following a Civil Code revision. The country's minimum voting age was also reduced to 18 after a revised election law came into effect in June 2016.—Kyodo News



Women wearing kimono celebrate their coming-of-age by shooting arrows during a traditional ceremony at Sanjusangendo temple in Kyoto, Japan on 14 January, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## Jim Carrey dating 'Kidding' co-star Ginger Gonzaga

LOS ANGELES—Jim Carrey is currently dating actress Ginger Gonzaga, who starts alongside him in "Kidding".

The actress's representative confirmed to E! News that Gonzaga is Carrey's girlfriend. Carrey's character on the Showtime series also dated Gonzaga's recurring character, Vivian. The two made their official red carpet debut over the weekend,

when they stepped out arm in arm for Showtime's Golden Globe nominees celebration.

Carrey was previously in relationships with Renee Zellweger, Jenny McCarthy and the late Cathriona White. He was first married to actress Melissa Womer, with whom he shares 31-year-old daughter Jane Carrey, and later briefly to "Dumb and Dumber" co-star Lauren Holly.—PTI ■

## Singapore eco-tourism plan sparks squawks of protest



This photograph taken on 14 December, 2018 shows Michael Barclay, group CEO of Mandai Park Holdings, feeding white rhinos at Singapore Zoo. Singapore is creating a vast eco-tourism zone to draw more visitors to the city-state but environmentalists fear the development will damage natural habitats and are already blaming it for a series of animal deaths. PHOTO: AFP

SINGAPORE (Singapore)—Singapore is creating a vast eco-tourism zone in a bid to bring in more visitors, but environmentalists fear the development will damage natural habitats and are already blaming it for a series of animal deaths.

While it may be best known as a financial hub with scores of high-rise buildings, tropical Singapore is still home to patches of rainforest and an array of wildlife, from monkeys to pangolins—also known as scaly anteaters.

In one green corner of the city sits a zoo and two sister attractions—a night safari and river safari—that have long been big draws for foreign and local visitors.

Now jungle is being cleared in the same area to make way for a bird park, a rainforest park and a 400-room resort, to create a green tourism hub it is hoped will eventually attract millions of visitors a year.

But the project in the Mandai district has ruffled the feathers of environmentalists.

They believe that rather than promote biodiversity, it is too imposing for the area, will destroy forest habitats and they

say insufficient safeguards were put in place before work began—leading to animals being killed on roads. The row has highlighted concerns about rapid development in space-starved Singapore, and worries that some of the country's more wild and green corners are being lost only to be replaced with something more artificial.

"I think you are getting your priorities wrong if you are replacing natural heritage with captive breeding," Subaraj Rajathurai, a veteran wildlife consultant, told AFP. With the new development, it appears that "making money was more of a priority than finding the balance and preserving biodiversity", he added.

### Roadkill worries

But Mandai Park Holdings, which is overseeing the project through its development arm, insists work is being carried out sensitively and will bring improvements.

The district, which sits next to a protected nature reserve and has been earmarked for development for years, is mostly abandoned villages and farmland that have been swallowed

by the surrounding jungle.

Work is already well under way in an area that is home to animals including flying lemurs and deer, with construction cranes looming over hillsides stripped bare of jungle.

A major focus of concern has been the animal deaths on the main road leading up to the zoo as forest is cleared.

Several deer, a critically endangered pangolin and a leopard cat are among animals to have perished after straying in front of vehicles, according to environmentalists.

Subaraj blamed the deaths on a lack of protective measures, pointing in particular to a failure to put up temporary barriers around the road quickly enough.

"It's crazy—it would have been so easy to avoid that happening," he said. But Mandai Park Holdings insists it is doing everything it can to prevent animal deaths on the roads.

Barriers have now been put up along much of the road, as well as a rope bridge for monkeys to cross above the traffic and road signs warning motorists about animals in the area.—AFP ■



## Shutdown keeps US experts away from scientific conferences

WASHINGTON (United States)—This week, the American Astronomical Society is meeting in Seattle, but no one from NASA is attending.

In Phoenix, thousands of meteorologists are presenting research on climate change and extreme weather, but hundreds of representatives from the National Weather Service and other US agencies canceled at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. The US government shutdown, now well into its third week, may be focused on a budget dispute between President Donald Trump and Congress over border security, but it is having a ripple effect on the scientific community. Keith Seitter, the executive director of the American Meteorological Society, told AFP that the absence of about 700 US government employees at his group's annual meeting will mean the loss of about 800 presentations. It slashed total attendance at the five-day meeting in Arizona from 4,400 to about 3,700, he said.

Many of the absentees work for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which is focused on the state of America's oceans and the atmosphere. It is also the umbrella agency for the National Weather Service, whose personnel still work on weather alerts and forecasts, but without pay. NOAA researchers who are not as involved in day-to-day operations but who take care of quality control and the development of



A view of NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) on 20 April, 2010 on a media preview day at NASA Dryden Flight Research Centre test facility in Palmdale, California. SOFIA, the only flying astronomical observatory in the world, is a specially modified Boeing 747 fitted with a 2.8-metre (98-inch) German-made telescope mounted inside a telescope bay which opens for observation. SOFIA will conduct observation research at altitudes up to 45,000 feet (13,716 metres), getting above more than 99 per cent of the atmospheric water vapour and other infrared-absorbing gases, opening windows to the universe not available from the earth's surface. PHOTO: AFP

forecast models have been furloughed until the wider budget dispute is resolved.

The US space agency NASA and the National Science Foundation, one of the main sources of research funding in the country, have also grounded their experts from attending any conferences until further notice. A large part of NASA's budget is earmarked for observation of the Earth.

"This is a real loss in many ways, from agencies not having access to the most recent research coming out of the academic community, to loss of interactions with the private sector, who are innovating new techniques,"

Seitter said. "And of course, all of us are also missing an opportunity to learn more about what the government scientists are doing," he added, making special mention of improvements to weather forecasting models, now on hold. "The ripple effects and the lingering impact of this are going to be significant and noticeable."

### NASA absence felt

At the American Astronomical Society's 233<sup>rd</sup> meeting, which runs through Thursday in Seattle, 10 to 15 per cent of the registered participants did not show up in the end, according to organizers—300-450 people out of 3,200. The society,

which meets twice a year, is a must for researchers in the field.

Hundreds of presentations, press conferences and other events are on the agenda. Many astronomers announce key discoveries at the conferences—on black holes, galaxies or, you know, the formation of the universe.

But 96 per cent of NASA staff are considered non-essential, according to Democratic lawmakers. That means 16,700 agency employees have been furloughed until the agency's new budget is approved.

They cannot even attend the winter meeting as a representative via videolink—even if they

pay for their travel out of their own pockets. "Usually, the director of astrophysics at NASA will come and make a little presentation and then take questions for an hour," says AAS spokesman Rick Fienberg. "So sessions like that—that involve government officials who are currently on furlough—obviously, those couldn't happen."

The Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy, or SOFIA—an aircraft largely funded by NASA, in concert with the German Aerospace Center—was meant to welcome visits onboard in Seattle. No deal.

"That had to be canceled because SOFIA is NASA-funded and it's currently grounded," Fienberg said. The spokesman took pains not to overstate the consequences of the government, saying that the conference sessions were well attended, even if there was an "undercurrent of disappointment." At NASA's booths, subcontractors are holding the reins. An exception was made for co-authors of major studies, who were allowed to make their presentations if the lead authors was absent.

But that doesn't mean the shutdown is pain-free for the society. "A lot of what people come for is to interact with their colleagues and peers and friends and to explore new opportunities in research," he said. "And some fraction of those conversations aren't happening, and it's a shame."—AFP ■

## Studying mice sleeping provides clues to insomnia

CHICAGO—Studying mice genetically modified to mimic the genetic disease neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1) that is associated with sleep problems, researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis found that the animals, like some people with NF1, slept in short and irregular spurts.

The study may help identify the molecular and cellular mechanisms that go awry and cause fragmented sleep patterns in people with and without the disease, the researchers noted.

The researchers bred mice with a mutation in their NF1 gene similar to what is seen in people with NF1. Then, they fitted onto the mice miniature

versions of the caps people wear for sleep studies to measure brain waves and identify sleep patterns of the mice.

Mice normally sleep during the day. Like people, mice cycle several times from deep, dreamless sleep to REM sleep or dreaming and back again. However, mice with an NF1 mutation tended to wake up soon after they entered deep sleep, and the result was a fragmented, and probably not restful, day of sleep.

"Throughout the whole night and day, they fell asleep and woke up when they shouldn't have," said co-first author Corina Anastasaki, an instructor in neurology at the university. "They fell into deep sleep, but

they didn't stay there."

Although the mice were engineered to mimic human NF1 disease, they could yield insights about the biological underpinnings of sleep in general, which could help people with sleep problems unrelated to NF1.

About a third of US adults report some degree of insomnia, and 15 per cent have chronic insomnia that lasts three months or more.

Statistics show that as many as half of people with NF1, a condition that causes benign tumors in the brain and on nerves throughout the body, have difficulty falling or staying asleep. The findings were published on 4 January in the *Journal of Sleep Research*.—Xinhua ■

## Israeli researchers discover proteins that may cure wheat rust disease

JERUSALEM—Israeli researchers have discovered a new family of proteins in plants, which may cure the wheat yellow rust disease, the University of Haifa said in a report published on Tuesday.

It is estimated that this disease, caused by parasitic fungi, affects about 5 million tons of wheat a year worldwide, causing a loss of more than 1 billion US dollars. The researchers transferred the "Yr15" gene, which belongs to this protein family and originates from wild wheat, into modern strains of bread wheat and pasta wheat, to withstand the disease. It was found that as soon as the plant is infected by the fungi, the proteins will respond by causing the "suicide" of the infected cells, along with the invader which causes the disease, the report said.

The discovery requires precise mapping of the "Yr15" gene to find its location within the giant genome of wheat (five times greater than the human genome) and precise identification of the genetic code that sends the commands against the disease.

Once they decipher the gene, the researchers could discover it in almost all food plants. The researchers noted that this is a major breakthrough that opens new possibilities for reducing the damage caused to food crops as part of the struggle to ensure global food supply. The researchers hope the discovery will also lead to the development of wheat strains resistant to destructive diseases.—Xinhua ■



# Myanmar to play friendly match against Qatar today



The Myanmar's U-22 football squad sing the national anthem during a friendly match with Oman in Muscat on 7 January. PHOTO: MFF

THE Myanmar U-22 national football team will play a friendly match today against Qatar U-23 national football team at Doha, the capital city of Qatar, according to the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

The match is aimed at in-

creasing the young Myanmar team's international exposure and helping them prepare for the upcoming ASEAN football tournaments, such as the Southeast Asian Games.

The Myanmar squad comprises young and new players,

including goal keeper Soe Arkar, defender Zin Ye Naung, midfielder Myat Kaung Khant, and striker Win Naing Tun, who possess great confidence and skill.

The Myanmar squad's head coach U Kyi Lwin helped the team win a silver medal

in the 2015 SEA Games, when Myanmar lost to Thailand with result 0-3 in the final match. In the previous friendly match on 7 January in Muscat, the capital of Oman, Myanmar lost with result 0-1 to Oman's U-23 national football team.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

## Saudi Arabia breeze past DPR Korea 4-0 in AFC Asian Cup

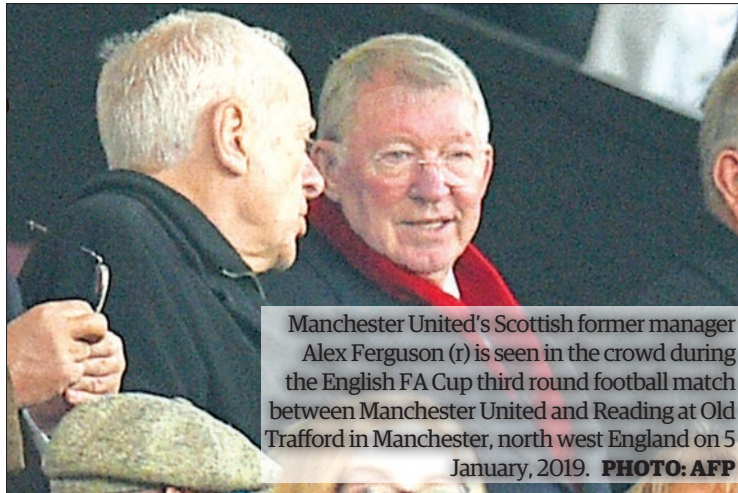
DUBAI—Saudi Arabia started their 2019 AFC Asian Cup campaign with an easy 4-0 win over the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in Group E here on Tuesday. Hatan Bahbri opened the scoring in the 28<sup>th</sup> minute, while Mohammed Al Fatil extended their lead to 2-0 on 37 minutes. DPRK almost pulled on back in the 66<sup>th</sup> minute as Ri Yong Jik fired a long shot from outside of the box, but it was denied by Saudi keeper Mohammed Alowais. Salem Al Dawsari scored the third goal in the 70<sup>th</sup> minute, and Fahad Al Muwallad sealed the win on 87 minutes. Saudi Arabia had beaten DPRK 4-1 in their only previous Asian Cup meeting in the group stage of the 2015 edition. Saudi Arabia will meet Lebanon on 12 January, while DPRK are set to play Qatar on 13 January.—Xinhua ■

## Fergie delivers rousing call to arms to United players

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Manchester United's legendary former manager Alex Ferguson delivered a rousing call to arms to the players, insisting they could make the club successful again, a source close to the Premier League team told *The Sun*. The 77-year-old Scot—who guided United to numerous trophies including two Champions League titles during his 27-year reign—has played an increasingly prominent role since former striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer became interim manager following the sacking of Jose Mourinho.

The latest intervention from Ferguson, who has made a remarkable recovery from the brain haemorrhage he suffered last May, came at the behest of Solskjaer and took place at the training ground. The squad are presently in Dubai for a training camp ahead of Sunday's clash with Tottenham Hotspur which represents a real test for Solskjaer to maintain his perfect record of five wins in five matches.

"He (Ferguson) told the lads that this group will make United dominant and successful again," the source told *The Sun*. "He said that he believes in them and he



Manchester United's Scottish former manager Alex Ferguson (r) is seen in the crowd 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

wants them to enjoy themselves and to fight hard for each other and leave everything on the pitch." Ferguson told the players that in Solskjaer—who has put a smile back on the players faces since the departure of the volatile Mourinho—they could look forward to happier times. Solskjaer and Ferguson know each other well as the Norwegian played under him for 11 years, accruing many trophies including six Premier League titles and the 1999 Champions League trophy.

"He also told them that the club is in good hands and he promised them that it will become bigger and better in the years to come and they will be part of this

success," the source said. "The players believe that there are some good times ahead."

Although Solskjaer has been appointed as a stop gap till the end of the season—Spurs manager Mauricio Pochettino remains the bookmakers favourite for the full-time post—the players are keen according to the *Daily Mirror* he gets the job. Solskjaer could do himself no end of good in pursuit of the job by landing a trophy this term with United still involved in the Champions League and the FA Cup, though, they were drawn away to Premier League rivals Arsenal in Monday's fourth round draw.—AFP ■

## Week 9 of Myanmar Futsal League ends with no draws

WEEK 9 of the Myanmar Futsal League, organized by the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF), ended with no draws in any of the matches.

The Myanmar Imperial College (MIC) team is leading the table after beating the VUC Futsal team 3-1 last week. VUC is placed second in the table.

In other matches, Titan XII FC beat Pyay United FC by 4-1, Comrade FC beat UPT FC by 3-1, AMM FC trounced White Colour FC by 8-3, while Myoma YTD FC defeated GV Athletic FC by 3-1.

In the last match of Week 9, the Shwe Myawady FC beat the MFF U-19 youth futsal team with a big score of 6-2.

Week 10 of the MFL will start 8 a.m. on 12 January at the Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium (1), said a source with the MFF.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



A UPT FC player (No.20) tries to score against Comrade FC. PHOTO: MFF FUTSAL