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President meets with three pillars of democracy in Kayah State

PRESIDENT U Win Myint attended the meeting with officials from the executive, legislative, and judiciary pillars of Kayah State held in Loikaw Township yesterday morning.

Accompanying the President were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, U Min Thu, Dr. Aung Thu, U Ohn Win, U Win Khaing, and Nai Thet Lwin, and other officials. Present at the meeting were the Kayah State cabinet, officials from the State Hluttaw and High Court, Hluttaw MPs (Pyithu, Amyotha, Kayah State), and officials from state, district and township level departments.

In his opening speech, the President said he has been traveling to the states and regions urging democratic transition and national reform to be carried out uniformly. He said that Myanmar was transitioning from an old system to a new and modern system, and that this required the people to break out of their old habits and onto new paths. He said every responsible official needed to cooperate to reach the intended goal. He said a firm resolution has been set to establish a 'democratic federal union'. He said all citizens in a democratic country enjoyed equality, justice, fairness, and the same rights and opportunities. He said Myanmar comprised many ethnic national races and cannot be called a Union without all of them in-



President U Win Myint greets attendees at the meeting with officials from the judiciary, executive and legislative pillars in Kayah State yesterday.

PHOTO: KO THA BYAW

cluded. He said this was why he made the resolution to establish a democratic federal union.

The President said some people may be hesitant, worried or feel burdened to change. He said the unchanging truth of

the world is that change is constant. Both living and non-living beings change with time, said the President. He said adapting with change is the key to survival. He said the changes being made intend to strengthen the

democratic foundation of the nation and its people. He said just changing the entire cabinet of the Union or state and regional government cannot be called a democratic transition nor will it result in a change in

the administrative mechanism. He said change will only occur when the officials and staff from the grassroots departments implement the changing policies of the nation.

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Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Toshiko Abe. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Toshiko Abe at the Bayintnaung Guest Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, according to the Office of the Command-

er-in-Chief of Defense Services. During the meeting, they openly discussed matters related to Myanmar's peace process, problems in Rakhine State being solved by government and Tatmadaw, the conditions of opening door for peace,

Japan's assistance for Myanmar's local peace process and development, and assistance and equal rights to be given to the local ethnic people in Rakhine State. —MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Ethnic excursion group visits Nay Pyi Taw



Ethnic excursion group observe Antique Curios (Konbaung) displayed at Defense Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

WITH the aim of enhancing friendship and understanding among ethnic people, the Ministry of Border Affairs arranged the excursion programme for the ethnic people from remote areas to visit Nay Pyi Taw for four days from 15-18 January.

As a part of the excursion programme, a 150-member excursion group comprising 30

each from the Kokang Self-Administered Zone, Kayah State, Kayin State, Rakhine State and Chin State arrived in Nay Pyi Taw on January 14, 2019.

Under the arrangements of Department of Development for Border Areas and National Races, the ethnic excursion group visited Nay Pyi Taw Buddha Gaya Thatta Thattaha Maha Bawdi Pagoda, Depart-

ment of Agricultural Research, Yezin, Nay Pyi Taw, Yezin Dam and the Safari Park on 15 January. They then paid a visit to the Maha Setkya Yansi Pagoda and offered cash donation at the pagoda yesterday. They proceeded to the Mausoleum for Heroes (Nay Pyi Taw) and Defence Services Museum. —MNA ■ *(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee discusses Tax Administration Bill

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Joint Bill Committee held a meeting over the Tax Administration Bill sent by the Union Government at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D yesterday.

Present at the meeting were the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, who is also Joint Bill Committee and Joint Public Accounts Committee Chairman U Tun Aung, also known as U Tun Tun Hein, deputy chairmen,

secretaries, joint secretary and committee members of Joint Bill Committee and Joint Public Accounts Committee, Deputy Ministers for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win and U Set Aung, Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission members, and officials from Union Attorney General's Office, and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office. —MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Tun Tun Hein delivers a speech at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee meeting yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister U Thaung Tun meets with Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun received State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Mrs. Toshiko Abe yesterday at the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

Matters related to political and economic development,

bilateral economic, investment and technical cooperation were discussed.

The meeting was attended by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador Mr. Ichiro Maruyama of the Japanese Embassy in Yangon. —MNA ■



Union Minister U Thaung Tun meets with Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Toshiko Abe yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

President meets with three pillars of democracy in Kayah State



President U Win Myint meeting with officials from the executive, legislative and judiciary pillars of Kayah State in Loikaw, Kayah State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA/KO THA BYAW

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The President said everyone in a department must work hand-in-hand to bring about successful change. He added we must shed our old habits to instill change in the nation and the people. We need to gauge how much we have changed ourselves when implementing changes, as we can only change other people when we succeed in changing ourselves. Therefore, the heads of departments needed to guide and amend change in spirit and habits of the staff under their care. Change was neither worrying nor fearful. Everyone needed to actively participate with their own thoughts and reasoning, said the President.

The President said the intention was to head towards an ad-

ministration where all citizens do not worry about prestige, riches or pride and implement fairness in society, business, and politics. There must also be equality in opportunities, class, and before the law. No one was above the law and must be in accordance with the law. This would ensure the country was a democratic country. There must be responsibility and accountability in a democracy. Democracy meant abiding by the rules and the law. This was a fundamental pillar of democracy, said the President.

He continued to say that everyone here in attendance must be able to work harder than everyone else, and must endure and sacrifice more as well. Officials must accomplish the tasks entrusted by the people. They

must repay in diligent work to the people. The administration we are heading towards must be fair and supportive of the rule of law. It must be averted from becoming an oppressive administration. The mechanism must be service-oriented and citizen-based.

The legislation pillar has a responsibility to serve the country abiding by the rules and regulations of the enacted laws, and directives and instructions. Only then, the administrative, legislative and judiciary pillars could interact to ensure check and balance. To achieve success in implementing works, all should have an attitude of magnanimity, tolerance and forgiveness mutually and all should embrace welfare of others before self, said the President.

He also urged the attendees from the governmental departments to give correct information to their superior bodies to be able to make right decisions, stressing the need to complete the works at the state/region level in conformity with the region/state level laws.

The Judiciary pillar was an important pillar for democracy, and only when this pillar can work in a right way with legal norms and standards, the rule of law will prevail in the country, he said. All those who were working in the judiciary pillar should observe the law concerning with the legal system because only when the judiciary pillar is right, can the society ensure fairness and justice.

A fair and just society strengthens a democracy and can be supportive to a federal system, said President U Win Myint.

He called on the governmental officials for solving the problems faced by the people daily first rather than their own, urging the officials to actively participate in implementing the State policies.

Afterwards, Kayah State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho reported on regional development works by the Kayah State Government; Speaker of Kayah State Hluttaw U Hla Htwe on Hluttaw affairs and Kayah State Chief Judge U Kyaw Lin Maung on judiciary affairs.

Afterwards, President U Win Myint made his concluding remarks, urging the courts to settle the cases quickly and fairly not to cause grievances in education and socio economy of those who

were on trial.

As the judiciary system was independent, the administrative and legislation pillars are not to interfere in it, and judges at different levels were to take responsibility and accountability.

Regarding the drug issues, the President urged the governmental departments neither involve in the crime nor turn a blind eye to the drug trafficking cases, stressing the need to arrest the main source of the drug trafficking.

Regarding the legislative sector, the President urged to enact laws which could benefit the state, saying that only when the capacity of MPs and service personnel were high, could the legislative pillar be developed.

The three pillars should work in a check and balance way avoiding competition, said President U Win Myint, adding that a good government should ensure accountability, responsibility, transparency, calculation and cooperation.

A bad management of a region or state government could cause hindrances to the democratic transition and all citizens need to participate in building a federal democratic nation as the country was in a transition to democracy.

Following the meeting, President U Win Myint and entourage visited the Taungkwe Pagoda and Myo Nam Pagoda in Loikaw and made cash donation there.

Afterwards, the President and his entourage returned to Nay Pyi Taw by a Special flight of the Tatmadaw. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



President U Win Myint and entourage visit the Myo Nam Pagoda in Loikaw yesterday. PHOTO: KO THA BYAW

Tatmadaw's sports competition opened in Nay Pyi Taw



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers the opening speech at the Tatmadaw's sports competition in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

THE sports competition of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) was opened yesterday at Zeyya Thiri Tatmadaw sports ground in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the

ceremony.

During the opening ceremony, Tatmadaw troops along with the 17 sport teams took place in the sports ground followed by the opening of the ceremony by cutting the ceremonial ribbon by Adjutant-General Lt-Gen San Oo

and Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, Maj-Gen Myint Maw.

Afterwards, the senior general delivered the opening speech.

Next, in the football competition, the Commander-in-Chief Office team beat the Office of

the Commander of Nay Pyi Taw team 2-0.

The Sports competition will be ongoing till 28 January and will include colorful sport events: boxing, Sepak takraw, track and field, Parasports event, Chin-lone, men's and women's Volley-

ball, men's and women's Judo, Swimming, Weightlifting and Bodybuilding contest, Wushu, Karatedo, Myanma Thaing and Taekwondo according to the statement with the Commander-in-Chief Office. — MNA
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Union Minister U Min Thu meets GAD staff in Kayah State

UNION Minister for the Office of the Union Government, U Min Thu, who is in Loikaw, Kayah State, met with staff of the General Administration Department (GAD) from state, district and township offices, at Loikaw Tsp Hall yesterday.

Firstly, U Khin Maung Win, the Head of Kayah 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) on 28 December 2018. He explained that the reason for the transfer is to be consistent with President U Win Myint's Myanmar



Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government, U Min Thu, speaks with staff of Kayah State General Administration Department in Loikaw Township, Kayah State. **PHOTO: KO THA BYAW**

New Year speech in April 2018 to initiate government reforms and decentralize institutions.

The Union Minister said the transfer also aims 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 said the administrative mechanism has been traditionally viewed from an administrator's perspective. He said it is linked to political systems. He said it is important for the administrative mechanism to change its view as civil servants in the current administration elected by the people. He said the GAD must change with the shifting political land-

scape and be consistent with the regions and states.

Making gradual changes in the GAD

The Union Minister said they have to work towards the national reconciliation and peace process lead by the State Counsellor so as to be ready to walk together towards the democratic federal Union the whole country is heading to. He said they must take slow steps in implementing changes to the political system, national policy, and aspirations and eventually

speed things up.

The Union Minister said his ministry will listen to experts and GAD staff to implement visible changes with the GAD, which is the backbone of the administrative mechanism. He said his ministry will facilitate cooperation, negotiations, and coordination to build capacity and form necessary groups to carry out step-by-step implementations of the aforementioned changes. He said GAD staff should face these changes devoid of apprehension and perform them systematically and persistently.

The Union Minister said he has regularly engaged in conversation with GAD staff and the general summary of their discussion is they know where and what changes need to be made to bring good results. He said they know changes can be made in the workplace. He said there are worries in changing routine processes. He said not to fear change but to take pride in being able to change.

GAD needs to address illegal drugs, squatter issues

The Union Minister said the administrative mechanism now comprises a direct link from the Union level down to the region and state, district, township, and ward and village level.

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It is important for the administrative mechanism to change its view as civil servants in the current administration elected by the people.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe meets with officials from Naga Self-Administered Zone

UNION MINISTER for Office of the State Counsellor, U Kyaw Tint Swe, held talks with officials from the Naga Self-Administered Zone's Leading Body, leaders of ethnic Naga tribes, Naga central traditional culture and literature committee, at the Taungzalat Yeiktha, Leshi Township in the Naga Self-Administered Zone, Sagaing Region, at 8 am yesterday.

The meeting was attended

by Sagaing Region Chief Minister Dr. Myint Naing, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Than, Deputy Ministers Maj-Gen Than Htut, U Kyi Min, U Kyaw Lin, U Hla Maw Oo, Commander of the North-West Command Maj-Gen Phone Myat, regional ministers, Hluttaw representatives, officials-concerned from the departments, Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body Chairman U Kay Hsai, other



Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe presents gift to the Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body Chairman U Kay Hsai. PHOTO: MNA



Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe holds a meeting together with officials from the Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body, Naga central traditional culture and literature committee. PHOTO: MNA

members of the body, leaders of ethnic Naga tribes and officials from the Naga central traditional culture and literature committee.

First, Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe explained about the conditions of the Government's efforts to implement the all-round development of Naga region, and then Sagaing Region Chief Minister Dr. Myint Naing clarified on the implementation process of tourism development

and the status of inviting investment in Naga region.

Then Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body Chairman U Kay Hsai, Hluttaw representatives and leaders of ethnic Naga tribes presented their difficulties in education, healthcare, transportation, communication and electricity.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe coordinated with regional government and officials from the departments to cope with these difficulties. Union Minis-

ter then presented gifts to the Naga Self-Administered Zone Leading Body Chairman U Kay Hsai, officials, leaders of ethnic Naga tribes and chairman of Naga central traditional culture and literature committee.

Following this, Union Minister, Regional Chief Minister and officials left Leshi for Homalin by Tatmadaw aircraft and arrived in Yangon by the Myanmar National Airlines.—MNA ■

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

Union Minister U Min Thu meets GAD staff in Kayah State

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He said the GAD are in direct contact with the public and must actively participate in eradicating illegal drugs. He said members of the public are afraid to come forward with information on illegal drug dealers. He asked whether the GAD staff, who are working in the closest capacity with the public

are 'ignorant of the situation or turning a blind eye'.

The Union Minister also talked about the numerous cases of squatters. He said ignoring one or two squatters in the GAD's designated territory eventually leads to a mass invasion of squatters. This leads to difficulties for the government and the public, he said. He said this is the same case with land

rights. He said the GAD staff need to be more diligent and responsible, and must try harder in the future.

GAD staff need not worry of changes

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

The staff are to continue working as normal, fulfilling their duties, while adhering to the law, rules and regulations in place and to carry out reforms in line with any changing policies and instructions: Union Minister U Min Thu

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 bring about visible change in their convictions and spirit so that the public increases their trust in the

GAD. He concluded his speech by wishing GAD staff peace of mind and happiness in carrying out the new changes and continuing their work.

Afterwards, GAD staff in attendance submitted requirements to the Union Minister, who gave necessary suggestions and directions.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

The Union Minister said he has regularly engaged in conversation with GAD staff and the general summary of their discussion is they know where and what changes need to be made to bring good results.

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye receives Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye received Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Toshiko Abe at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to Japan's assistance for Rakhine

issue, works being carried out by six UN organizations in Rakhine State with the assistance by Japanese government, preparation for receiving displaced persons and reception programs in accord with the bilateral agreement with Bangladesh government, distributing fact-sheets

regarding the repatriation to camps in Bangladesh, social welfare activities for the disabled in cooperation with Japanese social organizations and plans for peace and stability in Rakhine State.—MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye shakes hands with Japanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Toshiko Abe in Nay Pyi Taw.

PHOTO: MNA



Japanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs Mrs. Toshiko Abe greets international students from Myanmar Language class at Yangon University of Foreign Languages in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs visits YUFL

A delegation led by Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ms. Toshiko Abe visited the Yangon University of Foreign Languages (YUFL) on University Avenue Road in Yangon yesterday.

During the visit, the delegation met with YUFL's Rector Dr. Kyi Shwin, Pro-rector and lecturers at YUFL IR Office.

Afterwards, the delegation met with the fourth-year students of Japanese Language

class and international students from Myanmar Language class.

In the evening, the Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs and delegation departed from Yangon and were seen off by Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Ichiro Maruyama and officials at Yangon International Airport.—MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Jade stone monument erected to commemorate 71st Anniversary of Kachin State Day

A large jade stone was erected as a monument for the 71st Anniversary of Kachin State Day in front of Myitkyina Airport at 9 am yesterday.

Chief Minister of Kachin State, Dr. Khet Aung, delivered opening remarks at the ceremony. He said erecting the monumental jade stone in front of the Myitkyina Airport intends to raise awareness of Kachin State's reputation as the land of jade and is a signature of Kachin State. He said domestic and foreign travellers entering and leaving the airport will be able to learn

about Myanmar's treasured jade and will give remembrance of Kachin state in conjunction with jade land for ever. He mentioned there are plans to erect more jade stone monuments in other locations. The Chief Minister then expressed his gratitude to the donor family for the jade memorial.

Next, the jade's donor, Dr. Banlun Duwa Bomyan explained about the donation.

Minister for Kachin State Road, Communication, Electricity and Industry U Win Nyunt, Minister for Kachin State Environment and Natural Resources

U H La Aung, Kachin State Minister for Development Affairs U Nay Win and officials opened the ceremony by cutting the ceremonial ribbon and Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung and Donor Dr. Banlun Duwa Bomyan pressed a button to unveil the jade stone.

The Chief Minister awarded honorable certificate to Donor Dr. Banlun Duwa Bomyan. After the ceremony, the Chief Minister and local people pose for documentary photos with jade stone. The jade stone is weight:6.37 tons, height:8 feet and width-4 feet.—MNA ■ (Translated by M T A)



Kachin State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung and local people pose for documentary photo in front of jade stone to mark 71st Anniversary of Kachin State Day at Myitkyina Airport. PHOTO: MNA



Central Bank of Myanmar Governor U Kyaw Kyaw Maung meets with Senior Vice President of the New York Fed Mr. Mike Schetzel. PHOTO: MNA

Governor of CBM receives Senior Vice President of Federal Reserve Bank of New York

U KYAW KYAW MAUNG, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM), received a delegation led by Senior Vice President Mr. Mike Schetzel from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, yesterday morning, at the Zabthuthiri Hall of the Central

Bank of Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed matters relating to the money transfer process between Myanmar and foreign countries, facilitation process for international loans and

anti-money laundering compliance process that financial institution need to follow. Also present at the meeting were Deputy Governors of CBM and Directors-General.—MNA ■

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

YBS soon to install card payment system

YANGON Bus Service (YBS) is going to start its card payment system instead of cash, said Chief Minister of Yangon Region, U Phyo Min Thein, at the event of the 2nd anniversary of Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA) at Sky Star Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

The Chief Minister said, "We are preparing to install a payment system instead of cash boxes. There are questions regarding with the sector. OK Dollar and Anypay are part of the current payment systems. Now our changing payment system is not at that level. The card payment system will be available for every bus."

Within the next 9 months, we are planning to change the card payment system step by step and Asia Starmar Transport Intelligent Company will take responsibility for the YPS (Yangon Payment Service).



A staff of YBS demonstrates how to use a smart card with the card payment system to media at the ceremony to celebrate the 2nd year anniversary of the Yangon Buse Service. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

"For the first 3 months, we will import the necessary equipment for installation of the pay-

ment system. We will need to take up to 3 to 5 months to install the equipment.

In the final 3 months, we will try to operate the card system from 1,000 to 2,000 buses.

Within 9 months, we will make the card payment system available in 4,000 buses," said Chief Marketing Officer Daw Yi Yi Khin.

During the project, bus fare is still fixed and after the pilot project time, the card payment system will detect depending on the distance. A total of 380 top up agencies will widely be opened in Yangon and also 5 card service centers will be opened for lost cards.

The ceremony was presented by Ministers of Yangon Region Government, Regional Hluttaw representatives, departmental officials, officials from YRTA, officials from 18 current operating bus companies and the Chief Minister awarded the best YBS awards for 2018. The ceremony was closed by taking documentary photos.—Myint Soe ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

MLF seeks customs duty cut on MBM

By Aye Yamone

AS customs duties on meat and bone meal (MBM) imported from the Netherlands are high, the Myanmar Livestock Federation (MLF) plans to ask Myanmar Customs Department to reduce the tariff to 1.5 per cent by switching MBM to H.S. Code 2309.90.20.

The high import tariff on raw animal feed drives the domestic feed prices up, according to the MLF. The feedstuff association under the MLF will soon send a report on the tariff rate to the Customs Department.

"The Customs Department needs to change the H.S. tariff code. MBM is not currently listed as raw feed. As it is registered as a finished product, a duty of 15 per

cent is levied on imports. If MBM is on the raw material list, only 1.5 tax will have to be paid. The high tax is increasing the price of feed," said Dr. Khin Hlaing, the vice chair of the MLF.

Other ASEAN countries impose zero import tariff on MBM. This was reported at the 23rd meeting led by Vice President U Myint Swe with entrepreneurs, and the respective ministry directed the MLF to approach the Customs Department.

"The tax rate might change once MBM is placed on the raw material list. The feedstuff body will hold a meeting and forward its report to the Customs Department. When there is a change in the H. S. code, a notification is released. If we submit a systematic report to the department, our

request may get accepted," said Dr. Khin Hlaing.

Myanmar started importation of MBM from the Netherlands in 2015. At that time, only a 1.5-per-cent customs duty was levied on raw materials. As per a notification issued on 2 October 2018, MBM was put under H.S. Code 2301.10.00 and 15 per cent of tariff was set on import.

"Even if there is tax reduction on MBM, the price of finished animal feed is not likely to fall as we primarily use corn and broken rice as raw materials and MBM is used only as a protein ingredient. Soybean meal has zero tax, while MBM attracts a 15-per-cent tax," said Dr. Kyaw Htin, a livestock breeder from the Mandalay Region.

As the operation of local oil

mills has slowed, feedstuff such as sesame meal and bean meal are faced with a lack of storage facilities along with rice and corn, prompting the inflow of raw feedstuff materials from foreign markets, according to the MLF.

At present, feedstuff is being imported from the Netherlands, Brazil, India, and Viet Nam. Myanmar is also importing finished animal feed. Additionally, locally produced dairy products are listed as tax exempt. However, only milk, condensed milk, and milk powder are registered on the list, but not yogurt. Some small businesses have to pay a 5-per-cent tax on yogurt. Therefore, the MLF has asked that the list be changed so milk and milk products are tax exempt.

■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

FDI inflow increases \$659 mln to top \$1.3 bln in Q1

BY Nyein Nyein

IN the first quarter of the current financial year, foreign direct investments into Myanmar exceeded US\$1.3 billion, an increase of \$659 million compared to the corresponding period of the previous FY, according to Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

"In the same period of the previous FY, \$662.29 million of FDI's flowed into the country. The investment inflow this FY has increased by \$659 million," said U Aung Naing Oo, the secretary of the MIC. Between 1 October 2018 and 11 January 2019, a total of 78 foreign enterprises received permits and endorsements, bringing in a capital of \$970.4 million. The total FDI of \$1.3 billion includes expansion of capital and investments of over \$89.47 million in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

Additionally, domestic entrepreneurs invested K506.67 billion with 54 projects. Factoring in expansion of capital from previously permitted enterprises, the total domestic investment exceeded K620.9 billion.

The MIC targets FDI of \$5.8 billion in the current fiscal year. ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

MIC permits, endorses 50 investment projects

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) permitted and endorsed 40 foreign and 10 domestic investment projects during a meeting (1/2019) held on 11 January.

The MIC and the investment committees of Yangon, Bago, Mandalay, Tanninthayi, and Ayeyawady regions approved foreign businesses to bring in a capital of US\$309.6 million to the regions. The enterprises

will be engaged in the manufacturing, electricity, livestock and fishery, real estate development, and other sectors, creating 31,695 jobs for local people. The majority of the investments will flow to the manufacturing sector.

The MIC and the investment committees of Yangon, Mandalay, Ayeyawady, and Bago regions, and Rakhine and Kayah states also approved 10

domestic enterprises with estimated capitals of K21.5 billion including \$2.86 million to execute projects in manufacturing, hotels and tourism, and other sectors. They will help create 863 jobs.

Under the new Myanmar Investment Law, region and state investment committees are authorized to endorse investment proposals with a capital of not more than \$5 million (K6,000 million). This is aimed at sim-

plifying the verification process of investment projects.

At present, 60 per cent of foreign investments are concentrated in Yangon Region, and 30 per cent in Mandalay. Other regions and states get only a small portion of the investments, according to statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration. —GNLM ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Let flowers of the Union bloom

THE cool and pleasant winter season in the Himalayas makes all the trees and flowers across the country bloom. Just as the flowers blossom in the natural world, it is heartening to watch Myanmar blossom into a Union.

After the battle for independence, the essence of our Union has manifest in the Kayin New Year, Kachin State Day, Naga New Year, and Kayah State Day celebrations. These days were observed with joyful celebrations not only in their respective regions, but across the country. Seeing our national leaders celebrate these auspicious occasions with the people brings up images of a flourishing garden.

In his speech on the 67th Kayah State Day, President U Win Myint said: "The languages, literature, traditions, and cultures of our ethnic national brothers and sisters are multi-colored flowers that are blooming beautifully and beautifying the garden which is our Union."

The fact that each ethnic race is allowed to celebrate its own special day signals the unity of our country.

"For the eternal existence of the beautiful garden, we are imbuing it with good thoughts and good intentions by establishing a peaceful and developed union that will bring about socio-economic development of all ethnic nationals; a union that will exist as long as the earth exists. All ethnic nationals are urged to participate in it," he added.

The fact that each ethnic race is allowed to celebrate its own special day signals the unity of our country. All ethnic races dress in their unique colors and outfits which bring out their intrinsic beauty and culture. The caretakers of our Union garden are working hard to nurture and integrate the elegance of the different and distinct flowers in it.

There is no discrimination between the plains and the highlands, the states and the regions, as they are working for equitable development for all.

The Union government is working to preserve the languages, literature, traditions and culture of the ethnic races, in addition to working for their socio-economic development. Only when their rights and ways of life are protected and elevated will our country become strong and everlasting. We can see the undertakings of the Union government ever more clearly. We would like to urge all our ethnic brothers and sisters to cooperate in safeguarding and developing our Union.

Round Table discussion held on social security benefits and reform program

"We will release an exclusive report only after thoroughly researching the difficulties and delays encountered by employers' associations as well workers' associations":

U Maung Maung Aye, Director-General

By Khin Yadana
PHOTO: May Oo Moe

THE MRTV broadcast a round table discussion as Part Three on social security benefits and the reform program. The panelists are U Maung Maung Aye, Director-General of Social Security Board, Daw Than Nu, Director of SSB, U Win Nang, Employers' Representative, Daw Phyto Sandar Soe, Workers' Representative, and Dr. Thein Than Htay, ILO National Project Coordinator.

Moderator: Please explain the reform plans of the Social Security Board.

Director-General: We have some challenges in our reform programs as I had earlier discussed, and at the moment, we are working on four reform programs.

Five tasks ahead

The first task is on IT reform and that we are planning to go ahead with social security system based on data and information.

All of the four reform programs are to be implemented with the technical support of the ILO, and the IT reform is to be carried out with the support of Korean Project.

Another plan is about advanced health care medical reform, being collaborated with ILO Luxembourg. Another plan is about administrative reform.

The SSB has five main functions, and all the working methods and procedures are lengthy, bulky and messy, and therefore, we are trying to simplify the steps.

We made many discussions on the matter with the experts of the ILO, and have decided that we would like to release an exclusive report only after making a proper research over the difficulties and delays encountered by employers' association as well as workers' association.

Next, we plan to go on with



the pilot projects through the branch offices at the township levels in the country. The last reform is the legal reform.

Although we have six categories of social security systems, only three systems are operational and the remaining three systems are yet to implement. We are studying the matters in detailed with the intention for making reform.

Doing reform according to law

In line with the New Year speech of the President, we are complying as his direction. The system under the social security program must be solid and firm for the benefits of the workers.

Therefore, we are working for the reform of the system.

We also discussed on the coverage extension, and we have categorized (15) types of work establishments according to law, such as that of (5) workers and above.

When a claim of benefit is being delayed, we need to explore the reason and to address with solution in line with the standard and norm of international practices.

Filling up amendments

We have added information

Another area is medical reform, which we are tackling with a three-pronged approach. As part of the reforms, workers will be offered treatment and medical services at our hospitals and clinics, and also outside private hospitals. This is in line with the international standards and norms prescribed by the ILO.

and technology with the intent to enable us to go on with the extension programs regarding the benefits of the workers; otherwise the process would be delayed.

The IT reform is underway with three year program, and that the study had begun in December 2016 with the ILO personnel.

The Terms of References (TOR) have been drafted and the document is under discussions within the relevant departments, where the necessary points were added and submitted the documents to the Union Minister and then forwarded to the Economic Committee of the Government.

When the approval was being accorded, the invitation of tender is floated and called out.

Reform

The tender is spread out in

proper way and with transparency according to the directive of the President's Office. Regarding the technical reform, the first year is to carry out the data center, the cabling, and the construction of basic structure.

In the second year, the E-Banking and the E-Money are to be established.

The third year is earmarked for the task of the hospital management, and to hook up with all the hospitals in the country.

Currently, the tender matter is in the process which had started with the interest of (85) companies, and we received (14) proposals out of them, and there were four finalists. After scrutiny, we would be able to sign the contract and the implementation is likely to start in 2019. The reform

at the social security hospitals, and that if and when necessary; we have to transfer the patients to government hospitals. Some workers may like it and some may not like it.

At that juncture, we are trying to sign with the private hospitals so that the workers would be able to transfer to the private medical facilities.

The last factor is about the upgrading of the clinics and hospitals under the social security board. We intend to do it through PPB designing system and that the remaining clinics and hospitals are to be streamlined into Internal Market Model.

Another plan is administrative reform in which we intend to reduce the complicated and messy methods and procedures in obtaining benefits by the workers. Some pilot projects would be carried out at Hlinethaya Township in Yangon Region and Pyigyidagon Township in Mandalay Region during the first quarter of 2019.

Reform of law is on the agenda as asked by the workers, and the necessary discussions would be made with the law experts from the ministry and the law sector for the greater good of the workers.

For raising awareness and communication strategy, we have sought advice and assistance from the ILO. In the knowledge dissemination programs, we are broadcasting through the Myanmar Radio and Television to the public, and also other ways and means.

We are evaluating on the fact which method would be most effective. When the workers came to understand the procedures and way out, then the claim of benefits would be easier and also the steps in taking medical treatments at the hospitals and the clinics, and the workers would be comfortable.

To be continued.

Translated by UMT (Ahlon)

72nd Anniversary (2019) Union Day National Objectives

1. All ethnic nationals to work with collective strength for non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national unity, perpetuation of national sovereignty; and to work for preservation and protection of the above.
2. To strive for the emergence of a Constitution that is in alignment and harmony with the Democratic Federal Union.
3. To strive for the success of the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panlong and thence till the success of the internal peace process.
4. All union nationals to cooperate and work in "Unity and Harmony" for rule of law and for the people to be secure and free from danger.
5. All union citizens to be able to enjoy good education and adequate health care protection.

Invitation for drug elimination theme

Submissions for themes are open for the 22nd International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, which will be held on 26 June 2019, and facilitated by the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control. Interested applicants can submit their ideas for anti-drug themes, and 5 themes will be chosen for use in the competitions on short novels, articles, poems, songs, photographs, computer posters, paintings, cartoons, posters, and computer paintings.

- (1) A single applicant can submit up to 2 themes
- (2) Each theme must be submitted in both Myanmar and English
- (3) Applicants must use Font size -13, Myanmar-3 for Myanmar language, and Font size-12, Myanmar 3 for English language.
- (4) Submissions should be made no later than 15-2-2019
- (5) Submissions must be sent to Fax No: 0673-401716 and Email: ccdacpm@gmail.com
- (6) Applicants must include their contact information, such as phone number and email, their name, and full address.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued on Wednesday 16 January 2019)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs MST: During the past (24) hours, rain has been scattered in Taninthayi Region, weather has been generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway, Bago and Ayeyawady regions, Kayah and Kayin states and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states. Night temperatures were (3°C) below January average temperature in Rakhine State, (2°C) below January average temperature in Ayeyawady Region and Chin State, (2°C) above January average temperatures in Taninthayi Region and about January average temperatures in the remaining regions and states. The significant night temperatures were (-1°C) in Haka, (2°C) each in Heho and Ramthlo, (3°C) each in Pinlaung and Lolain, (4°C) each in Putao, Hsipaw, Namhsan, Tiddim, Tonzang and PyinOoLwin. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded was Kawthoung (0.28)inch. **BAY INFERENCE:** Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

A slight earthquake of magnitude (3.9) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (12) miles southwest of Mawlaik, latitude 23.49°N, longitude 94.31°E, depth (28) kilometers about (50) miles south of Tamu seismological observatory was recorded at (14)hr (27)min (35)sec MST on 16 January 2019.

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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.

Naga people dancing at the traditional 2019 New Year festival in Leshi, Naga Self-administered Zone of Sagaing Region. **PHOTO: MNA**

Naga New Year Festival attracts tourists

A total of 49 tourists visited the 2019 Naga New Year Festival in Leshi Town in the Naga Self-administered Zone of Sagaing Region on 15 January, according to the Sagaing Region's Department of Immigration and Population.

This year, 33 men and 16 women from countries such as Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Japan, Australia, France,

Israel, the US, Canada, Czech Republic, Italy, South Korea, and Spain joined the Naga New Year festivities.

"Tourists mostly visit Leshi in the travelling season. Over 40 tourists visited the festival this year.

There are few tourists during the remaining seasons," said U Kyaw Soe Moe, official from the Department of Im-

migration and Population in Sagaing Region.

According to records of the department, the number of tourists to Leshi Township totalled 7 in 2011, 37 in 2012, 21 in 2013, 19 in 2014, 59 in 2015, 39 in 2017, and 63 in 2018.

As part of the festival, which falls on 15 January, ethnic hill tribes turn out in full traditional costumes in the afternoons and

evenings, proving a big draw for photographers, both from home and abroad.

The annual festival is held for two days each January. The first day is set aside for traditional dance rehearsals, and the proper festival takes place on the second day.—Win Oo (*Zeyar Tine*) ■

(Translated by La Wonn)

20 Forest staff attend capacity building training in Kanbalu

TO improve knowledge-sharing with locals, a five-day intensive course has been organized at the Kanbalu bat cave education center from 14 to 18 January for rangers from the Chatthin Wildlife Sanctuary, the Alaungdaw Katthapa National Park, and township forest departments in Kanbalu and Shwebo districts of Sagaing Region. The assistant director of the Forest Department in Nay Pyi Taw and five other trainers will conduct the course which has 20 participants. They will be the first batch to undergo the capacity building course for forest staff.

"The course is being conducted under a project entitled 'Sustainable Cropland and Forest Management in Priority Agroecosystems of Myanmar'.

Kanbalu bat cave natural conservation park and education center showcases the area's biodiversity and ecosystem. **PHOTO: AUNG WIN NYEIN (KANBALU)**

The project is supported by the Community Forestry National Working Group (CFNWG) and

the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)," said U Min Swe, the Assistant Director of

the Chatthin Wildlife Sanctuary.

The bat cave natural conservation park and education center was opened to showcase the area's biodiversity and ecosystem. It includes a guest house, a lounge, a museum, and an orchard farm.

The area has been identified as a bat cave natural conservation area and preparations are under way to give it that status. Once the status is granted, it will be opened to visitors and researchers. Constructed near milepost 65/0 on the Shwebo-Myitkyina Road in Kanbalu Township, Sagaing Region, the park was inaugurated on 26 December, under the guidance of the Sagaing Region government.—Aung Win Nyein (Kanbalu) ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

Police seize illegal drugs in Kunhing, Laukkai townships

POLICE from Drug Enforcement Division (27) Loilem confiscated 600 kilos of ICE (methamphetamine) from Myint Aung's car at Tar Kaw bridge

inspection checkpoint, Kunhing Tsp, on 15 January. The drugs are estimated at K15 billion.

Similarly, police from Drug Enforcement Division (21) Kun-

long confiscated 23,400 psychotropic tablets from a motorcycle driven by Pham Kine along the Laukkai-Chin Shwe Haw Road, Laukkai Tsp. Police have filed

cases under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law against both men.—MNA (*Translated by Su Mon Khaing*) ■

British PM faces confidence vote after Brexit humiliation

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Prime Minister Theresa May will on Wednesday face a confidence vote after MPs overwhelmingly rejected her deal to leave the European Union, leaving Britain with no plan as it hurtles towards Brexit on 29 March. May suffered the largest government defeat in modern British history on Tuesday night when the House of Commons rejected by 432 votes to 202 the withdrawal agreement she struck with Brussels late last year.

The EU immediately warned that the vote raises the risk of a hugely disruptive “no deal” Brexit where Britain could sever ties with its biggest trading partner overnight. European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker urged London to “clarify its intentions as soon as possible”, warning: “Time is almost up.”

Ireland, the only EU member state with a land border with Britain, said it would now intensify preparations for a “disorderly Brexit”. May struck a conciliatory tone after the vote, promising cross-party talks to try and salvage a workable Brexit deal before returning with a new plan next Monday. She expects to win the confidence vote scheduled for around 1900 GMT on Wednesday night. It was tabled by opposition Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, who wants to force a general election.

While her own Conservative MPs and her allies in Northern



Drinkers watch a television screen in the Red Lion public house on Whitehall, as it shows Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May speaking in the Houses of Parliament in London on 15 January, 2019, after MPs vote against the government's Brexit deal. British lawmakers voted overwhelmingly on Tuesday to reject the EU divorce deal struck between London and Brussels, in a historic vote that leave Brexit hanging in the balance. PHOTO: AFP

Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) have led the charge against her Brexit deal, they do not want a Labour government.

However, Britain's newspapers were withering at the scale of her defeat, a damning verdict on 18 months of negotiations with the EU. The top-selling *Sun* tabloid said May was “crushed”, while the *Daily Mail* said her power was left “hanging by a thread”, and one commentator in *The Times* described her as a “zombie prime minister”.

Fundamental change

Most lawmakers—including

May—opposed Brexit ahead of the 2016 referendum, which has caused bitter divisions across the island nation. Nearly three years later, they still cannot decide what to do, with MPs criticising May's deal both for keeping Britain too closely tied to the EU, and for not keeping it closer. Former foreign minister and leading Brexit supporter Boris Johnson said the vote gave May a “massive mandate” to renegotiate her deal with the EU. DUP leader Arlene Foster, whose small party props up May's government in the Commons, also called for

“fundamental change” to the Brexit deal. “We will give the government the space to set out a plan to secure a better deal,” she said. But, speaking ahead of Tuesday's vote, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas ruled out any substantial changes to the withdrawal agreement—a message reinforced by Juncker. “It is the only way to ensure an orderly withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union,” Juncker said. After the defeat, French President Emmanuel Macron said “the pressure” was mainly on Britain to find a solution.

High-stakes poker

Increasing numbers of pro-European MPs are calling for a second referendum as the way out of the deadlock, with an option to cancel Brexit altogether.

EU Council president Donald Tusk tweeted after the vote: “If a deal is impossible, and no one wants no deal, then who will finally have the courage to say what the only positive solution is?” Speculation is also growing on both sides of the Channel that May could ask to delay Brexit, although she denies this. On Wednesday morning the pound edged down, but mostly held its ground as investors considered the next likely developments in the long-running saga. Sterling had tanked to a near two-year low soon after the expected defeat but it rebounded back against both the dollar and euro on hopes that a no-deal Brexit could be avoided.

While it was slightly lower in Asia, the pound managed to avoid the sort of pummeling many had predicted and analysts say the positive news is that the options for the future are narrowing. British businesses urged politicians to unite. “Financial stability must not be jeopardised in a game of high-stakes political poker,” warned Catherine McGuinness, policy chair at the City of London Corporation, the body governing the British capital's massive financial district.—AFP ■

Spanish police raid Barcelona cell suspected of plotting attack

BARCELONA (Spain)—Spanish police launched a counter-terrorism operation in Barcelona and a nearby city against on Tuesday against a cell suspected of plotting an attack, a police spokesman said.

Two people had been arrested in Barcelona and Igualada, 60 kilometres (40 miles) west of the Catalan capital, as part of the raid, the spokesman for Catalonia's police force, the Mossos d'Esquadra, told AFP. Further arrests were expected, he added.

“The goal (of the cell) was to attack but we are still investigating which places may have been targeted,” the spokesman said. Over 100 officers were taking part in the “counter-terrorism operation” launched by the Catalan police force at six am (0500 GMT), the Mossos said on Twitter. Police stormed five properties in Barcelona and a sixth in Igualada as part of the operation.

Armed officers, wearing black ski masks, stood guard outside a building in central Barcelona as boxes and bags were

removed from a flat, according to an AFP reporter on the scene.

The operation was ordered by Spain's High Court, which is charged with terrorism investigations, and it is focused on “the crimes of terrorism, public health offences and organised crime”, the Mossos said. Barcelona was on alert last month after the US State Department warned off the risk of a terrorist attack in Spain's second-largest city over Christmas.

On 17 August, 2017, a van rammed crowds on Barcelona's Las Ramblas boulevard, killing 14 people and injuring over 130 others.

The 22-year-old Moroccan driver then stole a car after killing the driver and fled.

Several hours later five of his accomplices mowed down pedestrians on the promenade of the seaside resort of Cambrils, south of Barcelona, before stabbing a woman to death. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack, Spain's deadliest in over a decade.—AFP ■

15 killed in ongoing Islamist attack on Kenya hotel complex

NAIROBI (Kenya)—Fifteen people have died in an Islamist attack on an upmarket hotel complex in Nairobi, Kenyan police sources said on Wednesday, as fresh explosions and gunfire rang out in the siege which stretched into its second day.

Security forces worked throughout the night to secure the DusitD2 compound, which includes a 101-room hotel, spa, restaurant and office buildings, after an attack claimed by Al-Shabaab Islamists on Tuesday afternoon.

At least one suicide bomber blew himself up at the hotel while gunmen sprayed fire before engaging security forces and holing themselves up at the premises as civilians fled or barricaded themselves in their offices awaiting rescue.

“We have 15 people dead as of now and that includes foreigners,” a police source told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Among the dead was an American citizen, a State Department official said. A second police source confirmed the

toll but warned “there are areas not yet accessed but that's what we know so far.”

After 12 hours trapped inside the complex, a group of dozens of people was freed at 3:30am (0030INGMT), according to an AFP journalist at the scene, followed by fresh gunfire and a detonation.

“We still believe there are two or three attackers in specific locations,” the first police officer said. “The situation is far from over.”

The second police officer said that at one point they had been sure the attackers had been neutralised after a long period without shooting, however gunfire resumed again after 2am.

Further explosions and gunfire were heard shortly before dawn, with no official word on how many people were still trapped inside.

“There is a floor where they are shooting from, we still believe there are people there,” he said, after reports that a large number of people had fled upstairs.—AFP ■

Cambodian opposition figures allowed to resume political activities



People line up to vote in the Cambodian general election at a polling station in Phnom Penh on 29 July, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

PHNOM PENH — The Cambodian king has allowed two opposition figures to resume political activities from which they were banned ahead of last July’s general election, according to a government document obtained on Wednesday.

Kong Korm, former acting president of the now-defunct Sam Rainsy Party and adviser to its successor party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party, and his son Kong Bora, a former CNRP lawmaker,

were among 118 opposition figures barred from politics for five years as part of a Supreme Court decision in November 2017 to dissolve the main opposition CNRP over an alleged plot to topple the government.

The royal decree, signed by King Norodom Sihamoni on Tuesday, came after the pair filed requests with the Interior Ministry on Wednesday last week.

The king had earlier promulgated an amendment of the political party law, paving the way for

reinstating the political rights of the 118 opposition figures.

Prime Minister Hun Sen has said his government will only allow them to return to politics if they make individual requests for pardons.

It remains unclear if others will follow Kong Korm and his son. Sam Rainsy, a former CNRP president who lives abroad in self-imposed exile, has called on the banned opposition figures to spurn Hun Sen’s offer.—Kyodo News ■

Philippine troops rescue Indonesian hostage kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf

MANILA — The Philippine troops have rescued an Indonesian kidnapped by terrorist group Abu Sayyaf after nearly four months in captivity, the military said on Wednesday.

Gerry Besana, spokesman of the Philippine military’s Western Mindanao Command, said Juragan Kapal Samsul Saguni was rescued on Tuesday after-

noon in a remote village in Sulu province in southern Philippines. Saguni underwent a medical checkup at a military hospital in Jolo town, also in Sulu, said Besana. The result of the check-up indicated that the victim is “physically healthy.” Saguni and another Indonesian Usman Yusuf were seized by Abu Sayyaf terrorists while fish-

ing on 11 September last year in waters off Semporna archipelago in Sabah, Malaysia. Both were taken to the Abu Sayyaf militants in their hideout in Sulu province, said a military report. Troops rescued Yusuf in December last year.

The Abu Sayyaf terrorists are holding five foreigners and three Filipinos in the boondocks of Sulu

province. The Abu Sayyaf is the smallest but also the most radical among the terrorist groups operating in the southern Philippines.

The group is notorious for carrying out kidnappings, bombings and beheadings in western Mindanao, particularly in their lair in the island provinces of Basilan and Sulu.—Xinhua ■

Engagement Announcement

This is to announce that

Oo Than Shwe

residing at No 115, Royal Ave, Keene, NH-03431, U.S.A
son of (Kyaw Sein Hla) + Mya Tain Shwe
residing at Ywarhaung Ward, Ponnagyun Township,
Rakhine State, has been enjoyed to

Khin Mar Aye @ Phyu May

daughter of U Tun Hla + Tin May
residing at Alesu Ward, Ponnagyun Township, Rakhine
State before both sides of parents, relatives and
honourable dignitaries “**Pearl Rose Wedding Hall**”
located at Ayeyarwun Road, Thaketa Township, Yangon
Region on (14.1.2019).

Oo Than Shwe + Khin Mar Aye @ Phyu May

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS MYANMA RAILWAYS

Extension of Tender Closing Date

Myanma Railways Extends the Tender Closing Date as follows:

Sr No	Tender No	Description	Initial Closing Date & Time	Extension Closing Date & Time
1	12(T)7/MR (ML) Kyat/18-19	Procurement for Assembling and Manufacturing of (5) Nos of Microprocessor Controlled 1200 HP Complete Knocked-Down Diesel Electric Locomotives	22.1.2019 (14:30) Hr	14.2.2019 (14:30) Hr
2	12(T)8/MR (ML) Euro/18-19	Procurement of 5 Sets of Diesel Engine & Main Alternator Sets with Foundation Frame and Related Necessary Parts for Microprocessor Controlled 1200 HP Diesel Electric Locomotives	22.1.2019 (14:30) Hr	14.2.2019 (14:30) Hr

Deputy General Manager
Supply Department, Myanma Railways

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS MYANMA RAILWAYS INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

- Open Tender is invited for supply of the following items in Euro:

Sr No	Tender No	Description
1.	15(T)4/MR (E)Euro/18-19	Spare Parts for Track Maintenance Machine (3) Lots - Flash Butt Welding Machine (15) Items - Automatic Levelling, Lining and Tamping Machine (45) Items - Profile Ballast Regulating Machine (1) Item

Closing Date & Time-19.2.2019 (Tuesday) (14:30) Hrs
- Tender documents are available at our office starting from 18.1.2019 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Deputy General Manager Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of 51th Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung, Yangon. Phone: 95-1-291985, 291994

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (4/2019)

- Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	IFB-041(18-19)	Rock Bits & PDC Bits (14) Items	US\$
(b)	DMP/L-164(18-19)	Skid Mounted Water Transfer Pump with Motor (700 igpm x 700 ft head), 185 KW (2) Sets	Ks
(c)	DMP/L-165(18-19)	Spares for 12 VAT 27 Waukesha Engine & MH 64 Compressor (24) Items	Ks
(d)	DMP/L-166(18-19)	Spares for P 9390 GSI Waukesha Engine and Gemini E 604 Compressor (6) Items	Ks
(e)	DMP/L-167(18-19)	Spares for F 2895 GSI Waukesha Engine and Ariel JGE 2 Compressor (9) Items	Ks
(f)	DMP/L-168(18-19)	Spares for H 2475 G Waukesha Engine and KB-2 Compressor (19) Items	Ks
(g)	DMP/L-169(18-19)	AJAX DPC 600 Engine and Compressor Spares (11) Items	Ks
(h)	DMP/L-170(18-19)	Spares for P 9390 GL Waukesha Engine, MH 64 Cooper and JGK-4 Ariel Compressor (8) Items	Ks
(i)	DMP/L-171(18-19)	Data Acquisition, Interpretation Workstation and Data Processing Center (4) Items	Ks

- The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moe.gov.mm) as from 17 January 2019. Tender forms will not be sold.
- The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 14:00 pm on 13 February 2019.
- Tender Closing Date & Time – **13-2-2019, 14:00 pm**

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 – 411206

Antarctica ice loss increases six fold since 1979: study

TAMPA (United States) — Global warming is melting ice in Antarctica faster than ever before — about six times more per year now than 40 years ago — leading to increasingly high sea levels worldwide, scientists warned on Monday.

Already, Antarctic melting has raised global sea levels more than half an inch (1.4 centimetres) between 1979 and 2017, said the report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), a peer-reviewed US journal.

And the pace of melting is expected to lead to disastrous sea level rise in the years to come, according to lead author Eric Rignot, chair of Earth system science at the University of California, Irvine.

“As the Antarctic ice sheet continues to melt away, we expect multi-meter sea level rise from Ant-

arctica in the coming centuries,” Rignot said.

A rise of 1.8 metres (six feet) by 2100, as some scientists forecast in worst-case scenarios, would flood many coastal cities that are home to millions of people around the world, previous research has shown.

For the current study, researchers embarked on the longest-ever assessment of ice mass in the Antarctic, across 18 geographic regions.

Data came from high-resolution aerial photographs taken by NASA planes, along with satellite radar from multiple space agencies. Researchers discovered that from 1979 to 1990, Antarctica shed an average of 40 billion tons of ice mass annually.

By the years 2009 to 2017, the ice loss had increased more than sixfold, to 252 billion tons per year.

Even more worrying, researchers found that areas that were once considered “stable and immune to change” in East Antarctica, are shedding quite a lot of ice, too, said the study.

“The Wilkes Land sector of East Antarctica has, overall, always been an important participant in the mass loss, even as far back as the 1980s, as our research has shown,” Rignot said.

“This region is probably more sensitive to climate than has traditionally been assumed, and that’s important to know, because it holds even more ice than West Antarctica and the Antarctic Peninsula together.”

Ice loss

The total amount of ice in the Antarctic, if it all melted, would be enough to raise sea level 187 feet



Global warming is melting ice in Antarctica faster than ever before, a new study says. PHOTO:AFP

(57 metres).

By far, the most ice in Antarctica is concentrated in the east, where there is enough sea ice to drive 170 feet of sea level rise, compared to about 17 feet in the entire West Antarctic ice sheet.

The East Antarctic Ice Sheet is the world’s largest, containing roughly half of Earth’s freshwater.

Until now, most research has shown that the majority of melting is hap-

pening in the West.

A landmark study published in Nature in June last year found that Antarctic ice melt had tripled since 1992, but did not show significant melting in the east.

However, a subsequent study published in Nature in September 2018 analyzed layers of sediment from the ocean floor deposited the last time the Wilkes Subglacial Basin, part of the Eastern Antarctic due

south of Australia, melted around 125,000 years ago.

That study found the massive basin would start melting again, with a sustained temperature rise of just two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit), the cap called for in the landmark Paris climate deal to avert runaway global warming.

The latest research shows that East Antarctic melting deserves “closer attention,” according to the PNAS report.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BANDUNG VOY. NO. (601 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BANDUNG VOY. NO. (601 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.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

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC MERGUI VOY. NO. (902)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC MERGUI VOY. NO. (902) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/M.I.T.T/T.M.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

Request for Expression of Interest

Consulting Services for the Agricultural Development Unit (ADU)
Contract Ref: AFD-02

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a financing from the French Development Agency (AFD) for the Irrigated Agriculture Inclusive Development Project (IAIDP), and intends to use part of the funds thereof for payments under the following contract package: Consulting Services for the Agricultural Development Unit (ADU).

The Consultant services of the Agricultural Development Unit (ADU) will be responsible for providing technical assistance to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) at the Union, regional, district and township levels.

The consultancy service is divided into two (2) stages.

The 1st stage is the preparation of the “Agricultural Support Assessment and Delivery Strategy” and preparation of 5 Front line centers (FCs)' construction. Stage 1 will be under a lump sum type of contract with an implementation period of 8 months.

Stage 2 services will commence after successful completion of Stage 1 and will be implemented under a time-based contract with implementation period 60 months.

The ADU Consultant will preferably be a consortium that may involve a combination of consulting firms, international and/or local NGOs, and possibly are search organization.

For more detailed information, any interested firm can refer to the Terms of Reference, which may be obtained upon request to iaidp.mm@gmail.com.

Expressions of Interest must be submitted to the address below no later than 20th February 2019 at 16:30 (Myanmar Standard Time).

Hard Copy:

To,

U Tint Lwin

Director (Procurement Branch)
Irrigation & Water Utilization Management Department
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock & Irrigation
Office No.43, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Soft Copy to:

tlwin4.irr@gmail.com and

CC to: iaidp.mm@gmail.com, zarkyaw@gmail.com,

ukhinzaw1984@gmail.com

Note: Consultant Selection Committee reserves the right to reject any delay submission of EOI after deadline.

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HARTA VOY. NO. (KHAR 0030N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HARTA VOY. NO. (KHAR 0030N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/A.W.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 OEL MALAYSIA VOY. NO. (1902 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OEL MALAYSIA VOY. NO. (1902 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.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 BLPL SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

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The exhibition "Encompassing the Globe: Portugal and the World in the XVI and XVII Centuries," opened in late 2017, attracted 183,865 visitors. **PHOTO: TASS**

Almost 3 million people visited Moscow Kremlin Museums in 2018

MOSCOW — About 2,867,000 people visited Moscow Kremlin Museums last year. The most popular exhibition was "BVLGARI. Tribute to Femininity. Magnificent Roman Jewels," the Moscow Kremlin Museums press service told on Tuesday.

"In 2018, the Moscow Krem-

lin Museums received 2,867,000 people. This are visitors of the museum's main exposition and three large exhibition projects launched in 2018.

The most visited exhibition was the project 'BVLGARI. Tribute to Femininity. Magnificent Roman Jewels,' which ended on 13 January: 220,428 visitors saw

it," the report says.

The exhibition "Ming Dynasty: The Radiance of Knowledge" was attended by 121,573 people, and the exhibition "Encompassing the Globe: Portugal and the World in the XVI and XVII Centuries," which opened in late 2017, attracted 183,865 guests.—Tass ■

Cranberries debut single of last album to mark singer's death

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Irish band The Cranberries released the first song of its final album on Tuesday, exactly one year after lead singer Dolores O'Riordan was found drowned in a London hotel bathtub.

The band dropped the new track ahead of the April release of their eighth and last album "In the End," after which the rock group — best known for 90s-era hits including "Zombie," "Linger," and "Dreams" — will split after three decades together.

Band members Noel Hogan, Mike Hogan, and Fergal Lawler finished the new 11-song album using demo vocals O'Riordan completed in December 2017, they said on Instagram.

"We remembered how Dolores had been so energized by the prospect of making this record and getting back out on the road to play the songs live, and realized that the most meaningful thing to do was to finish the album we had started with her," the group said. "It was a very emotional process for us," they said. "Knowing that we would

never get to play these songs live made it even more difficult."

But, they concluded, "we felt that this is what she would want."

The lead single has an unmistakable Cranberries vibe, a sorrowful but moving track that features O'Riordan repeating the eerily prescient lyric "It's all over now." The group is releasing the music with approval from the family of O'Riordan, who died aged 46. A London coroner ruled that she had died from accidental

drowning due to intoxication, but found no evidence of injuries or self harm. "I can't think of a more fitting way to commemorate the first anniversary of Dolores' passing and to celebrate her life than to announce to the world the release of her final album with the band," the singer's mother Eileen O'Riordan said in a statement.

"I have no doubt that she is happy now and would be delighted with today's announcement."—AFP ■



Singer Dolores O'Riordan of the Irish rock band "The Cranberries" performs at the Sant Jordi Club in Barcelona on 4 October, 2012. **PHOTO: AFP**

NY rapper tops charts with less than 1,000 sales

NEW YORK — A Bronx rapper has snagged the top spot on the US Billboard 200 chart after selling just 823 albums — and posting 83 million on-demand streams.

Industry tracker Billboard, whose chart ranks the most popular albums of the week in the United States, said on Monday that A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie's album "Hoodie SZN" climbed to the top with the equivalent of 58,000 sales for the week ending on 10 January.

That multi-metric sum includes streams and downloads of individual songs along with sales of the full 20-song album — but according to Billboard, streams powered the ascent, while the sales set a record-low for an album that reached number one.

The figures lay bare the ever-widening gap between the rapidly growing business of streaming and that of lethargic album sales. The 23-year-old rapper's

record tops that of 3,481 copies and 84 million streams, which rapper 21 Savage set last week with his album "I Am > I Was."

"Hoodie SZN," which came out on 21 December, is the Bronx artist's second full-length studio album and second visit to the Billboard's top 10, after his album "The Bigger Artist" peaking at number four in 2017.

His sophomore album did not sell enough downloads — "Hoodie SZN" has not been released in a physical format — to make Billboard's sales-only chart, which saw Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper's "A Star Is Born" soundtrack take first place. The Billboard 200 chart began including streams in its ranking in December 2014, calculating figures based on "equivalent album units" that include streaming, album downloads and traditional album sales. —AFP ■



"Hoodie SZN" is rapper A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie's second full-length studio album. **PHOTO: AFP**

YouTube clarifies rules on pranks as risky memes rage

SAN FRANCISCO (United States) — YouTube on Tuesday clarified rules against posting videos of dangerous pranks, as risky "challenges" prompt people to video themselves doing things like biting into laundry soap or driving blindfolded.

The company already forbid content inciting dangerous activities likely to result in serious harm. But the clarifications "make it clear that challenges like the Tide pod challenge or the Fire challenge, that can cause death and/or have caused death in some instances, have no place on YouTube," the company said in a blog post. "We've made it clear that our policies prohibiting harmful and dangerous content also extend to pranks with

a perceived danger of serious physical injury," said YouTube, which like other social networks is trying to show that it is better tackling problematic content. It made clear the updated policies ban pranks that trick people into thinking they are in danger, such as fake home invasions or drive-by shootings.

"YouTube is home to many beloved viral challenges and pranks, like Jimmy Kimmel's 'Terrible Christmas Presents' prank or the water bottle flip challenge," said YouTube, owned by Google's parent Alphabet.

"That said, we've always had policies to make sure what's funny doesn't cross the line into also being harmful or dangerous." —AFP ■

City gov't tests autonomous robots to aid people in city hall

GIFU (Japan)—A local government in central Japan demonstrated an experiment in its city hall on Tuesday with robots that can independently guide people to the right information window or teach them how to fill out government forms.

Ogaki city in Gifu Prefecture is the first local government in Japan that is attempting to use robots that will autonomously guide people, according to the city which is looking to integrate them in its services in 2020.

"I would like to use robots to increase our services to our residents, and make our municipal office a gathering place where we can have fun," said Ogaki Mayor Bin Ogawa.

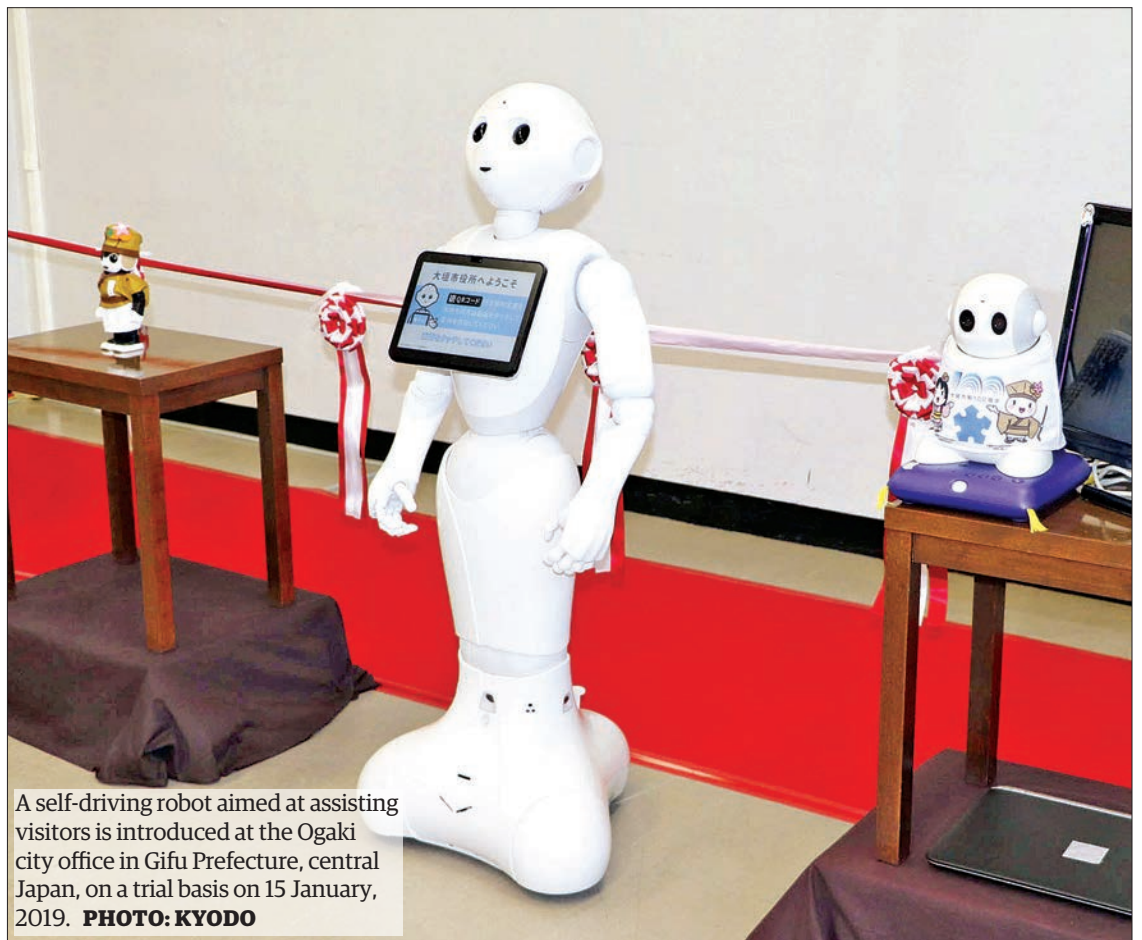
At the event, an autonomous robot shaped like a tube

guided the mayor from the information counter to the elevator.

Ogawa wants the project to be implemented in 2020 when a new government office is set to open.

The city government is in the midst of developing an "electronic city hall" which uses robots and artificial intelligence. Last November, it concluded an agreement of cooperation with six businesses including those in charge of the development of robotics.

The experiment features five different robots. The autonomous ones have touch panels from which a person can choose the department he or she would like to go to. The robots will then guide the person to the correct information window.



A self-driving robot aimed at assisting visitors is introduced at the Ogaki city office in Gifu Prefecture, central Japan, on a trial basis on 15 January, 2019. PHOTO: KYODO

People who wish to apply for a certificate can be helped by robots that explain verbally

how to fill out the appropriate application form. Robots in the children's corner can hold sim-

ple conversations with children and read them picture books.—Kyodo News ■

Russian, Chinese scientists get grant for project of discovering water on Moon

BARNAUL—Scientists of Altai State Technical University (AltSTU) have won a grant of the Russian Fundamental Research Fund and China's National Natural Science Fund for 2019-2020, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor of the Measuring Methods and Instruments and Automation Department at the Biysk Technological Institute (a branch of the AltSTU) Vladimir Khmelyov told TASS. The scientists will explore and develop the physical principles of the ultrasonic drilling of extraterrestrial objects' surface to discover water and ice, including on the reverse side of the Moon. PHOTO: TASS



The scientists will explore and develop the physical principles of the ultrasonic drilling of extraterrestrial objects' surface to discover water and ice, including on the reverse side of the Moon. PHOTO: TASS

Khmelyov said.

According to data of the AltSTU's press office, the project's authors are planning to determine the optimal modes of ultrasound drilling to maximally preserve water and ice, which will ensure the authenticity of discovering the traces of water. The project will help develop the scientific basis for creating ultrasonic drilling instruments. The Russian-Chinese research in this area is one of the prospects of developing the lunar and Martian programs: to find water so that a station can be built on the Moon where humans will live, the researcher said.

Based on indirect explorations, it is assumed that water is located close to the surface of craters up to 10km deep on the reverse side of the Moon. Ultrasonic

equipment can be eventually installed on lunar and Martian rovers, Khmelyov said. The research has been carried out jointly with the Space Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences since 2010, he added.

"Unfortunately, no flights to the reverse side of the Moon are planned in our country to study the soil. The Chinese state plans such work: in December last year, they sent the first probe to the reverse side of the Moon, landed it in a crater and started conducting preliminary research. In subsequent years, they are planning to carry out work already related to drilling. That is why, we are going to work jointly with the Harbin University, which is participating in China's lunar programme," the researcher said.—Tass ■

DNA could potentially predict people's lifespan: study

LONDON—By looking at people's DNA, researchers can potentially predict whether a person can expect to live longer or die sooner than average, according to a study released on Tuesday by the University of Edinburgh.

A team led by the university's Usher Institute looked at genetic data from more than half a million people alongside records of their parents' lifespan. Some 12 areas of the human genome were pinpointed as having a significant impact on lifespan, including five sites that have not been reported before. The team analyzed the combined effect

of genetic variations that influence lifespan to produce a scoring system. They found that people who score in the top ten percent of the population might expect to live up to five years longer than those who score in the lowest ten percent, according to the team. "If we take 100 people at birth, or later, and use our lifespan score to divide them into ten groups, the top group will live five years longer than the bottom on average," said Dr Peter Joshi, who is an AXA Fellow at the Usher Institute. The study has been published in the journal *eLife*.—Xinhua ■

Chinese scientists develop new moisture-wicking fabric

BEIJING—Chinese scientists have developed a new moisture-wicking fabric with ultrafast water evaporation and quick-dry performance. Moisture-wicking fabric can pull moisture away from the skin to the exterior of the clothing. It dries quickly and provides a comfortable environment for the human body in hot or humid environments. There is a growing market demand for this material.

Scientists from Shanghai-based Donghua University developed an assembly strategy to create a biomimetic nanofibrous membrane with ultrafast

evaporation and quick-dry performance. It exhibits an outstanding water evaporation rate, 2.1 times that of Coolmax fabric, a popular moisture-wicking fabric currently on the market. The research serves as a source of inspiration for the development of high-performance moisture-wicking fabric. Besides sportswear, the research has applications in optimizing functional textiles such as wound dressing materials and diapers, according to the research team. The research was published in the journal *ACS Nano*.—Xinhua ■

Myanmar Police Chief's Shield T&F competitions held

MYANMAR Police Force-MPF held the 31st Police Chief's Shield Track and Field Competitions and award presentation ceremony at Kyaikkasan Ground in Yangon yesterday morning.

Present at the event were Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and wife, Myanmar Police Force's officers and their wives, principal of Yangon's Institute of Sports and Physical Education U Soe Aung, invited guests from Myanmar Track and Field Federation and athletes.

After the competition, the presentation ceremony was held with the speech of the Chief of Myanmar Police Force.

Officials then presented awards to the winners in which the Chief of Myanmar Police Force and his wife presented awards to the winners of the men's and women's events of the Police Chief's Shield Track



Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo presents the shield to the winners at the 31st Police Chief's Shield Track and Field Competitions awarding ceremony in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

and Field Competitions.

A total of 32 teams, including 575 male athletes and 145 female athletes, from regions and states' police force units, se-

curity forces and police training schools took part the competition.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun) ■

Football Association formed in Kyaukse, Mandalay Region

A football association was set up in Kyaukse on Tuesday through the efforts of the football authorities, said a source with the Myanmar Football Federation.

A meeting was held the same day to introduce the football association in Kyaukse, which was attended by MFF members U Ko Ko Thein and U Ye Nyunt,

and the headmaster of the Mandalay Football Academy, U Soe Nyunt. The Kyaukse Football Association comprises 15 officials, including the Township Football Association working committee chairman U Myo Thet, the coach and secretary of the association, U Aung Aung, the representative of men footballers, U Than Htike

Soe, the representative of women footballers, Daw Htay Htay Myint, and the representative of futsal sports, U Zaw Myint Oo.

The association hopes to recognize and develop football skills in players across the Mandalay Region, especially in Kyaukse Township.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

MFF to conduct referee course for youths in Yangon

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) has organized a referee course to train youths at its headquarters in Yangon from 7 to 13 February, the federation stated on its website.

The MFF has outlined some requirements for those interested in the course. Those wishing to attend the course need to be physically fit, not require eyeglasses, and must be below 30 years of age. They also need to have cleared Matriculation at the

high school level and must be interested in taking up refereeing as a career.

Those who successfully complete the course will be registered as official referees in Myanmar and will serve on MFF referee committees and undertake other States and Regions referee duties.

Qualified referees will then be selected from the pool of serving referees who have finished the course to be assigned as My-

anmar National League referees, or possibly as FIFA-recognised referees upon completion of foreign referee courses, said an MFF official.

Registrations for the course will be open at the Myanmar Football Federation, Thuwunna Stadium, till 25 January. Further information about the course is available with the MFF Referee Committee, which can be contacted on 09-420128064.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech to retire at end of season

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech announced on Tuesday that he will retire at the end of the season. The 36-year-old, who won four Premier League titles with Chelsea, revealed his decision on Twitter. He wrote: "This is my 20th season as a professional player and it is 20 years since I signed my first professional contract, so it feels like the right time to announce that I will retire at the end of this season." The Czech, who arrived in the Premier League with Chelsea in 2004 and moved to Arsenal in 2015, added: "Having played 15 years in the Premier League and won every single trophy possible, I feel like I have achieved everything I set out to achieve.

"I will continue to work hard at Arsenal to hopefully win one more trophy this season, then I am looking forward to seeing what life holds for me off the pitch." Cech joined Arsenal in 2015 and has made 129 appearances for the Gunners after winning multiple trophies at rivals Chelsea.

Signed from Rennes by Claudio Ranieri in 2004, Cech won four Premier League titles, four FA Cups, the Champions League, the Europa League and three League Cups with the Blues. Cech suffered a serious head injury in 2006 following a collision with Reading's Stephen Hunt. Hunt's knee crashed into Cech's head, leaving him with a fractured skull, but he returned to action four months later wearing what became his trademark protective headgear. Cech became the first goalkeeper to keep 200 Premier League clean sheets in Arsenal's 3-0 win over Watford last season, during which he saved a penalty from Troy Deeney.

He is also the Czech Republic's most capped player, making 124 appearances. Cech is no longer first choice at Arsenal, with Bernd Leno preferred for most of this season so far, but the club were quick to pay their own tribute. Arsenal tweeted: "For your consummate professionalism, for being the perfect role model, for the 50 clean sheets, for your honesty, your integrity and for your inspiring work with @AFC—Foundation, we want to say... Thank you, @PetrCech!"—AFP ■



Arsenal's Czech goalkeeper Petr Cech gestures during the English FA Cup third round football match between Blackpool and Arsenal at Bloomfield Road in Blackpool, north west England on 5 January, 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**