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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## State Counsellor launches first phase of solar power project in Minbu



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Magway Region Chief Minister Dr Aung Moe Nyo unveil Minbu Solar Power Plant Project yesterday. **PHOTO: MAUNG THEIN (PHILOSOPHY)**

STATE COUNSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi inaugurated the first phase of a solar power plant project in Minbu yesterday, adding 40MW of power generated by the plant's first phase to the national grid.

Once completed, the plant will have a total capacity of 170MW, and it will produce 350 million kWh (kilowatt hour) per annum, and electrify about 210,000 households.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the Chairperson of the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races together with Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, U Min Thu, U Ohn Win and officials arrived at Magway from Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The State Counsellor and party were welcomed at Magway Airport by Magway Region

Chief Minister Dr Aung Moe Nyo, region ministers, Hluttaw representatives and officials.

From there the State Counsellor and party proceeded to the Minbu Solar Energy Power Plant Project 16 miles 3 furlong southwest of Minbu (Saku) Town by Tatmadaw helicopters and were greeted upon arrival by Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tar, Deputy Minister Dr. Tun Naing and officials. **SEE PAGE-3**

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## Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives New Zealand's Chief Ombudsman



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat presents gift to New Zealand's Chief Ombudsman Mr Peter Boshier in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received a delegation from New Zealand led by Mr Peter Boshier, Chief Ombudsman of the Office of the Ombudsman, at the Pyithu Hluttaw guest hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they

discussed the Pyithu Hluttaw's formation of the Complaints and Appeals Committee and its progress, and linking with relevant departments to respond to public letters of complaint and appeals. They also discussed the work carried out by the ombudsman office

and its budget allocation.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein, officials from Pyithu Hluttaw Office and New Zealand Ambassador Mr Steve Marshall were also present during the meeting. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Japan, Myanmar sign the Exchange of Notes on the Development of Japan-Myanmar Aung San Vocational Training Institute Project



A signing agreement ceremony for Exchange of Notes on rendering assistance to Myanmar by Japan held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE signing ceremony for Exchange of Notes on rendering assistance to Myanmar by Japan was held at the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Nay Pyi Taw.

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaug Tun, Deputy Minister

for Planning and Finance U Set Aung, Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun, Permanent Secretary for Ministry of Foreign Affairs U Myint Thu and Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Ichiro MARUYAMA and officials of the Japan Embassy.

Exchange of Notes was signed by Deputy Minister U

Set Aung and Japanese Ambassador Mr. Ichiro MARUYAMA. According to the Notes, the Government of Japan will provide grant of Japanese Yen (2.726) billion for the implementation of the Project for the Development of Japan-Myanmar Aung San Vocational Training Institute in Myanmar.—MNA

## State Counsellor's meeting with Danubyu farmers to be broadcast live

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's meeting with local farmers in Danubyu's Agricultural Services Centre, Ayeyawady Region, will be broadcast live on 28 June, starting from 9:15 a.m.

The live broadcast can be accessed through MRTV, MITV, MRTV radio programme, the Facebook pages of Myanmar President Office, Myanmar State Counsellor Office, MOI Web portal, MRTV, and Myanmar Digital News. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## UEC to pass final ruling on Seikkan Constituency candidate complaint

THE Union Election Commission has accepted an appeal from the overturned candidate for Yangon Region's Seikkan Township Constituency 2, U Nay Myo Aung as Appeal Case (1/2019).

In line with Section 101 of the State or Regional Hluttaw Election Bylaw, the UEC formed a tribunal with all members, including Chairman U Hla Thein and heard from both sides, while considering legal suggestions from the Union Attorney-General Office, yesterday.

The final ruling will be made on 4 July 2019.

The original complaint was made by rival candidate U Than Htike Aung against the initial winner, U Nay Myo Aung. The UEC accepted the complaint, formed a tribunal, heard from both sides and ruled that U Nay Myo Aung violated electoral laws.

UEC revoked U Nay Myo Aung's victory and ruled to appoint for U Than Htike Aung as the Regional Hluttaw representative. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Myanmar-China Culture Association officially opens

MYANMAR-China Culture Association (MCCA) officially opened their office in Royal Holiday Hotel, Tamway Township, Yangon, with a ceremony yesterday.

MCCA Chairman U Tin Hlaing, Deputy Director of the Township Administration U Aung Kyaw Aye, and Chinese Ambassador Mr Cheng Rong attended the signboard unveiling and donation ceremony.

The officials first cut ceremonial ribbons to unveil the signboard, U Tin Hlaing next delivered a speech, after which

U Aung Kyaw Aye explained about the MCCA. The donation ceremony then followed.

MCCA aims to display Myanmar's cultural evolution through a series of paintings and sculptures and is currently planning a painting exhibition, said painter Ni Po Oo, an executive member.

MCCA was officially formed on 5 December last year and mainly deals in cultural exchange and philanthropic activities. —TTHL

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



MCCA Chairman U Tin Hlaing cuts ribbon to unveil the Myanmar-China Culture Association (MCCA) Office in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**



# State Counsellor visits Yaypotegyi Village in Pwintbyu Township, meets with local people

## FROM PAGE-1

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi then met with the local people of Minbu (Saku) region and officials at the temporary briefing hall where the opening ceremony of Minbu Solar Power Plant Project was held.

At the meeting the State Counsellor said that the Minbu Solar Power Plant Project was the first commercial solar power plant in Myanmar. It was implemented under BOT system by Green Earth Power (Myanmar) Co., Ltd. Installed capacity was 170 MW and the project would be conducted in four stages. First to third stage was to construct 40 MW each of generating power and the fourth stage would construct 50 MW generating power. Once the entire 170 MW generating power was constructed, it would produce 350 million kWh (kilowatt hour) per annum distributing electricity to about 210,000 households.

Today's opening ceremony was for the implementation of the construction for the first stage 40 MW started on 4 February 2018. The electricity generated from the first stage 40 MW was being transmitted to the national grid via 230 KV Mann-An power line.

Solar power stations had the drawbacks of requiring wide land area to construct the station, dependent on weather, high cost of electricity and high cost



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and local children with traditional hair style pose for a documentary photo during her visit to Pwintbyu Township, Magway Region. **PHOTO: MNA**

of battery storage but the solar energy required to generate the electricity was an ever available renewable energy. However it does not need fuels such as diesel, gas and coal required by other power stations. It had many advantages such as low maintenance cost, reduces carbon dioxide emission, obtain technology development and very low emission of products that causes environmental pollution. It was expected that

as technology advanced, more weaknesses would be removed. Myanmar needed the spirit of continuous innovation and invention. Development must be

conducted according to natural surroundings and environmental situation. Even though there were weaknesses in solar energy power plants, all power gen-

In an effort to distribute electricity to all over the country, 746 MW was generated from all energy sources during the period from 2016 to 2018.

erating systems had strengths and weaknesses. All had to be considered and the best was to be selected. As climate changes, hydropower system were noted to be not always reliable. Therefore, as the situation changes, it was very important for us to have the ability and courage to change our technology.

After our government took over responsibility, from 2016 April to 2019 March, the progress of electrical power sector in Magway Region was a 40 MW hydro power station (Myittha) that distributes power starting from 9 January 2017. On new power lines 100 miles of 230 KV power line, 236 miles of 66 KV power line, 10 miles of 33 KV power line, 557 miles of 11 KV power line and 191 miles of 400 Volt power lines were laid. On sub-stations 66 KV sub-station with 446 MVA installed capacity, 33 KV sub-station with 143 MVA installed capacity and 11/0.4 KV sub-station with 98 MVA installed capacity were installed. Due to this electricity was provided to 7 towns of Gangaw, Htilin, Saw, Kyaukhtu, Kyaw, Mindon and Kamma and 317 villages totaling 68,149 households.



Aerial view of solar panels of Minbu Solar Energy Power Plant. **PHOTO: MNA**

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## State Counsellor launches solar power project, holds meeting with Magway Region Govt

FROM PAGE-3

The Union government was placing great emphasis towards providing electricity to all the people in the country 100 per cent and to raise the socio-economic condition of the people by upgrading state-own power station, constructing state-own power stations, expanding the construction of sub-stations and the laying of power lines with own fund, foreign loan and assistances every year in stages. While doing this, it was implementing new project like the present one under BOT system as privately owned projects with foreign investment.

In striving towards achieving the targeted electricity generating capacity, huge power station with high installed generating capacity, mid-level power stations and mini-power stations were being implemented based on investment and economic viability of privately owned power stations.

While hydropower stations with long construction periods were under construction, solar power stations with short construction period like the current one would be constructed after careful consideration to provide electricity.

In an effort to distribute electricity to all over the country, 746 MW was generated from all energy sources during the period 2016 to 2018. From the start of 2019 to June a new natural gas and solar power stations generating 393 MW were completed. To improve services to the public, the public was given a choice of four types of meters starting from early April 2018 while only one type was of-



State Counsellor holds the meeting with Magway Region Government in Magway yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

ferred in the past.

The government provided round the clock power to 68 towns and 5,191 villages during the 3 year period. In 2016 electricity utilization was just 34 per cent and it was increased to 44 per cent now. Arrangements were made for electricity utilization to reach 50 per cent of the country by December 2019.

It was true that some had complained about frequent black outs after getting electricity. But there were many reasons for this. They were investigating to find out the reasons and would strive toward preventing recurrences in the future.

While the government was striving towards providing stable electricity, it would also strive towards providing electricity to those who did not have access to it. Arrangements were made to provide electricity to 55 per cent of the country in 2021, 75 per cent

of the country in 2025-2026 and 100 percent or the whole country by 2030. Arrangements were also made to provide a timely short-term provision of about 1,200 MW with LNG and gas fired engines.

We were using many ways to obtain electricity and we could not depend on a single way or method. If we depended on a single way or method we would not be able to meet the requirements of the country.

The country's development and raising the living standard of the people was directly related to increasing electric power generation. Our government would continue its effort to achieve the aim of providing electricity to 100 per cent of the country. At the same time, the people were urged to cooperate and support the government's implementation efforts, said the State Counsellor.

Next the Region Chief Minister explained about the status

of acquiring and using electricity in Magway Region.

Afterwards, Green Earth Power (Myanmar) Co., Ltd showed a video record of the project works, after which Region Hluttaw representative U Kyaw Swan Yee spoke words of thanks.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi then took a commemorative group photo with meeting attendees and attended that open ceremony of the Minbu Solar Power Plant Project. The ceremony was opened by Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tar, Deputy Minister Dr Tun Naing, Region minister U Myint Zaw, Hluttaw representatives and officials cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

The State Counsellor and Region Chief Minister also unveiled the plaque commemorating the opening ceremony of the Minbu Solar Power Plant Project by pressing a button and sprinkled scented water onto the plaque.

Afterwards, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observed generation of electricity with solar power from the view point.

From there, the State Counsellor and party went by Tatmadaw helicopters to a meeting with local people in a temporary pandal at Pwintbyu Township, Yaypotegyi Village Tract, Yaypotegyi Village.

At the meeting, the State Counsellor urged parents to raise the education level of their children so that the children who were learnt to be attending school only to fourth grade could complete their education. Questions raised by the State Counsellor on education, health, agriculture, road transport and acquisition of potable water in Yaypotegyi Village Tract were ex-

plained by the locals and officials. The State Counsellor provided guidelines on practical works that could be conducted.

The State Counsellor and Region Chief Minister also responded to questions raised by the local people.

Later, the State Counsellor accepted K 7.5 million to provide potable water to Yaypotegyi Village, K 5 million to repair village road and K 20 million to repair Sedaw Village School donated by U Aye Zaw and wife Daw Su Su Zin and K 5 million donated by Dr Khin Thu Zar Kyaw family to repair village road. The donated monies were then transferred to village administrator by the State Counsellor.

After this, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi took a commemorative group photo with local residents and youth and observed the Shwe Nyar Myay photo exhibition.

Yaypotegyi Village was known as a village that maintains traditional hairstyle. This traditional hairstyle has been maintained ever since the village came to existence.

After the meeting, the State Counsellor paid homage to the Yaypotegyi Village monastery principal patron Sayadaw Bhaddanta Wunnathara and made donations.

The State Counsellor left Yaypotegyi Village by Tatmadaw helicopter and reached Magway where she met with Magway Region government members in Magway Region Government meeting hall.

Later in the evening, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the party left Magway by special flight and arrived back in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Residents of Yaypotegyi Village, Pwintbyu Township, are seen yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



# Freshwater striped catfish must not be bred on large scale at present: MFF

By Aye Yamone

LOCAL fish farmers must not breed freshwater striped catfish on a large scale at present due to obstacles in legally exporting the species to China, according to the Myanmar Fisheries Federation.

To ensure legal export of freshwater striped catfish, the federation had forwarded a proposal to the General Administration of Customs China (GACC), seeking its cooperation, on 5 September, 2018 through the commercial attache with the Myanmar embassy in China. But, GACC has taken no action yet.

“The MFF is making arrangements to export freshwater striped catfish to China in cooperation with the Ministry. But, the process is not finished yet. Therefore, it is slightly difficult to export the fish species legally. We

would like to tell farmers that they must not breed freshwater striped catfish on a large scale for the moment. We will let local fish breeders know about the market conditions so that they know the right time to expand the breeding business,” said Dr Toe Nandar Tin, Vice Chairman, MFF.

While exploring potential markets in Asian countries, including China, the MFF had found that only freshwater striped catfish had export potential as they are easy to breed, have a high growth rate, and international acceptance. Therefore, the federation had advised farmers to breed the species.

“However, local entrepreneurs, who are breeding the fish for export, need to scale production depending upon the market conditions,” Dr. Toe Nandar Tin had said at the



Freshwater catfishes are seen at a small-scale fish farm.  
**PHOTO: MYINT OO (MYEIK)**

Fisheries Sector Entrepreneurs Regular Meeting (11/2019), held on 25 June at the Myanmar Fisheries Federation, Yangon.

“Although we are urging them to breed freshwater striped catfish for export to the Chinese market, they need to check the

volume of demand from China. We have heard that local fish breeders are facing losses because they could not export their products as expected,” she said.

Currently, natural fish and prawn can be exported to China through the le-

gal channel. In September, 2018, Myanmar exported one container of pangasius hypophthalmus species to China on a trial basis. But, the entrepreneurs had exported the fish without registering on China’s website.

Myanmar fish need

to be sent to the General Administration of Customs China (GACC) along with a guarantee that the fish and prawn intended for export are disease-free. Then, China signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to allow Myanmar to export the fish legally.

Officials from the Ministry of Commerce, the Fisheries Department, and the Myanmar Fisheries Federation will head to China if Myanmar is granted permission to meet with officials from the General Administration of Customs China.

Myanmar exports aquatic products to over 40 countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Japan. Myanmar striped catfish are demanded mainly by China. ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



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**Security first priority in industrial zone upgrade: U Phyo Min Thein**

By Nyein Nyein

SECURITY would be considered as the first priority when 29 industrial zones in Yangon Region are upgraded, said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein.

He made the remarks at a press conference held by the Yangon Region Investment Committee on Wednesday.

"Security will be our first priority in the upgrade works. We will try to improve security by installing CCTVs and with the help of other technology," he said.

In addition, squatters in industrial zones will have to be relocated, he said.

The upgrade will include utilities such as supply of purified water, electricity, transportation, and sewage and waste

management. "Infrastructure will be a vital part of the industrial zone upgrade, as we will have to deal with the growing electricity needs, road transportation difficulties, and insufficient water supply," said U Phyo Min Thein.

"The Thilawa Special Economic Zone has been developed along international standards, with better infrastructure. It should serve as the model for

upgrading the zones," he added.

Earlier, the zones that will be upgraded were taken over by the Construction Ministry and now, they will be handled by the Yangon Region government.

Yangon Region is aiming to transform itself into a liveable economic hub through sustainable development and heritage conservation. ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

**Reclaimed farmland handed over to farmers in Pyay**

A total of 106 acres of reclaimed mechanized farmland in Tee Tut Village, Pyay Township, Bago Region, was handed over to 18 farmers at a ceremony held on 25 June. Collective ploughing was performed at the ceremony, held on Plot 366, owned by the Aung Myay Tee Tut Public Company Ltd.

At the ceremony, U Aung Zaw Naing, the Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Minister for Bago Region, delivered the opening speech.

"Plot 366 in Tee Tut Model Village was of irregular shape and the yield was poor on this plot. Therefore, we reclaimed the mechanized farmland systematically, using funds from the regional government, to improve the yield of local crops to ensure socio-economic growth," said the regional minister.

Then, Pyithu Hluttaw representative Dr Daw Khin Soe Soe Kyi explained how the farmland was reclaimed, and the



Farmers plough a farmland to grow rice at a village in Pyay. PHOTO: MYO KYAW GYI (IPRD)

regional minister handed over plots of land to local farmers. A local farmer gave words of thanks, on behalf of the farmers.

Afterwards, a collective plowing ceremony was held on the land. The Thaw Gabar (Pyay) Company took the re-

sponsibility of reclaiming 106 acres of mechanized farmland. Of the 111 acres covered by the project, only 106 acres was reclaimed, and plots of land were handed over to local farmers.

The handing over ceremony was also attended by Re-

gional Hluttaw representative U Thet Win Hlaing, region, district, and township-level officials, Pyay Township Administrator U Myat Kyaw and Thaw Gabar Company officials.—Myo Kyaw Gyi (IPRD) ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

**Bodhi Tahtaung camp gets seven new elephants**

THE MYANMA Timber Enterprise has sent seven elephants to the Bodhi Tahtaung Elephant Conservation camp, which is slated to be opened in the Bodhi Tahtaung Pagoda precinct in Monywa Township in July, said U Zaw Win Thein, Assistant General Manager, Monywa extraction region.

"Those seven elephants come from the Taungdingyi extraction region, and the Bodhi Tahtaung camp is exhibiting different types of elephants," said U Zaw Win Thein.

The Bodhi Tahtaung Elephant Conservation camp has been built on eight acres of land in the Bodhi Tahtaung Pagoda precinct, where the Lay Kyun Sakkya standing Buddha statue, the reclining Buddha statue,



File photo shows mahouts bathing an elephant at the Bodhi Tahtaung Elephant Conservation camp in Monywa Township. PHOTO: WIN OO (ZEYARTINE)

and the Ah Lantayar Pagoda are located. The camp offers pil-

grims a chance to observe the lifestyle of the mahouts and ele-

phants.—Win Oo (Zeyartine) ■ (Translated by La Wonn)



## Education forum in Nay Pyi Taw highlights importance of ICT



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi addresses the ICT for Education Forum at Park Royal Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

ICT for Education Forum was held at Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Firstly, Union Minister for Education, Dr Myo Thein Gyi, delivered a speech where he said they are implementing educational reforms in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all – and the National Education Strategic Plan (2016-2021).

The Union Minister said we need to effectively make use of ICT technology in order to strengthen the education system, spread general knowledge, collect information, and implement quality teaching and education services.

He said this forum is part of

Communication Strategy Task Team (CSST)'s processes in line with the programme of My-EQIP. He said CSST will use the results of the forum discussions to compile necessary surveys, reviews and researches. He said an ICT based communication strategic plan needs to be drafted.

The Union Minister expressed his hope that ICT technology will be implemented in managing education and news and in learning processes. He said as the Union Government is taking steps to transition into an e-Government system, so too will the education sector adapt into an e-Education system that promotes lifelong learning.

Next, Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint delivered a speech. He said the forum is

important for future generations as ICT is in the frontlines of the world. He said we need to catch up to them and breed ICT professionals to compete with global standards.

Following this, First Secretary Ms Esther Sainsbury of the Australian Embassy delivered an address and Myanmar Computer Federation Chairman U Min Zayar Hlaing explained how MCF will assist in developing the ICT skills of the education ministry staff and their future tasks.

The Union Ministers and attendees then observed the display booths at the forum. This was followed by a discussions on various topics and a question and answer session. The forum continues today. —MNA ■ *(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

## UEHRD holds third meeting for 2019

THE UNION Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development (UEHRD) meeting (3/2019) was held at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Vice Chairmen (1) Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and Deputy Minister from the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor U Khin Maung Tin, Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung, and other members.

At the meeting, Dr Win Myat Aye urged attendees to give effective humanitarian assistance and repatriation, and said that development efforts were underway. As for UEHRD, there were completed projects and the ones that were in progress.

Departments, organizations and task forces which use the Committee's funds, are having their accounts audited. It was necessary for the organizations to collaborate with the in-

ternational audit team which will audit their accounts. UEHRD tasks were long term ones, nevertheless it was also important to accomplish the short term ones effectively. ASEAN conducted a preliminary needs assessment on repatriation and identified possible areas for cooperation. ASEAN would cooperate with UEHRD on making repatriation efforts smoother, information dissemination, and providing basic services to the people.

Efforts were being made to allow UNHCR, a UN agency to assist ASEAN's collaborative efforts in Rakhine State. In rehabilitating displaced persons in Rakhine state, it was important to focus on Rule of Law and social harmony.

Then, the Vice Chairman (2), the Secretary and the members discussed about the status of works being undertaken and future work. The meeting ended with a concluding speech by the Union Minister.—MNA

*(Translated by Alphonsus)*



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye addresses UEHRD meeting (3/2019) in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

## GEN donates gender-related books to IPRD

GENDER Equality Network (GEN) donated gender-related books for libraries of the Infor-

mation and Public Relations Department in a ceremony held at the IPRD head office

yesterday.

GEN donated a total of 7,500 books on 25 gender-related topics, including 300 books for each topic such as gender research, general knowledge, domestic violence and women leadership.

Information and Public Relations Department's Director-General U Ye Naing accepted the donations and conferred honorary certificates in return.

The donated books will be distributed to IPRD branches located in towns, townships and districts across Myanmar in order to raise awareness of these topics among the public. —MNA ■

*(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*



IPRD Director-General U Ye Naing hands over honorary certificate to GEN book donors. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman receives New Zealand Ambassador



Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi holds talks with New Zealand Ambassador Mr Steve Marshall in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

ANTI-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi received a delegation consisting of New Zealand Ambassador Mr Steve Marshall and Chief Ombudsman Mr Peter Boshier at the ACC office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed technological cooperation between ACC and Ombudsman Office of New Zealand. —MNA ■

*(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)*



# There will be no excuse on drug matters

**T**HE dramatic increase in the production and seizure of drugs in Myanmar is evidence that drug abuse has become the epidemic of our time. But, concerted efforts on the part of the authorities give us reason to hope that the problem of drugs will be eliminated in the future.

Myanmar is facing a drug problem. In 2017, poppy was cultivated on 41,000 hectares of land to produce 550 metric tons of opium. In 2018, poppy acreage dropped to 37,300 hectares, a decline of 9.1 per cent from the previous year. Opium production also declined 5.45 per cent to reach 520 metric tons.

However, the drug problem escalated due to increased production of stimulants and IECs, and traffickers smuggling drug precursors from the borders of neighbouring countries. As the new generation is vulnerable to drugs and endangered by them, it is vital that the public intensify the fight against drugs with comprehensive measures, considering it a national duty.

Like other countries in the world, Myanmar cannot solve this problem overnight. But, we are committed to eliminating opioid abuse in the country. We are aware that no single country alone can resolve drug-related problems, and we need to increase cooperation with neighboring countries to prevent narcotics use and trafficking. In the fight against drug trafficking in our country, there has been effective action to a certain extent on account of people filing complaints and providing drug-related information to the authorities through a hotline office, established in June, 2018. The Drug Enforcement

Police have, up to the present, conducted 25 special operations in drug hotspots and seized a significant amount of heroin and other drugs.

The authorities must focus on targeting kingpins who control the business. But, better results can be attained if people provide more information on large-scale production, distribution, and trafficking to the authorities.

Hence, we would like to urge people to report and provide information on drugs and drug trafficking, especially detailed information and intelligence on major drug syndicates and drug producers. They must also report officials who are turning a blind eye to drug cases and corrupt officials so that action can be taken against them. We would also like to urge the Regional and State governments and administrative bodies at all levels to abide by the policy: "There will be no excuse on drug matters".



By António Guterres  
(United Nations Secretary-General)

# The Wildfire of Hate Speech

**A**ROUND the world, hate is on the march. A menacing wave of intolerance and hate-based violence is targeting worshippers of many faiths across the globe. Sadly – and disturbingly – such vicious incidents are becoming all too familiar.

In recent months, we have seen Jews murdered in synagogues, their gravestones defaced with swastikas; Muslims gunned down in mosques, their religious sites vandalized; Christians killed at prayer; their churches torched. Beyond these horrific attacks, increasingly loathsome rhetoric is being aimed not only at religious groups but also minorities, migrants, refugees, women and any so-called "other".

As the wildfire of hate spreads, social media is being exploited for bigotry. Neo-Nazi and white supremacist movements are growing. And incendiary rhetoric is being weaponized for political gain. Hate is moving into the mainstream in liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes alike – and casting a shadow over our common humanity.

The United Nations has a long history of mobilizing the world against hatred of all kinds through wide-ranging action to defend human rights and advance



GRAPHIC: BT

the rule of law.

Indeed, the very identity and establishment of the Organization are rooted in the nightmare that ensues when virulent hatred is left unopposed for too long.

We recognize hate speech as an attack on tolerance, inclusion, diversity and the very essence of our human rights norms and principles.

More broadly, it undermines social cohesion, erodes shared values, and can lay the foundation for

violence, setting back the cause of peace, stability, sustainable development and human dignity.

In recent decades, hate speech has been a precursor to atrocity crimes, including genocide, from Rwanda to Bosnia to Cambodia.

I fear that the world is reaching another acute moment in battling the demon of hate.

That is why I have launched two United Nations initiatives in response.

First, I have just unveiled a Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech to coordinate efforts across the whole United Nations system, addressing the root causes and making our response more effective.

Second, we are developing an Action Plan for the UN to be fully engaged in efforts to support safeguard religious sites and ensure the safety of houses of worship.

To those who insist on using fear to divide communities, we

must say: diversity is a richness, never a threat.

A deep and sustained spirit of mutual respect and receptivity can transcend posts and tweets fired off in a split second. We must never forget, after all, that each of us is an "other" to someone, somewhere. There can be no illusion of safety when hate is widespread.

As part of one humanity, it is our duty to look after each other.

Of course, all action aimed at addressing and confronting hate

speech must be consistent with fundamental human rights.

Addressing hate speech does not mean limiting or prohibiting freedom of speech. It means keeping hate speech from escalating into something more dangerous, particularly incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence, which is prohibited under international law.

We need to treat hate speech as we treat every malicious act: by condemning it, refusing to amplify it, countering it with the truth, and encouraging the perpetrators to change their behaviour.

Now is the time to step up to stamp out anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred, persecution of Christians and all other forms of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Governments, civil society, the private sector and the media all have important roles to play. Political and religious leaders have a special responsibility to promote peaceful coexistence.

Hatred is a danger to everyone – and so fighting it must be a job for everyone.

Together, we can put out the wildfire of hate and uphold the values that bind us together as a single human family.

Released by UNIC Yangon



By Maung Thuang Win (Ex-diplomat)

# Prioritizing to keep a school and its environs clean

**B**ASIC education schools across the country have opened since 1 June. After the calm of summer holidays in schools, the schools have become bustling with teachers, parents and students. Sweet voices from the classrooms make us hearty. It is a blessing for our country that a new generation of young people has been in classrooms. In addition, opening more schools mean shutting down more prisons. Therefore, it is more important for schoolchildren to learn their lessons happily. Southwesterly monsoon set in Myanmar in the last week of May. At the beginning of June, it was hot in the afternoon, but dark clouds create rain or thundershowers in the evening. It had been raining regularly all night. Because of storms originating from the Bay of Bengal, heavy rain poured across the country. Scattered rain was observed in some areas. Schoolchildren in some villages go to the school in a faraway place during the heavy rain. They tend to suffer from diarrhea, cough, and fever.

## Health of Schoolchildren

Some school classrooms were covered with dust, dirt, waste and spider's webs dur-

ing the summer holidays, but cleaning was done days before the opening of the schools. Some schools are not kept properly. Unless school desks covered with clouds of dust are properly cleaned, schoolchildren have learned lessons on these desks, making brand new school uniforms dirty; they have to eat food and snacks with dirty hands.

School administrative committees, parents and teachers have to do in advance not to happen again. Toilets, snack bars, the inside and outside cleanings of schools should be carried out before 25 May, especially the cleaning of the classrooms. On the opening days, middle and high school students are assigned to do sweeping, collecting waste products and filling water pots whereas primary students cannot do their duties skillfully.

In some schools, the front and back entrances with pot-holes are dangerous for young children. During rainy season, the roads are usually muddy; they should be repaired in advance. In addition, school sport stadiums are covered with grass and bushes for schoolchildren too difficult to play. A headmaster could solve the problems by himself; the issues should be addressed with the active

Basic needs for children to keep them healthy and happy is personal hygiene. Parents should train their children in their young days to keep them hygienic.

participation of parents in terms of finance and manpower: Donations should be used transparently and practically. Preventive measures to keep the outside and inside of the school School administrative committees with the close cooperation of teachers and parents could make the schools clean by contributing labour or donations. Those who are engaged in some ways should give financial support to the school central fund. By using these funds, cleaners could be hired for cleanliness inside and outside of the school campus. Some schools are covered with dense undergrowth with its signpost blurred. That is why the school has to seek the help of the Tatmadaw, the police force or the charity groups for its

cleanliness. The authorities concerned should give collective financial support to the school so that children could learn lessons happily if the cleanliness inside and outside of the school was systematically done before its opening. The school toilet is the most important place for children. In some schools, toilets keep stinking with swarms of flies. Abundant water supply is necessary; if possible the surroundings should be paved with quicklime. Soaps, tissue papers, and towels should be put inside the toilets. Teachers and parents are mainly responsible for their children to teach how to use the toilets systematically so that they could be prevented from infectious diseases. For everyone, knowledge and caution

about health is not in excess.

## Personal hygiene

Basic needs for children to keep them healthy and happy is personal hygiene. Parents should train their children in their young days to keep them hygienic. Nail and toe clippings, washing hands before meals and after using toilets, regular daily bath, shampooing hair and keeping school uniforms neat and tidy are good habits for them. Practicing these good habits might prevent them from infectious diseases from the outside of their school. In addition, their school uniforms must be regularly washed and ironed by their parents. Even if there are not many, some uniforms are needed to be dried and ironed.

## School's snack stalls

Another place for the sake of children's health is school's snack bars. Almost all schoolchildren usually go to snack stalls to have some sorts of snacks. They usually buy to eat all attractive snacks; they are usually made of chemical dyes and saccharin. Hand-made pickles and salads swarmed with flies might lead them to suffer from diarrhea. During the

rainy season, ripe mangoes swarmed with flies and fermented foods cause serious ill health. Authorities concerned should make arrangements for hawkers to sell snacks compatible with health, and fresh fruits and foods not swarmed with flies. Parents should especially feed their children with nutritious foods. Some parents pay pocket money instead of preparing a lunch box in advance for their children. That is why schoolchildren will have to snacks swarmed with flies. These children might get diarrhea, becoming sickly and frail in the long run. If possible, the lunch box should be followed by nutritious snacks; the idea should be taken seriously by respective parents.

## Easily infectious diseases

It rains off and on in June. Especially in July, it rains almost daily incessantly. Rain or sunshine makes the weather hot and cold. The weather is sultry at bedtime, but at dawn, it is chilly. These conditions make schoolchildren catch cold and cough; the brisk temperature makes them feverish. Children weak in body strength become easily infectious with viruses.

SEE PAGE-10

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Office of the President  
Notification No. 81/2019  
10<sup>th</sup> Waning of Nayon, 1381 ME  
(27 June 2019)

### Formation of the new Ministry at the Region and State levels

In accordance with the agreement of the respective Region and State Hluttaws, the Ministry of Immigration and Human Resources has been established in the Kayah State Government, the Kayin State Government, the Sagaing Region Government, the Taninthayi Region Government, the Mandalay Region Government and the Yangon Region Government respectively.

Sd/-  
Win Myint  
President  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

“ရာသီတုပ်ကွေးရောဂါ မိမိကချေ့ ကာကွယ်ပါ။”

- Coughing/ sneezing into a cloth handkerchief
- Wash your hands often.
- Keep your distance.

Take to a nearby hospital or clinic.

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## Poverty Assessment based on Myanmar Living Conditions Survey introduced

POVERTY Assessment based on data of Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017 was introduced at Thigaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw at 9 am.

At the event, Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win said that Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017 is a collective effort of the Central Statistical Organization, UNDP and World Bank and is a mile stone of success. The assessment will help make policy on tackling poverty and inequality. It was the second report based on the survey. Different perspectives were taken into consideration in rating poverty. The number of people below the poverty line drop from 48.2% in 2005 to 24.8% in 2017.

The poverty rate is highest in Chin and Rakhine states and lowest in Taninthayi, Mandalay, and Yangon regions. Poverty is common in rural area and poverty goes hand in hand with low income. People shifting career from farming to others acquire better standard of living. In Farming, Land owners have the better standard of living than those who don't own land. The report states suggestion in the matters of economy and social of the country.



Union Minister U Soe Win addresses the introduction of Poverty Assessment based on Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (2017) in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

The report also helps tackle unemployment problems. Government and private Organizations should work together to provide clean drinking water, quality sewerage system, health-care and education and electricity and eradicate poverty.

Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs are being implemented in Myanmar with Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan- MSDP and it is important to consider the actual conditions of people.

Union Minister expressed his gratitude to everyone in-

involved in survey taking.

Then, Head of Office from World Bank Mr. Gevorg Sargsyan and Resident Representative of UNDP Mr. Peter Batchelor said their greetings.

Afterwards, Director General of Central Statistical Organization, U San Myint, Project Analyst Sa Sithu Htike San, Senior Economist Mr Clarence Tsimo Nkengne and Deputy Director of Central Statistical Organization Daw Khin Sat Yee detailed the Poverty Report based on the data of Myanmar Living Conditions Survey.

Subsequently, Economist Dr Tin Maung Tan led the discussion under the topic, "What will it take to eradicate poverty in Myanmar". Planning Department, Myanmar Development Organization, civil society Organizations, World Bank and UNDP participated in the discussion.

The event was attended by Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance, U Maung Maung Win, members of regional and state governments, business related organizations, permanent secretaries, directors general, and officials.

Myanmar Living Conditions Survey was conducted by the Central statistical Organization with the help of the World Bank and UNDP. It was conducted in 296 townships of regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw Council.

Form 1145 survey plot data form 13730 household were collected every three months throughout the year.

The report based on it will be used in making policy of the development of the country and for statistic analysts. ■

(Translated by Alphonsus)

## Myanmar International Terminals Thilawa Phase 2 to be extended soon

With the economy forecast to grow, the Myanmar International Terminals Thilawa (MITT) plans to invest in extending its Phase 2 soon, MITT marketing manager U Than Tun has been quoted by iMyanmarHouse.com as saying.

"We are also planning to implement goods transportation by train from Thilawa to Ywar Thar Gyi-Mandalay in August," he added.

MITT Phase 2 will be extended with US\$158 million obtained from Hong-Kong based

Hutchison Port Holding Company.

According to MITT, the terminal is 185 acres wide and the jetty is 1,000 meters long. The construction of the container yard has been completed. The terminal can now

handle 450,000 containers annually.

In 2017-2018, Thilawa terminals handled 157,755 TEUs. Hutchison Port Holding Company has already constructed jetties in Europe, the Middle East, Asian countries, and the

US. They have invested in construction of 52 jetties in over 20 countries.

Hutchison Port Holding Company began investing in Myanmar International Terminals Thilawa in 1995. — GNLM ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

## Prioritizing to keep a school and its environs clean

### FROM PAGE-9

Sickly children in the classroom should be separated from other ones. Parents should not let them go to school, giving them a complete rest at home. Generally, children easily catch the fever when mingled with sick children.

The health of the children of school age depends on the cleanliness of their school. Badly-ventilated classrooms jammed with children and covered with dust and dirt, viruses spread easily among them. Schoolchildren in schools covered with undergrowth are likely to catch dengue haemorrhagic fever. Mosquitoes breed quickly in the dense undergrowth, muddy water, puddles and pools without roofs.

### Taking great care

Cleanliness for school environs should be taken seriously by school administration council with close cooperation of parents. A teaching staff headed by the Headmaster or Headmistress should take great interest in cleanliness of their school. Unless cleaners and schoolchildren are unable to do their cleaning work, they should

seek help from authorities concerned and town elders. As children learn lessons in clean school and its environs, they could come to school regularly. As a consequence, they are deemed outstanding students.

### Examinations of health in schools

In addition, school examination groups should pay a regular visit to the Basic primary, middle and high schools. The graph in connection with the weight and height of children should be systematically recorded. Medical treatments should be given to children after systematic investigations who easily fall into diseases including dengue haemorrhagic fever and tuberculosis. While they are learning, whether there is enough light or not, adequate ventilation in the classrooms, toilets, snack bars, cleanliness inside and outside of the schools must be examined. Investigations should be taken whether there are bushes and heaps of refuse which need to be cut down and disposed. Findings should be reported to the authorities concerned so that children could learn lessons well.

### For children to learn lessons well

Schoolchildren are indeed crown jewels of a country. Their learning lessons happily in the school depends mainly on teachers and parents.

As they are fully occupied in learning, classrooms and cleanliness play a vital role. In order to keep the school and its environs clean, regional authorities, school administrative council, parents and ward elders should take part in the task simultaneously. In this way, schoolchildren could learn in happy and healthy environments.

The rate of students and classrooms, adequate ventilation, clean toilets and snack stalls, cleanliness in the environs play an important role for the health of schoolchildren. It would be successful if regional health authorities, school administrative committee, teachers, and parents take active participation in the task to keep the school and its environs clean. Let the schoolchildren who are due to shoulder the responsibility for the benefits of our country take learning opportunities fully.

Translated by Arakan Sein



## Union Minister U Thaung Tun receives Chinese Ambassador

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, U Thaung Tun received Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Mr. Chen Hai on Thursday at the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Nay Pyi Taw.

Matters relating to further promoting ties of friendship, bilateral economic cooperation and investment as well as infrastructure development were discussed.—MNA



Union Minister U Thaung Tun shakes hands with Chinese Ambassador Mr. Chen Hai in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Four dead, three undergoing treatment after eating wild mushrooms

OF the seven migrant workers who were hospitalized on 20 June after consuming wild mushrooms, four died yesterday at the Mandalay People's Hospital.

The workers reportedly ate poisonous mushrooms on 20 June while working in a sugarcane field in a village in Yunnan Province, China. They were admitted to a local hospital and later transferred to the Mandalay People's Hospital on 26 June. The victims have been identified as U Tun Tun Oo, 36, from Thanze Village in Sedoktara Township, Magway

Region, U Tun Lin, 43, Maung Tin San Lin, 18, and Ma Thein Thein Win, 28, from Yebokalay Village, Pwintbyu Township, U Supar, 26, from Kaunggyi Village, Pwintbyu Township, Ma Su Myat Khaing, 23, from Htoopauk Village in Pwintbyu Township, and Ma K Zin Thwe, 18, from Kyaukkongyi Village in Pwintbyu Township.

Seven Myanmar migrant workers had also died of mushroom poisoning in China in June, 2018.—Salai Van Rohtan (IPRD)

■  
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

## Britain adopts 2050 net zero emissions target

LONDON — Britain on Thursday became the world's first major economy to adopt the tough new target of lowering fossil fuel emissions to a level of net zero by 2050.

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Chris Skidmore signed an order paper enacting the legislation after it passed both houses of parliament without a vote earlier this week.

Britain is already on course this year to make low-carbon

sources such as wind and solar responsible for more than half of all its power generation for the first time since the 1800s.

"The UK kick-started the Industrial Revolution, which was responsible for economic growth across the globe but also for increasing emissions," Skidmore said in a statement.

"Today we're leading the world yet again in becoming the first major economy to pass

new laws to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050 while remaining committed to growing the economy." The deadline is more ambitious than Britain's previous policy of cutting emissions by 80 percent over the same period.

'Incredible progress'

The stringent new guidelines will require a fundamental change in how the UK economy functions that some have warned

may carry prohibitive costs.

Philip Hammond's finance ministry has reportedly issued a study showing that a shift to net zero from current targets could cost more than £1.0 trillion (\$1.3 trillion, 1.1 trillion euros) over 30 years. But the top UK advisory body on climate change said the new target could be achieved within a less costly budget of 1.0-2.0 percent of gross domestic product by 2050.—AFP ■

## Spain wildfire out of control amid Europe heatwave

BARCELONA — A Spanish forest fire raged out of control Thursday amid a European heatwave, devouring land as hundreds of firefighters battled through the night, local authorities said.

The blaze broke out Wednesday afternoon in Torre del Espanol in the northeastern region of Catalonia and by Thursday had destroyed more than 5,500 hectares (13,500 acres), the regional government said.

The fire could eventually devour 20,000 hectares in what was presented as an "extreme risk", a statement said.

The blaze raged several kilometres from the Asco nuclear plant but officials said the site was not at risk since winds were blowing the flames away from it.

"The difficulties are such that we can't talk about a fire that is under control or in the extinction phase, but rather that we're at a moment when the blaze is getting bigger," regional interior minister Miquel Buch told Catalan radio.

Some 350 firefighters backed by around 120 soldiers and 15 aerial tanker aircraft were at the scene of the blaze, the worst in Catalonia in the last 20 years.

Buch said it might have been caused by "an accumulation of manure in a farm that generated enough heat to explode and generate sparks."—AFP ■

## Japan faces critics, conflict on environment issues at G20

OSAKA — G20 host Japan hopes world leaders will endorse a deal on marine plastic waste and find common ground on climate change, but its own environmental record is under increasing scrutiny.

Activists say Japan has fallen behind on reducing plastic consumption and is caving

to US pressure to water down language on climate change to achieve a unanimous statement on the issue.

Japan, chair of this week's Group of 20 meeting in Osaka, has already secured agreement from environment ministers on a marine plastic waste deal that will be endorsed this week.

The deal commits G20 members to reducing plastic waste but includes few details on how that will be achieved, proposing only voluntary steps and yearly progress reports.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said last month the issue would be "one of the most important themes of the G20", adding that Japan "hopes to play a leadership role". But while campaigners say the agreement — the first on the issue bringing together rich and developing nations — is a "first step", they argue it should be more ambitious.

"Legally binding international rules with clear timelines and goals" are needed, Yukihiro Misawa, plastic policy manager of environmental group WWF Japan, told AFP.

Experts welcomed part of the agreement that calls for research to better understand where plastic is coming from and

how to tackle it.

"Scientific knowledge should be the foundation of an international deal, so that's good," professor Atsuhiko Isobe of Kyushu University's Center for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research told AFP.

### Japan as a role model?

The agreement comes as campaigners criticise Japan for moving too slowly on reducing plastic consumption, particularly as the country produces more plastic waste per capita than any nation apart from the United States.

Japan touts an enviable waste management system, and 86 percent of its plastic waste is recycled. But much of that "recycling" involves simply incinerating plastic, often to produce energy, a process that generates carbon dioxide and contributes to climate change.—AFP ■

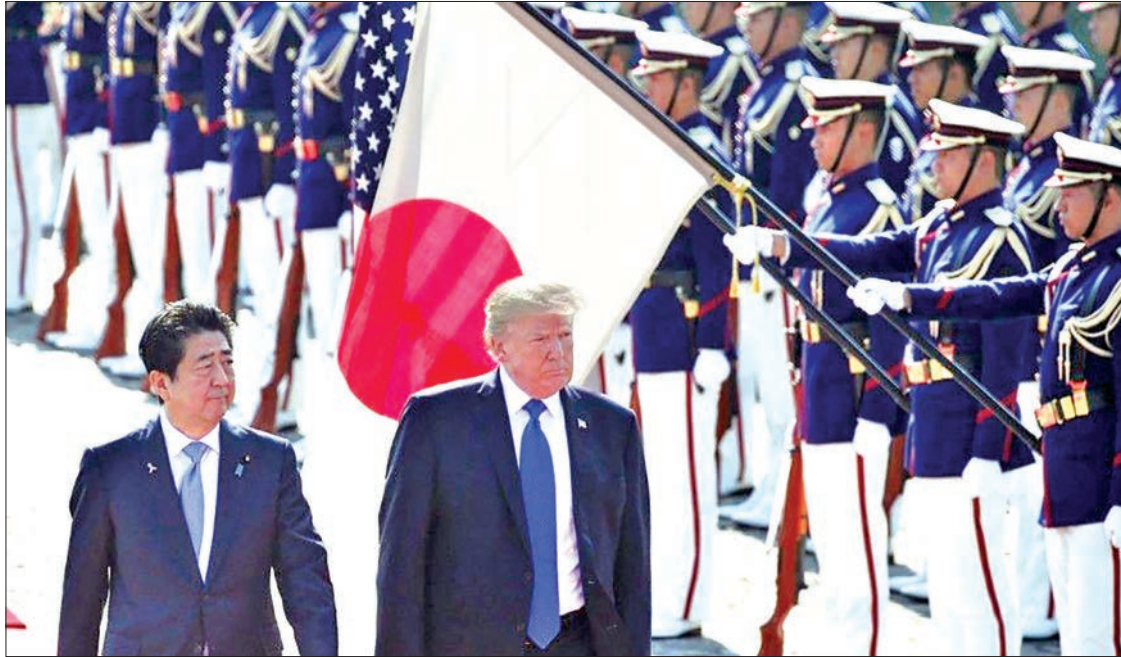


G20 leaders are set to endorse a deal on marine plastic pollution, but Japan's own record on waste is coming under the spotlight.

**PHOTO: AFP**



## Is Donald Trump's threat to quit Japan defence pact just a negotiating tactic?



Japan's armed forces are solely intended to be used for self defence under the terms of the country's post-war constitution. **PHOTO: KYODO**

OSAKA — Security analysts have dismissed suggestions that Donald Trump would pull out of the defence treaty with Japan, saying it was likely to be a negotiating tactic aimed at extorting greater trade concessions from Tokyo.

They also warned that if Japan was freed from the restrictions imposed by the post-World War II alliance, it would build up its military “possibly acquiring nuclear weapons” which would unsettle China and trigger an “unrestricted” arms race in the region.

The US president is expected to arrive in Osaka on Thursday ahead of the G20 summit, where he is expected to meet his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on Saturday for much-anticipated trade talks. However, Trump will also want similar talks with Japan as he pushes for a deal aimed at resolving a trade deficit that the United States says has reached US\$67.6 billion.

### View photos

On his last visit to Japan in May he agreed to suspend an increase in tariffs on Japanese cars for six months, and predicted the two sides would reach a deal “probably by August”.

“Trump will not pull out of the defence treaty which has played an essential role in the United States’ global strategy,” said Song Zhongping, a Hong Kong-based military analyst. “Trump just wants to push for more trade concessions from Japan.”

Song said that Trump also wanted Japan to increase its contribution towards the costs of stationing American troops in the country by half. About 54,000 American troops are stationed in the country across 85 facilities, according to the US Congressional Research Service.

On Tuesday Bloomberg cited three unnamed sources as saying that Trump had privately

discussed ending the pact “a claim the Japanese and White House both denied.

But Song also argued: “It’s Japan that wants to abolish the defence treaty more and it’s the US that has restricted Japan’s ability to develop its own military capabilities.”

“If the US did withdraw from the treaty, Japan would have no limits on its military build-up,” Song added. “That would pose a real threat to China.”

During his visit last month, Trump confirmed that Japan had been given the go-ahead to buy 105 US-made F-35 Lightning jets, which would give it the largest F-35 fleet of any US ally.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has previously suggested that Japan’s constitution, brought in after its defeat in World War II, should be revised to remove a clause limiting its armed forces to a purely defensive role.—AFP ■

## NATO agrees response to new Russia missile

BRUSSELS — NATO on Wednesday agreed a package of political and military measures to boost its defences against a controversial new Russian missile system.

The alliance will review its air and missile defences, along with its intelligence and surveillance programmes, unless Moscow abandons its 9M729 ground-launched cruise missiles by August 2.

The US and NATO say Russia is breaching the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty with the missile and endangering peace in Europe.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Russia still had a chance to save the the landmark Cold War arms control pact.

“There’s a window of opportunity. Time is running out but it is still possible for Russia to save the INF treaty,” Stoltenberg told reporters at a meeting of NATO defence ministers.

“If they don’t come back into compliance before August 2 then they have to bear the full responsibility for the demise of

the treaty.”

After years of complaining to Russia about the missile, the US announced in February it would pull out of the INF on 2 August unless Moscow gave it up.

A meeting of the NATO-Russia Council has been called next week as a last-ditch attempt to save the deal, but there is little expectation of Russia backing down.

Moscow for its part insists the missile complies with the INF and has made counter-accusations against the US.

A number of European allies are keen to use every last moment to try to save the INF, which is seen as a cornerstone of global arms control, but defence ministers agreed to prepare measures in case the efforts fail.

“We have agreed on a wide range of measures: political measures, military measures, exercises, missile defence, conventional and any others,” Stoltenberg said.

“Some of them will be long term, others it will be possible to implement short term or more concretely.” AFP ■



NATO says Russia's mobile 9M729 cruise missile can hit European capitals with nuclear warheads in a matter of minutes. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Warren leads US Democrats in spirited first 2020 debate

WASHINGTON — Ten Democrats clashed Wednesday in the first debate of the 2020 presidential race, with Elizabeth Warren cementing her status as a top-tier candidate and several underdogs using the issue of immigration to clamor for the limelight.

The biggest American political debate since the 2016 presidential campaign is occurring over two nights in Miami, climaxing Thursday with former vice president Joe Biden squaring off against number two candidate

Bernie Sanders and eight others.

Wednesday’s first take was a spirited encounter among ex-congressman Beto O’Rourke, Senator Cory Booker, former San Antonio mayor Julian Castro and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio on everything from health care and economic inequality to climate action, gun violence, Iran and immigration.

They hit out at President Donald Trump’s economic and immigration policies, but diverged on how zealously the next

president should shift the country onto a more liberal course.

Despite heavy campaigning in early voting states, millions of Americans were tuning in to the 2020 race for the first time.

What they heard from the start was the progressive ideology of Warren, the night’s only candidate polling in double digits, and her knocking a rigged system. “When you’ve got a government, when you have an economy that does great for those with money and is not doing great for every-

one else, that is corruption, pure and simple,” she said. “We need to call it out.”

On such a crowded stage the hopefuls had limited time to impress, and of the low-polling candidates, Castro, De Blasio and Amy Klobuchar seemed to make the most of the opportunity.

The debate’s backdrop—the mushrooming border crisis, the detention of migrant children in squalid conditions and a shocking photograph of a Salvadoran man and his daughter drowned

in the Rio Grande — prompted tense exchanges. Castro, the only Latino in the race, who wants to decriminalize unauthorized immigration as part of a sweeping immigration reform, called the photograph “heartbreaking.”

“It should also piss us all off,” he said, “and it should spur us to action.” O’Rourke, Booker and later Castro notably slipped into Spanish as they spoke about the migration crisis, openly courting an increasingly influential voting bloc.—AFP ■



# US, China agree to trade truce ahead of Trump-Xi talks: report



US President Donald Trump (centre) is expected to meet his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Japan on Saturday. **PHOTO: AFP**

OSAKA — The United States and China have agreed to a tentative cease-fire in their trade war ahead of a bilateral summit in Osaka this weekend, the South China Morning Post reported Thursday, citing three sources in Beijing and Washington.

Details of the agreement — which would suspend U.S. tariffs on an additional \$300 billion of Chinese products — are being laid out in press releases in advance of the meeting Saturday between US President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping, the paper said.

Meanwhile, Trump

criticized the United States' security treaty with Japan, calling it unfair, a sign that he may touch on the issue in a meeting Friday with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the margins of a two-day meeting of the Group of 20 major economies starting that day in the western Japanese city.

The comment was taken as suggesting Trump could use a threat to potentially scrap the long-time treaty as leverage to extract concessions from Japan during ongoing negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement.

With the tit-for-tat US-China tariff war roiling

financial markets and impacting global growth, analysts are closely watching whether Trump and Xi can avoid a further escalation of the dispute as they hold face-to-face talks.

Quoting one source with knowledge of the planning, the Hong Kong paper said Trump's decision to delay additional tariffs was Xi's price for having the meeting in Osaka.

A senior US administration official suggested Tuesday that Trump and Xi may agree to relaunch trade negotiations, a scenario similar to that which the leaders reached in their last meeting in December

in Argentina.

Under this scenario, the two sides' existing tariffs and counter-duties on many of each other's goods would stay in place. But no additional import taxes would take effect as a goodwill gesture to get the talks rolling.

Washington has imposed 25 per cent tariffs on \$250 billion of Chinese imports. Beijing has retaliated by taxing \$110 billion in goods from the United States.

Despite the December truce, US-China talks broke down in May and the two sides slapped additional tariffs on each other. Trump has now threatened to impose levies of up to 25 percent on an additional \$300 billion of Chinese products, a move that would extend US tariffs to nearly everything China ships to the United States.

In a meeting with Abe on Friday, Trump is expected to demand that Japan cut tariffs on American agricultural products as part of a trade deal, as he endeavors to appease impacted farmers in the lead-up to campaigning for his 2020 re-election bid.

—Kyodo News ■

## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V CHERRY VESTA VOY. NO. (017N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CHERRY VESTA VOY. NO. (017N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-06-2019 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.

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## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

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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.

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# Japan, Indian leaders agree to step up defense cooperation

OSAKA— International Airport in Osaka Prefecture, western Japan, on June 27, 2019, a day before a two-day Group of 20 summit starts in the city of Osaka. (Kyodo)

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Thursday that Japan's ties with India are blessed with the "greatest potential for development of any bilateral relationship in the world" and agreed with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi to enhance defense cooperation.

"Toward the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific, I'd like to... advance concrete cooperation on connectivity

through quality infrastructure as well as defense and security," Abe was quoted by the Japanese Foreign Ministry as telling Modi as they met on the fringes of a Group of 20 summit in Osaka, with China's growing influence in the region apparently in mind.

Modi agreed to pursue cooperation in the fields of security, disaster risk reduction, digital affairs and cooperation in other countries, according to the ministry.

With Modi having traveled to Japan in October for annual summit talks, Abe said it is now his turn to go to India and that he is looking forward to the trip.

The Japanese prime minister also said the two countries should hold "two-plus-two" foreign and defense ministerial talks, which they agreed to institute in October, as soon as possible.

Japan and India have already held security talks at the vice ministerial level, but have decided to upgrade the format.

Congratulating Modi on his party's victory in a general election in May, Abe expressed his desire to work with him "hand in hand" and elevate the Japan-India relationship "to greater heights," according to the ministry. —Kyodo News ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR  
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY  
ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION ENTERPRISE

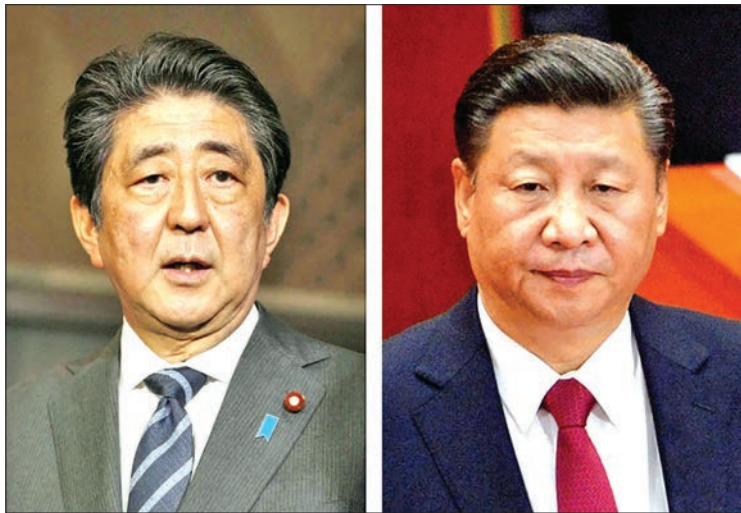
Invitation to Bid for purchasing of 1040 MW from Gas Engine Power Plant/ Power Barge/ Power Ship on Independent Power Producer and Build-Operate-Own Basis

1. Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) seeks to invite tender for the purchasing of electricity 1040 MW from the Gas Engine Power Plant/Power Barge/Power Ship on Independent Power Producer and Build-Operate-Own (IPP/BOO) basis as follow.

		Location	Size(MW)	Remark
Lot 1	Package-1	Kyun Chaung	20	Gas (Pass Through basis)
	Package-2	Ahlone	120	
		Location	Size(MW)	
Lot-2	Package-3	Kyauk Phyu	150	LNG to Power
	Package-4	Thanlyin	350	
	Package-5	Tharketa	400	

- The concession period shall be 5 years (five) years from commercial operation date (COD).
- The Tender Form for each package can be purchased at Procurement Department, Electric Power Generation Enterprise, Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw, and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar within office hour from the tender announced date. The Tender Form fees for each package is as follow;
  - Package -1 Myanmar Kyat 300,000/- (Myanmar Kyat three hundred thousand only)
  - Package -2 and 3 Myanmar Kyat 400,000/- (Myanmar Kyat four hundred thousand only)
  - Package - 4 and 5 Myanmar Kyat 500,000/- (Myanmar Kyat five hundred thousand only)
- Site Visit will be conducted for package 2,3,4 and 5. The tentative date for site visit is July 6 and 7, 2019. The bid submission date is 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2019 at [14:00] hr. Myanmar Standard Time.
- The bidders shall make the proposals in accordance with the **Invitation for Bid and Supplemental Request for Proposal (SRFP)**. Bidder's Proposals must be submitted at the address on time. Any late proposal shall be rejected.
- The necessary information of this tender can be inquired within office hour.
  - Electric Power Generation Enterprise
  - Ministry of Electricity and Energy
  - Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw
  - Ph +95 67 8104282





Combined file photo shows Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (L) and Chinese President Xi Jinping. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## Xi eager to visit Japan as state guest next spring

OSAKA — Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday expressed willingness to visit Japan as a “state guest” next spring for the first time since he came to power in 2013, in another sign of a thaw in relations between the two Asian powers.

“It is a good idea for me to visit Japan next spring,” Xi told Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the outset of their meeting on the sideline of the two-day Group of 20 summit in Osaka from Friday, pledging to make efforts to build a “new era” of Sino-Japanese ties.

Xi, who arrived in Osaka earlier in the day, is making his first visit to Japan as China’s president to attend the summit, but he is not a state guest this time.

His remark came after Abe invited the Chinese head of state to make a trip to Japan as a state guest “when cherry blossoms bloom.”

Abe told Xi that Japan is eager to work together with China to elevate oft-strained relations between the two nations to a “new dimension,” adding that bilateral ties have “completely returned to a normal track.”

During their meeting and ensuing dinner, Abe and Xi were also expected to exchange views on North Korea’s denuclearization alongside other issues concerning their two countries.

Xi visited Pyongyang last week for talks with leader Kim Jong Un, becoming the first Chinese head of state to travel to North Korea in 14 years.

Amid a tit-for-tat tariff war with the United States, Xi called for Japan’s cooperation to tackle trade protectionism, taking an apparent jab at US President Donald Trump, whose “America First” agenda contrasts sharply

with globalization.

Xi is likely to meet with Trump on Saturday for the first time in around seven months, with businesses and markets set to watch whether the leaders of the world’s two biggest economies can avoid a further escalation of the US-China trade dispute.

Japan and China, meanwhile, plan to cooperate on giant panda breeding research and will sign a memorandum on the occasion of their leaders’ meeting in a bid to showcase the thaw in bilateral relations, diplomatic sources said.

The last visit to Japan by a Chinese head of state was made by Hu Jintao in November 2010. He attended a Yokohama meeting of leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

China-Japan tension intensified after the government of Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, Abe’s predecessor, decided in September 2012 to bring the uninhabited Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea under state control.

The Senkakus, called Diaoyu in China, are controlled by Japan but claimed by Beijing.

The relationship between the two nations appears to have changed recently, with last year’s 40th anniversary of the bilateral Treaty of Peace and Friendship serving as an incentive to forge better ties.

Beijing has also been trying to improve relations with its neighbors, as this year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, led by the Communist Party.

Xi is scheduled to stay in Osaka for three days through Saturday. He last visited Japan in 2009, when he was a vice president of China.—Kyodo News ■

## Afghan president arrives in Pakistan to discuss ties, peace talks

ISLAMABAD — Afghan President Ashraf Ghani flew into Pakistan on Thursday for talks aimed at bolstering bilateral relations and discussing Islamabad’s role in supporting Afghanistan’s peace process.

After arriving for the two-day visit, his first to Pakistan since Prime Minister Imran Khan took office last year, Ghani met with Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

“Pakistan will make its contribution with an open heart, honestly, with full responsibility in the ongoing Afghan peace and reconciliation talks,” Qureshi was quoted as saying in the meeting, according to a statement by the Foreign Ministry.

Pakistan is often accused of harboring Taliban militia forces that carry out terrorist activities and attacks on foreign troops



Afghan President Ashraf Ghani addresses the closing ceremony of the country’s Loya Jirga grand assembly in Kabul on 3 May, 2019. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

in Afghanistan and the Afghan army.

The statement said that discussions with the Afghan

delegation will also focus on Afghan transit trade and bilateral trade, which have been adversely affected in recent times by the construction of a fence on the long border between the two countries.

Ghani’s spokesman Haroon Chakhansuri said Wednesday in Kabul that the visit was important to “see how such a regional country like Pakistan is ready and what kind of help it can provide for peace in Afghanistan.”

The visit comes ahead of the next round of talks between the United States and the Afghan Taliban on Saturday in Doha, Qatar.

Hectic diplomatic and political activity has preceded the talks, which are aimed at finding a peaceful solution to Afghanistan’s 18-year-old war.—Kyodo News ■

## Huawei staff pair up with Chinese military on research

BEIJING — Huawei employees have teamed up with Chinese military scientists to carry out research, a collaboration that challenges the telecom giant’s assertion that it has no ties to the country’s government or armed forces.

Founded by former People’s Liberation Army (PLA) engineer RenZhengfei, Washington suspects Huawei has deep ties to China’s military and thus poses a security threat.

US President Donald Trump placed Huawei last month on a blacklist prohibiting US firms from selling components to the company, raising tensions in the US-China trade war. A 90-day reprieve was granted.

Several research papers published since 2009 show Huawei employees have worked with researchers at different arms of the People’s Liberation Army, according to an AFP review of academic papers. Bloomberg News first reported on the collaborations.

Military and private sector collaboration is common in many countries but Huawei has gone to great lengths to deny any close relationship with the Chinese government or military.

Microsoft researchers in China for instance raised eye-

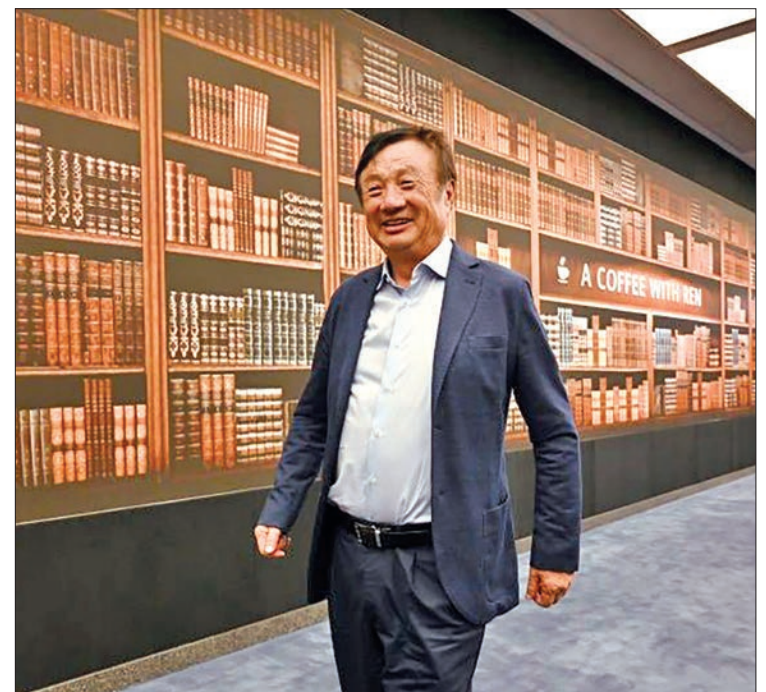
brows earlier this year for their work with scholars affiliated with a Chinese military-backed university — researchers from the same university worked with a Huawei employee on at least one project.

Huawei employees and PLA members have worked together on at least 10 research projects including artificial intelligence and radio communications, according to Bloomberg News.

Ren has denied Huawei maintains military connections.

“We don’t have any R&D collaboration or partnerships with the PLA-affiliated institutions,” Ren told journalists in January, according to a Huawei transcript.

“We are probably selling a small amount of civilian products to the PLA, but I don’t know the exact number, because it is not our major customer,” he said at the time. But the academic papers list the names of the researchers and the Huawei units they work for.—AFP ■



The founder and CEO of Huawei RenZhengfei is a former People’s Liberation Army engineer. PHOTO: AFP



# Europe powerless as Iran nuclear deal unravels

PARIS — The 2015 Iranian nuclear deal, hailed at the time as a historic boost for regional peace, is unravelling before the eyes of its European backers who appear powerless in the face of US rejection of the accord, analysts say.

The United States, under the presidency of Barack Obama, was among the powers that clinched the deal.

But in May 2018, Donald Trump declared he was abandoning the signature foreign policy achievement of his predecessor.

European powers led by Germany and France have sought to salvage the deal but analysts say the accord appears all but doomed as the risk of military confrontation between Tehran and Washington grows.

Frustrated it was not getting the promised benefits of the deal following the US withdrawal, Iran last month said it would stop respecting the agreed limits on stockpiles of enriched uranium as well as those for heavy water.

“Everything was sealed after the decision by Donald Trump,” Bruno Tertrais, deputy director of France’s Foundation for Strategic



France and Germany have been at the forefront of efforts to keep the nuclear deal alive, with Berlin’s top diplomat Heiko Maas, seen on the right, visiting Iran earlier this month. **PHOTO: AFP**

Research (FRS), told AFP.

## ‘Without concession’

The 2015 accord promised Iran relief from international sanctions that had crippled its economy for years, in return for guarantees about the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme which Western powers fear could be used to make a bomb.

The problem is that the global economy is so connected it is near impossible for European companies to deal seriously with Iran without incurring the wrath of the United States, analysts say.

EU companies are still haunted by the \$8.9-billion fine handed to French bank BNP Paribas in June 2014 after it pled guilty to US criminal charges of

violating sanctions on Cuba, Iran and Sudan for eight years.

“European companies are more globalised while the US policy under Trump is without any concession,” said Tertrais.

## ‘In intensive care’

EU officials have insisted the deal is not dead and have engaged in intense diplomacy with

Tehran, despite an upsurge of tensions in the Gulf following the sabotage of tankers the US has blamed on Iran.

President Emmanuel Macron’s diplomatic advisor Emmanuel Bonne and German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas have both visited Tehran this month.

EU powers have sought to keep the nuclear deal alive with a special trade mechanism called INSTEX that would allow legitimate trade with Iran without falling foul of US sanctions.

But it is not fully operational. “I would not say the deal is dead yet, but certainly it is in intensive care,” said Annalisa Perteghella, research fellow at the Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI).

“We are witnessing some efforts to resuscitate it but if I look at the future, I can’t see it leaving the hospital safe and sound,” she added. She said instruments such as INSTEX promoted by the European Union to revive the deal have “proven worthless in the face of the tremendous economic leverage the US still has on financial markets”.—AFP ■

## Sweltering Europe braces for peak of record heatwave

PARIS — Europeans braced Thursday for the expected peak of a sweltering heatwave that has sent temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius, with schools in France closing and wildfires in Spain spinning out of control.

Governments warned citizens to take extra precautions, with the high temperatures also causing a build-up of pollution, as emergency calls to hospitals increased.

Exceptional for arriving so early in summer, the heatwave

will on Thursday and Friday likely send thermometers above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) in France, Spain and Greece.

A forest fire in Torre de Espanol in Spain’s northeastern Catalonia region raged out of control, devouring land despite the efforts of hundreds of firefighters who worked through the night.

In the Italian city of Milan, a homeless man aged 72 was found dead at the main train station after falling ill due to the heatwave, the local authorities said.

## Ice cakes for animals

Across Europe people frolicked in fountains to stay cool while at the Bordeaux-Pessac Zoo in southwestern France, keepers handed out fish or mango ice cakes to keep the animals cool. At the Serengeti animal park in Hodenhagen near Hannover, northern Germany, keepers even applied sunscreen to some animals. French Health Minister Agnes Buzyn said people had to be prepared for the peak of the heatwave and expressed irritation that some appeared not to be taking the advice on board.

“We see citizens who are quite irresponsible and continue to go jogging between midday and 2:00 pm,” she told France 2 TV. She complained also of seeing “parents who leave their children in the car to do some quick shopping or leave them without a hat in the open air.”

Some four days into the heatwave, Buzyn said French authorities were seeing an increase in the number of calls to emergency services and that she was concerned there would be an influx of people going to hospital.—AFP ■



The heat has been particularly intense in northern Spain, with temperatures set to rise above 40 degrees Celsius at the weekend. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Frenchman jailed for five years in Brussels diamond heist

BRUSSELS — A Frenchman was sentenced Thursday in Belgium to five years in prison for his role in a spectacular \$50 million diamond heist at Brussels airport in 2013.

Smiling, Marc Bertoldi, 48, replied “thanks, goodbye” after the presiding judge told him he had one month to appeal his jail sentence and a 6,000 euros (\$6,800) fine.

The February 18, 2013 robbery, one of the world’s biggest diamond thefts, saw a gang of armed men posing as police seize the gems from a passenger plane in an operation that lasted barely six minutes without a shot being fired.

The hooded men, armed with machine guns, pulled up in a car on the runway at Brussels’ main Zaventem airport where an armoured vehicle had just unloaded diamonds onto a plane about to take off for Zurich.

The men forced open the hold and removed about 120 boxes of diamonds before making off with the haul of about \$50 million dollars (worth 37 million euros at the time) in gems, most of which was never recovered.



Frenchman jailed for five years in Brussels diamond heist. **PHOTO: AFP**

Some gold and precious metal in powder form were also stolen. More than 30 people were detained in Belgium, France and Switzerland in massive coordinated police operations.

Last month, Bertoldi denied he had taken part in what the Belgian media called “the heist of the century,” telling the court he had only received some of the stolen diamonds. But the presiding judge, reading the sentence on Thursday, said Bertoldi, an athletic man who wore jeans and a dark shirt, had in fact been “an indispensable cog” in the theft.

The judge said Bertoldi nonetheless “did not personally participate in all the offences committed,” particularly the theft of cars that were later set on fire.—AFP ■



## Myanmar U-14 footballers leave for China for Wuhan Cup 2019

THE Myanmar U-14 boys national football squad left for Wuhan, China from the Yangon International Airport yesterday morning to compete in the Wuhan Cup 2019 International Youth Championship, said a source with the Myanmar Football Federation.

The Myanmar team has 18 talented youth footballers and is headed by coach U Bo Bo Aung from the Mandalay National Football Academy.

Eight teams divided into two groups are participating in the Wuhan Cup 2019 International Youth Championship, which is scheduled to be held from 29

June to 5 July.

The Myanmar U-14 team has been placed in Group A with China, Republic of Korea, and Indonesia.

The Group B comprises teams from Wuhan (China), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Osaka (Japan), and Malaysia.

In the group stage, Myanmar will take on China at 8 p.m. (China Standard Time) on 29 June, the Republic of Korea at 8 p.m. (China Standard Time) on 30 June, and Indonesia at 5 p.m. (China Standard Time) on 2 July.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



The Myanmar U-14 football squad and their coaches pose for a group photo at the Yangon International Airport yesterday before leaving for Wuhan, China to take part in the Wuhan Cup 2019. **PHOTO: MFF**

## Myanmar women's football team to play friendlies with local men's clubs



Veteran striker Win Theingi Tun (No.7) vies for the ball against a footballer from a local men's club during a previous friendly match. **PHOTO: MFF**

TO prepare for the ASEAN Football Federation Women's Championship 2019, the Myanmar national women's football team will play friendly matches against three local men's clubs next week, according to a statement issued by the Myanmar Football Federation.

The women's team will play their first friendly match against the Institute of Sports and Physical Education (ISPE) team of Mawlamyaing on 30 June, Dawei Township's U-19 team on 2 July, and the all-stars veteran team of Dawei Township on 4 July.

The Myanmar women's team comprises 25 stars play-

ers — a mix of talented youth footballers and veteran players.

The team will be headed by its head coach U Win Thu Moe and will be supervised by a seven-member coaching team, said a source with the MFF.

The Myanmar women's team will leave for Mawlamyaing, Mon State from Yangon on 28 June for their first friendly against Mawlamyaing's ISPE team.

After the first match, the team will head to Dawei, Thaninthayi Region for the next two matches, according to the football federation.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

## Neymar wants Barcelona return, says club's vice-president

BARCELONA Brazilian superstar Neymar wants to return to Barcelona two years after quitting the club to join Paris Saint-Germain, Barcelona's vice-president said Thursday.

"What is correct, at the current time, what I have read, what I have heard, which seems exact, is that Neymar wants to come back to Barcelona," Jordi Cardoner told a press conference at the Camp Nou.

But he stressed that Barcelona had made no contact so far with the world's most expensive footballer who joined the French champions for 222 million euros (\$252 million).

For the moment the club acknowledged Neymar's interest

in returning to Barcelona but said there was no recruitment effort on their part to resign him.

"To say that Barça is working on recruiting Neymar, that is something I cannot agree with," Cardoner said.

"For the moment all that is happening — and not only with Neymar — is that a number of players would like to play for a great club like Barcelona. We will see what happens in timely fashion."

"We are currently working on the phase of deciding which players we will not be keeping on next season," said Cardoner.

"We are recruiting no-one at the moment, especially not this player (Neymar) with whom we

have had no contact."

However, media reports indicated that intermediaries between PSG and Barca had hammered out the terms of the deal which would free the Brazilian star to return to Barcelona this summer.

According to other Spanish media reports this week, Neymar has offered to take a pay cut of 12 million euros a year to return to the club and Barca have reached a 'verbal agreement' to take him back. The 27-year-old spent four years at Camp Nou, winning the Champions League in 2015 and two La Liga titles in a potent attacking trio alongside Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez.—**AFP** ■



(FILES) In this file photo taken on August 20, 2016, Brazil's forward Neymar poses for a selfie with fans as they celebrate after the Rio 2016 Olympic Games men's football gold medal match between Brazil and Germany at the Maracana stadium in Rio de Janeiro. **PHOTO: AFP**