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State Counsellor opens housings for university teachers, lab equipment factory in Yangon



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi formally opens the two housings for university teachers and a new laboratory equipment factory in Hline Township, Yangon, yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

STATE COUNSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi inaugurated two housing projects for university teachers and a new laboratory equipment factory in Hline Township, Yangon, yesterday morning.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by Union Ministers U Min Thu, U Ohn Win, Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Dr Myint Htwe and U Han Zaw; Union Auditor General U Maw Than, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Pyo Min Thein, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, minister for regional government, Hluttaw representatives, Chairman of Sae Paing Development Limited,

officials and invited guests.

The State Counsellor watched a video presentation of Mindhamma Pyinnya Yeiktha Housing for teachers, Hline Pyinnya Yeiktha staff apartment, and a new laboratory equipment factory.

In her speech, the State Counsellor said, "I would like to extend my greetings to all invited guests at the ceremony. I am pleased with this occasion. According to the designs, the facilities look very smart. I hope that the performance of the civil service staff will be worthy of these buildings."

The main objective of our

government is to develop a Democratic Federal Union that can bring about peace, sustainability and development. In doing so, it is important to upgrade physical infrastructures and attitudes, along with human resources.

Everybody knows that our country and people are facing with challenges and difficulties. However, we need to find opportunities for development amidst these situations.

In this regard, teachers play a crucial role. They can change the mindset of youth. They were regarded as parents because they gave us advice.

While the world has seen

technology developments, Myanmar also needs to try for technical innovations. The government is building appropriate facilities in these tasks in line with budget constraints. It is expected that housing for teachers and civil service staff and laboratory equipment factory would be very beneficial for the country's development.

Modern and advanced infrastructures can encourage people's efforts and their innovations. In studying development trends of respective countries, it has been found that only knowledge based on human resources could sustain long-term devel-

opment.

The government is upgrading the capacity of citizens. If the capabilities of people did not improve, the support of government could not result in sustainable development.

Education is the foundation in developing human resources, and the government has been working on curriculum reforms, upgrading teaching methods, supplying modern teaching aids, creating pleasant environment of schools and helping teachers and educational staff to improve their living standards.

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Whatever we do, we must keep in mind the good of our Union

Our country is a union. A union is a nation comprised of many ethnic nationalities. Whatever we do, we must keep in mind the good of our Union. Whatever you do, please think for the good of our Union and the peoples of our Union. Further, please work to bring the peoples of our Union closer together, more bonded, more united.

(Extract from the opening speech given by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 3 August 2018 at Meeting No. 1/2018 of the National Tourism Development Central Committee.)



State Counsellor visits arts exhibition of 56 artists in Yangon



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addresses the 'Hay Manda Art Exhibition' at the Strand Hotel in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited the 'Hay Manda Art Exhibition' held at the Strand Hotel in Yangon yesterday morning.

During the visit, she was accompanied by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Min Thu and officials.

Artists explained and introduced their artworks to the State Counsellor at the exhibition.

In her remark at the exhibition, the State Counsellor said, "I did not think to make a speech at the exhibition and was just prepared to enjoy the paintings. So, I should not make any comment on the artworks. But let me express my feelings on the paintings.

I considered myself it might be my favouritism or preference. I feel that Myanmar artists are the best in Southeast Asia. The artworks of Myanmar artists are very aesthetic. Some persons might be of the view that the art should not be judged on beauty. I disagree. Art is for beauty. Neither beauty nor ugliness is an offence. Each has different meanings. I

value pleasant feeling when I looked at some paintings. It could please me. We love beauty as it can give us peace and calmness.

We should believe the Earth as it possesses beauties. It is not a place for depression or lack of expectations. So, I conclude the artworks are beautiful. Some artists do not like the word 'beauty'. They regard this remark is quite disparaging. However, the paintings are so beautiful that I am pleased to see them more and more.

I would like to share my experience. On one day, it was just before I went out of the home when I heard a melody of a veteran musician from the radio. It tied me up not to leave there till it came to an end. It was a very first weird feeling in my life. I did not worry about being late for the intended place. That is the power of art.

The paintings also attracted me despite pushing me from behind with constant reminders of the time. However, I needed more time to enjoy them. It is also the

power of art. I love painting. I am not a genius or expert in it. But I prefer water colour paints. It is like meditation. It can also improve the power of concentration. It was found that we can control our mind from wandering. The mind totally concentrates on the movements of brushes and painting of water colours. Such concentration could be experienced only in meditation which seems to be more profound. Such mental state can be achieved only when viewing the paintings. I want to view the paintings very thoroughly.

I would like to express thanks to all artists for your artworks on depicting the beauties of our country based on your own experiences.

I have more trust on our country while we are experiencing more and more challenges. An alternative view is that problems could undermine trust and confidence. However, I have more belief in our country and our people who have enough capacity to overcome all the problems and challenges because they are al-



State Counsellor receives her portrait painting by U Lun Gywe at the 'Hay Manda Art Exhibition' at the Strand Hotel in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

ways ready to show their support. They never turn a blind eye to any crisis. So also, the artistes are finding ways to overcome challenges of our country in their own ways. I am of the view that every person is considering their ways how to solve their problems and how to build up a meaningful life every day.

I believe artistes think more seriously. I am very pleased to see

the esteemed artists, and thank you all for your valuable works for the country."

After the speech, the State Counsellor received commemorative paintings from the artists. Next, she took a documentary photo with them.

A total of 56 artists are displaying their 116 artworks till 27 December.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

State Counsellor opens housings for university teachers, new lab equipment factory in Yangon

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Emergence of capable teachers is as important as a good education system. Therefore, the government emphasizes on developing decent environments and facilities for teachers.

Teachers also need to fully understand their core value. We communicated with our teachers respectfully during our childhood. Teachers are also responsible for worthiness of respect from their students. Teachers are working not only for themselves but for future generations; therefore, their attitude is crucial for the development of the country.

Mindhama Pyinnya Yeiktha has 9 units of 12-storey building and 2 units of 8-storey buildings with a total of 910 apartments—798 apartments with 1,200 sq ft and 112 apartment—car parking building, swimming pool, gyms, community centres and two market places.

Meanwhile, Hline Pyinnya Yeiktha has 7 units of 8-storey buildings with a total of 520 apartments, ranging areas of 1,800 sqft, 900 sqft and 600 sqft. Among them, 184 apartments from 3 units of 8-storey building, a four-storey community centre and a three-storey lab equipment factory with underground facility.

Moreover, Parami Pyinnya Yeiktha has a unit of duplex building with 10 apartments of 3,600 sqft, and 2 units of two-and-a-half storey building for training school.

A total of 1,104 international standard apartments have been ready for teachers and educational staff. We need to provide more facilities as ours is still a developing country. Therefore, while



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi cuts ribbon to open the two housings for university teachers and a new laboratory equipment factory in Hline Township, Yangon, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

other countries are moving forward, we need to run even among Southeast Asian countries.

The remaining facilities need to be completed 4 units of 8-storey buildings and 11 units of 12-storey building, with a total of 1,286 apartments, in 2020 and 2021.

As the new facilities are modern buildings, these facilities could make good shelters for the teachers and other staff. All are urged to live in discipline and maintain the facilities well.

Our country needs good education staff. They need to develop good attitudes by themselves. Teachers should have willingness to educate children in far-flung areas. People away from cities

respect teachers. Once teachers earn the respect and love of country people, that kind of satisfaction cannot be compared with these apartments.

Countries liberated from poverty helped their people move from huts to apartments. Development of public living standards could promote mindset, discipline and capacities of people. In this perspective, the government is building staff apartments and housing for pensioners across the country. We are also building safe and secure apartments for the medical staff in rural areas.

The government will develop the living standards of teachers and educational staff across the

country. Although we cannot implement these projects in the short term due to budget constraints, the government will work together with the private sector and local and foreign investors.

I also appreciate private firms which are contributing in the development of our country. I want to see the success of these firms which were compared with the abdomen of human beings. The success of private firms is beneficial to the development of country. They need to share their wealth with the people. The world sees Myanmar as the most generous country. However, our country is ranked in the list of least developed countries.

Our people need to keep on holding our good advantages and attitudes when the country is on the trend of development. We need to understand challenges and difficulties help us develop our mental power.

In conclusion, I wish to inform that the government is trying for development of the education sector and living standard of teachers. The teachers are also urged to try their best for improvement of the country's education standard, while we all are trying in building up a modern developed nation. Our people must have high expectations. It must be understood we have our own trend for development. Both endeavours and confidence are re-

quired for implementation, while making more efforts for national interest and taking care of your health. Please don't be afraid of getting tired."

After the speech, the State Counsellor received a photo of Mindhama Pyinnya Yeiktha housing from Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw. He also handed over a commemorative photo album to Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi.

Chairman U Weik from Sae Paing Development Limited donated K. 200 million to Dr Thein Win, the Director General of Higher Education Department, for housing maintenance fund.

The State Counsellor then unveiled the plaque of Mindhama Pyinnya Yeiktha housing and cut the ceremonial ribbon to inaugurate the Mindhama Pyinnya Yeiktha Housing for teachers, Hline Pyinnya Yeiktha Staff Apartment, and a new laboratory equipment factory. The project was implemented for urban development and improvement of living standard of the people. It was carried out by the Ministry of Education as client with the Ministry of Construction taking care of project management. The Myanmar Imperial Vega Company which is a branch of Sae Paing Development Limited acted as joint-venture partner under the PPP arrangement.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Photo shows the two housings for university teachers in Hline Township, Yangon, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor joins 32nd dinner of Thirty Comrades families

THE welfare association of the Thirty Comrades families held their 32nd dinner at the Grand Mercure Yangon Golden Empire hotel in South Okkalapa Township, Yangon, yesterday evening.

Dr Khin Letya, the daughter of Bo Let Ya who was a member of colonial-era thirty comrades, made an opening remark at the dinner.

On behalf of the offspring of Thirty Comrades, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of Bo Teza, made a speech.

She said, “I want to say something about the comrade spirit between our fathers. I have frequently said there is no relationship more important than camaraderie as they were even closer than blood relations. This is because it is built on trust and a common belief while facing danger together.”

“They have gone through thick and thin together and people who have experienced what can be called true comrades. Even now, our fathers are still called the ‘Thirty Comrades’ and the people only know them as such no matter how high a rank they attained.”

“Members of the Thirty Comrades still refer to each other as ‘Bo’. Some people may think they are disregarding the higher ranks attained later or are deliberately trying to erase or forget them but that is not the case. Calling each other ‘Bo’ is a sign of familiarity. This shows the complete sense of camaraderie



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and families members pose for a photo at the 32nd dinner of Thirty Comrades families in Yangon yesterday.

PHOTO: MNA

they have.”

“Bo Letya is no longer a lieutenant and has risen among the ranks but he is still called Bo Letya by his contemporaries. This shows closeness and genuine value. The real value is gaining familiarity through friendship. This is why when we remember our fathers, it is absolutely necessary that we also remember comradeship.”

“The Thirty Comrades are the predecessor of Myanmar’s modern Tatmadaw whose numbers are now in the hundred thousands. The real source of strength for any organization is mental spirit. It can’t be compared to anything else. No matter how strong other physical

strengths are, an organization will falter if it doesn’t have mental unity. Comradeship is especially crucial in the success of national duties.”

“This camaraderie must start from your own organization and spread throughout the nation. You must have that mentally on the entire country. You must consider your fellow citizens as genuine comrades and value them even more than your own blood relations. I believe that just as the Thirty Comrades were born for carrying the duties for the people, our families will continue to be united with that thought.”

“Come to think of it, do you wonder how many people would have believed in the Thirty Comrades when they were first formed? Relatively few people would have had faith on the significance of thirty young men hoping to make an impact on a nation. There might even have been those who viewed them as hot-blooded youths. Some people might also have thought the situation was unfavorable regardless of the enthusiasm and lived as though the arrows had run out before the war began. But we all have to start somewhere. We need to take the first step to eventually reach our goals.”

“There is still a lot left to do in our country. We cannot call it a developing country yet and I believe the responsibility of that lies on everyone. If we want to receive our parents’ inheritance then we must also inherit their responsibilities.”

“What was the main concept pursued by the Thirty Comrades? It was independence. But why? They believed that real devel-

opment only takes place when a country is independent and only then can it promise full inherent rights of all citizens.”

“Everyone needs to ponder on the meaning of independence together to see why the Thirty Comrades were born and why they were successful. It was because the people wanted independence as well. We only achieved independence because the people gave their full support to the comrades who entered battle for it. Nothing would have been accomplished without the support of all the citizens.”

“That is why if we speak of it fondly and come together then this country that our fathers believed in will be able to stand at the same level with other nations on the global stage. We must become a nation that creates its own future but it is not enough just to achieve independence because in the modern world a person’s nation must first be strong for them to fully grasp their future for themselves.”

“Here, I am not referring to our outward physical strength but to our mental fortitude and spirit. We can achieve physical strength anytime as long as we have the spirit to do so. But without spirit not only would our physical strength falter, we may also become prone to endanger ourselves. That is why it is important to remember how successful the objectives of our fathers long ago were when we remember them.”

“What was the motive for the formation of the Thirty Comrades and how did they begin the trek towards independence? To what extent have those objectives been fulfilled and if they

aren’t, then what must we do to supplement them? We must think of how each of us can contribute to what capacity to fulfill all of them.”

“I have been in the political world for so long it wouldn’t be wrong to assume I see everything through a political lens. However, politics concerns everyone and that includes all the people living in this country.”

“So, if we think politics is only the concern of politicians then each and every citizen is a politician as well. You are all concerned with the welfare of the nation and that is why you are politicians.”

“Whether from a political perspective or civilian or social perspective or even through a perspective based on past closeness, I wish for everyone to be successful in working together to fulfill the objectives and aspirations of our fathers if we are to fondly remember them.”

Then, Daw Ye Mar Maw Naing (daughter of Bo Yan Naing), DawKhinSandar Win (daughter of Bo Ne Win), U Kyaw Kyaw (son of Bo Ye Htut) and U Maung Maung Gyi (son of Bo Yan Aung) expressed thanks to the gathering.

The State Counsellor and the offspring of the Thirty Comrades presented education outstanding awards of the welfare association to the grandchildren of late comrades.

Nine family members of the Thirty Comrades formed the welfare association on 26 December 1983, and Daw Kyi Kyi Win who is the spouse of Bo Myint Swe is still alive having reached the age of 94.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin/ Zaw Htet Oo)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presents education outstanding award of the welfare association to a student at the dinner reception.

PHOTO: MNA

Kayin New year celebrated in YGN's National Races Village

KAYIN New Year was celebrated at National Races Village, Thakayta Township, Yangon, at 5:40 am yesterday. The Kayin Literature and Culture Committee and Kayin New Year Organizing Committee cooperated on the celebration of the Kayin Year 2759.

Firstly, Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw, hoisted the Kayin National Flag and Deputy Minister for Ethnic Affairs U Hla Maw Oo, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Rakhine Ethnic Affairs Minister U Zaw Aye Maung, and Kayin

Literature and Culture Committee's honorary Patron Pado Dr Saw Tun Aung Myint rang the traditional drum. Next, the National Flag of Myanmar and the Kayin Flag were saluted followed by a documentary group photograph.

At 7 am, Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife Nant Kyin Kyi, U Hla Maw Oo and officials donated robes and offertories to members of the Sangha, and then offered them early morning meal. This was followed by paying obeisance to a hundred elderly Kayin, after which entertainment, including Kayin Don Yein dance, were



Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than attends the Kayin New Year celebration at National Races Village, Thakayta Township, Yangon, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

performed.

Also present at the celebration were Dr Shwe Hluan,

wife of Vice President U Henry Van Thio, members of the two joint-organizing committees,

and invited guests.—Township IPRD

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Two dozen plus research laboratories open in YTU



Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi addresses the handover ceremony of Myanmar-Japan Technological Development Centre-1 and Centre-2 in Yangon Technological University. **PHOTO: MNA**

MYANMAR-JAPAN Technological Development Centre-1 and Centre-2 were handed over in a

ceremony at Yangon Technological University (YTU) yesterday morning.

Firstly, Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi thanked officials from Ja-

pan, JICA and other sources of assistance for the centres, on behalf of the Ministry of Education. He said it is important to amend curricula to accommodate the needs of KG+12 and to promote teaching methodologies and research processes. He said he encourages more practical teaching in engineering.

The Union Minister said they are following a Master Plan in developing YTU and are in close cooperation for elevating the quality of curricula and research processes with JICA after signing a Record of Discussion with them in 2013.

Next, Japanese Ambassador Mr Ichiro Maruyama and Japan-Myanmar Association's

Secretary-General Mr Yuichi Watanabe delivered separate addresses and the YTU Rector explained the equipment installed in both centres and plans to utilize them.

Masayuki Karasawa of JICA Myanmar Office also delivered an address, after which officials cut ceremonial ribbons to unveil the two centres and observed the equipment inside.

The two centres have 25 research laboratories and equipped with machinery worth 2,582 million Japanese Yen for use in teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students from a diverse field of engineering subjects.—MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

MS Genting Dream cruise ship tours Kawthoung on Christmas

THE MS Genting Dream came for a one-day visit to NyaungOoPhee Island in Kawthoung Township, Taninthayi Region, on 25 December carrying international visitors from different nations.

Organized by TZK Travel & Tours Co Ltd and Hong Kong-based Star Cruise Co Ltd, the 18-deck cruise ship brought its guests for a day of fun to Victoria Cliff Resort on the island during Christmas.

TZK's owner U Sein Gar (a) U Khin Maung Win said they aim to boost Taninthayi Region's blossoming development by pro-

moting its ecotourism and introducing foreign travelers to its myriad beaches and islands, the availability of high-class hotels and resorts, and increase foreign income and jobs for the local population.

After dropping anchor at NyaungOoPhee Island, the ship's passenger's received examination CIQ clearance from Kawthoung department officials after which they were cordially welcomed by local organizations, the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, and staff of TZK Travel & Tours.

The Genting Dream was registered in Nassau, Bahamas, and measures 335.35m in length and 150,695GT in weight. The ship is staffed with 1,850 crew members from numerous countries with Swedish Captain Carl Magnus Folke at the helm and 3,323 passengers on board.

This is the ship's first visit to Myanmar and after observing the beauty of Kawthoung throughout the day, the ship departed for Singapore in the evening. —Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



International visitors from different nations on board MS Genting Dream visit to NyaungOo Phee Island in Kawthoung Township, Taninthayi Region, on 25 December. **PHOTO: KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)**

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Tatmadaw families make donations at Sitagu Int'l Buddhist Academy

FAMILIES of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) made cash donation and Sitagu water donation for Buddhist academies throughout Myanmar with a ceremony at the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy in North Dagon Myothit Township, Yangon Region, yesterday morning.

The ceremony was graced by the Most Venerable Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nyanissara, other sayadaws and monks.

Firstly, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and other attendees received the five precepts from Sitagu Sayadaw. The Senior General then explained the purpose of the donations.

Next, the Senior General and wife contributed K50 million to the fund of the academy and K24.6 million for Sitagu water donation from the families of the Tatmadaw to Sitagu Sayadaw, who conferred



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife accept a certificate of honour from Sitagu Sayadaw at the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy. **PHOTO: C-IN-C'S OFFICE**

a certificate of honour in return.

Following this, Admiral Tin Aung San, Commander-in-Chief of Navy, General Maung Maung Kyaw, Commander-in-Chief of Air, and other attendees gifted offertories

to the Sitagu Sayadaw, other sayadaws and monks present and received Dhamma gifts in return.

Afterwards, the Senior General and attendees listened to Sitagu Sayadaw's sermon for the

multiple donations, according to news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

U Khandi's legacy on Mandalay Hill to receive overdue repairs

THE Mandalay Region government will be making major renovations to the historical Byant Gyi area on Mandalay Hill next year, said U Thein Tun, chairman of the board of trustees.

Once used for religious donations by the revered hermit U Khandi, the century-old place has been marked as a dangerous structure due to years of deterioration and entrance has been restricted. U Thein Tun said the board of trustees have been working hard to maintain the area for many years but they will be aided by the regional government to perform major renovations through a tender system in 2020.

He said the renovation will only focus on repairing roofing, floor tiles and other deteriorated aspects of the



The historical Byant Gyi area on Mandalay Hill will be renovated next year. **PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MAN SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)**

building but will maintain its original motif, giving priority to making it safe for pilgrims and visitors to enter and rest inside. Another project is also underway to construct a three-storey building area to the northwest of the Two Great Snakes, as part of a larger renovation project on Mandalay Hill. Surveys are in process for installing an elevator and escalators.

The Mandalay Hill Board of Trustees have announced that they have compiled a list of regular or previous donors who can simply make donations for the major renovation project at the board's office, if they so wish, in an attempt to make the process more efficient.—Min Htet Aung (Man Sub-printing House)

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

215 killed, 722 injured in over 450 road mishaps in southern Shan State

A TOTAL of 215 persons have been killed and 722 others injured in 456 traffic accidents in Southern Shan State in the past 11 months, said officials from the regional traffic police.

The police have taken legal action against 313 drivers in the accident cases, and losses due to the mishaps have been pegged at over K30 million.

Reckless driving has been the main cause of road accidents in the region, especially in accidents involving bikes, said police. "We are conducting awareness talks related to road and vehicle rules and regulations. The people should also follow those rules and regulations," said an official.

The authorities are working on curbing traffic accidents to ensure public safety. The traffic police have filed charges against suspected reckless drivers under Sections 279, 337, 338, and 304 (A) of the Penal Code.—Aye Cho

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

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.

10 killed, five injured in car crash in Mudon, Mon State

TEN people were killed and five injured after their vehicle careened into a truck in Mudon, Mon State, yesterday.

The accident took place around yesterday morning involving a Hijet carrying 15 pilgrims travelling to Kyaikhami crashed into the truck on the Mawlamyine-Mudon Road.

Nine were pronounced dead on the scene and one woman died at the hospital. One man and five women are receiving treatment at the Mawlamyine Hospital. A child was trapped inside the Hijet and rescued.

The victims are from Gyobinkauk, Zigon, Aunglan and Hpa-an, according to the police.—Moe Thauk (Shwebo) (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Ministry unveils national strategy on resettlement of IDPs, camp closures



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye poses for a photo with attendees at the meeting for national strategy on the resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and closure of IDP camps in Lashio, Shan State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement outlined the national strategy on the resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and closure of IDP camps yesterday at a meeting held at the City Hall

in Lashio, Shan State. The meeting was attended by members of the Shan State Cabinet, MPs, departmental officials, officials from IDP camps, representatives of ethnic cultural groups, CSOs, UN agencies,

NGOs, INGOs, and displaced persons. Speaking at the meeting, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye said the national-level strategy was written in keeping

with current requirements and Myanmar law, and it meets international standards. He promised that the strategy would also support the implementation of works, in accordance with the basic social principles of the Union

Accord of the second session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong.

“The strategy was written focusing on all IDPs and IDP camps in the country,” said Dr Win Myat Aye, “However, it is a requirement to draw a separate work plan for each region and to implement it in the long run because the regions are different,” he said.

“While seeking ways for ending the issue of internal displacement and to secure the return of IDPs with safety and dignity, the strategy has been drafted, and all are urged to cooperate with the government,” he added.

Afterwards, Dr Ko Ko Naing, Director-General of the Disaster Management Department said the IDP camps would be closed and humanitarian aid would be provided to IDPs for a certain period of time.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

New Airbus plane joins MAI fleet

A new Airbus A319-100 aircraft has joined the fleet of Myanmar Airways International (MAI) after flying from Phoenix, USA, and landing at Yangon International Airport yesterday.

The Airbus, full classification A319-100, MSN-5193, XY-ALK, was welcomed with a water salute at the airport by MAI’s Board of Operations Management Chairman U Aung Aung Zaw and officials while the MAI veteran pilot who flew the plane from Phoenix was greeted by

MAI flight attendants with flower wreaths. With the addition of the new plane, MAI’s current fleet consists of five Airbus A319s and an A-320, while four A320-214s and two Embraer 190s are expected to join in the future. MAI is known for operating on the highest safety standards and will soon operate partner airline MAI Domestic Routes with AIR KBZ in the near future.—Poe Thaw Zin (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



PHOTO: SOENYUNT

Price of mung beans volatile after India sets new import quota of 250,000 tons

By Nyein Nyein

THE price of mung beans has been volatile ever since India announced it will purchase 250,000 tons of mung beans from Myanmar by 31 March, said U Min Ko Oo, secretary of the Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association (MPBSSMA).

For the 2019-2020 financial year, India had announced an import quota of 150,000 tons for mung beans. However, India’s Directorate General of Foreign Trade, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, re-

leased a notice on 12 December, asking Myanmar to export 250,000 tons of mung beans to the country by 31 March. “The price of mung beans is unstable these days. As we all know, India announced it would purchase 250,000 tons of Myanmar mung beans in the 2019-2020 FY. The day after the announcement was issued, the price of mung beans increased to K1.2 million. After that, the price of mung beans has been ranging around K1.15 million-K1.16 million,” said U Min Ko Oo. “We have to export 250,000

tons of mung beans to India by 31 March, which is the ending date of the Indian financial year. There are 100,000 tons of mung beans in stock currently and new mung beans will be harvested at the end of February, 2020. We may have sufficient quantity of mung beans to export to India,” he added. This year, India followed an import quota system again because its domestic supply of monsoon mung beans was lower on account of climate change. “Defining an import quota of 250,000 tons for mung beans again is good for Myanmar,

which is a bean exporter country. Although India is purchasing beans under the quota system, it has said it would purchase 250,000 tons of mung beans before the new beans are harvested, thereby making a guarantee for the bean price for local farmers,” U Min Ko Oo added. India’s Directorate General of Foreign Trade had set an import quota of 400,000 tons for mung beans within the prescribed financial year. Mung beans was one of the restricted items listed by the Indian government in 2017 under the coun-

try’s 2015-2020 foreign trade policy. India’s Commerce and Industry Ministry announced on 18 December that the restriction was not related with MoUs signed at the bilateral or regional levels. In the first two months of the 2019-2020FY, a total of 210,000 tons of mung beans, pigeon peas, and green grams were shipped to foreign countries. Mung beans made up more than 120,000 tons of the total bean exports, according to data provided by the Ministry of Commerce. (Translated by Hay Mar)

Farmer's knowledge of crop insurance key for development

CROP insurance can play an essential role in the agriculture sector because erratic weather on account of climate change is a big challenge for local and foreign investors. Currently, a weather index-based crop insurance system is on a trial run in Myanmar to help farmers tackle problems when crops are damaged by erratic weather conditions. Lack of crop insurance has been landing farmers in a debt trap as it is hard for them to pay off loans to the government when their crops get damaged.

It was heartening to see recently that Myanmar Insurance paid 30 per cent of the premium to farmers in Shwebo, Sagaing Region, who had bought insurance, after the amount of rainfall did not reach the set 114 mm level during the September-October period.

When farmers know they will receive an insurance payout if their crop fails, they may take fewer steps to mitigate that risk, or choose to grow riskier crops. We must prevent this by inculcating awareness.

change farmers' incentives, which in turn might change their behavior.

When farmers know they will receive an insurance payout if their crop fails, they may take fewer steps to mitigate that risk, or choose to grow riskier crops. We must prevent this by inculcating awareness.

Still another concern is that farmers with crop insurance might not take enough precautions against extreme weather, since crop losses will be covered. Without insurance, farmers who find that they are no longer able to raise a particular crop at their location might grow something else or move production elsewhere.

It is the responsibility of the authorities concerned to educate the farmers that those whose premiums rise after they experience large losses due to extreme weather should take steps such as switching to more resilient crops.

The weather index-based period is set from July to October. If the amount of rainfall does not reach the agreed upon level in the first two months, farmers get about 20 per cent of the premium. If it fails again in the last two months, about 30 per cent of the premium is paid.

Farmers are keen to avail crop insurance as it can cover possible losses. The premium rating will depend on the data procured after the joint survey. The liability rate may vary depending on the climatic conditions in each region as the weather index differs in each place.

Myanmar is listed among countries which are adversely affected by erratic weather. This is the reason why crop insurance is important for our farmers.

We believe that insurance protects farmers' livelihoods in times of crop failure. But, we need to ensure that the insurance does not

Pay Homage to Sasana Heroes

By Dr. Nyan Tun

MYANMAR known as the Golden Land to the world has been a home to Buddhism especially Theravada Buddhism since immemorial time and advanced in the time of embracing Buddhist way of life, the people have been exercising highly culture, literate, hospitality, and morality and advanced in secular and spiritual fields. These are the benefits that the people have been experiencing for life by applying the art of living under the guidance of spiritual leaders from the very inception up to modern time.

The teachings of the Buddha are termed *Pitaka* which is used with reference to learning and a receptacle such as a vessel or a basket separately that were compiled and rehearsed at the Council namely the *Vinaya Pitaka*, (the Discipline basket in which *Vinaya* learning was kept), the *Sutta Pitaka* (the Discourses basket) and the *Abhidhamma Pitaka* (the Profound Teaching basket) in which the *Abhidhamma* learning was kept and then handed on from generation to generation till the present time.

The method of oral transmission called '*Bhāṇakas*' tradition in *Pāli* means committing the Teachings of the Buddha into their memory played the most important role in religious teachings. The lineages of *bhāṇakas* were responsible for preserving and transmitting the teachings of the Buddha until the 1st Century BC. Myanmar as the strongest Theravada Buddhist country among Theravada Buddhist community, the examination system in religious sector has been created by the successive kings and their subjects until the present day to promote and preserve the genuine teachings of the Buddha at home and in abroad. Among those exams, *Tipitakadhara Selection Examination*, which was born together with the independence of the country, includes one of the most difficult exams in the country.

There was hardly any person who did not know Sir U Thwin who was the pioneer for Buddhist revival in Myanmar in those days. He was reputedly a very wealthy person and he had been popularly addressed as 'a multi-millionaire' (သုဠေဌကြီး). During the time following the country's achievement of Independence, he had made energetic efforts in the highest interests of the people as well as Buddhism. He had in his heart the spiritual welfare of his country to carry out the greatest task for the enhancement of Buddhism. He was eager



A ceremony to confer religious titles to winners of the Tipitakadhara Examination is held in Yangon on 18 May 2018. PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT

to hold the Tipitakadhara Selected Examination to pay respect to the hero monks of the country.

In 1949, one year after the independence of the country from British, the Myanmar government considered the need to purify, perpetuate and propagate Buddha *Sāsana*, to promote the emergence of a heroic *Sāsana* personality with the ability to memorize and recite the entire Pitaka by heart and to seek out personalities with special intellectual powers to receive the reverence and praise of the devotees, with the support of the Government, Buddhhasananuggaha Organization held Tipitakadhara Selection Examination for the first time in 1949.

The exam has two sections: oral and written one which is lasting over one month (thirty three days). The oral exam in the *Vinaya Pitaka* covers five volumes in five books of the text comprising 2260 pages. The oral exam in the *Sutta Pitaka* covers three volumes in three books comprising 782 pages and the oral exam in *Abhidhamma Pitaka* covers seven volumes in twelve books comprising 4941 pages. The candidate is examined in the Three *Pitakas*: *Vinaya*, *Suttanta* and *Abhidhamma*. Every candidate monk has to reproduce the prescribed texts orally and only if the candidate passes oral examination, he has a chance to sit for the writing exam so this exam is the most difficult one in the world.

The oral exam on these 7983 pages or about 2.4 million words is not a viva voce, and it is an exam on total recall and faultless reproduction. The candidate will be given a point in the *Pāli* Canon, any point,

and asked to continue reciting from there, line by line, paragraph by paragraph and page by page. Or he would be given a point and asked to go back from there a certain number of selections and to recite from there. There must be no error in the word form, the pronunciation must be correct, the flow must be smooth and the enunciation must demonstrate the proper understanding of the meaning of the passage being recited. A candidate who requires prompting for five or more times is considered fails in the oral test.

The written exam is not only on the *Pāli* texts but also on the Commentaries, Sub-Commentaries and other related treatises. The ten major Commentaries in ten books and the major Sub-Commentaries in fourteen books cover 17917 pages. Candidates are tested on the doctrinal understanding, comparative philosophy, textual discrimination, taxonomic grouping and analysis and on the inter-relationships. Thus, *Tipitakadhara Selection Examination* is one of the longest and toughest exams in the world.

Searching for Tipitakadhara hero monks

The examination was held for the first time in 1949 (6th Waxing of Tazaungmone in 1310 Myanmar Era) at Mahasi Meditation Center. Seventeen candidate monks enrolled for the exam but only six persons appeared for the exam. As mentioned earlier, the exam was conducted for one month long and after the oral and written exams were over, the result was not satisfied with the respected Venerable Senior monks as well

as the responsible persons. The announcement came out that no candidate passed both oral and written examination for the first time. Although the result showed in negative, the organization managed to pay honor to those monks who participated in the exam showing their pious generosity to the monks so the responsible persons organized the paying honor ceremony to those heroes monks

Ven. *Vicittasārābhivamsa* (later known as Mingun Sayadawgyi) was one of the one hundred monks invited to attend the honoring of the First Tipitakadhara Examination held by the newly independent Union of Burma. He observed the President of the Union of Burma holding high the raised palm brought together in reverence and never lowering them throughout the opening ceremony. He noticed the disappointment on the President's face and as well as of his Ordination Sponsor, Sir. U Thwin, when the result was announced that no candidate monk had passed. At that moment, Ven. *Vicittasārābhivamsa* felt that the reverent palms were directed towards all the assembled monks in search of *Sāsana* hero to emerge. He felt that the debt of reverence should be repaid so he resolved to endeavor to become a Tipitakadhara (bearer of the Tipitaka). He informed Daw Dhammacari, a nun, his foster mother in religion and declared his intention to Sir U Thwin. He said, "I will return the gratitude of you by participating Tiptakadhara Exam coming year. I will try to gain at least '*Vinayadhara*' but if I'm feeling healthy, I intend to occupy

'Tipitakadhara' title."

After resolution to repay the nations' debt in search of a hero of the Theravada Buddhism, Ven. *Vicittasārābhivamsa* set about the task systematically. He took up the *Pāli* Canon passage by passage, book by book. He first set out to understand the passage thinking in Burmese and in *Pāli*. He broke the passage into sentences, paragraphs or sections according to the degree of difficulty. He enrolled for the 3rd time Tipitakadhara Selection Examination. When the Third time came around in 1950, he was ready to repay the debt to the devotees of the nation. He appeared for the exam. He started to commit memory the *Pāli* Text of *Vinaya Pitaka* which has five volumes and it contains 2260 pages. At the oral exam, he reproduced the entire *Vinaya Pitaka* in a clear, firm voice, unhesitatingly, without hesitation and precisely enunciated each word and phrase audible to the whole audience. When there were different versions he pointed each out and suggested the most suitable one and the audience felt very satisfied with his great task and he passed it so Buddhāsana Nuggaha Association conferred him 'Visittha *vinayadhara*' and as a result of passing that exam he was given free first class pass ticket for ship and train.

In the 4th time, he recited the first part of *Abhidhamma Pitaka* which consists of five books and passed the written exam with distinction in the same year. He kept on reproduced the last part

of *Abhidhamma Pitaka* which has eight volumes and which has 4988 pages. He completed both oral test and written exam with distinction so he was conferred the title of '*Buddhasāsana* *visittha ābhidhammika mahāābhidhammakovidha*' in the 5th time. In the sixth time of the exam, he committed into memory the *Sutta Pitaka* which has three volumes and contains 779 pages and passed it exceptionally in 1954, Ven. *Vicittasārābhivamsa* successfully completed the recitation of the entire Pitaka so he was conferred the title of '*Buddhasāsana* *digghabhānaka mahādighanikayākovida*'

In the Sixth Tipitakadhara Examination he successfully recited the *Sutta Pitaka* so Tipitakadhara *Dhammabhandagārika* (Bearer of the Tipitaka and Keeper of the Dhamma Treasure) appeared to restore the lineage of Bhanaka tradition in Theravada Buddhism. The President of the Union of Burma presented Ven. *Vicittasārābhivamsa* with the Title, Insignia and prerequisites of the Honor in a ceremony held in February 1954. The Guinness Book of Records of 1985 has this entry Human memory; Bhandanta *Vicittasara* recited 16,000 pages of Buddhist canonical texts in Rangoon, Burma in May 1954. Rare instance of eidetic memory the ability to reproject and hence "visually" recall material are known to science."

Tipitakadhara Selection Examination was born together with the independence country and it turns over diamond dueled. Within these seven decades, there have been many heroes Tipitakadhara monks appeared in Myanmar totally fourteen in number. Now, the exam turns to 72nd time and the far sighted respected senior Venerable Sirs and the leaders of the country joined hand together to carry out this noble task. Due to their great effort, we, the Myanmar monks have been restoring the ancient Buddhist Bhanaka tradition and the people of Myanmar have been enjoyed the prosperous in secular and spiritual progress. In addition to those above mentioned living Buddhas, there are still many new generation future living Buddhas who have been devoting their lives to preserve and perpetuate the teachings of the Buddha so long as Buddha Sasana flourish. Therefore, with this article, I respectfully pay homage to the late Venerable Mingun Sayadawgyi, the first-ever *Tipitakadhara* *dhammabandhagārika* and dedicated to all living Buddhas, Sasana Heroes.

2020, 72nd Anniversary Independence Day National Objectives

1. All National Ethnic Races to defend and protect with "collective strength" to ensure Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of the Unity of National Ethnic Races and Perpetuation of National Sovereignty.
2. To give priority and work for transformation of the rule of law and justice sector which is important for stability, peace and development of the State.
3. To work on amendment of the Constitution, which is the basic foundation for building a Democratic Federal Union.
4. To build and create conducive environments for Union citizens which can elevate their sense of duty and improve their capabilities while the Democratic Federal Union is being built.
5. Emergence of a peaceful and prosperous Democratic Federal Union by implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

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

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Commercial suborbital carrier rocket launched in China

JIUQUAN—A commercial sub-orbital carrier rocket developed by a private Chinese company was launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China at 4:50 p.m. Wednesday (Beijing Time).

The rocket, Tansuo-1, was developed by Space Trek. It completed the whole maneuver

flight and fairing separation at high dynamic pressure during the flight.

The rocket can serve purposes of meteorological observation, microgravity testing as well as satellite payload experiments.

It was the maid flight of the first rocket developed by the company.—Xinhua ■



A commercial rocket, Tansuo-1, is launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China, on 25 December, 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA

The year the world woke up to the climate emergency

PARIS — Schoolchildren skipping class to strike, protests bringing city centres to a standstill: armed with dire warnings from scientists, people around the world dragged the climate emergency into the mainstream in 2019.

Spurred on by Swedish wunderkind Greta Thunberg -- virtually unknown outside of her homeland a year ago but now a global star nominated for a Nobel prize — millions of young people took part in weekly demonstrations demanding climate action.

And, like harbingers of the apocalypse, the Extinction Rebellion movement embarked on a campaign of peaceful civil disobedience that spread worldwide, armed with little more than superglue and the nihilistic motto: “When hope dies, action begins.”

Although scientists have warned for decades about the risk to humanity and Earth posed by unfettered burning of fossil fuels, in 2019 — set to be the second hottest year in history — their message seems to have finally hit home.

The 2015 Paris agreement saw nations commit to limiting global warming to two degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels as a way of curbing the worst impacts of global warming.

A safer cap of 1.5C was included as a goal for nations to work towards.

With Earth having already warmed by 1C, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) dropped a bombshell late last year.

Its landmark report in October 2018 laid the groundwork for the string of climate shockwaves that rumbled throughout 2019: The world is way off course for

1.5C, and the difference between 1.5C and 2C could be catastrophic.

“The message from scientists was that each half-degree counts,” said Amy Dahan, a science historian specialising in climate at France’s National Centre for Scientific Research.

It was a message heard around the world.—AFP ■



Climate protests hit the global headlines in 2019. PHOTO: AFP

Researchers fabricate metallic nanowire network with brain-like functions

WASHINGTON — An international joint research team succeeded in fabricating a neuromorphic network composed of numerous metallic nanowires. Using this network, the team was able to generate electrical characteristics similar to those associated with higher-order brain functions unique to humans, such as memorisation, learning, forgetting, becoming alert and returning to calm. The team then clarified the mechanisms that induced these electrical characteristics.

The development of artificial intelligence (AI) techniques has been rapidly advancing in recent years and has begun impacting our lives in various ways. Although AI processes information in a manner similar to the human brain, the mechanisms by which human brains operate are still largely unknown. —ANI

In an African forest, the enduring mystery of a giant butterfly



An entomologist climbs a tree to observe the leaves of a toxic creeper believed to be a host plant for the giant butterfly. PHOTO: AFP

FOREST OF LOBAYE — Suspended from branches high above the ground, Nicolas Moulin looked through his binoculars over a seemingly endless sea of emerald green.

Somewhere beneath the forest canopy was the African giant swallowtail: the largest butterfly to appear by day on the African continent, virtually unrecorded in scientific annals but known to be venomous. The species, known in Latin as *Papilio antimachus*, was discovered in 1782.

Its black-streaked orange-brown wings are extraordinary. They reach up to 25 centimetres (9.8 inches) across, making it one of the largest butterflies in the world. But, just as remarkable, nobody has ever been able to study the creature in its state as caterpillar or chrysalis — keys to understanding its life cycle and longevity. Seeking to unlock the mystery, a privately-financed French expedition of about 20 people set up camp in the far south of the Central

African Republic, on the banks of the Lobaye river, which winds like a copper snake through primary forest. “This is a place for poachers — the male (butterflies) come to ingest mineral salts on the bank and are captured,” Moulin said from his perch 40 metres (130 feet) above the ground.

Collages created from the wings of butterflies are a prized art form in the CAR and provide a living for many hunters. Abroad, a giant swallowtail specimen can sell for 1,500 euros (\$1,700).—AFP

Pope Francis appeal nations to embrace refugees in Christmas Day message

ROME — Pope Francis has, once again, directed the world's attention to the plight of migrants in his annual Christmas speech, appealing to all countries to take responsibility and embrace the refugees who have been displaced from areas plagued by conflict, social and political upheaval, injustice or natural disasters.

Addressing thousands of people gathered in St. Peter's Square on Wednesday, the Pope spoke of the millions of people who have fled their homes for "places where they might have hope for a dignified life," only to find themselves "before walls of indifference," The New York Times reported. In his speech, the Pope lamented the miseries of several trouble spots, urging the "stony and self-centered hearts" to soften their stand on the millions who have been affected by social and political conflicts in recent years.

Delivering his "Urbi et Orbi" ("To the City and to the World") benediction from a balcony in the facade of St. Peter's Basilica, the Pope called upon Jesus Christ to "bless the efforts of those



Pope Francis leads a Christmas Eve mass in St Peter's Basilica to mark the nativity of Jesus Christ on 24 December, 2019, at the Vatican. PHOTO: AFP

who spare no effort to promote justice and reconciliation and to overcome the various crises and the many forms of poverty that offend the dignity of each person."

He also called for "concrete solutions for an enduring peace" in Ukraine, and cited all those in Africa "who are persecuted for their religious faith, especially

missionaries and members of the faithful who have been kidnapped," as well as "victims of attacks by extremist groups, particularly in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria."

"It is such suffering that has pushed millions of people to leave their homelands to find better lives," the Pope said.

"It is the injustice that

makes them cross deserts and seas that become cemeteries," adding that the "injustice that forces them to ensure unspeakable forms of abuse, the enslavement of every kind and torture in inhumane detention camps," he added.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Pope became one of three religious leaders who appealed directly to the leaders of South Sudan to end the violence in the African country and form a transitional power-sharing government.

Peace talks between the government and rebels have been stalled this week in South Sudan, the world's youngest country, having attained independence from Sudan in July 2011.

Over the past year, the Pope has strengthened the church's stance in fighting the scourge of sexual abuse, convening a meeting of bishops from around the world in February to address the issue.

In May, the Vatican mandated that those suspected of abuse should be reported to their superiors. —ANI ■

China aircraft carrier sails through Taiwan Strait again

BEIJING — A newly commissioned Chinese aircraft carrier sailed through the Taiwan Strait for a second time Thursday, Taipei's defence ministry said, just weeks before the island goes to polls to elect a new president.

The ministry said it was fully monitoring the Shandong, China's first domestically built carrier, and accompanying ships as they traversed the strait separating China from self-ruled Taiwan.

Taiwan's presidential office said in a statement that China had an "international responsibility" to contribute to cross-strait and regional peace and welfare.

Last month Beijing confirmed it had sent the new carrier through the strait as part of routine training, sparking concerns from Washington's de facto embassy in Taiwan.

At the time, foreign minister Joseph Wu accused China of attempting to intervene in Taiwan's elections, saying "voters won't be intimidated". —AFP ■

Afghan war caused 100,000 civilian casualties in last decade: UN

KABUL — More than 100,000 Afghan civilians have been killed or injured over the past decade, the United Nations reported Thursday, as it renewed calls to end the bloody 18-year conflict.

The announcement comes as the Taliban and US continue to hold talks aimed at drawing a close to America's longest war, after the negotiations

were called off in September by President Donald Trump due to insurgent attacks.

However fighting continues to rage across the country, with ordinary Afghans frequently bearing the brunt of the violence.

"I recognize with extreme sadness that civilian casualties recently surpassed 100,000 in the past 10 years alone, from the

time the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) began systematic documentation of civilian casualties," Tadamichi Yamamoto, the UN special representative in Afghanistan, said in a statement.

"The United Nations urges those participating in all peace efforts to consider the millions of ordinary Afghans, especially the victims of the conflict, who want a chance to live in peace so they can rebuild their lives."

The grim milestone also comes days after officials announced preliminary results in Afghanistan's latest presidential elections that put President Ashraf Ghani on track to secure a second term.

The Taliban have long viewed Ghani as an American stooge and have refused to negotiate with him, leading many to fear that fighting will continue even if the US secures an eventual deal with the militants. —AFP ■



Fighting continues to rage across Afghanistan, with ordinary citizens frequently bearing the brunt of the violence. PHOTO: AFP

Kiev-Donbass dialogue necessary for conflict settlement: Russian FM

MOSCOW — Any progress in the settlement of the conflict in eastern Ukraine is only possible through direct dialogue between Kiev and Donbass, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said.

"We are ready to contribute in every possible way," Lavrov was quoted as saying in an interview with TASS news agency posted on the foreign ministry's website Thursday.

He said that the establishment of lasting peace in Ukraine is in line with Russia's interests and would have a positive effect on the relations between Moscow and Kiev. Lavrov praised the determination of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to reach a speedy end to the hostilities in Donbass as he managed

to do in his five-month presidency what his predecessor "stubbornly refused to do for years."

Lavrov said it was possible for the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany to meet in Paris on Dec. 9 when they confirmed that there was no alternative to the Minsk agreements on the settlement in Ukraine.

The Minsk agreements, reached in September 2014 and February 2015, respectively, envisage a ceasefire, a withdrawal of heavy weaponry from the demarcation line, a prisoner exchange and local elections, among other measures. Now it is important to ensure the implementation of these agreements, although this will not be simple, Lavrov said. —Xinhua ■

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New hotel encapsulates Milan tourist renaissance

MILAN — Cheap and cheerful capsule hotels are forever expanding from their Japanese cradle, including now in Milan where the tiny, stacked rooms are helping the Italian city cope with exploding tourist numbers.

With no-fuss convenience for both the city and transport links, digital connectivity and a social side among their chief selling points, the capsule hotels target the Generation Y crowd.

Some people, though, just stay out of sheer curiosity.

Croatian tourist Dragan Kupresanin, 31, said he wanted to try the room because “it looked like something new, futuristic style... those kind of boxes that you sleep in”.



Gianmaria Leto, chief executive officer of ZZZleopardGo which opened Milan's capsule hotel, says the company is expanding. **PHOTO: AFP**

After sleeping like a log at Ostelzzz, down a quiet street in the centre of Italy's economic capital, he's ready for more.

“I really liked it. This kind of hotel should be developed, many people avoid youth hostels because of the privacy problem

(with bunk beds etc) but here you have it,” he said.

In the size of one standard hotel room, eight capsules -- each measuring 1.45 by 1.45 by two metres (4.5 x 4.5 x 6.5 feet) -- are stacked on top of each other, four above and four below, with an enclosed toilet space in the room and showers down the corridor.

Inside the capsule is a mattress with duvet and pillow, two charging plugs for mobile phone or laptop, a lockable cupboard for luggage and a bedside table.

All this for between 19 euros a night (\$21), including breakfast, and 150 euros during Milan's world-famous Design Week. —AFP ■

‘More churros, less cops!’: New York food vendors feel the heat

NEW YORK -- For two decades, Guadalupe Galicia has been waking up every day at 4:00 am to make tamales and rice pudding to sell on the streets of New York.

She is one of thousands of vendors, many of whom are undocumented migrants, who hawk yummy treats in the Big Apple, but they are facing a litany of problems, from weather to assaults to arrests to even de-

portation.

“One of their biggest fears is the police, and that's why they are extra vulnerable,” Julie Torres Moskowitz, from the Street Vendors Project (SVP) support group, told AFP.

New York is known for hot dogs, pizza, bagels and pretzels, but the food scene is way more diverse. From Venezuelan arepas and Ecuadoran baked piglet to

Middle Eastern falafel sandwiches and Tibetan momos, the city has it all.

Galicia, an undocumented migrant from Mexico and single mother of six children, sells tamales stuffed with all sorts of fillings for \$2.25 each in the Bushwick area of Brooklyn.

“We are only making enough money to support our children,” says the 40-year-old, who also

sells champurrado -- a hot, thick Mexican drink made with chocolate, corn flour and spices.

Icy weather, risk of deportation

Inclement weather is a problem -- temperatures regularly drop below freezing during the winter months -- but so are assaults, robberies, fines, confiscations and arrests, according to SVP. The women vendors are particularly vulnerable, they say. Arrests can result in deportation if a vendor's papers are not in order, which they often aren't, the group says.

Moskowitz, who sits on SVP's advisory board, says some attacks and thefts go unreported because of fear of dealing with the police. To sell street food, vendors require a license that costs about \$50 and a permit for the cart that costs another \$200. It's very hard to obtain a permit, though: although there are more than 10,000 vendors, the number of permits has been capped at 2,900 since 1983 -- meaning many operate at their own risk. —AFP



Sabina Morales once lost all of her savings when she bought a vendor permit that turned out to be fake. **PHOTO: AFP**

JAL to offer free domestic flights to foreigners via mileage program

TOKYO — Japan Airlines Co. said Thursday overseas members of its mileage program will be able to apply for free return tickets for domestic flights next summer, part of an effort to provide foreign travelers with a greater experience of Japan alongside the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The airline will offer 50,000 free return tickets for flights to select destinations between 1 July and 30 September, with overseas members of JAL Mileage Bank eligible to apply from the end of February.

Applicants will be able to choose their departure point from among Haneda airport in Tokyo, and Itami and Kansai

airports in Osaka.

The airline is collaborating on the campaign with the Japan Tourism Agency, the Japan National Tourism Organization and Nomura Research Institute Ltd.

“We hope this prompts overseas travelers to become ‘fans of Japan,’” JAL said in a press release. — Kyodo News ■



File photo taken in May 2012 shows a Boeing 787 jetliner operated by Japan Airlines Co. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

NEWS In BRIEF

Huawei rings in the New Year with an exciting range of offers

NEW DELHI — Huawei Consumer Business Group, India, adds on to the early New Year festivities for Huawei fans - announces the ‘Together 2020 campaign’, where consumers can avail of special offers on the purchase of Huawei products.

The campaign will run from December 25 to January 5 across both offline as well as online platforms. Customers who purchase Huawei Y9 Prime 2019, Huawei P30 Lite or Huawei Watch GT 2 will get free Mini Speaker worth Rs 2999 for free. On the purchase of Huawei P30 Pro and Huawei Mate 20 Pro, they will get free Huawei FreeLace worth Rs 6999 absolutely free. With exceptional looks coupled with best-in-class design and features, Huawei's range of smartphones and wearables offer unmatched consumer experiences that complements their modern fast-paced lifestyles. —ANI ■

Chinese e-commerce platforms bring job chances for unemployed Gaza youths

GAZA — Shorouq al-Sheikh Khalil, a young Palestinian lady from the Gaza Strip, could not hide her joy after receiving her first professional earnings from her work in e-commerce for one month and a half.

She said the earnings could help her pay the accumulated university fees that prevented her from completing her studying. Al-Sheikh Khalil, a student of engineering, earned 1,000 US dollars, while working for Chinese e-commerce platforms, specializing in electronic marketing. “The Chinese electronic marketing websites are lifelines for young people around the world, not just in Palestine. They help us to get money through online trade, with no need to face the hassle with local businesspeople,” she said.

E-commerce contributes greatly to solving the problems of youths and represents a promising industry, especially for those who desperately need job opportunities in the Gaza Strip, where Israel has imposed movement restrictions, according to al-Sheikh Khalil. —Xinhua

China issues guideline to improve financial services for foreign trade



Photo taken on 13 March, 2018 shows the headquarters of the People's Bank of China in Beijing, capital of China. PHOTO: XINHUA

BEIJING — China unveiled a guideline Thursday to further guide banking and insurance institutions in utilizing financial services to stabilize foreign trade.

The guideline was jointly released by the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission, the Ministry of Commerce and the State Administration of Foreign Exchange.

Greater efforts will be made to further regulate the foreign trade-related business of the banking and insurance sectors, the guideline said.

The guideline listed 29 specific requirements, including deepening reform, diversifying product types and strengthening background checks. — Xinhua ■

The big shortcoming: A grumpy 2020 for global growth

PARIS — US political clouds coupled with wider climate and digital transformations point to a tricky 2020 for the world economy, although experts say a lurch back to crisis is improbable.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said last month that activity had been hobbled by weaker trade and investment in the past two years, as US President Donald Trump pursued a trade war with China.

The OECD expects global growth to dip in the coming year to 2.9 per cent, its lowest level since the world recession of 2009.

Trump appears to have struck a truce with China for now, under a "phase one" pact announced this month, but pre-existing tariffs remain in place and it will take time to demobilise their effects.

More broadly, the OECD contrasted proactive actions taken by central banks with the policy foot-dragging by governments in the face of climate change and the

march of technology.

Industrialists and investors are having to correct their climate strategies even as Trump sits firm in his policy of denial. Oil giant Saudi Aramco recently had to trim back the volume of its gigantic share offering. — Xinhua ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MCC KYOTO VOY.NO. (950N/951S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC KYOTO VOY.NO. (950N/951S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27-12-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP 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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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
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THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (28/2019)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	DMP/L-155(19-20) (RETENDER)	Spares for Kobelco Excavator (SK200-5) (71) Items	Ks
(b)	DMP/L-182(19-20)	Spares for 3 NB 1300 C Rig Pump for ZJ 50D Drilling Rigs (16) Items	Ks
(c)	DMP/L-183(19-20)	Assorted Sizes of Gate Valves, Butterfly Valves and Check Valves (5) Groups	Ks
(d)	DMP/L-184(19-20)	Industrial Raw Materials (2) Groups	Ks
(e)	DMP/L-185(19-20)	Spares for Mack Trucks (48) Items	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from **27 December 2019** at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

3. 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 27 January 2020**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time – **27-1-2020, 14:00 pm**

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

TRADEMARK CAUTION

International Coffee & Tea, LLC, a company incorporated and existing under the laws of USA, and having its registered office at 5700 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 120, Los Angeles, CA 90036 USA, hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole proprietor of the following Trademarks:



The above Trademarks are used in respect of "Coffee, coffee beans, ground coffee, coffee-based beverages, espresso, espresso-based beverages, tea, loose tea, tea bags, tea-based beverages, tea-based beverages with fruit flavoring, espresso and espresso-based beverages, hot chocolate, chocolate-based beverages, mixes for making beverages, chocolate products, fresh, prepared and packaged food items including pastries, flavored shakes, including coffee, chocolate, vanilla and caramel, fruit-based shakes, beverages and frozen drinks, coffee, espresso, tea and powder sold in single-serving containers for use in electric brewing machines for brewing beverages" in **Class 30**; "Publicity services, advertising services, retail store services, mail order services and online retail store services featuring coffee and tea, chocolate-based beverages, coffee-based beverages, tea-based beverages, mixes for making beverages, coffee beans, ground coffee, loose tea and tea bags, chocolate products and food, pastries, flavored shakes, including coffee, chocolate, vanilla, caramel and tea, fruit-based shakes, and mixes for making the same, coffee, espresso, tea and powder sold in single-serving containers for use in brewing machines, electric brewing machines and electric espresso machines, coffee and tea presses, pots and filters, beverage ware, t-shirts" in **Class 35**; and "Restaurant services featuring coffee, espresso and tea, coffee-based beverages, espresso-based beverages, tea-based beverages, tea-based beverages with fruit flavoring chocolate-based beverages, and mixes for making beverages; coffee beans, ground coffee, loose tea and tea bags; chocolate products; fresh, prepared and packaged food items including pastries; flavored shakes, including coffee, chocolate, vanilla, caramel and tea; fruit-based shakes, beverages and frozen drinks" in **Class 43**.

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the above Trademarks or other infringements whatsoever thereto will be dealt with according to law.

Daw Yee Mon Aung, (Advocate)

For International Coffee & Tea, LLC,
c/o Baker & McKenzie Limited

Level 18, Unit 18-03, Sule Square,
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Dated: **27th December 2019**

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Political, economic challenges to test Thai gov't in 2020

BANGKOK — Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha is confident that a civilian, pro-military government he formed in the middle of this year after five years of junta rule can complete its four-year term.

But the former army chief and coup leader must deal with various veteran politicians from 19 parties that form the coalition government, while navigating an uncertain political landscape involving the nation's second-largest opposition party as it faces the possibility of a court-ordered dissolution.

In the long-delayed March 24 general election held to restore civilian government, the Palang Pracharath Party, which chose Prayut as its prime ministerial candidate, came in second with 116 seats but managed to

form the coalition government with 18 smaller parties.

The Pheu Thai Party, which won the largest number of seats at 136 but was unable to form a government under junta-drafted election rules that favored mid-sized parties, leads the opposition with six other parties, including the second-largest opposition Future Forward Party led by the tycoon-turned-politician Thanathorn Jungroongruangkit.

Having secured majority support in parliament, and with the help of junta-appointed senators who serve for five years, Prayut looks to extend his rule beyond the current term through 2023. "Do not get bored of me, I will stay (in power) for quite a long time," the prime minister said in his recent remarks.



Workers scale a skyscraper to install Christmas and New Year lights in Bangkok on 10 December, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

The country's 250 wholly appointed senators are empowered by the 2017 Constitution to vote along with 500 elected members of the House of Representatives in choosing the prime minister.

One of the key challeng-

es he faces, however, is a slim margin the ruling coalition holds over the opposition in the lower house. The slim margin means trouble for the government when trying to pass legislation, including a budget.—Kyodo News ■

'Ring of fire' eclipse wows across Asia

SINGAPORE — Skywatchers from Saudi Arabia and Oman to India and Singapore were treated to a rare "ring of fire" solar eclipse Thursday.

Annular eclipses occur when the Moon is not close enough to the Earth to completely obscure the Sun, leaving a thin ring of the solar disc visible.

While these types of eclipses occur every year or two, they are only visible from a narrow band of Earth each time and it can be decades before the same pattern is repeated.

Depending on weather conditions, this year's astronomical phenomenon was set to be visible from the Middle East across southern India and Southeast Asia before ending over the northern Pacific.

Hundreds of amateur astronomers, photographers and set up by Singapore's harbour for what some described as a "once in a lifetime" event.

"The next one will happen in about 40 years I think," said Jason Teng, 37, who took the day off work to photograph the eclipse.

The amateur astronomer used a special solar filter on his telescope as there is no safe period to observe an annular solar eclipse.

Alexander Alin 45, a geophysicist from Germany, travels around the world following eclipses.

"It's only two minutes, but it's so intense that you talk about it with your friends, family for the next month," Alin said.—AFP ■



Skywatchers in Southeast Asia were treated to a view of the eclipse. PHOTO: AFP

Petition to recall Taiwan mayor, presidential candidate Han begins



Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu (l), the presidential candidate of Taiwan's main opposition Nationalist Party, and former premier Simon Chang speaks in Taipei on 26 December, 2019. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TAIPEI — A petition to recall Kaohsiung Mayor Han Kuo-yu, the presidential candidate of the main opposition Nationalist Party (KMT), kicked off on Thursday, with just two weeks to go until the 11 January election.

For the petition to be move forward, the signatures of at least 1 per cent of eligible voters in the southern city of 2.78 million people, or about 23,000 of them, must be collected in the first stage.

In the second stage, the

threshold is at least 10 per cent, while in the third and final stage, at least 25 per cent of voters must participate in a recall vote with a majority voting in favor.

Aaron Yin, an initiator of the campaign, told reporters after submitting some 30,000 signatures to the Central Election Commission, that if the signatures pass scrutiny in the first two stages, the recall vote is likely to happen in April or May next year.—Kyodo News ■

NEWS In BRIEF

India, Japan hold 8th bilateral consultations

NEW DELHI — India and Japan have exchanged views on the issues of disarmament, non-proliferation and export control.

The discussion took place on December 23 in Tokyo during the eighth round of bilateral consultations on disarmament, non-proliferation and export control, according to the Ministry of External Affairs in a statement. During the meeting, both sides also agreed to hold the next round of Dialogue on a mutually convenient date in India. The Indian delegation was led by Indra Mani Pandey, Additional Secretary (Disarmament and International Security Affairs), while Hisajima Naoto, Director-General, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department led the Japanese side.—ANI ■

10 killed as Typhoon Phanfone batters central Philippines

MANILA — At least 10 people have been killed and six others missing after Typhoon Phanfone battered several central Philippine islands on Christmas Day, before heading out to the South China Sea, state media reported citing local authorities on Thursday.

According to The Philippine Daily Inquirer news website, two people were reportedly killed in Leyte province, while eight others died in the provinces of Iloilo and Capiz. Thousands of people were forced to be evacuated in several provinces before the typhoon made landfall.

Images posted on social media showed some areas in the provinces of Capiz and Iloilo are underwater.

As of Thursday morning, the Philippine weather agency, PAGASA, said that Phanfone was reported 155 kilometres west of the province of Palawan, with maximum winds of up to 130 kilometres per hour and gustiness of up to 160 kilometres per hour. The typhoon brought a wet and miserable season to many who were holidaying in the island nation and stranded thousands as dozens of flights were cancelled.—ANI ■

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Turkey's Erdogan paves the way for troop deployment in Libya



Erdogan has in recent weeks vowed to increase military support to the GNA. PHOTO:AFP

ISTANBUL — President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday opened the way for direct Turkish military intervention in Libya, announcing a parliamentary vote in early January on sending troops to support the UN-backed Tripoli government against strongman Khalifa Haftar.

Sending Turkish troops will complicate the situation in an already fragile country torn by internal dissent since the ouster

and killing of dictator Moamer Kadhafi in 2011. "We will present the motion to send troops (to Libya) as soon as parliament resumes" on January 7, Erdogan said in a speech in Ankara.

"God willing, we will pass it in parliament on January 8-9 and thus respond to an invitation" from the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA), he said. Erdogan's comments come after the Turkish parlia-

ment on Saturday ratified a security and military cooperation deal with the GNA of Fayed al-Sarraj.

That agreement, which came into force on Thursday, allows Ankara to send military and security personnel to Libya for training purposes, according to Turkish officials. But a separate motion is needed to send boots on the ground. The Turkish parliament in October passed another motion to deploy troops in Iraq and Syria for another year.

"We have given and will give all forms of support to the Tripoli government which is fighting against a putschist general backed by Arab countries and Europeans," Erdogan said.

The Turkish leader has in recent weeks vowed to increase military support to the GNA if needed as it battles Haftar, who launched an offensive in April to seize the capital.

Erdogan on Wednesday paid an unannounced visit to Tunisia with his defence minister and spy chief to discuss ways of reaching a ceasefire in Libya.— AFP ■



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces a party leadership challenge on Thursday, addressed Likud party supporters during a meeting in the Israeli city of Petah Tikva near Tel Aviv on 18 December. PHOTO:AFP

Israel's Likud party prepares for leadership primary election

TEL AVID — Israel's ruling Likud party will hold a chairmanship primary election on Thursday to determine who will lead it in the next election.

Some 120,000 members of the party will cast their votes today, with official results expected on Friday, Xinhua news agency reported. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is running against Gideon Saar, a Likud lawmaker and a former education minister, in one of the crucial challenges in his long political career.

Both candidates spent the day before the internal elections in energising supporters and making logistic preparations to ensure their voters would arrive at the ballots amid unusually stormy weather that hit Israel.

The two addressed their right-wing constituency.

Netanyahu announced that he will convince the White House to acknowledge Israel's sovereignty over the Jordan Valley, part of the Palestinian West Bank seized by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war.

"Only I can make it," the Prime Minister said in video footage released on his Facebook page.

Saar pledged that he will impose Israeli law on the entire settlement West Bank, a controversial move that would practically annex the disputed territory. Local media reported that internal polls, commissioned by the candidates' headquarters, predict a landslide victory to Netanyahu.—ANI ■

245 houses affected by Chilean coastal city fire

SANTIAGO — At least 245 houses have been destroyed or damaged by a fire in the coastal Chilean city of Valparaiso, Jorge Martinez Duran, administrative head of the Valparaiso Region, said late Wednesday.

The fire, which broke out

Tuesday night, is already "in the control phase," Martinez Duran said at a press conference.

Authorities believed that the fire was caused by arson, and have launched a search for suspects, Martinez Duran added.

The fire triggered the declaration of an alert by the federal government on Tuesday, with firefighters being mobilized to control the blaze as residents in the poor neighborhood fled their homes on Christmas Eve.—Xinhua

Iraqi protesters torch buildings, block roads over PM pick

BAGHDAD — Iraqi anti-government protesters blocked roads and bridges in Baghdad and the country's south Thursday after torching several buildings overnight.

The demonstrators oppose the entire political class and have vented their anger against leaders who are negotiating to nominate an establishment insider as the next prime minister.

"The government is hostage to corrupt parties and sectarian divisions", said one activist, Sattar Jabbar, 25, in the southern city of Nasiriyah.

Smoke and flames from burning tyres in Nasiriyah, Basra and Diwaniyah blocked major roads and bridges across the Euphrates all night, AFP correspondents



FILE PHOTO: Government offices and schools remain closed across almost all of Iraq's south. Anti-government protesters blocked roads leading to an oilfield in Iraq's Al Zubair area in the southern Basra province. PHOTO:AFP

said, before some of these roadblocks were lifted in the morning. In Nasiriyah, demonstrators set the provincial government building ablaze overnight for a second time since the protests began, and protesters also torched the new headquarters of a pro-Iran militia in Diwaniyah.

Iraq has been rocked by protests since 1 October, prompting Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi to resign last month.

After dwindling, the street campaign has gained new vigour in recent days to rally against widespread corruption and a political system seen as beholden to neighbouring Iran. Government offices and schools remain closed across almost all of Iraq's south.— AFP ■

Myanmar wins 2 gold medals in 6th World Vovinam Championship 2019

MYANMAR Vovinam athletes Hein Htet Aung and May Han Ni Aung Lwin won gold medals at the 6th World Vovinam Championship 2019, held from 16 to 22 December in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

During the championship, Myanmar athletes also secured five silver medals and six bronze medals in other men's and women's categories.

Hein Htet Aung secured the gold medal in the men's individual cross form event on 21 December and May Han Ni Aung Lwin won a gold medal for Myanmar in the women's individual cross form event on 20 December.

In the men's dual form event, Mana Kwee and Hein Htet Aung secured the silver medal.

In the women's individual Yom-Yam sword form event, May Han Ni Aung Lwin bagged the silver medal and in the women's individual dual knife form event,

Khaing Wha Phue won the silver medal.

In the 66-kg women's individual attacking event, Mya Thein Su won silver and in the men's individual Five Gate form event, Maung Bo Bo claimed another silver medal for Myanmar.

Meanwhile, in the men's double Piar knife form event, Mana Kwee and Maung Bo Bo secured the bronze medal and in the women's individual Dragon Tiger form, Khaing Wha Phue got another bronze medal.

In the 60-kg men's individual attacking event, Myanmar's Hein Htet Aung secured the bronze medal.

In the men's individual performance showing event, Mana Kwee secured another bronze medal and Ni Lar Tun secured one more bronze for Myanmar in the 57-kg women's attacking event and Khaing Wha Phue won the bronze medal in the 60-kg



Myanmar gold medalists Hein Htet Aung (right) and May Han Ni Aung Lwin (left). PHOTO: MVF

women's attacking event.

With two gold medals, five silver medals, and six bronze

medals, Myanmar was placed fifth, while Viet Nam was in the first place, host Cambodia in the

second, Algeria in the third, and Thailand in the fourth place. — Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Alli caps Spurs fightback to sink Brighton

LONDON — Dele Alli got Tottenham back on track as the England midfielder capped a gritty escape act with the late winner in Thursday's 2-1 victory against Brighton.

Jose Mourinho's side were in danger of a second successive Premier League defeat when Adam Webster headed Brighton into a shock lead at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

But Harry Kane equalised after the interval and Alli finished off a flowing Tottenham move in the closing stages to

erase the bitter taste of last weekend's acrimonious London derby loss to Chelsea.

Avenging their defeat at Brighton in October, Tottenham, unbeaten in Boxing Day fixtures since 2003, have won three of their last four league games as they try to climb into the top four.

That Chelsea setback was completely overshadowed by the alleged racist abuse of Blues defender Antonio Rudiger by Tottenham fans after his role in Son Heung-min's red card.

Amid widespread calls for

stronger action to stamp out racism in football, Tottenham fans appeared to behave better this time. Initially, there were worrying signs for Mourinho on the field however as Steven Alzate escaped Moussa Sissoko, making space for a low strike that drifted just wide.

Since Mourinho's first game in charge of Tottenham, no Premier League team had conceded more goals than the 14 his side allowed across all competitions heading into this round of matches.— AFP



Tottenham's Dele Alli (C) celebrates the winner against Brighton. PHOTO: AFP

Defender Min Ko Thu joins Rakhine United

FORMER Yangon United defender Min Ko Thu has been signed by Rakhine United, according to a statement by the football club.

The 27-year-old defender started his football career with the junior team of Rakhine United in 2012, was selected on the senior football team in 2013, and stayed with the team till 2015.

He then joined Hantharwady United F.C. for a while and then shifted to Yangon United

F.C. at the end of the 2015 season of the Myanmar National League.

Min Ko Thu has Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Cup experience and participated in Yangon United's meeting with Ceres Negros F.C. in the AFC Cup matches.

The defender has been signed in place of former defender Nyein Chan, who moved to Shan United recently, according to a statement released by Rakhine United.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Five amateur teams to take part in General Aung San Shield 2020

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) and the Myanmar National League (MNL) have decided to allow five football clubs from Myanmar's Amateur League to take part in the 2020 edition of the General Aung San Shield.

This will be the first time that amateur clubs will participate in the major football tournament in Myanmar. The amateur teams will be competing against other professional football clubs: defending champion Yangon United, Shan United, Ayeyawady

United, Hantharwady United, Yadanarbon F.C., Sagaing United, Rakhine United, Magwe F.C., and Southern Myanmar F.C.

The General Aung San Shield was launched in 2009 and the decision to allow amateur teams in the 2020 season was finalized recently.

In the final match of the previous season of the General Aung San Shield, Yangon United had defeated Shan United by 4-3, and the match had run into extra time amidst fierce competition.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)