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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Saturday, 16 December 2017

## 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium sells 32 gem lots

THE fourth day of the 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium was held yesterday at Mani Yandana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw, attracting local and international gem merchants.

Thirty-two gem lots out of 190 with a base-price of 500 euros and above were sold to local and foreign gem merchants. The 32 gem lots were sold under an open tender system and fetched a total of about 760,000 euros.

A total of 4,371 local and foreign gem merchants attended the fourth day of the emporium. They were seen viewing the displayed gem and jade lots and submitting their tenders into the tender boxes.

The 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium is being held from 12 to 21 December. On 16 December, jade lot Nos. 1 to 1150 will be sold. On 17 December, jade lot Nos. 1151 to 2300 will be sold. On 18 December jade lot Nos. 2301 to 3450, on 19 December jade lot Nos. 3451 to 4600, on 20 December jade lot Nos. 4601 to 5750 and on 20 December jade lot Nos. 5751 to 6685 will be sold.

The 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium will sell 6,685 jade lots and 190 gem lots under an open tender system, while high-quality finished jade and gems were also on display and for sale, it is learnt.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Merchants inspect a large jade stone on the fourth day of the 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium in Mani Yandana Jade Hall, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday . **PHOTO: MNA**

## 40,000 vaccinated in Buthidaung, Rakhine State

By Myint Maung Soe

ABOUT 40,000 of the 55,752 children in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State have been vaccinated against Japanese encephalitis, said an official from the Department of Health.

“We have two Japanese encephalitis vaccination programmes; one is community based and the other is school based. According to the security situation, we launched the vaccination programmes on 15 November. So far about 40,000 children have been injected with Japanese encephalitis vaccine. We are committed to concluding the vaccination project by the deadline,” said U Than Aung, head of the township’s health department.

There are 55,752 children who are between nine months and 15 years of age in the township. Of this group, 39,691 children have been vaccinated, he added. The government launched the school-based vaccination campaign for children between 5 and 15 years of age from 15 to 23 November. The community-based vaccination programme for children between nine months and five years is being held from 11 to 20 December. ■



## BEST BANK IN MYANMAR

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# Opening ceremony of Myanmar e-Sport Federation and Yangon HOG e-Sports Center

THE opening ceremony of the Myanmar e-Sport Federation and Yangon HOG e-Sports Center, the first of its kind in Myanmar, was held yesterday morning in Kamayut Township, Yangon. The ceremony was attended by the Myanmar Computer Federation (MCF) President U Khun Oo, Myanmar Young Entrepreneurs Association (MYEA) Chairman U Tun Tun Naing, Myanmar Taekwondo Federation President U Mya Han and heads of departments from states and regions, invited foreign guests, e-Sport experts and students.

In his opening speech, MYEA Chairman U Tun Tun Naing said developed countries have “e-based” efforts such as e-cabinet, e-trade, e-commerce, e-library, e-business, e-data centre, e-payment, for which only a mobile phone is needed to conduct business. Through this, good governance, clean government, transparent government systems appear and corruption disappears.

“Now e-Sport, or electronic sport, is being organised by Myanmar youths attending University of Medicine, University of Foreign Language and American University. They formed the first entrepreneurial organisations of the Myanmar e-Sport Federation and Yangon HOG e-Sport Center, where youth e-sport training competitions will be held. Today’s event was the opening ceremony of the Myanmar e-Sport Federation and Yangon HOG



The opening ceremony of the Myanmar e-Sport Federation and Yangon HOG e-Sport Center in Yangon on 15 December 2017. PHOTO: MNA

e-Sport Center. It is the first of its kind in Myanmar, and youth themselves went to Southeast Asia, Korea and Singapore to practice and then design and construct it. It is at the same level as Southeast Asia, Korea and Singapore”, said the MYEA Chairman.

Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Viet Nam, and the Philippines are member countries of the International e-Sport Federation, along with 18 Eu-

ropean, 18 Asian, four African, three American and two Oceanic island countries, for a total of 45 member countries. Myanmar e-Sport Federation has applied to become a member of the international federation, and only then can Myanmar participate in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. The aim of the Myanmar e-Sport Federation is to upgrade e-Sport technology in Myanmar according to the law and to participate in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, said

the MYEA Chairman.

In many countries of the world, many e-Sport professional clubs were formed to play world level e-sports. Based on sports, health and knowledge, development of a country came about. e-Sport universities were opened in Malaysia and China, and Myanmar is now opening a Yangon HOG e-Sport Center, added the MYEA Chairman.

MCF President U Khun Oo and other attendees gave

speeches yesterday, noting that the Myanmar e-Sport Federation is being formed for the first time in Myanmar and Yangon HOG e-Sport Center is the only e-sport center in Myanmar that is classified as meeting world standards.

The e-Sport Center is a tobacco, quid, alcohol and drug free zone, and is a place where physical and mental training is conducted, it is learnt.— Myanmar News Agency



Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat holds talks with Mr. Peter M. Manikas, regional director for Asia programs at National Democratic Institute in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 December 2017. PHOTO: MNA

## JCC Chairman U T Khun Myat receives Director of NDI, Asia

UT Khun Myat, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw and Chairman of Joint Coordination Committee received Mr. Peter M. Manikas, regional director for Asia programs at National Democratic Institute and party at 1 pm yesterday at the Office of the Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Hluttaw Premises in Nay Pyi Taw.

In the meeting, matters of

NDI’s increased cooperation in the tasks of development of the parliaments, convention of workshops, trainings which will be of benefit for Hluttaw Representatives and Hluttaw Offices’ staff and NDI’s increased cooperation in the strategic project for Hluttaw Development [2018-2022] were discussed at length, it was learnt.— Myanmar News Agency

# President U Htin Kyaw meets professors, students of Osaka University in Japan

A Myanmar delegation headed by President U Htin Kyaw and First Lady Daw Su Su Lwin, who have been in Japan on a friendship visit, arrived in Osaka by bullet train yesterday.

The President and his delegation were welcomed by responsible officials at the Osaka Railway Station and they proceeded to Osaka University, where they met with responsible officials of Osaka University led by Executive Vice-President Professor Tetsuo Ogawa and Director Professor of Centre for International Education and Exchange at Osaka University, Mr. Tomono Arikawa.

The President met with teaching staff of the Myanmar language faculty, university students and Myanmar scholarship students. Two Japanese students spoke words of thanks, followed by Myanmar traditional Thingyan dancing and traditional national dancing. On behalf of the Myanmar language students, two second-year female students presented the President and First Lady with bouquets.

“Diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Japan were established since over 60 years ago, so bilateral friendship has lasted long. I am very pleased to see Japanese youths studying Myanmar literature, Myanmar culture, Myanmar music and Myanmar art enthusiastically. With the increasing amount of students learning the Myanmar language and literature with great interest, it was learnt that there took place insufficiency of Myanmar language teaching staff. In Myanmar as well, those



President U Htin Kyaw and First Lady Daw Su Su Lwin pose for the documentary photos together with professors and students of the Myanmar Language Department of the Osaka University in Japan on 15 December 2017. **PHOTO:MNA**

who are interested in Japanese language stood second or third, it was said. In both countries, there are many Japanese learning Myanmar language and literature in Myanmar or vice versa. We firmly believe that mutual understanding achieved through meeting with each other may promote better relations and lead to strengthened friendship”, said the President.

After the university visit, the President and his delegation arrived in Kyoto and visited the Kinkakuji Temple, an ancient heritage edifice.

Kinkakuji Temple was built in 1397 by the Chinese government to be used as a place of lodging when their diplomats came to Japan. After it was destroyed by fire in 1350, the structure was renovated in 1355. In 1987, all the gold leaves on the temple were replaced with new ones. Kinkakuji Temple contains 20 kilograms of gold, mostly from gold leaves placed there by worshippers. It is listed as a National Special Historic Site and a National Special Landscape, and is one of 17 locations making up the Historic Monuments of Ancient



President U Htin Kyaw speaks at the Osaka University. **PHOTO: MNA**

Kyoto, which are World Heritage Sites.

In the evening, the President and First Lady arrived at

the Kyoto State Guest House, where they will stay. At night, the President and First Lady visited the Wisteria Flower Room, where they were welcomed by Governor Mr. Keiji Yomada, Mayor of Kyoto Prefecture, and member of Kyoto Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mr. Daisaky Kadokawa, with Governor Mr. Keiji Yomada giving a welcoming speech. The President and his delegation attended a dinner party hosted by the Kyoto Merchants and Industrial Entrepreneurs Federation, Kyoto Prefecture.—Myanmar News Agency ■

## State Counsellor meets Finnish Ambassador

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received HE. Mrs. Riikka Laatu, Finnish Ambassador to Myanmar, at the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw at 11:00 hrs on 15 December 2017, and exchanged views on the promotion of friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries.—Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Mrs. Riikka Laatu, Finnish Ambassador to Myanmar, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 December 2017. **PHOTO: MNA**

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## More than 680,000 foreign day-trippers visit Myanmar across Thai border since April

OVER 687,000 foreign day-trippers visited Myanmar from Tachilek, a cross-border gate between Thailand and Myanmar, since April, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

Between 1 April and 14 December of this year, the number of international day-trippers reached 687,235, who visited Talaw Market, Mahamyatmini Pagoda, Shwedagon Pagoda, ethnic villages and Chinese temples.

In the second week of this month, a total of 160 foreign travellers toured the country through Tachilek and visited

the town's popular destinations for a one-day trip.

Concerted efforts are being made to extend more nature-based tourism development projects nationwide and development of cross-border trips is high on the government's list of priorities, said a spokesperson of the ministry.

Myanmar's archaeological sites, mountain ranges, natural forests, beaches, ancient monuments, and a diverse range of traditions and lifestyles of ethnic tribes are popular among foreigners.—Maung Maung ■



Foreign day-trippers visit Talaw Market in Tachileik. PHOTO: MAUNG MAUNG

## German tourists cruised Chindwin River



German tourists visit eco-tourism locations archaeological sites in Myanmar. PHOTO: MNA

THERE are unique natural scenes, eco-tourism locations and archaeological sites in Myanmar, and there is now a culture-based tourism industry by which tourists can observe the traditions and cultures of ethnic people. Due to these attractive sites and scenes, larger numbers of tourists are visiting Myanmar.

A tour group of 12 Germans cruised along the Chindwin River, with arrangement made by Pandaw Cruises Co., Ltd and under the supervision of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. They arrived in Mandalay on 24 No-

vember by air and toured along the Chindwin River by Khabyoo Pandaw cruise ship from 25th November - 2nd December.

The tourists visited Mandalay, Monywa, Bo Win Taung, Monywa, Shwe Sar Yay Way Ah Tat, Kani, Mauk Kataw, Mingin, Kan Ywa, Kyi Htaung Oo, Kalaywa, Ma Sein, Mawlaik, Yuwa, Stituang, Phaungbyin, Thayaung, Thauung Htut, Homalin, Mandalay, and Yangon. Moreover, ten British tourists visited Myanmar on 1st December, arriving by air. The tourists followed a route from Yangon to Mandalay.—MNA ■

## Terrorists destroy backhoe in Maungtaw

A backhoe of the Road Transport Administration Department was burnt down yesterday morning on the Kyainchaung-Taungpyo road near Wat Kyein (Mro) Village, Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State. The backhoe is currently used for road work and worth of about Ks 65 million. Police is conducting investigation into the case.—Myanmar News Agency ■

## Wild elephant found dead in Ngaputaw Township

A wild elephant was found dead near Hsuepaik creek, Wah Chaung village tract, Ngaputaw Township, Ayeyawady Region on Wednesday.

The elephant was found lying on the ground in the early morning of Wednesday, the 13th of December.

A local man founded the dead elephant in the morning and alerted authorities.

When officials from the township forestry department and local police forces arrived on the scene, elephant doctors and Friends of Wildlife (FOW) examined the elephant and concluded that the elephant was killed by unknown persons. They also said the elephant hide and trunk were missing from its body.



Elephant was found dead near Hsuepaik creek. PHOTO: PATHEIN HLA KYI

Currently, the forestry department is offering an education campaign to local residents concerning wildlife conservation.

Also, local police are searching for the person who killed the wild elephant.—Pathein Hla Kyi ■

## Cement imports decline by nearly 6,000 tonnes in late November

MYANMAR imported almost 6,000 tonnes of cement in the last week of November from neighbouring countries through border points, a decrease of nearly 700 tonnes against the previous week's total, according to border merchants.

The country imported more than 6,600 tonnes of ce-

ment in the previous week before 25 November.

Between 26 November and 2 December, domestic importers bought US\$34,330 worth of cement weighing 175 tonnes from neighbouring Thailand via sea routes, which is 25 tonnes less than that of the previous week's total of over 200 tonnes.

According to official sta-

tistics of border trade authorities, the country imported more than 20,000 tonnes of the same product last month.

The country also imports cement, an important construction material, from Malaysia and it exports domestically-produced cement to India, the second-largest neighbouring country.—Shwe Khine ■



PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

## More than \$2.9 billion trade deficit in current FY

THE external trade value for the current fiscal year topped US\$22 billion since April, with a trade deficit of over \$2.9 billion, according to the Commerce Ministry's weekly statistical report.

From 1 April to 8 December of this year, total foreign trade value rose by \$3.9 billion when compared to the similar period of last year. Imports were

\$12.497 billion and exports were \$9.58 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of \$2.916 billion.

The current trade value included over \$16.836 billion from normal trade and over \$5.241 billion from border trade. Myanmar conducts overseas trade with international trade partners mainly through by sea ports. At present, the country chiefly imports capital goods,

intermediate goods and consumer products and exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals and forest products. Efforts have been made by the trade authorities to reduce trade deficit by promoting the country's export sector.

According to the ministry's yearly report, the country's trade deficit was \$5.5 billion in FY2016-2017.—Swe Nyein ■

## China increases border imports of sesame seeds

CHINA increased its import of locally produced sesame seeds from Myanmar through cross-border points of entry in late November, according to border authorities.

From 25 November to 1 December, Myanmar exported a wide variety of different coloured sesame seeds to the world's most populous country from Muse (105-mile) trade zone and Chinshwehaw border station, earning US\$6.766 mil-

lion in total.

According to official statistics, China imported over 190 tonnes of black and white sesame from the Muse border gate, a significant increase of 97.5 tonnes against the previous week's total of 94 tonnes. It also imported over 5,500 black, brown and white sesame seeds from Chinshwehaw border station, increasing over 3,300 tonnes matched against last week. In Muse market, the

prices of black sesame seeds were Ks2.225 million per tonne while white sesame seeds were sold for over Ks14 million within the aforesaid week.

The country exported more than 16,000 tonnes of sesame seeds to China from both Muse and Chinshwehaw borders in November.

It also sold 85 tonnes of the black sesame seeds to neighbouring Thailand last month.—Khine Khant ■

## Japanese company to build bulk grain terminal at Thilawa

JAPANESE logistics company Kamigumi Co. will establish a joint venture to operate a bulk terminal at Thilawa port on the outskirts of Yangon with a local partner by the end of the year.

Under the \$65 million investment project, Kamigumi has teamed up with Lluvia Ltd., a leading flour milling firm, to form International Bulk Terminal (Thilawa) Co. to cater to the growing demand for handling grain, feed and other bulk cargo in Myanmar. Lluvia will hold a 75 per cent stake in the venture with registered capital of \$35 million and Kamigumi will own the remaining 25 per cent, according to the Japanese logistics firm.

The planned bulk terminal will be built on an 80,000-square-meter plot at the port, with a 230-meter-long jetty, and is slated for completion in April 2019. Thilawa is home to Myanmar's first special economic zone jointly developed by the private and public sectors of Japan and Myanmar. The emerging economy with one of the fastest growth rates in the region has seen westernization in diets and a greater diversity in food choices along with a rapid increase in per capita consump-

tion, but mostly depends on imports for raw materials of food products.

Expecting the continued growth in trading of food products and raw materials in the future, the joint venture will mainly handle grains and also operate silos and warehouses by taking advantage of the Kobe-based intermodal transporter's expertise in port facility operations, Kamigumi said. With the project, "Kamigumi will be able to secure an advantageous position in handling of bulk cargo such as wheat grain in Myanmar and establish a solid foothold in the food logistics business, which is expected to see further growth going forward," the company said in a statement. Kamigumi is also seeking to expand its logistics business in the country through synergies with another of its joint ventures, Kamigumi-EFR Logistics (Myanmar) Co., set up in March 2014 in Yangon.

Lluvia, a joint venture between Japanese trading house Mitsubishi Corp. and local conglomerate Capital Diamond Star Group, is a major food maker in the country with a focus on flour milling and Premier brand instant coffee.—NNA/Kyodo ■

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- Market Place by City Mart (6.5 Mile)
- Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)
- Market Place by City Mart (Junction City)
- City Mart (Aung San Stadium)
- City Mart (47th street)
- City Mart (Yankin)
- City Mart (China Town)
- City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)
- City Mart (FMI)
- City Mart (Junction Square)
- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
- City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
- City Mart (Junction 8)
- City Mart (St. John)
- Ocean North Point (9 mile)
- Ocean Shwegonedine

**Ocean City SUPERCENTER** **City Mart Supermarket**

# 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day ceremony held

## 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day ceremony held in Sittway

Rakhine State Government observed the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day yesterday at the Ottama Hall in Sittway Rakhine State.

The event was opened with royal-drum beating and singing by author Sittway Nyo Thant.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu read the Message sent from the President to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day.

Sittway Town elder U Maung Thein Phyu (Gawyaw Myay Saw Win) explained the holding of 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day.

At the ceremony, Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, Rakhine State Hluttaw Speaker, deputy Hluttaw speaker, state ministers, State Attorney-General and State Audit-General presented the state's honoring awards to those who contributed their service to the socio economy of Rakhine State such as economic, social, education, health, livestock, environmental conservation and agricultural development sectors.

Attended at the ceremony were State Chief minister and wife, State Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Hluttaw Speaker, State ministers and wives, state departmental officials, elders of the town, teachers, awarded people and students.

In the early morning, State



Rakhine ethnic women perform traditional dance at the ceremony to celebrate the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day in Maungtau, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG**



Chief minister, State government ministers and elders of the town offered morning meal and offertories to nine Sayadaws of Rakhine State Sangha Nayaka at Atulamarazein Pylon Chan Thar Pagoda Hall in commemoration of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Rakhine State Day. The officials also received

the five precepts from the monks and shared the merits.

## Buthidaung observes 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day

The 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day ceremony was celebrated yesterday at the Otta-

ma Hall, Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State.

In the ceremony, after the people saluted the national flag, U Hla Shwe deputy head of Buthidaung Township General Administration Department read the message from the President to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day.

"The objective of holding this event is to conserve our traditions. Rakhine traditional games are also organized on the state day as part of efforts for raising awareness that conserving Rakhine traditional culture is the duty of all Rakhine people," said Daw Khaing Su Hlaing, leader of Rakhine tradition group.

At the ceremony, the certificates of honor were granted to the organizations involved in the development and philanthropic

activities in Buthidaung Township and outstanding students were also awarded.

## 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day celebrated in Maungtau

Maungtau celebrated the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day yesterday at the Maungtau General Administration Department Hall in Maungtau.

U Phyu Hla, Deputy Head of Maungtau Township General Administration Department read the message sent from the President to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day.

"The anniversary day event was held on a grand scale. After the violence, we hold the ceremony at the Town Hall.

In coming years when the state returns to peace and stability, we will hold fun activities on the state day in cooperation with township departments, Hluttaw-representatives and social organizations", said U Phyu Hla.

"In coming years, we hope that Rakhine State Day can be held on a grand scale as we celebrated in the past", said Ma Sandar who attended the ceremony.

Attended at the event were townships departmental officials, local ethnic residents, teachers and students. —Zaya, Myint Maung, Tin Tun, Han Lin Naing (Sittway IPRD) ■

## Rakhine-born magician wows audience

AT the invitation of the Rakhine State Government, Rakhine-born magician Mr. Top and his son Harry staged a magic performance Thursday before a packed crowd in commemoration of the 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Rakhine State Day at the Dhan-yavati Sports Ground in Sittway.

"Being a Rakhine national, my magic skills have been known by the Rakhine State Government. They regard (my magic) as world-class performances. I showed some of my magic skills to them, which were highly acclaimed by them. In reply to my request to show my skills to Rakhine brethren, they told me to do so on Rakhine State Day. I am very pleased to have an opportunity to make my fellow natives enjoy a wonderful magic perfor-

mance, which is given in gratitude. Every individual cannot be delightful all the time. I firmly believe that people will be happy provided that I can manage to present magic shows mixed with humour", he said.

Mr. Top's performance impressed the crowd.

"To my great delight and honour, this Rakhine State-born magician showed his world-class magic at the invitation of Rakhine State Government on Rakhine State Day. We can have marvelous feelings on seeing such world-class magic shows. This will be a thing of pride for us. I would like him to entertain people in other townships in Rakhine State with these performances in future", said U Kyaw Zan Maung of the Hsat Yoe



Harry shows his magic skill at the ceremony to celebrate the 43<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Rakhine State Day in Sittway. **PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG**

quarter of Sittway.

Officials said after the terrorist attacks in Maungtau in August, the local populace lost their happiness. With a view to encouraging them to lift up

their depression and to get rid of unhappy feelings, such performances were entertained on the ceremony of Rakhine State Day.

Present at the ceremony were Chief Minister U Nyi Pu

and wife, Rakhine State Cabinet members and their wives, Rakhine State, district and township departmental heads and local residents. —Zaya, Myint Maung ■

# Literary Conference 2017 continues

THE third day of Literary Conference 2017 was conducted with the theme of “Free Literature, Free Voice” yesterday at the Myanmar Convention Centre, Ward 4, Mayangone Township, Yangon, where representatives from literary organisations discussed poetry, culture, education, literature and youth.

The day’s event was held in six different groups. The discussion leaders, titles of the talks, and the participants in yesterday’s morning session included:

Maung Kyu Yint, “Modern Poem Culture”, O Aung, Hlaing Htat and Moe Kyaw Aung.

Maung Sein Win (Padigone), “Existence of National Culture”, Maung Khin Min (Danuphyu), San San Nwe (Thayawaddy), Myin Mu Maung Naing Moe, Myay Lat Maung Myint Thu of Myanmar Writers Association.

Kaung Thant, “Connection Between Literature and Education”, Gone Du U Thein Naing, Dr. Khin Muang Nyo, U Bone (Datu-Mandalay) and Maung Dipa (Education).

Myanmar Poets’ Union, Min Htat Maung, “Modern Poetry and National Literature Award”, Maung Think Khaing, Ko Yway, Lupa Aung and San Nyein Oo (Myitawkyunpaw).

Kyi Naing, Myanmar Writers’ Union, “Status of Essay or Aesthetic Work in Today’s Literature”, Maung Yint Ma (Kyaungkone), Maung Khaing Latt, Min Charm Mon and Myaylat Maung Myint Thu.

Pen Myanmar, Mi Charm Wei, “The Part of Ethnic Nation-



Discussion of Myanmar Writers Club in progress with the title “Connection Between Literature and Education” at Literary Conference 2017. **PHOTO: HLA MOE**

al Literature”, Khin Ma Ma Myo, A Phyu Yaung (Shwe) and Moe Pan Mon (Yamanya).

In the afternoon session:

Myanmar Writers’ Union, Mya Hnaung Nyo, “Status of Current Myanmar Novels”, Khin Mya Zin, Cha Ei Mahn (Mandalay), Htat Naing (Talo-temyo) and Thado.

Upper Myanmar Writer Association, San Nyein Oo, “Today’s Poem”, Maw Min Than, Nyi (Pakokku) and Lin Thet Nyein.

Aung Soe Oo, “Literature and Movies, Music, Dance, Painting and Cartoons”, Maung Myo Min (Yin Twin Phyt), Diramo, cartoonist Aung Aung and Nyein Min.

May Kyawt Shin, “Successful Myanmar Literature and Youth”, Khin Thu Thu Winm, Aung Shan Wine and Khaing Chit Aung.

Ma Thida (Sanchaung), Pen

Myanmar, “Toward International Literature Circles”, Saya Win Nyein, Pascal Khoo Thwe and Myay Hmon Lwin.

Saya Zaw Lwin Oo, “Downward Aesthetic Work”, Saya Aung San Min, Myint Swe, Zaw Win and Nyunt Swe.

Maw Nwe, Pen Myanmar, “Freedom to Innovate in Poetry and Sustainability”, Maung Saung Kha and Maung Phyo Wei.

Gone Du U Thein Naing, Myanmar Literature Lovers Association, “Maintaining Classic Literature and Classic Poems”, Saya U Aye Cho (M.A), Thuya Zaw, Cho Mya Nwe and U Myo Thant (Maung Phone Pyae – Takkatho).

U Soe Myint, “Future Path of Writers”, Saya Myo Win, Aung Soe, Tint Lwin and Maung Myint.

Saya Maung Ni Oo, Upper Myanmar Writer’s Association,

“Poet Life’s General Rights, Right to Safeguard and Duties”, Saya Okka Kyaw, Maung Nay Thit (Ye U), Maung Than Soe (Chauk).

Dan Feng, Myanmar Translation Network, “How to Build a Bridge Between Languages”, Kate Griffin, Nasir Tamarai and Moe That Han.

Writer Hnin Wai Nyein, Myanmar Writers Club, “Writer and Literature Influences”, San San Nwe (Thayawaddy), Mahn (Taung Lone Pyan) and Ko Yo Kunt.

Writer Ma Thida (Sanchaung) of Pen Myanmar later commented on the pros and cons of the discussions.

“I participated in leading a discussion in the conference. In my discussion, I’m very much satisfied by the discussions of Saya Kyaw Win and Ko Tar. However, as the conference was held after (being held) 55 years

(ago), there are some shortcomings on the side of the conference organisers. On the side of the speakers, there are many weaknesses in understanding the roundtable discussion. As there was no prior tradition of doing this, some conduct it like delivering a speech. The main point of this conference is to come up with suggestions and proposals. But it becomes a discussion on a topic or a subject. There are weaknesses in coming up with concrete suggestions and proposals”, Ma Thida said. “Some speakers are noticed to come as a member of a group and their discussions were based on a particular group. The discussions are not specifically on literature and become drawn out, taking a lot of time. As the conference was being held after a long time had passed, so maturity is lacking. For the conference to become a mature one, it needs to be held in the following years.”

The four-day literary conference ends today. In the first three days, more than 200 literature experts and writers participated in the discussions. Writers, literati, and invited guests were in attendance.

“The three days discussion includes some similar topics. Our committee is reviewing the discussions. Discussion of the same topic will be combined and on the final day (today) announcement on decisions and agreements will be announced”, said conference organising committee vice chairman and poet Maung Swe Thit.—Zaw Gyi ■

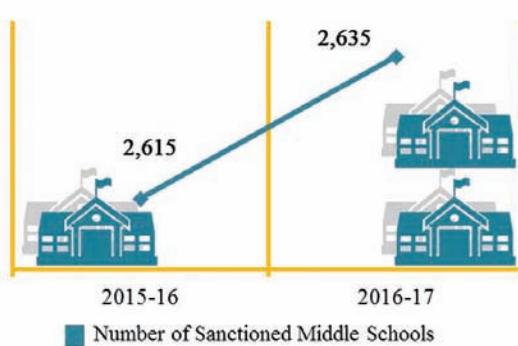
## Achievement in the Education Sector

Number of Primary Schools in Myanmar



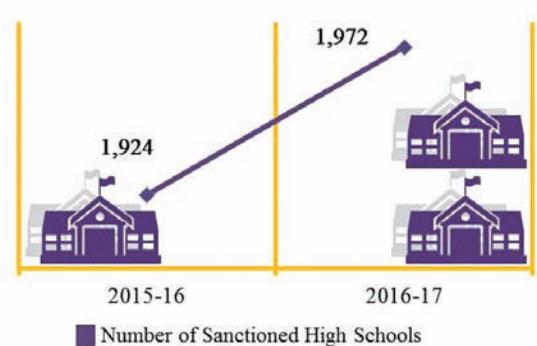
Source: Ministry of Education  
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

Number of Middle Schools in Myanmar



Source: Ministry of Education  
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

Number of High Schools in Myanmar



Source: Ministry of Education  
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

## Myanmar's ongoing economic reforms with SMEs development

**M**YANMAR is pushing ahead with its sweeping economic reform plans to find new sources of revenue so that the country can enjoy the renaissance and development that every citizen aspires for. With this end in view, necessary steps are being taken to enable the private sector to become a partner in development, as the economy's engine of growth.

Myanmar formulated the Long-term Foreign Direct Investment Promotion Plan (FIDPP) in 2014 for national development. More recently, FDIPP has been reviewed and updated as the Myanmar Long-term Investment Promotion Plan (MIPP) integrating domestic investment promotion and foreign investment promotion into one plan in line with the directions of the National Comprehensive Development Plan 2011-2030 and the Investment Policy of 2016. The MIPP was initiated with the purpose of attaining dynamic and harmonious growth of Myanmar and of creating a fair and wealthy society by promoting responsible and quality investment.

To provide comprehensive support to local SMEs for competitiveness improvement and facilitate technology transfer and productivity improvement, the country needs to become a middle-income one through fundamental improvement of business climate such as a fair and clear investment regime.

SMEs Development Work Committee at the committee's meeting 1/2017 held at the Ministry of Industry in Nay Pyi Taw the other day.

To provide comprehensive support to local SMEs for competitiveness improvement and facilitate technology transfer and productivity improvement, the country needs to become a middle-income one through fundamental improvement of business climate such as a fair and clear investment regime, good infrastructure and supportive business-related systems.

Taking advantages of ongoing economic reforms and open foreign investment policy, progress of democratization, abundant natural resources, inexpensive and good-quality young labour force, growing linkage with the regional economy and potential domestic market, it is needed to ensure investment to export-oriented industry, investment to domestic market-oriented industry, investment to resource-based industry and investment to knowledge-intensive industry. Meanwhile, remedial measures are to be taken to cope with the weaknesses in investment promotion such as underdeveloped infrastructure, insufficient skilled human resources and residual investment restrictions.

By Sayar Mya (MOFA)

**O**VER the years, the public's interest in ASEAN is at the highest and still rising. In the past, the media in Myanmar only covered ASEAN for two or three times, showing photos of Heads of State, meeting each other to hold hands in the customary ASEAN way.

Nowadays, a lot of attention is focused on Myanmar from ASEAN member countries and by the whole wide world. Generally, media people in Myanmar have become more interested in ASEAN and it is widely reported to the general public.

One of the factors is that Myanmar migrant workers are mostly heading to neighboring countries and landing there in pursuit of good paying jobs. There are three or four countries that Myanmar is more interested namely Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia, where unskilled workers and students go in quest of a better life.

The public interest became greater when State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended the 31st ASEAN Summit held in

Manila, Philippines in November 2017.

### State Counsellor attends ASEAN summit in Manila

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended the 31st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit that began in Manila on Monday 13 November 2017, with the attendance of heads of state of the member countries and the partner nations.

Following the opening ceremony of the ASEAN Summit, the events were as follows: ASEAN Plenary Session, ASEAN Business Advisory Council, ASEAN-US 40th Anniversary Commemorative Summit, 5th ASEAN-US Summit, 20th ASEAN-China Summit, 19th ASEAN-Republic of Korea Summit and 20th ASEAN-Japan Summit.

At the opening ceremony in Manila, Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte, said that the two days of meetings presented an excellent opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions on matters of regional and international importance.

"Terrorism and violent extremism endanger the peace,

# Understanding ASEAN: One Rising interest of citizens in ASEAN



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (2nd Left) and other ASEAN leaders join hands during a family photo before the 31st ASEAN Summit in Manila, Philippines on 13 November 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

stability and security of our region because these threats know no boundaries," Duterte said, who last month declared victory over Islamic State-inspired militants in the southern Philippines city of Marawi, on the island of Mindanao.

Duterte identified terrorism and violent extremism as threats that "know no boundaries" and piracy and armed robbery in the region's seas as damaging to economic growth.

At the start of the ASEAN-only meeting, Duterte said issues he expects participants to discuss include threats posed by "non-traditional security issues" to the peace and stability and prosperity of the region.

Following the ASEAN Plenary Session, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held talks with Prime Minister of Thailand Prayut Chan-o-cha at the Philippines International Convention Centre-PICC over bilateral co-operation.

Afterwards, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended the ASEAN Business

Advisory Council meeting.

Following the ASEAN BAC meeting, she participated in the ASEAN-US 40th Anniversary Commemorative Summit, 5th ASEAN-US Summit, 20th ASEAN-China Summit, 19th ASEAN-Republic of Korea Summit and 20th ASEAN-Japan Summit.

The ASEAN Summit was the most important event of the bloc this year in 2017 with the participation of leaders from 10 member countries and ASEAN partners.

ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Readers are mostly interested in short questions and answers.

### What are the ASEAN plus 3 countries?

ASEAN Plus Three (APT) is a forum that functions as a coordinator of co-operation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the three

East Asia nations of China, Japan, and South Korea.

### What is the ASEAN Economic Community?

The establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 is a major milestone in the regional economic integration agenda in ASEAN, offering opportunities in the form of a huge market of US\$2.6 trillion and over 622 million people.

### What is the vision of ASEAN in 2020?

ASEAN VISION 2020: That vision is of ASEAN as a concert of Southeast Asian nations, outward looking, living in peace, stability and prosperity, bonded together in partnership in dynamic development and in a community of caring societies.

### How many countries are there in ASEAN?

As of 2010, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has 10 member states, one candidate member state, and

one observer state. ASEAN was founded on 8 August 1967 with five members: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

### Is China in the ASEAN?

The ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA), also known as China-ASEAN Free Trade Area is a free trade area among the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the People's Republic of China.

### What is ASEAN plus Six?

The regional framework known as the ASEAN plus Six, which consists of the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea, took concrete shape at the first East Asia Summit in December 2005.

### What is the purpose of the ASEAN?

The ASEAN Declaration states that the aims and pur-

poses of the Association are:

- (1) to accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavors in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian nations, and
- (2) to promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries in the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter. In 1995, the ASEAN Heads of State and Government re-affirmed that "Cooperative peace and shared prosperity shall be the fundamental goals of ASEAN."

### ASEAN turned 50 years

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) turned 50 on Tuesday 14 November 2017, helping to transform the region into a more stable one which has been developing economically despite certain territorial disputes and human rights concerns.

Founded in 1967 by Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand with the objective of checking the influence of communism, the group was strengthened by the addition of Brunei (1987), Vietnam (1995), Laos (1997), Myanmar (1997) and Cambodia (1999), putting aside ideological differences.

In half a century ASEAN has established itself as an economic power with a combined GDP of \$2.55 trillion in 2016.

Under the umbrella of the organization, the region has become a focal point of investment by foreign companies especially in automobile manufacturing, attracting 7% of global foreign investment in 2015, according to official data.

Headquartered in Jakarta and with a joint population of 628 million, ASEAN estimates that it will grow jointly at a rate

of 5% this year and become the world's fifth largest economy in 2020, converting into the fourth largest by 2050.

In the economic arena, one of the challenges for the group is bridging the huge development gap between the more well-off members like Singapore or Malaysia and backward ones like Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

Back in 2015, the association declared itself an integrated single market with free movement of goods, capital, services and skilled personnel, although many resolutions for economic integration remain pending.

Despite many military conflicts in the region during these 50 years, stability has prevailed as ASEAN incorporated new members.

The fight against terrorism, maritime piracy, drug and human trafficking are among the main objectives of the group.

Foreign policy differences have also played a prominent role in its annual summits; and territorial disputes in the South China Sea have increasingly taken center stage.

Brunei, the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam have sovereignty disputes over a group of islands and shoals that are also claimed in their entirety by China and Taiwan.

For years the alliance has been working together with Beijing and Taipei to draft a code of conduct to administer this maritime space, rich in natural resources and through which one third of global maritime trade passes.

Cambodia and Laos, countries close to the Chinese government, have in the past blocked the group's attempts to issue a joint statement supporting the claims and interests of its members against China.

Alleged human rights violations within the boundaries of member nations are also problematic and the association has often tried to avoid discussing them during summits.

The author would like to use this term for ASEAN: "So far, so good".

(To be continued)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (L) shakes hands with Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte (C) before the opening ceremony of the 31st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit in Manila, Philippines on 13 November 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS



Lisu ethnic people celebrate their literature centenary jubilee in Myitkyina, Kachin State. **PHOTO: KACHIN STATE IPRD**

## Lisu Literature Centenary Jubilee held in Myitkyina

Lisu literature centenary jubilee was held under the sponsorship of Myanmar Lisu literature and culture central committee at the central grounds of Lisu literature and culture in Pammati ward, Myitkyina yesterday morning. Lisu literature was invented in 1917.

At the festival ceremony, Kachin State Cabinet Member and Minister for Kachin State Development U Nay Win and Director-General of Information and

Public Relations Department, the Ministry of Information, U Ye Naing made opening speeches respectively.

Afterward, U RT Yaw Han, Minister for Lisu Ethnic Affairs addressed a speech, contributing donation money of K5 million and providing books on Lisu literature to the committee for convening Lisu literature centenary jubilee on behalf of the Kachin State Government.

In addition, Major Gener-

al Nyi Nyi Swe, Commander of Northern Command, Minister for Lisu ethnic affairs, Kachin State, U Gu Hsar, Minister for Lisu ethnic affairs, Shan State, U Aung Thein, Patron of Central Committee for Lisu literature and culture, Amyotha Hluttaw Representative U Yaw Na and Chairman of Convening Lisu Literature Centenary Jubilee opened the ceremony by cutting ribbon, with Commander and Minister for Kachin State

Development unveiling the monument by pressing the button of the machine, followed by traditional dancing of Kwache of Lisu nationals in the grounds.

Lisu literature centenary jubilee will be held till December 17, with literary talks, singing religious praises, sports including sepak takraw, volleyball and futsal ball games.

Lisu literature was invented in 1913, based on English alphabet and English grammar. For

pronunciation, 15 English alphabets was invented in reverse writing, whereas it was published in hand script writing and started to be taught. It has been prescribed on 15th July 1922 under Reg; no GBC. PO 421, Sec 9 [g]. Starting from 1917 it has been being conserved, reaching for 100 years. The present jubilee was being held, organized by Lisu nationals living in China, Thailand, US and other EU countries, it was learnt. —Kachin State IPRD ■

## SG Min Aung Hlaing attends 70th Anniversary of Myanmar Air Force

70th Anniversary of Myanmar Air Force and inauguration of new aircrafts into the force was held yesterday morning at flight training base in Meiktila where Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended wearing an Air Force uniform in honor of the Air Force.

First, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Khin Aung Myint explained about the inauguration of new aircrafts into the force.

Next, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief delivered a speech saying wars occurring in the world nowadays can be seen as un-balanced wars where air power is gaining in importance.

Using the advantage of better air power, opponents were overwhelmed and controlled while air operations were seen to be used primarily. That is why our Air Force needs to be modernized in order to increase its air power said the Senior General.

Afterwards Chief of Staff (Air) Maj-Gen Maung Maung Kyaw announced the inauguration of new aircrafts into the force after which Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing was presented with new aircraft inauguration commemorative gift by Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Khin Aung Myint.



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing sprinkles scented water on an aircraft at the 70th Anniversary of Myanmar Air Force in Meiktila yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

The aircrafts and helicopters then conducted a demonstration fly-by and aerobatic display by squadron.

Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and party released

70 birds as merit making and then inspected the inaugurated aircrafts while sprinkling the aircrafts with scented water.

Myanmar Air Force 70th Anniversary exhibition opening

ceremony was held later in the day in Meiktila cantonment flight training headquarter with the cutting ribbon by the Senior General and wife.—Myanmar News Agency ■

# Group discussion continues on successful completion of nationwide census

Discussion by groups continued yesterday morning at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 (MICC-2) on the occasion of the successful completion of the nationwide population and household census.

Central Statistics Organisation Assistant Director Daw Thida Htwe and U Aung Ko Win of United Nations Population Fund discussed the topic under the title “Matters on the Quality of the Census” and Athong Makuty of the Naga National Council spoke on the topic in a discussion titled “Matters on Cooperation.”

Difficulties and challenges faced, opportunities, experiences and lessons learnt, suggestion on future works, processes to be drawn and finding ways to overcome difficulties were discussed by attendees.

Situations encountered during the population and household

census 2014, the importance of youth, obtaining of news and information, practical usefulness, importance of the health sector and other sectors were discussed by of Medical Research Department’s Director-General Dr. Kyaw Zin Thant and U Salai Pi Pi @ Salai Wunzapyang of Chin Nationals Supporting Committee, U Min Zarni Lin of the Socio-Economic Development Group, Executive Director Daw Khin Thet Maw of Social Vision Services and Director Daw Sandar Thant of Socio-Economic Gender Resource Institute joined the discussion.

Afterwards, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population Permanent Secretary U Myint Kyaing explained future work processes to be conducted based on data and information collected from the census.— Myanmar News Agency ■



The group discussion is held to mark the successful completion of the nationwide population and household census at MICC-2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

## Container cranes for Myanmar International Thilawa Terminal arrive

A second batch of Machinery for handling containers at Myanmar International Thilawa Terminal (MITT) arrived at the port in southern Yangon yesterday.

The five container cranes are manufactured by ZPMC company in China.

MITT has been boosting its capacity to handle increasing number of containers and to provide better service to the nearby Thilawa Special Economic Zone since April after seeking permission from the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Myanmar Port

Authority and Myanmar Investment Commission.

On completion of the project in early next year, the MITT would possess the highest capacity for handling containers among the ports in Yangon.—Myanmar News Agency ■



The ship carrying container cranes arrives at the Myanmar International Thilawa Terminal. PHOTO: MNA

## Four of six members of Ava Tailoring family receive long prison sentences

YANGON West District court sentenced four of the six members of the family that was accused of years of physical and emotional abuse of their teenage maids.

The family owned the downtown Yangon shop Ava Tailoring, where three female maids in their teens were employed. The young girls testified they endured years of beatings and enslavement.

Lawyer Hnin Su Aung, who represented the Ava Tailoring family, said Daw Tin Thuzar and Daw Su Mon Latt were each sentenced to 10 years imprisonment

for causing grievous hurt, confinement and abating under the Anti-trafficking in Persons Law, plus six years and one month for other violations, for a total prison sentence of 16 years and one month.

U Yazar Tun was sentenced to a total of 13 years and a month in prison, while U Tin Min Latt was sentenced to a total of 9 years and one month in prison.

Two other members of the family, Daw Thiri Latt and U Ko Latt, were acquitted after the court found no evidence to try them.—Myo Min Thein (Mayangon)

## Police detains terrorist suspect in Maungtaw

Police arrested a man on suspicion of planning for terrorist attack in Maungtaw on 13th December.

Mahar Bayzu Raman, a villager from Hmoe Win village in Maungtaw township, was found

with a mobile phone using Bangladesh SIM card, 9,230 Bangladesh Taka, and a registration card issued in Bangladesh.

He has been detained for further interrogation.—Myanmar News Agency ■

## Google crunches data to help NASA find two new planets

SAN FRANCISCO — Alphabet Inc's Google and NASA said on Thursday that advanced computer analysis identified two new planets around distant stars, including one that is part of the first star system with as many planets as Earth's solar system.

The research by Google and the University of Texas at Austin that used data from NASA raised the prospects of new insights into the universe by feeding data into computer programmes that can churn through information faster and more in-depth than humanly possible, a technique known as machine learning.

In this case, software learned differences between planets and other objects by analyzing thousands of data points, achieving 96 per cent accuracy, NASA said at a news conference. The data came from the Kepler telescope which NASA launched into space in 2009 as part of a planet-finding mission that is expected to end next year as the spacecraft runs out of fuel.

The software's artificial "neural network" combed through data about 670 stars, which led to the discovery of planets Kepler 80g and Kepler 90i. The latter, a scorching, rocky mass 30 per cent larger than Earth, is the eighth planet found to be orbiting the same star.

Astronomers had never before observed an

eight-planet network beside the solar system that includes Earth, researchers said.

"As the application of neural networks to Kepler data matures, who knows what might be discovered," said Jessie Dotson, a NASA project scientist for the Kepler space telescope. "I'm on the edge of my seat."

Christopher Shallue, an artificial intelligence researcher at Google, and Andrew Vanderburg, an astronomer at the University of Texas at Austin, said they plan to continue their work by analyzing Kepler data on more than 150,000 other stars.

Advancements in hardware and new techniques for machine learning have made it possible in recent years for automated software to tackle data analysis in science, finance and other industries.

Machine learning had not been applied to data acquired by the Kepler telescope until Shallue came up with the idea, he said.

"In my spare time, I started Googling for 'finding exoplanets with large data sets' and found out about the Kepler mission and the huge data set available," he said. "Machine learning really shines in situations where there is so much data that humans can't search it for themselves." Vanderburg has received funding through a NASA fellowship aimed at distant-planet researchers.—Reuters ■

### INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited by Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports for the supply of Medical Equipment for Sittwe General Hospital by Donation of Government of the Republic of India during the 2017-2018 Budget year.

Tender documents are available during office hours at the Procurement and Supplying Division, Department of Medical Services office No.(4), Ministry of Health and Sports Commencing from (19.12.2017).

Sealed bids are to be submitted to the office, not later than (5.1.2018) 14:00 hour, after which no bid will be accepted. No telegraph/telex proposal will be accepted.

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

Procurement and Supply Division  
Ministry of Health and Sports

## Second phase of Brexit talks will be harder than first - EU's Juncker

BRUSSELS — The second phase Brexit negotiations will be significantly harder than an already difficult first phase of talks, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said on Friday.

The leaders of the 27 countries remaining in the European Union will give the go-ahead on Friday for the EU's chief negotiator Michel Barnier to begin talks with London on a transition period and future trade ties with Britain.

"I have extraordinary faith in the British Prime Minister. She has agreed with me and Mr Barnier that the withdrawal agreement will first be for-



Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May is welcomed by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker at the EC headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, on 8 December 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

malised and will be voted on and then we will see. The second phase will be

significantly harder than the first and the first was very difficult," Juncker

told reporters on arriving for the second day of the EU summit.—Reuters ■

## US negotiator says direct diplomacy needed on North Korea

BANGKOK — The chief US negotiator for North Korea said on Friday the United States should engage in direct diplomacy with Pyongyang alongside sanctions imposed over its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson offered on Tuesday to begin direct talks with North Korea without pre-conditions, but the White House later said no negotiations could

be held until North Korea improved its behaviour.

"We should exercise direct diplomacy as well as sanctions. That is our policy, which is based on pressure and engagement, and we do want to engage in pressure and diplomacy," Joseph Yun, US Special Representative for North Korea Policy, told reporters in Bangkok.

Yun travelled to Japan and Thailand this week to meet officials to

discuss ways to build pressure on North Korea after its latest ballistic missile test.

On Thursday, Yun met the head of Thailand's National Security Council, General Wallop Rohsanoh, and deputy foreign minister Weerasak Futrakul.

"We had very constructive, open-ended discussion," said Yun. The United States had "no specific requests" for Thailand, he said.

Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said on Tuesday no trade takes place between Thailand and North Korea and that Thailand has abided by United Nations resolutions regarding North Korea. "We had no specific requests. It seems like, as the deputy foreign minister said, they are fully complying with United Nations resolutions," Yun told reporters.—Reuters ■

## Four French schoolchildren killed as train ploughs into bus

PARIS — Four adolescents were killed when a train smashed into a school bus on a level crossing outside the town of Perpignan in southwestern France on Thursday.

Images from the scene showed the bus split in two, with a long line of emergency vehicles on an approach to the crossing.

Another 20 people were injured in the crash, 11 of them seriously, according to French

Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, who travelled immediately to the scene. Most of the injured were schoolchildren aboard the bus, aged 13-17.

Philippe told reporters the authorities were focused on getting accurate information to families, a process "made difficult by the question of identification of those who have died and some of the injured."

A crisis coordination centre has been set up at

Millas town hall on Perpignan's western outskirts, about 850 kilometres (530 miles) from Paris. According to local media reports, the bus was transporting pupils from the town's Christian Bourquin college. "All my thoughts (are with) the victims and their families," French President Emmanuel Macron said on Twitter.

The causes of the crash are unknown, pending a full investigation, of-

ficials said. The bus and train drivers both survived and will be interviewed by police. The train was carrying 25 passengers and travelling at 80 kmh, the regulatory speed for the section of track where the collision occurred, a spokeswoman for the national SNCF railway told Reuters. Three train passengers sustained relatively minor injuries, according to the interior ministry.—Reuters ■

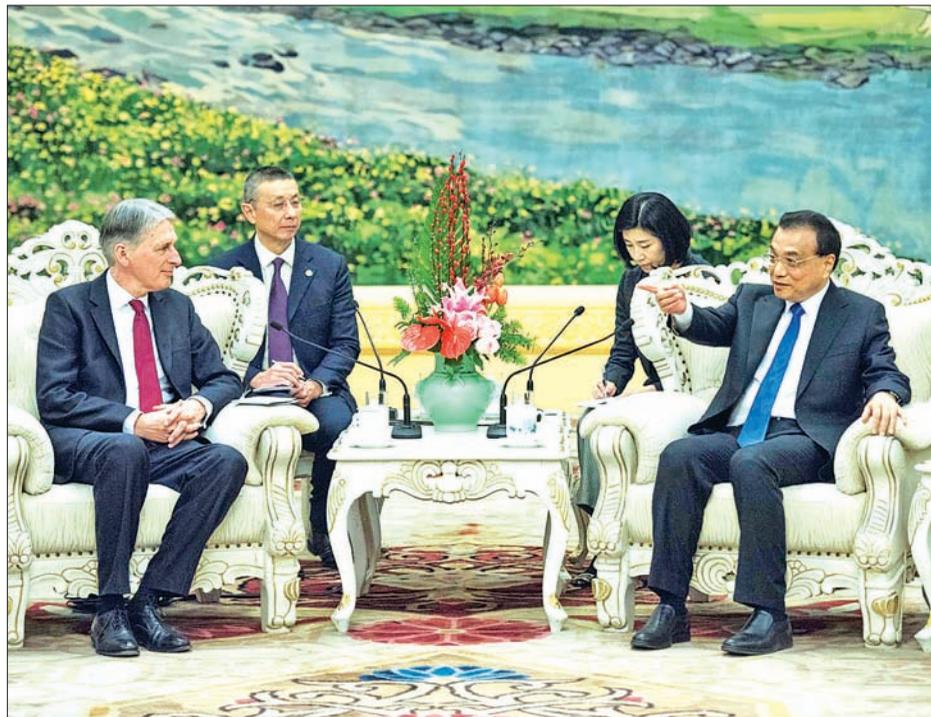
# Britain eyes closer Belt and Road cooperation with China

BEIJING/LONDON — Britain wants closer cooperation with China over its landmark Belt and Road infrastructure scheme, finance minister Philip Hammond said on Friday at the start of a Beijing trip on which he hopes to seal a billion pounds (\$1.34 billion) in deals.

Hammond's visit, the latest installment in long-running economic talks between the two nations, it has taken on new importance for Britain as it looks to re-invent itself as a global trading nation after leaving the European Union in 2019.

Meeting Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in Beijing's Great Hall of the People, Hammond said there were many opportunities to build on their strong relationship.

"I was privileged earlier this year to represent the UK at the first Belt and



China's Premier Li Keqian (R) talks with Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammonds at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, on 15 December 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Road forum and one of the things we will discuss tonight and tomorrow is the opportunity for closer collaboration in delivering the ambitions of the Belt and

Road programme," he said, without elaborating.

President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road initiative aims to recreate the old Silk Road with massive

infrastructure projects to connect China to Europe and beyond.

Li told Hammond that people in China follow developments in Britain and

Europe closely.

"We believe that no matter how the situation in Britain and in Europe may evolve, China will continue to hope that there will be steady and sound ground growth of Sino-British and Sino-Europe ties," Li said.

China is one of the countries with which Britain hopes to sign a free trade pact once it leaves the EU. London and Beijing have been keen to show that Britain's withdrawal from the bloc will not affect ties.

The focus on a "Golden Era" of relations, trumpeted by both sides in 2015 when then-prime minister David Cameron hosted a state visit by Xi, has cooled under Cameron's successor Theresa May.

In 2016, May caused a diplomatic spat by unexpectedly deciding to delay approval of a partly-Chinese funded nuclear power

project. She later granted it, but not before drawing criticism from Beijing.

Business Minister Greg Clarke will travel to Beijing too, along with a delegation including London Stock Exchange CEO Nikhil Rathi and representatives of major financial firms such as BlackRock, HSBC and Standard Chartered Bank.

Talks are expected to focus on a more integrated approach to financial services, new industrial partnerships and economic reform.

Previous rounds of discussions have examined how to develop London as an offshore hub for trading China's currency and closer integration of the two countries' stock markets.

Clark will hold energy-specific talks focused on clean and renewable power generation. —Reuters ■

## South Korea vice finance minister sees Chinese tourists return as ties improve

SEOUL — South Korean vice finance minister Ko Hyoung-kwon said on Friday he expects improving diplomatic ties with Beijing to support the country's economic growth next year as Chinese tourists return to its shores.

Ko's comments come a day after Chinese President Xi Jinping and his South Korean counterpart Moon Jae-in pledged at a summit in Beijing to move past a spat over Seoul's deployment of a US missile shield.

"One of many factors that makes next year more optimistic than this year is better Korea-China relations," Ko told Reuters in an interview in Seoul. He added there would be a resurgence in the visits by Chinese tourists, particularly if President Xi attends the 2018 Winter Olympics in February. Seoul has requested

Xi visit South Korea for the event. The government hopes the games will serve as a turning point for peace on the Korean Peninsula.

For nearly a year, China-South Korea relations have been tense with Beijing angry about the deployment of the US-made Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) anti-missile system in Korea. China claims THAAD's powerful radar can penetrate deep into its territory.

Ko expects an economic boon from improved relations with China in 2018 would help sustain momentum, which is currently supported by a memory chip boom and facility investments.

He said the economy is likely to expand 3.2 per cent this year, but declined to give an estimate for next year. —Reuters ■

### CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV DAYANGBAILI VOY. NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DAYANGBAILI VOY. NO. (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-12-2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AIPT-1 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES  
(S'PORE) PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

### CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO. ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-12-2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER  
LINES

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V OEL MALAYSIA VOY. NO (1723)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OEL MALAYSIA VOY. NO (1723) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-12-2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BATAM VOY. NO (031)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BATAM VOY. NO (031) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16-12-2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

## Oasis star Liam Gallagher lends voice to Christmas climate change campaign

LONDON — Former Oasis front man Liam Gallagher has lent his distinctive voice to a Christmas-themed video produced by an activist group highlighting climate change.

The video, “The Very Hot Snowman,” shows a cartoon snowman, melting under the heat of the sun, while Gallagher’s narration warns “Our earth is too ‘ot, and it’s getting even ‘otter,” and urges people to get involved in a campaign to raise awareness of climate change.

It was produced by director and photographer

Rankin, on behalf of The Climate Coalition, an umbrella group of 130 British organisations including the National Trust and Oxfam, advocating for political action on the environment.

Gallagher had a string of hits with Oasis in the late 1990s and early 2000s, including “Live Forever” and “Wonderwall”, before the band split in 2009.

His first album as a solo artist, “As You Were,” was released in October 2017, and topped the UK album charts.—Reuters ■



Musician Liam Gallagher. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Priyanka Chopra to deliver Penguin Annual Lecture 2017

NEW DELHI — Priyanka Chopra is all set to deliver this year’s Penguin Annual Lecture on the theme ‘Breaking the Glass Ceiling — Chasing a dream’.

Publishers Penguin Random House India announced in a press release that the 35-year-old “Quantico” star will give the address on 26 December here.

“Priyanka Chopra is an icon for today’s young Indians who identify with her drive, passion, intelligence and charisma. She has been a social media trendsetter and has a massive fan base across the globe.

“Much loved and admired as an artiste by people in India and around the world, she is also recognised as a global Indian — a woman who has broken the glass ceiling to reach the highest echelons of international stardom — and for her philanthropic work as Unicef’s global goodwill ambassador,” read the release.

Eleventh in the series, the publisher aims to spread the thrill of fresh ideas to a new generation of readers, thinkers and future achievers with the lecture. Over the past 10 years, speakers have included thought leaders such as Dalai Lama, A P J Abdul Kalam, Amartya Sen, Thomas Friedman, Amitabh Bachchan, Ramachandra Guha, and authors from both India and abroad such as Dan Brown, Jeff Kinney and Ruskin Bond.

The event will be telecast and webcast live.—PTI ■

# Fifty years on the Beatles’ Magical Mystery Tour celebrated

LONDON — A new exhibition has opened at the Beatles Story, the Liverpool museum dedicated to the city’s most famous band.

It celebrates the release in December, 1967 of the Beatles’ film, *Magical Mystery Tour*.

The film was first aired on British television as a 52-minute-long, largely improvised, surreal comedy film featuring the Beatles.

The band’s bass player, Paul McCartney, wanted to create a film based on the group and their music, in which various “ordinary” people were to travel on a

coach and take a journey of spontaneous “magical” adventures.

McCartney, in a comment made in 2012, said of the film: “It turned out to be a wacky, impromptu romp that puzzled a few people at the time but as the years have gone by it now stands as a fond reminder of that period in our lives.”

The film was poorly received by critics and audiences at the time, but the soundtrack, which included six new Beatles songs, was also released in December 1967, was a huge success. It was only off the top spot in the record

charts by the band’s own single, “Hello, Goodbye”.

The soundtrack spent eight weeks at number one in the US album charts and was nominated album of the year in 1968.

Half a century later, thousands of Beatles’ fans and tourists board the *Magical Mystery Tour* bus to relive the journey by visiting sights linked to the group.

A spokesman for the Beatles Story said: “1967 was a year of great achievement for The Beatles, considered by many to be at their most creative with the

release of Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band in February. It was also a year of sadness for the band, with the death of their manager Brian Epstein on August 27 1967 at the age of 32. It delayed filming for *Magical Mystery Tour* and threw the band into uncertain times.”

The new exhibition features revealing information, facts and figures about the *Magical Mystery Tour* film and soundtrack.

Visitors will also be able to view the film on loop in its entirety through the window of a replica tour bus.—Xinhua ■

# Three more women accuse Dustin Hoffman of sexual misconduct

LOS ANGELES — Three more women have accused Oscar-winning actor Dustin Hoffman of sexual misconduct, Hollywood trade publication *Variety* reported on Thursday, bringing to six the number of people accusing him of impropriety decades ago.

*Variety* reported that two of the women said Hoffman sexually assaulted them in 1987. A third woman said he exposed himself to her in 1980, when she was 16, and asked for a foot massage, the *Variety* report said. In the story, two women went on the record



Actor Dustin Hoffman. PHOTO: REUTERS

and a third was not identified.

*Variety* quoted Hoffman’s attorney, Mark Neubauer, as saying the accusations were “defamatory falsehoods.”

Neither Neubauer nor Hoffman’s representative immediately replied on Thursday to requests for comment.

Reuters was unable to independently confirm the accusations.

Three other women have come forward in the last six weeks accusing Hoffman of sexual harassment that they said

took place more than 30 years ago.

Hoffman issued an apology to the first woman, who was a teenage intern on the set of his 1985 TV film “*Death of a Salesman*.” He said in a 1 November statement the behavior the women described was “not reflective of who I am.”

He has declined comment on the other accusations.

Hoffman has won Oscars for his roles in “*Rain Man*” and “*Kramer vs. Kramer*.” —Reuters ■

## Decorated kayaks light up Copenhagen canals on Saint Lucia's Day

COPENHAGEN — A flotilla of kayaks decked in lights and Christmas decorations floated through the canals of central Copenhagen on Wednesday evening to celebrate Saint Lucia's Day.

Thousands watched from streets and bridges as around 400 kayaks illuminated the Danish capital's dark canals.

"We have people coming from other northern countries but also Italy and last year we had someone coming from the (United) States so it's a big thing now," Tobias Weber-Andersen of Danish Kayak Republic, organizer of the event, told Reuters.

Traditionally Saint Lucia's Day is celebrated on the evening of 13 December with a procession of singing children dressed in white and led by a "Lucia Bride" wearing a candle crown.

The light-bearing procession in honor of the 3rd-century saint originated in Sweden and was later adapted by the Danes.—Reuters ■



The barrel-shaped carriages of a new funicular line are seen front of mount Grosser Mythen (1,898 m/6,227 ft above sea level) during sunny winter weather in the Alpine resort of Stoos, Switzerland on 13 December 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

## World's steepest funicular railway to open in Switzerland

ZURICH — Swiss technology is due to hit new heights on Friday when the world's steepest funicular line opens at one of its Alpine resorts.

Swiss President Doris Leuthard will officially open the

52 million-Swiss franc (\$52.6 million) project running from Schyz to the mountain village of Stoos, which lies 1,300 meters (4,300 ft) above sea level in central Switzerland. The barrel-shaped carriages adjust their floors so

passengers can still stand upright even as they climb towards the Alpine plateau at inclines of up to 110 per cent.

The train, which will go into public service on Sunday, will climb 743 meters over a span of

1,738 meters, at speeds of up to 10 meters per second.

"After 14 years of planning and building, everyone is very proud of this train," said Ivan Steiner, spokesman for the railway.—Reuters ■

## Japan's southernmost ski resort opens for the season

MIYAZAKI, (Japan) — Japan's southernmost ski resort opened Friday in the Kyushu region for the winter season through early March, as it struggles to attract more visitors by overcoming difficult traffic access and warm winters.

With its highest slope starting at an altitude of 1,610 meters above sea level, the two-course Gokase Highland Ski & Snowboard resort in Miyazaki Prefecture kicked off by opening half of its 1-kilometer-long course for beginners and intermediate skiers.

With the introduction of a gentle slope where beginners and children can practice safely, the resort expects 35,000 visitors this season, 3,000 more than the previous year's record low.

Although snow was machine-made, Hiroshi Yano, 54, manager of the resort said, "The condition of the snow is fairly



Gokase Highland Ski & Snowboard in Gokase, Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan's southernmost ski resort, begins operations on 15 December 2017 for the season. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

good as it's colder than usual." More than 300 visitors in colorful attire had enjoyed the first day

of the season as of noon Friday. According to the local town government, which has invested

in the public-private operator of the resort, a shutdown has been considered due to declining

numbers of visitors. "The business environment is still harsh. We need to strive to draw more visitors by raising the profile," a Gokase town government official said.

Accessibility does not help the situation. It takes 90 minutes by car from the nearest highway exit and there is no public transport available, according to the official.

The past few years saw lack of snow due to warm winters, another major factor that kept visitors away from the resort in a prefecture which is often associated with tropical mango fruit and palm trees.

Yusaku Nonaka, a 31-year-old snowboarder who brought his 5-year old son and other family members from Fukuoka, said, "We came here because the snow quality is good. I want my son to enjoy it, too, and visit here next year and afterward as well."—Kyodo News ■

# Spurs away form adds to task at Man City

LONDON — Manchester City host Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday on the back of a record 15 successive Premier League wins, and on the basis of their visitors' recent away form, a 16<sup>th</sup> victory appears to be the likely outcome.

Tottenham will travel to the Etihad Stadium fourth in the standings following consecutive home wins over Stoke City and Brighton and Hove Albion in the past week, but their position masks troubles on the road.

Having won their first four away league games this season, Mauricio Pochettino's side have earned just one point and scored only twice in their past four away league matches, losing 1-0 to Manchester United, 2-0 to Arsenal and 2-1 to Leicester City before being held to a 1-1 draw by Watford.

And their prospects against City, who lead the league by 11 points, are dampened further by Tottenham's tendency under Pochettino to struggle away from home against the best teams in the country. Since he took over as manager in 2014, they have won only one of 17 away matches against Manchester City, Manchester United, Arsenal, Chelsea



Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino and assistant manager Jesus Perez during training at Tottenham Hotspur Training Centre, London, Britain on 5 December 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

and Liverpool.

Some comfort can be taken from the fact that the one exception was a 2-1 success at the Etihad Stadium in February 2016, but the two teams were in different situations back then, with Tottenham battling with Leicester City for the Premier

League title and Manchester City stumbling towards a fourth-place finish under Manuel Pellegrini.

In the 22 months since, City have evolved from also-rans into one of the most prolific, entertaining and consistent sides in the world, as potent away as they are at home.

Pep Guardiola's team have won seven home league matches in succession and haven't been beaten at the Etihad Stadium in the league since Chelsea claimed a 3-1 league win on 3 December, 2016.

In eight home games in the league this season, they have

scored 28 goals at a rate of 3.5 per game, which suggests Tottenham might struggle to keep a clean sheet and that they will need to score, potentially more than once, to get a result.

They can, however, take hope from the recent performances at the Etihad Stadium of Southampton and West Ham United, who defended deep in numbers and looked to be on course for 1-1 draws until City conjured winners in the 96<sup>th</sup> and 83<sup>rd</sup> minutes respectively. Should Tottenham get a positive result on Saturday, second-placed Manchester United will have the chance to cut the gap at the top when they visit West Bromwich Albion on Sunday. United bounced back from losing 2-1 to City last Sunday by beating Bournemouth 1-0 on Wednesday and should fancy their chances against a West Brom side who haven't won in the league since 19 August and who failed to score in each of the three matches new manager Alan Pardew has been in charge. Third-place Chelsea sit 14 points adrift of City and host Southampton on Saturday, while fifth-placed Liverpool travel to Bournemouth on Sunday.—Reuters ■

## AFC boosts prize money for upcoming football competitions

KyawZin Lin

The prize money for two leading club competitions, the AFC Champions League and the AFC Cup, have been increased for the coming season, according to a 9 December announcement by the Asia Football Confederation.

The AFC Champions League winners will receive US\$4 million – up from \$3m in 2018 while the club that lifts the AFC Cup will pick up \$1.5m next season rather than the previous \$1m.

The AFC Champions League is second only to European club competitions in terms of prize money, and in addition to the US\$1m increase

for the winner, the runners-up will get an extra \$500,000, taking the purse to \$2m.

There is also the introduction of a travel subsidy in the early stages with an increase in prize money to \$100,000 in the round of 16, \$150,000 in the quarter-finals and a rise of \$50,000 in the semi-finals, taking the total to \$250,000 per team.

In the AFC Cup, the winners rise of \$500,000 is in addition to the increase for the runners-up to \$750,000 from \$500,000.

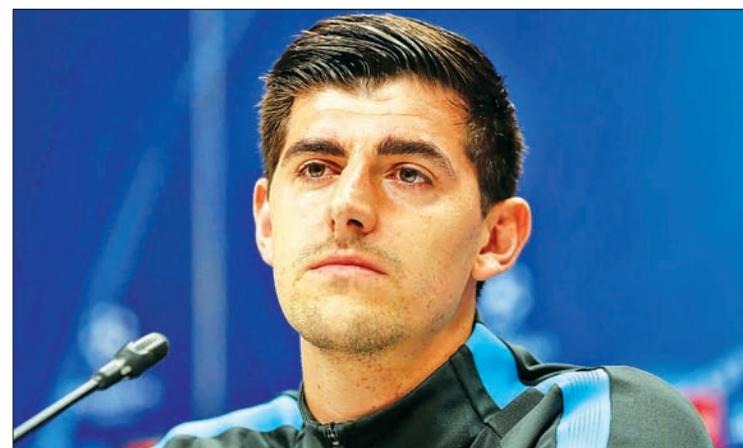
All the increases will come into force in the 2018 AFC Champions League and the AFC Cup, according to the AFC. ■

## Courtois says Chelsea expect tough challenge from Saints

LONDON — Premier League champions Chelsea will not underestimate Southampton on Saturday as they aim to keep up the pressure on the sides around them in the top four, goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois has said.

Chelsea are third in the league, 14 points adrift of leaders Manchester City and three behind second-placed Manchester United after 17 games, and Courtois says the London side must continue winning to either chase down City or at least finish second. "It's a tough game, Southampton drew against Arsenal and it's always difficult against them home or away," Courtois told the club's website. (www.chelseafc.com)

"We have to be careful because these are the games we have to win if we want to stay near the top and try to close the



Chelsea's Thibaut Courtois. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

gap on Man City. Obviously we are far away but we want to keep on pushing and if we can't catch them, we want to finish second.

"It was very good that we showed from the start we wanted to win against Huddersfield and that's the mentality we need in every game."

Chelsea beat promoted

Huddersfield Town 3-1 on Tuesday to maintain a four-point gap above Tottenham Hotspur, Liverpool and Burnley with seventh-placed Arsenal a further point behind.

Southampton are 11th in the standings and winless in their last four league games.—Reuters ■