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Tuesday, 21 January 2020

Independent Commission of Enquiry hands over final report to President



President U Win Myint accepts the Independent Commission of Enquiry's final report from Independent Commission of Enquiry Chairperson Ambassador Rosario Manalo in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) submitted its final report to President U Win Myint yesterday morning.

ICOE Chairperson Ambassador Rosario Manalo and fellow members were received by the President at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw whereupon she handed over the commission's final report.

Also present at the meeting were Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for Office of the Union Government U Min Thu, ICOE members U Mya Thein, Ambassador Kenzo Oshima, and Prof Dr

Aung Tun Thet.

The ICOE was formed by the Union government with Order No 61/2018 on 15 August 2018. On 2 July 2019, the commission's period was extended from 30 July 2019 to 29 January 2020.

The ICOE was formed to investigate the allegations of human rights violations and related issues following attacks by ARSA in Rakhine State. The commission is tasked with uncovering accountability and providing recommendations on steps necessary to implement peace and stability in Rakhine State. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets ICOE delegation



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Independent Commission of Enquiry Chairperson Ambassador Rosario Manalo and party in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) led by its Chairperson Ambassador Rosario Manalo at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Also present at the meeting were

Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for Office of the Union Government U Min Thu, ICOE members U Mya Thein, Ambassador Kenzo Oshima and Prof Dr Aung Tun Thet and other officials. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

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Joint Committee on Amending 2008 Constitution holds meeting 3/2020



Meeting 3/2020 of the Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution underway in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution held its 3/2020 meeting at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The meeting was attended by the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Deputy Speaker of both Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Vice Chairman of the Joint Committee and Amyo-

tha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Joint Committee Secretary Dr Myat Nyana Soe, Joint Secretary U Htay Win Aung (a) U Pyone Cho, committee members including Hluttaw representatives from political parties, independent MPs and officials from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.

The Joint Committee approved the two bills amending articles and sub-articles relat-

ed with the sub-articles (a) and (b) of Article 436 in the Chapter 12 Amendment of the Constitution in 2008 Constitution.

The two bills will be processed in line with the Constitution, Hluttaw Law and by-laws before being submitted to the 15th regular session of Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union SWRR Minister meets int'l social welfare organizations

UNION MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye separately received delegations from Community and Family Service International (CFSI) and Help Age International (HAI) at his ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting with CFSI, they discussed cooperation between CFSI and the ministry to develop Myanmar's human resources for social welfare and protection by linking with universities in the Philippines and around the world to design relevant short and long term projects for that purpose.

They also discussed making social welfare accessible to the village-level, producing more volunteers for social welfare and providing them with the needed training and technological assistance, and signing MoU for future processes.



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye holds talks with a delegation from Community and Family Service International (CFSI) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

During the meeting with HAI, they discussed how the ministry worked for the enactment of the Elderly People Law in December 2016 to ensure the rights of senior citizens and provide them good quality of life.

They also discussed acquiring technical and financial assistance to implement relat-

ed laws, bylaws and policies through a strategic plan, forming Inclusive Self-Help Groups (ISHG), future processes, supporting the elderly abandoned on the streets, and handling matters related to the elderly and people living with disabilities together.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Union Supreme Court sits to pass judgements on civil cases, hear civil cases

THE Union Supreme Court convened at Union Supreme Court room number 1 yesterday with Chief Justice of the Union Supreme Court U Htun Htun Oo and Union Supreme Court Judges U Myint Aung and U Khin Maung Kyi passing judgements on five civil cases (certiorari), along with hearing five civil cases (certiorari).—MNA

(Translated by TTN)

Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo receives Kuwait Charge d'Affaires

UNION Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo held a meeting with Charge d' Affaires a.i. of Embassy of Kuwait Mr. Adel Al Adgham at the former's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed strengthening of bilateral relations between Myanmar

and Kuwait, implementation of bilateral promotion and protection of investment pact signed in 2008, cooperation plans for trade and tourism industry and coordination with the Office of Union Attorney-General.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo meets with Charge d' Affaires a.i. of Embassy of Kuwait Mr Adel Al Adgham in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office of the President Press Release

12th Waning of Pyatho 1381 ME
(21 January 2020)

1. President U Win Myint has received the final report of the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE). The Commission was established by the Office of the President on 30 July 2018 to investigate the allegations of human rights violations in Rakhine during the internal armed conflict between Myanmar's Defence Services and the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) in 2016-17.
2. The President has expressed his gratitude to the Commissioners, the members of the Secretariat and those who assisted the Secretariat. The four Commissioners were Ambassador Rosario Manalo (Chairperson; Member, CEDAW; former Deputy Foreign Minister of the Philippines), Ambassador Kenzo Oshima (former UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator), Judge U Mya Thein (former Chair, Constitutional Court of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar), and Prof. Dr. Aung Tun Thet.
3. The report of the Commission is comprehensive. With 31 annexes, it amounts to more than 450 pages. The analysis of the Commission is based on about 1,500 statements carefully collected by the Commission itself in northern Rakhine and from members of Myanmar's security forces who served in Rakhine at the relevant time. The President thanks the individuals who have come forward and cooperated with the Commission.
4. The Commission has found that war crimes were committed during the internal conflict in Rakhine, by members and collaborators of ARSA, by members of the Myanmar's security forces and by civilians. These crimes included the killing of civilians, disproportionate use of force, looting of property, and destruction of abandoned homes of Muslims in Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung Townships in Northern Rakhine. The Commission has found particularly serious loss of life in the villages of Min Gyi (Tula Toli), Chut Pyin and Maung Nu. The Commission's findings reveal no indication of a pattern of conduct from which one could reasonably conclude that the acts were committed with 'genocidal intent.'
5. In its 22 recommendations, the Commission recommends that further criminal investigations be undertaken by the Office of the Judge Advocate General and the Union Attorney General.
6. The President concurs with the recommendations of the Commission that there needs to be further criminal investigations and, where the evidence is compelling, prosecutions. To this end, the President has transmitted the full report with annexes to the Union Attorney General for further investigation and prosecution of any property destruction or looting or other serious crimes committed by civilians during the internal armed conflict in Rakhine. The President has also asked the Union Attorney General to consult with the Judge Advocate General as necessary on how serious crimes committed by ARSA members or collaborators should be investigated and prosecuted.
7. The President has also, acting under the Constitution of Myanmar, transmitted the full Commission report with annexes to the Commander-in-Chief of Myanmar's Defence Services in order that the Office of the Judge Advocate General might extend its ongoing investigations and prosecutions to cover crimes alleged to have been committed by members of Myanmar's security forces, in particular the killings in Min Gyi and Chut Pyin and the failure to prevent the burning of homes in abandoned Muslim villages.
8. The President has expressed sympathy for all victims and assured them of his commitment to accountability, justice and to professionalism of Myanmar's security forces.
9. The President has also directed that the Executive Summary of the Commission's report be made public.

VP U Henry Van Thio meets Universal Peace Federation delegation

VICE President U Henry Van Thio received a delegation from the Universal Peace Federation led by its Chairman Dr Thomas G Walsh at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

During the meeting, they discussed the invitation extended to Myanmar to send a high level delegation to the Universal Peace Federation's World Summit 2020 scheduled for February 2020 in Seoul, South Korea, and the UPF

and the Union government to co-host the Third Asia-Pacific Summit in Myanmar in June 2020.

Present at the meeting were Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun, and Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs U Soe Han and other officials. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Vice President U Henry Van Thio holds talks with a delegation from the Universal Peace Federation led by Chairman Dr Thomas G Walsh at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko receives Universal Peace Federation Chairman

UNION MINISTER for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko welcomed the Chairman of Universal Peace Federation, Dr Thomas G. Walsh, at former's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The meeting focused on co-organization of the Third

UPF Asia Pacific Summit 2020 in Myanmar.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko meets Chairman of Universal Peace Federation Dr Thomas G. Walsh in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



4th Cherry Trees Planting Ceremony held in Loikaw



Union Minister U Ohn Maung plants a cherry tree at the 4th Cherry Trees Planting Ceremony to mark the 68th Anniversary of Kayah State at the Buddha Park in Loikaw, Kayah State, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE 4th Cherry Trees Planting Ceremony was held at the Buddha Park in Loikaw, the capital city of Kayah State, on 19 January, marking the 68th Anniversary of the State.

It was attended by Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung and Deputy Minister U Tin Latt, Kayah State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Ichiro Maruyama, officials from Japan-Myanmar Friendship Association, Kayah State Cabinet members, departmental heads and officials.

The Cherry Tree Project of Japanese Royal Palace is being implemented with planting cherry trees in many global countries, including Myanmar, Viet Nam, Indonesia and Thailand. The project was introduced in Myanmar since 2017

as a part to support tourism industry of the country.

At the ceremony, the Union Minister, the Japanese Ambassador, the State Chief Minister made speeches at the ceremony, and planted Cherry trees.

The first cherry trees planting ceremony took place on Zawana Road in Nay Pyi Taw with 100 trees, the second event at Myanmar International Convention Centre-I, Royal Myanmar Golf Club and along Zawana Road with 200 trees, and Chin State, Mogok, PyinOoLwin, Kalaw and Inle with 2,250 trees, the third one in Yangon, Chin State, Mogok, Kachin State and Kayah State with 3,900 Cherry and Maple trees.

For the 4th ceremony, 200 Cherry trees will be planted in Loikaw and 114 trees in Pyithu Hluttaw compound in Nay Pyi

Taw, as well as 200 trees near Mwaytaw Kakku pagodas, 400 trees in Haka and Thalang townships, 100 trees at View Point in Haka, 35 trees in Pindaya, 100 trees in Mogok and 200 trees in Kayin State.

The Union Minister and party attended the opening ceremony of office of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism in Loikaw in the afternoon.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister and party inspected implementations of community-based tourism in Dortamagy Village in Kayah State.

They also attended a dinner to honour the 4th Cherry Trees Planting Ceremony marking the 68th Anniversary of Kayah State, hosted in the Buddha Park.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MCCA holds art exhibition at National Museum

MYANMAR-China Culture Association has conducted an art exhibition called 'The street with the specks of snow' from 20 to 22 January at the National Museum in Yangon.

The exhibition displays 65 paintings from 17 Myanmar artists through the use of different painting medium such as watercolor, acrylic and mixed media. It is organized by the Myanmar-China Culture Association (MCCA) and opens from 9 am to 5 pm on all three days.

The Chairman of the MCCA Art Exhibition Organizing Committee, Artist Ni Po Oo, spoke a few words of the exhibition. He said Myanmar and China have shared a close relation throughout history for many years. He said just as they have cultures in their country, Myanmar's cultures always remained firm.

He said these cultures can act as bridges to connect the people of both nations and he believes art exhibitions like this can cement the exiting cordial relations and make them even stronger. He said promoting art also extends to literature, film, music, photography and sculpting.

MCCA Chairman U Hlaing

Win said they had planned to showcase this exhibition last year and this exhibition is the first step. He said MCCA is partnering with a Chinese film company as part of Myanmar-China culture exchange programme.

Director Mr Hu Billy from China said the film will be based on cultural familiarity with Bagan region as the backdrop and will be filmed at locations in China and Myanmar. He said filming will begin soon and will include talents from both nations. He said the film will have drama, romance and comedy elements.

The MCCA is also planning to organize a photo exhibition to preserve the cultural history of Bagan by displaying photos from four periods of the region's history.

MCCA was established in December 2018 to further promote mutual understanding, respect and relations between the citizens of Myanmar and China and cooperate in socioeconomic development. The art exhibition was inaugurated by MCCA Chairman U Hlaing Win, Vice Chairman U Maung Maung Myint Aye and Director Artist U Soe Moe cutting ceremonial ribbons. — Win Win Maw (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



MCCA Chairman U Hlaing Win and officials cut ribbon to open the Art Exhibition at National Museum yesterday. **PHOTO: YE THUT**

Muse fruit depots to halt trade for 3 days during Chinese New Year Festival



Trucks laden with watermelons wait for inspection to enter China at the Muse 105th Mile border trade zone. PHOTO: PHOTO: THANT ZIN (MUSE)

WITH the closure of China's customs office during the Chinese New Year Festival, Muse fruit depots will suspend trading between 24 and 26 January, according to the Khwar Nyo fruit depot.

"On 16 January, there was steady fruit trade. After the New Year Festival, the market will see more potential. The current problem in trading is traffic congestion along the Kyin San Kyawt road section. More than 700 watermelon and muskmelon trucks were seen queuing on the road on 20 January," according to Khwar Nyo Trading Company Limited.

The Muse fruit market usu-

ally sees active trade ahead of the Chinese New Year Festival.

"At present, watermelon prices are ranging from 1,500 to 48,000 Yuan per 15 tons, depending on quality. Muskmelons are priced 2.5-8 Yuan per kilogram," according to the Khwar Nyo Trading Co. Ltd.

Watermelons and muskmelons top the list of fruits exported to China, and the export volume has been increasing significantly year over year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

"If growers follow GAP guidelines, they can get higher prices. But, a majority of them are still using pesticides," said

officials.

Myanmar currently exports around 800,000 tons of watermelons per year.

The volume of watermelon exports was estimated at 500,000 tons in the 2014-2015 fiscal year, over 560,000 tons in the 2015-2016FY, and over 170,000 tons in the 2018 mini-budget period (from April to September).

Watermelons and muskmelons are primarily grown in Mandalay and Sagaing regions and Shan State. Myanmar's watermelons and muskmelons have grabbed a large market share in China. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

FDI up \$200 mln against previous fiscal

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR attracted more than US\$1.4 billion in foreign direct investments in the current financial year, an increase of \$200 million compared with the corresponding period of the previous FY, said U Thant Sin Lwin, Director-General of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Between 1 October and 10 January, FDI of \$1.47 billion flowed into the country, including expansion of capital by existing enterprises. According to a press statement issued by the DICA, 77 foreign enterprises obtained permits from the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) and endorsements from regional and state Investment Committees in the current financial, bringing in a capital of \$1.35 billion.

In the year-ago period, FDI of \$1.254 billion had flowed in from 86 enterprises. "The number of permitted or endorsed enterprises this year was lower than last year. However, enterprises with large investments entered the country," said U Thant Sin Lwin.

"In the past three months, Myanmar received nearly \$1.5 billion in FDI (approximately \$500 million per month over three months). If investments grow steadily this year, it might reach around \$6 billion. The MIC intends to reach its FDI target of

\$5.8 billion. However, we are prioritizing responsible businesses," he said.

"As large projects were allowed in the current FY, investments grew," he said.

"Infrastructure projects such as industrial parks and urban development projects are bringing investments into the country. There is investment potential for large businesses," he added.

Once offshore oil and gas and mining projects are approved in the current FY, heavy enterprises will enter the country, said U Thauung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, at the 30th regular meeting of the Vice President U Myint Swe with private entrepreneurs, held on 19 October at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry office.

The ministry is inviting responsible businesses so the country benefits, he said.

"The Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan (MIPP) was drawn up with the assistance of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and it is being implemented. As per the MIPP, Myanmar aims to reach an FDI target of \$200 billion in 20 years," said U Thauung Tun.

In the current financial year, the MIC has set an FDI target of \$5.8 billion.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar exports Roselly cardamoms worth over \$2 mln in Oct-Dec

MORE THAN 1,060 tons of Roselly cardamom (Amomi Semen), worth an estimated US\$2.659 million, was exported through Muse to Shweli (Ruili) in the first three months of the 2019-2020 financial year, according to news released online by the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar's cardamom exports were pegged at 2,355 tons worth \$6.796 million in the 2017-2018FY, 694 tons worth \$1.973 million in the 2018 mini-budget period, and 3,903 tons worth \$10.307 million in the 2018-2019FY, according to data released by the ministry.

Buyers prefer cardamom seeds without pods. Cardamoms can be exported by paying a 2-per cent tax per ton at the One-Stop-Service Center of the Myanmar

Customs Department, and exporters do not need to obtain an export-import license for shipping cardamoms.

At present, cardamom pods are fetching K12,500 per viss (1.6 kg) and cardamom seeds without pods are priced at K22,500 per viss. The price offered this year is slightly lower than last year. However, the volume of trade is higher than last year.

Myanmar ships about 200,000 viss of Roselly cardamom to the Republic of Korea through the maritime route every year, as it fetches a higher price than border trade. Local consumption of Roselly cardamom is quite low. China uses cardamom as a spice and as an ingredient in traditional medicine.

About 200,000-300,000 car-

damom plants can be grown per acre, with yields touching 400-500 viss. An acre can produce up to about 700 viss of cardamoms in favorable weather.

The plants were earlier found growing in their natural habitat. Later, farmers began to grow them on a manageable scale as they became lucrative crops. They are currently exported to the Republic of Korea, China, and Thailand through the sea route and border trade.

The natural habitats of Roselly cardamom are Taungoo district of Bago Region and Kayin and Kayah states. This year, the production rate in Taungoo area dropped by 30 per cent compared with last year owing to hot weather: —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

External trade surges to \$10.44 bln as of 10 Jan

MYANMAR'S external trade between 1 October and 10 January in the 2019-2020 financial year reached US\$10.44 billion, an increase of \$1.489 billion compared to the corresponding period of the 2018-2019 fiscal, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the same period in the previous FY, trade stood at \$8.95 billion, according to data released by the ministry.

Both maritime and border trade showed an increase in the current FY compared with the year-ago period, with exports estimated at over \$5.06 billion, and imports valued at \$5.38 billion.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest

products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Export earnings from the CMP (cutting, making, and packaging) garment businesses are rising, while reliance on natural resources, such as natural gas and jade, is lessening.

The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports, according to the Ministry of Commerce.—GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Safety systems rolled out on school ferries

SCHOOL BUSES, which are engaged in the school ferry transportation system, started to operate in June, 2018, and now, 107 buses are plying 1,868 students to school in townships of Yangon Region, according to the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).

“We have issued smart cards, which can connect mobile phones to individual students, as a safety feature for children. The smart cards will record when children board their school bus and when they arrive back home. Moreover, emergency medical tool kits will be kept on board school buses. An information service center will also be opened for parents to help them keep track of their children. The major objective is to ensure the safety of children,” said U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw, Managing Director of the YRTA.

The school transportation service is now two years into the academic year. It is being provided in 12 schools, including two TTC high schools and middle schools, five schools in North Okkalapa Township, and five schools in Latha, Mayangone, Sanchaung, and Thingangyun townships, according to the YRTA.—Myint Maung
(Translated by Hay Mar)



School children in Yangon. PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG

River bank protection project in Mandalay Region to start this month

A river bank protection project will start at the end of January in the current financial year at 20 villages in 11 townships of Mandalay Region, according to the Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems, under the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

“The river bank protection project will cost K5.3 billion. Tenders have been invited from private entrepreneurs,” said U Kyaw Myint Than, regional head of the Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems.

“A total of 44 companies submitted tender applications, the closing date of which was 9 January. Last year, some of the activities were carried out by the department. But this year, the department will only supervise the project. The project will be implemented by the



A work processing area of River bank protection project seen in Mandalay Region. PHOTO: THAN ZAW MIN (IPRD)

companies,” he added.

In the 2019-2020 financial year, the river bank protection project will be implemented in four villages in Thabeikkyin Township, four villages in Singu Township, three villages in Madaya Township, two villages

in Ngazun Township, one village in Amarapura Township, one village in Singaing Township, one village in Myittha Township, one village in Tada-U Township, one village in Taungtha Township, one village in Patheingyi Township, and one village in

Nyaung-U Township.

The project has been timed with a fall in the level of river water. The department’s engineers will manage the work processes in the project areas.—Than Zaw Min (IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Information centre for local, foreign travellers being built in Sagaing

A new information centre under construction for investors and local and foreign travellers visiting Sagaing Region, said U Aung Thu Oo, head of the regional Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. The centre will be located in the compound of the office of the regional Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

“The information centre will regularly distribute pamphlets and provide technical assistance to local and foreign travellers. Currently, officials are negotiating with computer software experts to provide technological information to enable receipt of information via mobile phones and tablets. Moreover, the in-

formation center would provide information to travellers wanting to know more about Sagaing Region,” said U Aung Thu Oo.

The information centre is being constructed with allocations from the Sagaing Region Hotels and Tourism Development Fund. The centre would be 40 feet in length and 50 feet

in width. The construction of the centre began in the third week of December. Currently, the construction is 10 per cent complete, and it is expected to be finished within the 2019-2020 financial year.—Win Oo (Zay-yartine)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung inspects renovation of embankment in Nyaungdon

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung looked into renovation of embankment in Nyaungdon Township, Ayeyawady Region, on 19 January morning.

After hearing reports, the Union Minister advised to make consultations with experts from the Netherlands for renovation works to ensuring a resistible design of the new embankment

and to finalize the works before flood season.

Damage of the embankment occurred on 7 January, and it spoiled 500 ft up to 19 January.

Local authorities are taking temporary measures and precautions to prevent more damages and losses. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung inspects embankment maintenance work to prevent river bank erosion in Nyaungdon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

MoEE signs letter of intent to speed up Mee Lin Gyaing LNG power plant construction

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy signed the Letter of Intent for the Acceleration of Mee Lin Gyaing Integrated LNG to Power Plant with three companies and a Myanmar company on 17 January.

The LNG power plant is based in Mee Lin Gyaing region of Shwethaungyan Township in Patheingyi District, Ayeyawady Region, and is the biggest one to be invested at US\$2.5 billion. It will be capable of generation 1,390 Megawatts in 2023 once completed. It will be able to fulfill all electric demands of Ayeyawady Region and even distribute its electric generation to other states and regions through the National Power Grid.

The signing ceremony took

place at the MoEE's headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw with the Permanent Secretary representing the ministry and inking the documents with Mr Xie Yihua, Chairman of Yunnan Provincial Energy Investment Group Co Ltd, Mr Feng Ke, CEO of Union Resources and Engineering Co Ltd, Mr Li Jie, Chief Risk Control Officer of Zhefu Holding Group Co Ltd, and U Zaw Naing Thein, CEO of the Myanmar ethnic national-owned Supreme Trading Co Ltd.

The project will include the LNG power plant, an LNG terminal, a 230KV transmission line over 80 miles long and a 500KV transmission line over 130 miles long. — Myo Aung

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



A signing ceremony of Letter of Intent for the Acceleration of Mee Lin Gyaing Integrated LNG to Power Plant held in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 January. PHOTO: MNA

SpaceX in 'perfect' test of Crew Dragon emergency abort system

WASHINGTON (United States) — SpaceX successfully tested its emergency abort system on an unmanned spacecraft moments after launch Sunday, according to a live broadcast of

the event, the last major test before it plans to send NASA astronauts to the International Space Station.

"As far as we can tell thus far it was a picture-perfect

mission," SpaceX founder Elon Musk told reporters.

He added that the first manned flight of the capsule will probably occur "in the second quarter", an event that would mark the first time in nine years that Americans have gone into space aboard an American rocket, rather than a Russian one.

The favorable outcome of the peril-filled test was good news for SpaceX and for NASA, which urgently needs to certify a vehicle to transport astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS) this year.

"By all accounts, this was a very successful test," NASA administrator Jim Bridenstine said.

The test launch began at 10:30 am (1530 GMT) at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida with the launch of a Falcon 9 rocket topped by SpaceX's new Crew Dragon spacecraft. The rocket was programmed to perform as if it were launching the capsule into orbit.

One minute and 24 seconds after launch, at an altitude of 19 kilometers (12 miles) over the Atlantic and as the rocket was traveling at a speed of more than 1,500 kilometers per hour, an emergency escape sequence was set in motion.

The spacecraft ignited its powerful SuperDraco thrusters, propelling it away from the rocket.

Shortly after the separa-

tion, the rocket disintegrated in a ball of fire, as planned.

An Atlantic splashdown -

On a manned mission, the maneuver is designed to rescue the astronauts if the rocket has a problem on ascent or veers off course.

Crew Dragon continued its upward trajectory alone reaching an altitude of about 40 kilometers before beginning its natural descent toward the Atlantic. Four large parachutes opened to brake its descent and splashdown in the ocean, where recovery teams were pre-positioned. Nine minutes after launch, Crew Dragon was in the water, apparently without suffering damage.—AFP



This NASA TV video frame grab shows a SpaceX rocket launching to perform an in-flight abort test of its Crew Dragon spacecraft, which was unmanned for the apparently successful test. PHOTO: AFP

Investing in agricultural sector key for lifting living standard of farmers

THE time is ripe to transform the country's agricultural sector by switching from a traditional system to mechanized farming, as part of efforts to boost the economy.

We need to set a target of producing safe and nutritious food using Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and organic farming methods to penetrate foreign markets.

We need to step up efforts to raise awareness about the excessive use of chemical inputs, such as pesticides and fertilizers, to ensure that farmers as well as consumers enjoy good health through the production of safe food.

Agricultural experts are obliged to conduct research and disseminate knowledge to farmers who are dealing with the consequences of using chemical inputs and the impact of climate change.

The other sectors we need to improve through research are highland cultivation, boosting production of rice through water management, and fighting diseases using methods that do not affect the natural environment.

We need to intensify efforts for providing training to farmers on using critical inputs in an economic and sustainable way to obtain higher yields and follow a pattern of sustainable agriculture in the future.

Meanwhile, we should not forget that mechanization is an important tool in crop production. Farmers who have

access to improved tools and technologies have the opportunity to shift from subsistence farming to market-oriented farming.

Theoretically, delivering mechanized solutions and providing training to farming cooperatives on equipment, business systems, and soil management can help us raise the living standards of farmers.

However, modern processing machinery and technologies are beyond our farmers' means. There are many other obstacles, including lack of storage facilities.

We need to attract local and foreign investment in the sector. But foreign direct investment in agriculture is still low.

To achieve the sustainable development goal in the agricultural sector, Myanmar is encouraging public-private-partnerships, while assessing the strengths and weaknesses of rice and other crops, and making efforts for improving agri-technologies.

We should not forget the fact that small farmers play a crucial role in ensuring food sufficiency and nutritional content, abolishing poverty, and promoting inclusive and sustainable agricultural development operations.

The time is ripe to invest in the agricultural sector.

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The 106-megawatt Thakayta gas-fired power station in Yangon

By Min Thit (MNA)

THE Government of Myanmar is seeking means and implementing projects to fulfill the country's industrial and public electricity demand as power supply is one of the most important requirements for national economic growth and the increase in foreign investment.

In so doing, the government is inviting investments from local and foreign sources for the country's electricity sector. The 106-megawatt gas-fired power station in Thakayta Township, Yangon Region is one of the foreign investment projects of the electricity sector.

USD 126m investment

Union Resources & Engineering Co., Ltd. (UREC) a branch of the Yunnan Energy Investment Group (YEIG) put an investment of US\$ 126 million and built the 106-megawatt Thakayta gas-fired power station in cooperation with the Ministry of Electricity and Energy of Myanmar during the period between 2016 and 2018. The power station started operation on 28 February 2018.

The YEIG, the parent company of UREC, was established in Yunnan Province under the approval of Yunnan Province Government and Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2012. The mega company has been implementing hydropower, combined recycled power, solar power and wind power projects in various parts of the People's Republic of China. Till now, the company has implemented over 15000 megawatts. Total value of the assets of YEIG is 187 billion Yuan. With its annual income of 113 billion Yuan it is contributing 20 percent to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Yunnan Province.

Union Resources & Engineering Co., Ltd. (UREC) a sub-company of the Yunnan Energy Investment Group (YEIG) has opened offices in Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Bangladesh, Singapore and Hong Kong. In Myanmar, company built the 106-megawatt Thakayta gas-fired power station in Yangon and is implementing the 600-megawatt Shweli (1) hydropower project with its own investment in Shan State.



State-of-the-art technology

As regards its investment projects in Myanmar, Managing Director Mr. Dong Fan of Union Resources & Engineering Co., Ltd. said. "UREC is the company making investments mainly in power projects and implementing them by applying the state-of-the-art technology.

Myanmar can provide electricity for 50 percent of the people in December 2019, up from 34 percent in March 2016. In its endeavours for gen-

"With the strategic and financial support of its parent company, YEIG, the UREC will increase its investment in Myanmar's electricity sector to over US\$ 2 billion in the next five years." MD of UREC Mr. Dong Fan

nology. Myanmar's electricity consumption rate is rising daily amidst the Government's endeavours to generate more power for the country. With the aim of putting investment into Myanmar's energy sector under common interest for contributing towards the neighbouring country's progress, the UREC has entered Myanmar."

The 106-megawatt Thakayta gas-fired power station is generating about 800 million

kilowatt hours of electricity per year and is producing power to about 42,000 homes. So it is partly fulfilling the power needs of Yangon City.

Myanmar can provide electricity for 50 percent of the people in December 2019, up from 34 percent in March 2016. In its endeavours for gen-

erating more power for the national consumption, the Government built three hydropower stations, six combined recycled power stations and one solar power station totaling 10 that are producing 904 megawatts more for the country.

For all rural and urban areas

Apart from erecting more power stations to meet the growing local demand, the government installed 230-KV,

66-KV, 33-KV, 11-KV and 400-volt power cable lines totaling 19,600 miles long and 12,636 sub-power stations within a three-year period beginning 2016.

The government has been building more and more power stations, power cable lines and sub-power stations to supply enough energy for the people and industries. In December 2019, the national electrification ratio reached 50 percent. The government is striving for the national electrification ratio to touch 55 percent in 2021, more than 75 percent in fiscal year 2025-2026 and 100 percent in 2030.

"Electricity is the most basic part of the national development. It plays the main role in increasing the national economic growth and improving the infrastructures for multiple sectors including social, health and education sectors. For example, inadequate power supply may scare away foreign investment. It is the most noticeable point of a developing country like Myanmar. Moreover, electricity is an essential requirement for health and education that serve as the springboard for social progress of the people," said Mr. Dong Fan in expressing his view.

YEIG and UREC will make more investments in the power

sector of Myanmar and one of its new projects is a LNG-fired power station at Mee Lin Gyaint area near Shwethaungyan Town in Patheingyi District, Ayeyawady Region, in the south of Myanmar.

(Translated by TMT)

More investment

"UREC has been working in Myanmar for over 30 years. In the future, YEIG and UREC will make more investments in Myanmar under the priority program of Yunnan Province Government. We have further investment schemes for Myanmar for the present and the future. "With the strategic and financial support of its parent company, YEIG, the UREC will increase its investment in Myanmar's electricity sector to over US\$ 2 billion in the next five years," said Managing Director of UREC Mr. Dong Fan in explaining his company's plans.

The electricity sector of Myanmar has now a total foreign investment of US\$ 21681.678 million and a total local investment of US\$ 483.435 million. In Yangon Region alone, the volume of foreign investment is US\$ 746.620 million and that of local investment is Ks 59060.554 million, according to the list of the Myanmar Investment Commission.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 20th January, 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 21st January, 2020: Rain will be scattered in Kachin State and isolated in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Mandalay Region, Shan, Chin, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-6) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

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

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st January, 2020: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st January, 2020: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st January, 2020: Generally fair weather.

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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Venezuela's Guaido in Colombia to meet with Pompeo

CARACAS (Venezuela) — Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido surfaced in Colombia on Sunday to meet with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, as his power struggle with President Nicolas Maduro entered a challenging new phase.

“Already in #Colombia,” the Venezuelan National Assembly leader wrote on Twitter, thanking Colombian President Ivan Duque for his “support for the struggle.”

The move comes after an overture by Maduro for direct negotiations with the United States on an end to crippling US sanctions, and amid signs he is preparing for renewed confrontation with the opposition.



Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed acting president Juan Guaido is said to have traveled to Colombia to meet with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. **PHOTO: AFP**

Guaido, who is recognized by the United States and more than 50 other countries as Venezuela's acting president, will meet with Pompeo in Bogota. Pompeo told reporters on a flight from Germany to Colombia that Guaido was “the duly elected leader of Venezuela.” “I look forward to having a meeting with him,” Pompeo said. “Maduro has been destructive... Our mission set is to deliver a set of free and fair elections to the Venezuelan people.”

The US secretary of state is scheduled to arrive in the Colombian capital on Monday at the start of a Latin American tour.

“We will generate the conditions that will lead us to liberty,” Guaido said, anticipating he would return to Venezuela “full of good news.” Duque, also on Twitter, said he would hold a working meeting with Guaido, and that they would both attend a regional summit Monday on the fight against terrorism.

Guaido has been barred from leaving Venezuela since proclaiming himself acting president a year ago, after the National Assembly declared Maduro a “usurper.” He has defied the travel ban once before, in February, when he secretly traveled to Colombia and then visited several other countries to marshal regional support for his challenge to Maduro.—AFP ■

World's 22 richest men have more than all women in Africa: Oxfam

DAVOS (Switzerland) — The number of billionaires has doubled in the past decade and the world's 22 richest men now have more wealth than all the women in Africa, Oxfam said Monday in an appeal to the Davos elite to get serious about inequality.

“Our broken economies are lining the pockets of billionaires and big business at the expense of ordinary men and women. No wonder people are starting to question whether billionaires should even exist,” Oxfam's India head Amitabh Behar said.

“Women and girls are among those who benefit least from today's economic system,” Behar said ahead of the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, where he will represent Oxfam.

There will be at least 119 billionaires worth about \$500 billion attending Davos this

year, Bloomberg reported, with the highest contingents coming from the United States, India and Russia.

“The very top of the economic pyramid sees trillions of dollars of wealth in the hands of a very small group of people, predominantly men,” the Oxfam report said.

“Their wealth is already extreme, and our broken economy concentrates more and more wealth into these few hands,” it said.

The report said women and girls put in 12.5 billion hours of unpaid care work each and every day, estimated to be worth at least \$10.8 trillion a year.

Oxfam's annual report on global inequality is traditionally released just before the forum opens on Tuesday in the Swiss Alpine resort.

Startling stats

It had some astonishing statistics.

If the world's richest one percent paid just 0.5 per cent extra tax on their wealth for 10 years, it would equal the investment needed to create 117 million new jobs in elderly and child care, education and health, Oxfam said.

Oxfam's figures are based on data from Forbes magazine and Swiss bank Credit Suisse, but they are disputed by some economists.

The numbers show that 2,153 billionaires now have more wealth than the 4.6 billion poorest people on the planet.

Women and girls are burdened in particular because they are most often care givers that keep “the wheels of our economies, businesses and societies moving,” Behar said.

They “often have little time to get an education, earn a decent living or have a say in how our societies are run,” and “are therefore trapped at the bottom of the economy,” he added.

“Across the globe, 42 per cent of women cannot get jobs because they are responsible for all the caregiving, compared to just six percent of men,” Oxfam figures showed.

The report called on world governments to “build a human economy that is feminist and values what truly matters to society, rather than fuelling an endless pursuit of profit and wealth”. — AFP



Osito & Co co-founders engineer Julen Justa (l) 25, and Tamar Gigolashvili, a 24-year-old law and management graduate. **PHOTO: AFP**

Spain's 'drunken gummy bears' on edge as Haribo bares its teeth

MADRID (Spain) — Ander Mendez and his friends were hoping they'd struck it rich when they came up with the idea of selling alcohol-infused gummy bears — until they found themselves in the sights of sweet giant Haribo.

Now, these three Spaniards say they're afraid of being shut down by the German confectionery king, which is famed for its vast array of jelly sweets and was founded 100 years ago in the western city of Bonn.

In a not-so-sweetly worded legal letter, Haribo has accused their startup of infringing its trademarked little bear.

But these graduates from the northern Spanish port city of Bilbao insist they will carry on producing their “drunken gummy bears” — “because people like them.”

The conflict arose from the apparent similarities between the fruit gums created a year

ago by their startup, Osito & Co, and the miniature jelly bear that has become Haribo's best-known product.

With a manufacturing setup in Spain's northern Basque Country, the trio created a premium product in five different flavours that come in stylish metal tins that hold 30 sweets and retail at nine euros (\$10).

Each is colour-coded to denote different flavours: blue for rum and pineapple, pink for gin and strawberry, orange for vodka and orange, brown for whisky and coke, and yellow for tequila and lemon. Haribo's chewy confections are alcohol-free and sold thousands of shops across the world, from Europe to China, Australia, Brazil and the United States. “As normal in such cases, Haribo has started judicial proceedings to protect its registered trademarks,” a spokesperson for the company told AFP.—AFP ■



The 22 richest men in the world have more wealth than all the women in Africa, Oxfam says. **PHOTO: AFP**

Online campaign to save malnourished lions at Sudan park

KHARTOUM (Sudan) — Online calls grew Sunday to help save five “malnourished and sick” African lions held at a park in Sudan’s capital, with some demanding the creatures be shifted to a better habitat.

The five lions are held in cages at Khartoum’s Al-Qureshi Park in an upscale district of the capital, but for weeks now they have been suffering from shortages of food and medicine.

“I was shaken when I saw these lions at the park... their bones are protruding from the skin,” wrote Osman Salih on Facebook as he launched an online campaign under the slogan #Sudananimalrescue.

“I urge interested people and institutions to help them.”

Park officials and medics said the lions’ conditions deteriorated over the past few weeks, with some losing almost two-thirds of their body weight.

“Food is not always available, so often we buy it from our own money to feed them,” EssameldineHajjar, a manager at Al-Qureshi park told AFP.

The park is managed by Khartoum municipality but also funded in part by private donors.

Sudan is in the midst of a worsening economic crisis, led



For weeks now, five lions held at Khartoum’s Al-Qureshi Park in an upscale district of the capital have been suffering from shortages of food and medicine. **PHOTO: AFP**

by soaring food prices and foreign currency shortage.

On Sunday, crowds of citizens, volunteers and journalists flocked to the park to see the lions after their photographs went viral on social media networks.

One of the five cats was tied with a rope and was fed fluids through a drip as it recovered from dehydration, an AFP correspondent who toured the park reported. Chunks of rotten meat covered in flies lay scattered near the cages.

The overall condition of the park itself was also affecting the animals’ health, another official

at the park said.

“They are suffering from severe illnesses. They are sick and appear to be malnourished,” said Moataz Mahmoud, one of the caretakers at the park.

It is unclear how many lions are in Sudan, but several are at the Dinderpark along the border with Ethiopia.

African lions are classified as a “vulnerable” species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Their population dropped 43 percent between 1993 and 2014, with only around 20,000 alive today. — AFP ■

Malaysia says won’t be ‘garbage dump’ as it returns waste

BUTTERWORTH (Malaysia) — Malaysia has sent back 150 shipping containers of plastic waste to mostly wealthier nations, with the Southeast Asian country saying Monday it would not be the world’s “garbage dump”.

The region has been flooded with plastic from more developed economies such as the United States and Britain since 2018, after China — which previously boasted a massive recycling industry — ordered a halt to most imports.

Many Chinese recycling businesses moved to Malaysia after the ban took effect, leading to huge quantities of plastic being shipped in without permits and flooding small communities.

Governments across the region are now sending back illegally imported plastic, and Environment Minister Yeo Bee Yin said Malaysia had returned 150 shipping containers carrying 3,737 metric tons to places including France, Britain and the United States.

Officials hope to send back another 110 containers in the near future, 60 of which came

from the US, Yeo said.

Authorities “will take the necessary steps to ensure that Malaysia does not become the garbage dump of the world”, she added.

The environment ministry “will continue to wage war against pollution, including plastic waste”, she told reporters in the northern city of Butterworth, home to a major port from where some containers were sent back.

The exporting countries and shipping lines covered the cost of returning the containers.

“We don’t want to pay a single cent,” the minister said.

“People dump their rubbish into your country, we are not supposed to pay them to send it back.”

The containers were sent to 13 countries, with 43 returned to France, 42 to Britain, 17 to the US and 11 to Canada. Several Southeast Asian countries have sent back unwanted waste in recent months. Indonesia has returned hundreds of containers to their countries of origin and the Philippines returned a huge shipment of garbage to Canada. — AFP ■

Dust storms and giant hail batter bushfire-weary Australia

SYDNEY (Australia) — Thunderstorms and giant hail battered parts of Australia’s east coast on Monday after “apocalyptic” dust storms swept across drought-stricken areas, as extreme weather patterns collided in the bushfire-fatigued country.

Australia has since October been overwhelmed by an unprecedented bushfire season made worse by climate change.

Swathes of the country have burned, hundreds of millions of animals have died, more than 2,000 homes have been destroyed and at least 29 lives have been lost.

Violent hail storms pelted the capital Canberra on Monday, with footage showing the storm ripping branches off trees.

Emergency services were warning people there to “move cars undercover and away from trees and power lines”.

The bureau of meteorology told people in the southeast of

New South Wales, including Sydney, to brace for the approaching storm.

“Severe thunderstorms are likely to produce damaging, locally destructive winds, large, possibly giant hailstones and heavy rainfall that may lead to flash flooding in the warning area over the next several hours,” the bureau said.

Two people visiting the popular tourist destination the Blue Mountains were taken to hospital when a 16-year-old boy was hit by lightning and a 24-year-old man suffered injuries while leaning on a nearby metal railing.

“These people are extremely lucky to be alive,” Ambulance New South Wales duty manager Greg Marshall said in a statement.

“One centimetre either way and they would have faced a direct hit which could’ve been fatal.”

They both remain in hospital

in a stable condition.

‘Like an apocalyptic movie’

Dramatic images captured over the weekend from western New South Wales show a massive wall of dust rolling through outback towns. Locals reported

being cast into darkness in the middle of the day.

“We are used to the ritual and rush of bringing in washing, turning air cons off, closing windows and doors, before a big dust storm hits,” Ashleigh Hull from the rural town of Dubbo told AFP.

This one was “more spectacular” than the typical dust storm, she added. “It was honestly like an apocalyptic movie, a huge wave coming towards us, really quite impressive, but I just wish it actually brought a good amount of rain, not dust.” — AFP ■



Australia has since October been overwhelmed by an unprecedented bushfire season made worse by climate change. **PHOTO: AFP**

SARS-like virus spreads in China, reaches another Asian country

BEIJING (China)— A SARS-like virus has killed a third person, spread around China and reached another Asian country, authorities said Monday, fuelling fears of a major outbreak as millions begin travelling for the Lunar New Year in humanity's biggest migration.

The new coronavirus strain, first discovered in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, has caused alarm because of its connection to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed nearly 650 people across mainland China and Hong Kong in 2002-2003.

Wuhan has 11 million inhabitants and serves as a major transport hub, including during the annual Lunar New Year holiday which begins later this week and sees hundreds of millions of Chinese people travel across the country to visit family.

Weighing in on the matter for the first time, Chinese President Xi Jinping said Monday that safeguarding people's lives should be given "top priority" and that the spread of the epidemic "should be resolutely contained", according to state broadcaster CCTV.

Xi said it was necessary to "release information on the epidemic in a



No human-to-human transmission has been confirmed so far, but authorities have previously said the possibility 'cannot be excluded'. PHOTO: AFP

timely manner and deepen international cooperation," and ensure people have a "stable and peaceful Spring Festival", the broadcaster said. The total number of people diagnosed with the virus rose to 218, as Shanghai confirmed its first case on Monday and 136 new cases were found over the weekend in Wuhan, 15 in southern Guangdong province and five in Beijing, according to CCTV.

A third person died in Wuhan, the local health commission said.

According to Shanghai's health commission, its first case — a 56-year-old woman who was hospitalised last Wednesday — also came from Wuhan.

The patient's vital

signs are stable and two of her close contacts are under medical observation, it said through its official Twitter-like Weibo account.

South Korea on Monday also reported its first case — a 35-year-old woman who flew in from Wuhan. Thailand and Japan have previously confirmed a total of three cases — all of whom had visited the Chinese city. No human-to-human transmission has been confirmed so far, but authorities have not ruled out the possibility.

There are also six suspected cases in Shanghai and four provinces and regions in the east, south and southwest of the country.

"Experts believe that the current epidemic situa-

tion can still be controlled," the National Health Commission said Sunday.

But the commission acknowledged that the source of the coronavirus and its mode of transmission are not yet known.

The virus did not slow down the annual holiday travel rush, though some travellers wore masks at crowded railway stations in Beijing and Shanghai.

"Watching the news, I do feel a little worried. But I haven't taken precautionary measures beyond wearing regular masks," said Li Yang, a 28-year-old account manager who was heading home to the northern region of Inner Mongolia for the Lunar New Year. — AFP ■

Israeli, Canadian researchers develop 3D heart tissues

JERUSALEM — Israeli and Canadian researchers have developed engineered three-dimensional (3D) heart tissues from induced human stem cells, Israel Institute of Technology (Technion) reported Sunday.

The tissues were developed as part of a study published in the journal Nature Communications, conducted by researchers from the Technion and the Rambam Health Care Campus, both in northern Israel, and their colleagues at the University Health Network (UHN) in Toronto, Canada. The developed tissues, which mimic atrial and ventricular tissues, will be used to personalize drugs for cardiac patients and to develop new drugs for them.

In the more distant future, the new technology is expected to be used in the

manufacturing of the implants for damaged areas in the heart.

To illustrate the potential of these models, the researchers developed a model of arrhythmia in the atrial tissue and examined through it the effect of relevant drugs.

One of the innovations in the study is the separate creation of atrial and ventricular cells, both critical for cardiac function but function differently.

This separation is important because drugs that enhance the function of the atrial cells, thus preventing atrial arrhythmias, may be detrimental to ventricular cell function and even cause ventricular arrhythmias. Now, when it is possible to create atrial and cells separately, each drug can be tested for each cell type individually. —Xinhua ■

Wedding Regards

Thanks to our beloved family members, relatives and friends for attending our wedding: held in Mandalay on 19th January 2020 and making this special day a blessing in our life.

Your love, support and care will always be cherished.

With Deepest Gratitude,
Min Thaik Aung & Honey Win Latt

Early menopause increases health risks after 60: study

PARIS (France) — Women who undergo premature menopause are almost three times more likely to develop multiple, chronic medical problems in their sixties than women who make the transition at 50 or 51, researchers reported Monday.

In high-income countries, a third of a woman's life unfolds after the menopause.

Earlier research showed that premature menopause at 40 or younger is linked later in life to

single medical problems such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

But the new study, published in Human Reproduction, is the first to examine links between the timing of natural menopause and the onset of multiple medical conditions, known as multimorbidity, the authors said.

The data were drawn from more than 5,100 women enrolled in an Australian national health survey.

The women reported at three-year inter-

vals from 1996 to 2016 on whether they had been diagnosed with any of 11 health problems, including diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, arthritis, osteoporosis, asthma, depression, anxiety or breast cancer.

Multimorbidity was defined as having two or more of these conditions at the same time.

The women were considered to have entered natural menopause after 12 months without monthly periods.— AFP ■

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IMF upgrades Japan's growth forecast to 0.7% in 2020

WASHINGTON — The International Monetary Fund on Monday forecast that Japan's economy will grow by 0.7 per cent in 2020, up 0.2 percentage point from its earlier estimate due to stimulus measures to mitigate the impact of a recent consumption tax hike.

Global growth was projected to be 3.3 per cent this year, 0.1 point lower than the previous estimate, reflecting a more subdued growth forecast for India, the Washington-based institution said in its update of the World Economic Outlook report released in October.

The signing of a partial trade deal between the United States and China last week, which has brought a temporary truce in their trade war, led the IMF to lift the projection of China's growth this year by 0.2 point to 6.0 per cent.

The so-called phase one agreement includes a U.S. plan to alleviate some of its punitive tariffs imposed on Chinese goods in exchange for Beijing's commitment to make additional purchases of U.S. products and strengthen intellectual property protections.

In the United States, growth is projected at 2.0 percent in 2020, 0.1 percentage point lower than the earlier estimate, while the eurozone economy is projected to grow 1.3 per cent in 2020, also a downward revision of 0.1 point.

As for Japan, the IMF said it revised upward the country's growth rate for 2020 due to the "anticipated boost" from government stimulus measures passed last month following the 2-percentage-point consumption tax increase from 8 percent in October.

The government approved a package of stimulus measures worth 26 trillion yen (\$236 billion) as it seeks to shield the Japanese economy from weak overseas demand, the fallout from the consumption tax hike and the risk of a slowdown after next summer's Tokyo Olympics.

Japan's growth is likely to moderate to 0.5 percent in 2021, unchanged from the October estimate, as the impact of fiscal stimulus fades, the IMF said. — Kyodo News ■

Russia releases Japanese fishing boat seized off Hokkaido

NEMURO (Japan) — Russia released a Japanese fishing boat Monday seized last week in waters off islands claimed by Japan after confirming that a fine had been paid.

The boat returned to Nemuro in Hokkaido in the evening from Kunashiri, one of the disputed islands called the Northern Territories in Japan and the Southern Kurils in Russia.

A Russian judicial source said a local court ordered a fine of some 68,000 rubles (\$1,100) against the captain on Monday, as Moscow has said it violated rules under a bilateral fishing agreement.

The ShoyoMaru No. 68, with six crew members, was seized last Wednesday after the border security agency from Sakhalin in Russia's Far East, which



Supplied photo shows ShoyoMaru No. 68. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

effectively administers the disputed islands, said they found more than 1,100 kilograms of fish altogether on board but the catch was not declared in the vessel's logbook as required.

The boat was inspected by Russian authorities

in the country's claimed exclusive economic zone before being taken to Furukamappu, known as Yuzhno-Kurilsk in Russia, on Kunashiri.

The incident follows last month's seizure of five Japanese fishing boats also

from Nemuro by Russian authorities. The vessels and their 24 crew members, who were catching octopus in waters around the disputed islands, were released after paying a fine of some 6.4 million rubles. — Kyodo News ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (31/2019)

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

Sr.No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	DMP/L-192(19-20)	Electrical Accessories for Oil and Gas Field (1) Lot	Ks
(b)	DMP/L-193(19-20)	Mud Chemicals (4) Items	Ks

{Retender for DMP/L-035(2019-2020)}
 - The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from 20 January 2020 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
 - 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 20 February 2020**.
 - Tender Closing Date & Time – **20-2-2020, 14:00 pm**
- Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 - 411206

Trade Mark Ads Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355, 09974424848

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV HONG KAI

Consignees of cargo carried on MV HONG KAI VOY.NO. (1911) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-1-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIPL 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 ELDER TRIUMPHANT
SHIPPING LINES PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV TOVE MAERSK VOY.NO. (003W/004E)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TOVE MAERSK VOY.NO. (003W/004E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-1-2020 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SEALAND MAERSKASIAPTE
LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV XETHA BHUM VOY.NO. (1131E)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV XETHA BHUM VOY.NO. (1131E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-1-2020 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.

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV SINAR BINTAN VOY.NO. (662 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BINTAN VOY.NO. (662 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-1-2020 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.

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

Phone No: 2301185

New York Times endorses Warren, Klobuchar for president

WASHINGTON (United States) — The New York Times on Sunday endorsed Senators Amy Klobuchar and Elizabeth Warren for the Democratic presidential nomination, its first time choosing two candidates.

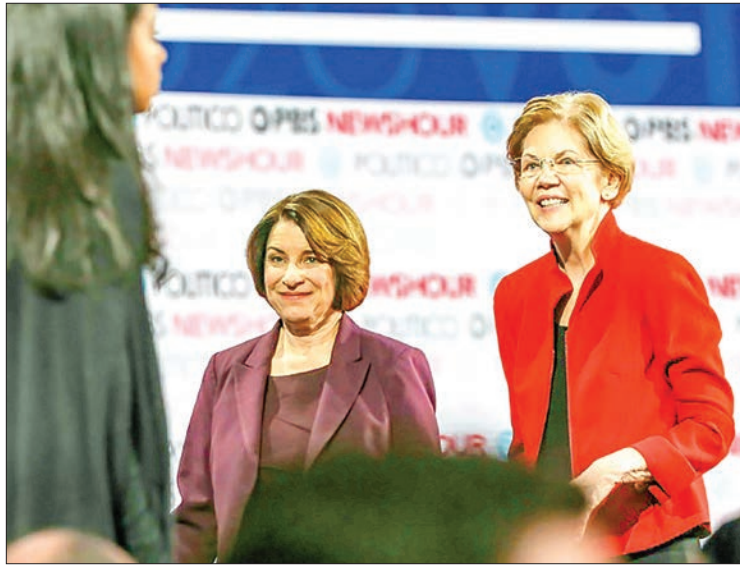
The liberal newspaper's pick comes just a few weeks before the Iowa caucuses on February 3 which officially begins the presidential primary season.

The Times described Massachusetts senator Warren as the "radical" and Minnesota senator Klobuchar as the "realist" choice.

"An essential debate is underway between two visions that may define the future of the (Democratic) party and perhaps the nation," the editorial board wrote. "Some in the party view President Trump as an aberration and believe that a return to a more sensible America is possible. Then there are those who believe that President Trump was the product of political and economic systems so rotten that they must be replaced."

"Both the radical and the realist models warrant serious consideration," the board said. "That's why we're endorsing the most effective candidates for each approach. They are Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar."

Warren has consistently polled at third place, behind former vice president Joe Biden and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders — Warren's fellow



The New York Times has endorsed Senator Elizabeth Warren (pictured December 2019) as its "radical" pick for the Democratic presidential nominee and Senator Amy Klobuchar as its "realist" one. PHOTO: AFP

progressive. She surged during the summer but has seen her support slide since October. But The Times called her the new "standard-bearer for the Democratic left," praising her plans for structural and social reform.

"Ms. Warren's path to the nomination is challenging, but not hard to envision," the board said.

For Klobuchar, who is more moderate, The Times said her "lengthy tenure in the Senate and bipartisan credentials would make her a deal maker (a real one) and uniter for the wings of the party — and perhaps the nation." "May the best woman win," The Times concluded.

For the first time, The Times detailed its decision-making pro-

cess on its television show "The Weekly".

The episode shows the editorial board's interviews with nine leading Democratic presidential hopefuls. In addition to Warren and Klobuchar, The Times spoke with Biden, Sanders, billionaire activist Tom Steyer, entrepreneur Andrew Yang, South Bend mayor Pete Buttigieg, former Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick and New Jersey senator Cory Booker, who dropped out of the race in December. The interviews were conducted on the record. In addition to showing video clips of the interviews in the "Weekly" episode, the Times Opinion section also published interview transcripts.—AFP ■

Tanzanian police kill 3 suspected armed bandits in commercial capital

DAR ES SALAAM — Tanzanian police have killed three suspected criminals in the commercial capital Dar es Salaam and seized one firearm with one round of ammunition, said a police statement on Monday.

The statement by the Dar es Salaam Police Special Zone said the three suspects were killed on Sunday afternoon at the hectic Magomeni suburb following an exchange of fire with the police.

The suspects started firing at the police who were on patrol after they suspected that they were being hunted by the police, said the statement.

"The police on patrol fired

back, seriously injuring the three suspects," said the statement, adding that the trio died on their way to the Muhimbili National Hospital, the country's leading medical referral facility.

The statement said preliminary investigations showed that the three suspected criminals have been carrying out armed robberies in Dar es Salaam and its neighboring regions for quite a long period. In November 2019, police shot down four suspected armed bandits following an abortive attempt to rob a wealthy livestock trader in the east African nation's western region of Kigoma. —Xinhua ■

Prince Harry expresses 'great sadness' at royal split

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Britain's Prince Harry expressed "great sadness" on Sunday at he and his wife Meghan being stripped of their royal titles as part of a historic separation settlement with the Queen.

But he said he saw no other way out but to give up his royal role in search of "a more peaceful life" with his American former actress wife and baby son Archie.

"It brings me great sadness that it has come to this," Harry told supporters of his Africa-based charity in London. His emotional first remarks since

the separation were aimed at calming a crisis that has shaken the very foundations of Britain's ancient monarchy.

Harry also confessed to some trepidation at taking the momentous step of resigning from daily duties and charting a new life abroad.

He said he had always been ready lose the public money that supported his lavish lifestyle but admitted it pained him to have to give up the military titles and patronages he was awarded after serving two tours in Afghanistan with the British Army.—AFP ■

JPMorgan Chase buys new Paris building for post-Brexit move

NEW YORK (United States) — US bank JPMorgan Chase on Sunday said it had purchased a new building in the heart of Paris capable of holding 450 people, the latest step in its plans to move out of London following Brexit.

The newcomers will join the 260 employees already working in the French capital, the bank said in a statement.

"After multiple government reforms and given the intrinsic nature of Parisian infrastructure, this is the ideal time to invest here and for more of our staff to settle here," said Kyril Courboin, the bank's managing director in France.

The move "will give the bank the opportunity to pursue growth in France, in line with its strategy to continue to serve its Europe-

an clients seamlessly from the continent's major cities, including Frankfurt, Luxembourg and Dublin," the statement added.

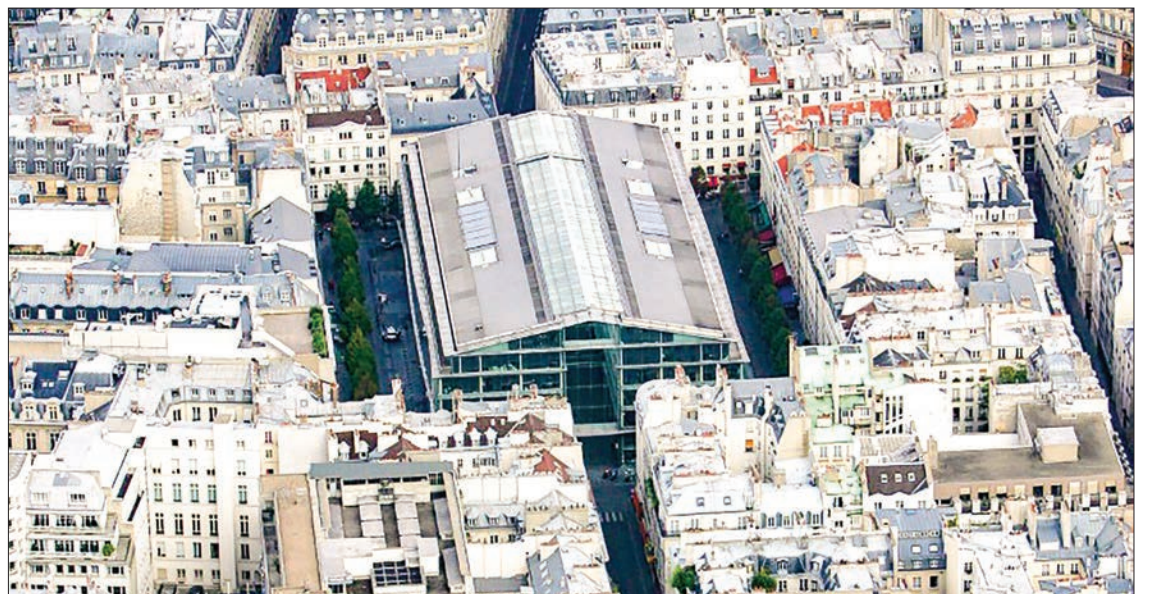
CEO Jamie Dimon said at the beginning of 2019 that JPMorgan planned to shift "several hundred" jobs from London to the continent due to Brexit. The bank already moved a handful of employees at the end of 2018.

Britain's exit from the European Union should take effect at the end of this month, paving the way for a transition period until the end of 2020. But the French capital should have already benefited from the relocation of 4,000 employees, Paris Europlace — an organisation that promotes Paris's financial sector — said at the beginning of January. Bank of America opened a new

French subsidiary in February 2019 that employs 400 people, most of whom were previously based in London. The building

JPMorgan chose in Paris is on Place du Marche Saint-Honore. It is connected to its headquarters on Place Vendome and could

eventually accommodate trading room activities after the completion of renovation work at the end of 2020.—AFP ■



An aerial view of the Place du Marche Saint-Honore in 2005. PHOTO: AFP

Indonesia readies town near Komodo dragon site to host ASEAN, G-20

JAKARTA — Indonesia is preparing a town near a World Heritage site inhabited by Komodo dragons, the world's largest lizards, to host summits of Group of 20 and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 2023, President Joko Widodo said Monday.

"We want to prepare Labuan Bajo to be the venue of G-20 in 2023 and ASEAN Summit in 2023," the president told reporters after chairing a Cabinet meeting in the town, situated on the western tip of Flores Island in East Nusa Tenggara Province.

"There is a huge work we have to complete by the end of this year to develop all here. Infrastructure, landscape, waste (management), clean water...we are preparing all," he said.

Labuan Bajo is a popular transit point for tourists heading to nearby islands to see Komodo dragons, which can grow up to 3 meters, and to observe one of the region's richest marine environments. Starting from February, a special ship will be sent to Labuan Bajo to clean up marine debris and the town's small airport will be developed.

Komodo National Park, which includes Komodo, Padar and Rinca islands and numerous smaller ones, was declared a World Heritage site in 1986. The Komodo Biosphere Reserve was accepted under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program in 1977. — Kyodo News ■



Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo chairs a Cabinet meeting in the town of Labuan Bajo in eastern Indonesia on 20 January 2020. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Toy Story: Hong Kong protest models become major hit

HONG KONG (China) — Intricately detailed Hong Kong protester figurines have become the latest must-have collectables as toy stores recreate the pro-democracy movement's street battles with police in their shop displays.

Stacked on shelves next to comic book superheroes, the models come in a variety of shapes and sizes, some holding make-shift shields and flags, others extinguishing tear gas rounds or playing instruments in protest orchestras.

A local figurine enthusiast and his friend designed dozens

of characters based on their own experiences of attending months of protests. Among their 1:6 scale figures are white-collar workers who hold regular lunchtime rallies outside their offices, elderly "silver-haired" protesters and a demonstrator wearing an oversized Pepe the Frog mask.

"We hope the figurines can reconstruct the situation with authenticity," said Charlie, a 30-year-old freelance photographer by day, who asked to use a pseudonym.

Their models boast many features of the street protests, which have upended Hong Kong

for the last seven months in the most serious challenge to Beijing's rule since the city's 1997 handover. Slogans have been painstakingly painted onto small helmets and some models have cling-film wrapped around their arms — a method protesters use to defend against police pepper spray. Others have scrapes on their legs from street skirmishes and almost all have removable gas masks that have become ubiquitous during the protests.

"We want to make them as detailed as possible so that they can evoke empathy in people," Charlie said. — AFP ■

Two women arrested, over 24 Kg ganja leaves seized in Haryana

CHANDIGARH (India) — Anti Narcotic cell of Haryana Police on Monday arrested two women from Daha Basti of Mangal colony in Karnal and seized over 24 Kilograms of ganja leaves from their possession.

The accused have been identified as Chandramukhi alias Chandro and Chandni Devi alias Chanda, said police. Working on a tip-off, anti-narcotic cell conducted a raid in Daha Basti

and arrested them.

"Anti Narcotic Cell had got a tip-off about drug peddling, accordingly, a police team had conducted a raid in Daha Basti and nabbed the duo along with 24 kg 200-gram ganja leaves," Haryana Police spokesperson said.

During interrogation, the arrested accused revealed that they had brought the seized consignment from Indira Colony

of Delhi and planned to sell it in small quantities on higher prices.

"Both the women also revealed the name of a man, Bittu involved in drug peddling. He will be behind bars very soon," he said.

A case under Narcotics, Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act has been registered. Further investigation is underway.— ANI ■

Malaysia on track for commercial 5G rollout by 3rd quarter of 2020

LANGKAWI (Malaysia) — Malaysia is gearing up to launch 5G, the fifth-generation cellular network, by the third quarter of this year, and Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is hoping the technology will propel the country into a developed nation by 2035.

"If we apply 5G properly, the development of Malaysia will take a much shorter time. Maybe not 2030, maybe by 2035, we should achieve our objective of becoming a developed country," he told reporters Monday after watching the demonstration of 5G wireless technology at police headquarters on the northern island resort of Langkawi.

Langkawi is one of 56 sites across the country chosen as testing grounds for 5G technology in such fields as health care, agriculture, education, public safety and tourism.

Two dozen countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including Malaysia, are set to launch 5G by 2025, according to Communications and Multimedia Minister Gobind Singh Deo. "To the innovators, service providers and relevant stakeholders, this is an exciting time for Malaysia," the minister said in his speech at a 5G-themed conference on Langkawi on Monday.

The minister urged participants to work together with his ministry and a regulatory body to roll out 5G commercial service by the July-September period this year. The government is banking on the supposed economic benefits that the 5G technology will bring.

The Malaysian Institute of Economic Research, a Kuala

Lumpur-based think tank, projects the launch of 5G services to inject up to 12.7 billion ringgit (\$3.1 billion) into the economy between 2021 and 2025 and create more than 39,000 jobs.

Unlike some Western countries, Malaysia has embraced China's telecommunications giant Huawei Technologies Co., a leader in 5G wireless networks, to develop its 5G infrastructure.

While the United States has urged its allies not to work with Huawei for alleged espionage risks, Mahathir has defended the company.

Huawei has made "tremendous advances" in technology and Malaysia has no fear of being spied on, the prime minister said in May. "Yes, there may be some spying. But what is there to spy (on) exactly in Malaysia? We are an open book," he said at a business forum in Tokyo then. "So we try to make use of their technology as much as possible." Huawei has signed preliminary 5G agreements with Malaysian telecommunication companies like Celcom, Telekom Malaysia and Maxis.

Huawei rivals in Malaysia include Finnish tech giant Nokia Corp. Gobind noted that Malaysia has not put all its eggs into one basket.

"At this point in time, Huawei is not the only group that we are looking at for 5G rollout. We are also looking at other companies. It is a question of what they propose and how we can work with them, and security aspect will be analyzed," the communications minister told reporters at Monday's event. —Kyodo News ■



Flower bed of 2019 World 5G Convention is pictured during 2019 World 5G Convention at Beijing Etrong International Exhibition & Convention Center on 21 November 2019 in Beijing, China. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Myanmar women's national football team undergo training in Mandalay



The players of Myanmar women's national football team train in Mandalay yesterday. PHOTO: MFF

AS part of their preparation for the third round of qualifying matches for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, the Myanmar women's national football team arrived in Mandalay on Sunday for training.

On 20 January, they trained at the Myanmar Football Academy (Mandalay) in the morning and at the Mandalay Thiri Stadium in the evening.

The women's national team will also play two friendly matches against Thailand on 25 and 28 January. For the third round of the qualifiers, Myanmar has been placed in Group A with South Korea, and Viet Nam, while Group B includes Australia, China, Thailand, and Chinese Taipei.

The winners and first run-

ners-up of the two groups will advance to the playoff round, which will be held on 6 and 11 March.

The winner of the qualifying tournament will earn an Olympic qualification place. The second placed team will advance to the playoff round against Chile, the second-placed team from the CONMEBOL qualifying tournament. —Kyaw Khin

Week-15 matches of Myanmar Futsal League to be held on 22 Jan

THE Week-15 matches of the Myanmar Futsal League 2019-2020 will take place on 22 January at the National Indoor Stadium-2, according to the league's website.

On 22 January, VUC F.C. will play against OnDoctor F.C. at 8.30 a.m., Futsal Chit Thu F.C. will compete with the MFF U-19 team at 10 a.m., GV F.C. will take on Dream Team F.C. at 11.30 a.m., MIU F.C. will face Do Do Ko Ko F.C. at 1 p.m., Myoma JY F.C. will

play AMM Brothers F.C. at 2.30 p.m., and Let Wel Thone Nara will take on Winner F.C. at 4 p.m.

The tournament will cover 22 weeks. Week-16 matches will be held on 25 January, Week-17 on 29 January, Week-18 on 1 February, Week-19 on 5 February, Week-20 on 8 February, Week-21 on 11 February, and the date for Week-22 matches is yet to be confirmed.

All the matches, except Week-22 which is still to be con-

firmed, will be held at the National Indoor Stadium-2.

After Week-14, VUC F.C. is leading the standing table, with 40 points and 113 goal difference, followed by MIU F.C. in the second place with 40 points and 97 goal difference.

GV F.C. is in the third place with 36 points, On Doctor F.C. is fourth with 25 points, and Winner F.C. is fifth with 25 points. —Kyaw Khin

25 players selected for Road to Japan 2020

THE names of 25 players selected for the MFF-MNL's Youth Development Programme (Road to Japan) were released yesterday, according to the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

The MFF, Myanmar National League, MPT, and Myanmar Care have jointly organized the programme.

The 25 players have been selected from 75 preliminarily selected players from the MPT U-14 Football Tournament 2019 and MFF 100Plus Cup States

and Regions U-14 (Boys) Football Tournament.

The selected players are goalkeepers Khun Aye Chan Aung, Thi Han Phyto, and Phyto Thuta, and defenders Saw Thein Win Aung, Tun Lin Aung, Aung Myo, Nyi Nyi Lin, Pyae Phyto Zaw, Aung Myo Htet, Myint Nang, and Khan Byat Twang.

The midfielders selected for the programme are Kaung Khant Kyaw, Hlaing Htut, Aung Zaw Myo, Ye Yint Aung, Khun Nay Aung, Han Tun Zaw, and

Kyaw Min Htet, and the forwards selected for the tour are Than Lin Ko, Myo Than Kyaw, Saw Myo Zaw, Thet Paing Phyto, Saw Nay Win Tun, Aung Kaung Myat, and Saw Chan Myae Ko Ko.

The Road to Japan tour is scheduled for the end of April or the first week of May. The youth football tour to Japan will involve joint training programmes, friendly matches, and viewing Japanese League football matches. —Kyaw Khin

Rashford vows to return 'fitter than ever' after back injury

LONDON (United Kingdom)— Marcus Rashford has vowed to return for Manchester United "fitter than ever" as he recovers from a stress fracture of the back.

The 22-year-old striker faces at least six weeks on the sidelines, with United boss Ole Gunnar Solskjaer confirming the full extent of the injury after Sunday's 2-0 Premier League defeat at Liverpool.

Rashford, who has scored 22 goals for club and country this season, tweeted: "Blink and I'll be back, fitter than ever. See you soon."

The England international also said he would remain heavily involved in all aspects of club life at Old Trafford during his rehabilitation.

"On the pitch or not, @ ManUtd fans don't get much bigger than me," he added.

"You best believe I'll be involved in team meetings, team

huddles and team sessions throughout this recovery."

Rashford sustained the injury after being introduced as a second-half substitute in last week's FA Cup third-round replay win over Wolves.

Speaking after Sunday's defeat at Anfield, Solskjaer told Sky Sports: "He's suffered a bad injury, it's a stress fracture.

"It happened against Wolverhampton and it is not something that has happened before. I'm looking at Marcus to be out for a while. He won't be back, I'm not a doctor so I don't know exactly, but we are looking at several weeks and then some rehab after that probably.

"We've had many injuries to big players this season, it's just an unfortunate position that we are in. The window is open and it might be that we look at something for the short term." —AFP



Manchester United forward Marcus Rashford is facing an extended spell on the sidelines. PHOTO: AFP

Liverpool still not interested in title talk, says Robertson

LIVERPOOL (United Kingdom) — Andy Robertson says Liverpool will not think about winning the Premier League title until it is mathematically certain, saying the players remain determined to stick to their game-by-game mentality.

A 2-0 victory over Manchester United on Sunday extended their lead over second-placed Manchester City at the top of the table to 16 points with a match in hand.

They require just 10 more victories, having already registered 21 in 22 fixtures, to guarantee a first championship in 30 years and they look uncatch-

able. Fans at Anfield on Sunday sang "We're going to win the league" but Robertson said the players were not complacent.

"We would obviously love to say yes -- but no," said the Scotland defender.

"You are playing against your rivals who you've had great battles with over the years and the fans probably want to rub it in a bit but we're not getting carried away.

"Until the champions sign is above our heads we don't believe anything. Yes, the lead is 16 points but we know how tough it gets." —AFP