Kayin New Year celebrations in Nay Pyi Taw

The State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivered the New Year address at the Kayin New Year Day celebrations held at 9 am yesterday, at the Myanmar International Convention Center-II in Nay Pyi Taw which falls on the 1st Waxing of Pyatho, Kayin Era 2757.

Present at the ceremony were Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw, U Myo Nyunt, Chairman of Constitutional Tribunal of the Union, U Hla Thein, Chairman of the Union Election Commission, U T Khun Myat, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw, U Aye Tha Aung, Deputy Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw, Thura U Shwe Mann, Chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission, Union Ministers, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, Union Attorney General, Deputy Ministers, Hluttaw representatives, representatives from Kayin National Union, invited guests and responsible officials.

First of all, after sacrificial offering were made to “phibiyaw” the divine bird, guardian of crops according to Kayin traditions, the ceremony was opened, presided over by Mahn Win Khaing Than, U Saw Valentine, U Saw Tin Win, U Saw Tun Mya Aung and Mahn Tun Kyawing.

SEE PAGE:2
Kayin New Year celebrations in Nay Pyi Taw

FROM PAGE 1

Afterwards, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw addressed the gathering as follows: “Every person living in the countries all over the world celebrate New Year Day in accord with the traditions of their nations and races. New Year Day is the first-ever day just after the end of the old year. Our Kayin race has different subgroups. Though being different in living locations, language used, literature, and religious beliefs, we all have unity of mind and spirit. We have been celebrating the ceremony for 79 years. Our main vocation is farming. At the time of the new harvest, when the new crops have been reaped, families gather to celebrate the festival. That time had been regarded as the New Year Day. That being so Kayin New Year is not only the sign of changing into the New Year but also the symbol of changing of unity. It had been held in Nay Pyi Taw for the 2nd time. To do so, after negotiation with the Kayin national parliamentarians, the decision was made to celebrate it here. Because we have all worked in unity, we are able to celebrate successfully. PUMA ENERGY ASIA SUM COMPANY also helped us to make the celebrations a success. So, we would like to thank Ko Than Win Kyaw, a Shan national who is the chairman of Puma Company. Accordingly, the Kayin New Year Day depicts national unity and youths’ effort.”

“Successful celebrations of Kayin New Year Day were attributed to unity and friendship among Kayin nationals. Due to the concerted efforts of Kayin national parliamentarians, the 1st Waxing of Pyatho was officially designated as the Kayin National Day. The first-ever Kayin National New Year address was said by Thaylay Hlaikho Hla on Kayin Era 2678, 1st waxing of Pyatho, AD 1938 December 21. In the address, Kayin nationals will take part in united Myanmar while building up national unity among Kayin nationals, without selfishness and any prejudices for the national interest. The great Kayin leaders’ speeches conveyed that Kayin national leaders’ efforts to successfully designate the KNVD. We all wished to take part in the nation building with genuine minds for the national progress. We firmly believe that peace is essentially needed for the emergence of a developed and united country as hoped by our leaders,” said Mahn Win Khaing Than.

The Speaker added, “As this is the time when the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is implementing the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong, we, all the Kayin nationals on our part must help as much as we can. As known by all, we are facing many challenges while making efforts to build up a peaceful and developed federal democratic union. At such a time, we must solve all the challenges in unity without any grudge and prejudices so that we can remove pressures and challenges as desired our leaders. To sum it up, we will continue to celebrate future Kayin New Year Days like the present 79th ceremony. As a way of showing gratitude to our Kayin national leaders, for emergence of an auspicious Union as desired by our leaders, I deeply urge my fellow nationals to work for the nation energetically and in unity.”

This was followed by an address by the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in which she said, “Today is the 1st Waxing of Pyatho, Kayin Era 2757 when the New Year ceremony is being held with auspiciousness just after the end of the old year. At the time of new harvest, family members assemble together; bearing good tidings and partaking in bounteous feasts. That is, it is the time full of unity, happiness and good hopes for the future. Nowadays, Union citizens living in the country are trying their best to overcome difficulties and challenges. We firmly believe that we will be successful no matter how many difficulties we may have to face. Looking back into our country’s history we had managed to overcome obstacles, moving along arduous journeys. In walking towards peace as well, it is evident that Kayins led energetically so much so that we all began to use the term “Kayin Model”. Now, the sound of Kayin drums are echoing on the “Dawna” mountain in Kayin State. The sound of gun fire has ceased; instead the voices of children reciting lessons in their class rooms and school bells have replaced these sounds. Nascent progress of peace is being seen. Those living in regions which are still far from peace look with envy. Kayin nationals from home and abroad who had been there for various reasons will see a bright future. On such an occasion, I would like to say that I am very pleased for the Kayin State which is building a beautiful future. Our Kayin people are simple, loyal and act with firmness and determination. They had inherited this from their ancestors for 2757 years. There will be no doubt for them to preserve these practices for generations. Kayin dances show swiftness and openness. Songs also are full of happiness. These give us physical and spiritual strength. Kayin nationals will take part in national reconciliation energetically and bravely. For these we would like to thank peace activists on behalf of the Union. Finally, may you bring about union peace with good examples, from now on. May you implement the development of Kayin State. May you preserve traditional culture, national heritage and lovable characteristics of the Kayin race. May have plentiful food and wealth and be free from dangers.” “One Kayin national came to me to explain about the divine bird while watching the festival. The reason for giving offerings to the divine bird is for the benefit of both sides—farmers and birds coming to feed on crops. Birds usually eat crops and snails. When crops are frequently eaten, it will cause loss for farmers. But as it eats snails, it is better for farmers. Advantage and disadvantages always come together. However we need to make sure that advantages far outweigh the disadvantages,” said the State Counsellor.

Following that the State Counsellor passed for documentary photos with those present at the ceremony.

After that, Colonel Kawkasar Saw Ne Soe, a representative of the KNU read out the message sent by General Saw Mutu Sae Poe, Chairman of KNU, followed by Dr Arrkar Htun (a) Naw Christ Tun who read out a paper on the origin of KNVD in Myanmar with Naw Susanar Hla Hla Soe reading in Sakaw Kayin language.

Then, the audience was entertained with Kayin traditional Done-yein dances after which the ceremony came to a close.—Myanmar News Agency (Unofficial Translation)
VP U Myint Swe attends 2017 International Migrants Day ceremony

INTERNATIONALMigrants Day was observed in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, which was attended by Vice President U Myint Swe.

U Myint Swe delivered an opening address at the ceremony which was held with the theme of “Safe Migration in World on the Move” at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 (MICC-2).

The event was attended by Union Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw representatives, heads of departments, diplomats, personnel from United Nations and international non-government organizations and officials.

In his speech, Vice President U Myint Swe called for giving legal protection to migrant workers and giving priority to women and children.

“Women and children are vulnerable to the effects of migration and this point should be taken into consideration when laws or policies are drawn for migrant rights,” said U Myint Swe.

He also stressed the need to produce more skilled workers in Myanmar who can meet the changing requirements of the labour market.

Within the ASEAN region, there are about 6.5 million migrant workers and Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand are the main destinations. From 1995 to 2015 the numbers of migration within the region increased significantly.

The World Bank’s report published in 2017 October said unskilled and undocumented ASEAN migratory workers seek jobs in construction, agriculture and domestic helpers for economic opportunity.

Regional countries and international organizations are cooperating internationally on the matter of migrant workers.

Myanmar signed the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers at 31st ASEAN Summit held in Philippines on November 2017. The declaration was signed with the aim to setup a framework on migrant workers under close cooperation and by working together with ASEAN countries. This reflects Myanmar’s firm commitment toward social protection of migrant workers in the region, obtaining justice, health protection, humane and fair treatment of migrant workers, said U Myint Swe.

Furthermore, Myanmar is participating to endorse the global agreement on safe, systematic and legal migration in 2018. In order to include Myanmar’s remarks supporting safe, systematic and legal migration with facts and positive suggestions in the agreement, a national level workshop was held in November.

Vice President U Myint Swe also called for ensuring a safe and secure method of transferring money by migrant workers to their homes as money remitted by migrant workers from developing countries to their family is a major source of GDP for their home country.

“More effort is required to have a safe and secure way of remitting money to their families,” said the Vice President.

In conclusion, the Vice President urged all to cooperate in establishing a complete and successful society where migrant workers who contribute towards the economic development of both the host country and country of origin have a safe way of migrating, while being accorded protection and full rights.

A video file depicting activities and movements on migrant workers was then shown to the attendees of the ceremony.

Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe said the ministry has assisted the country’s migrant workers, who returned home after working in foreign countries, to be able to use their vocational skills at their best in Myanmar.

For these aims to be achieved 261 employment agencies including one government employment agency is systematically sending workers to Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Japan, some middle east countries and some other countries according to the 1999 Overseas Employment Law.

Amendment to the Overseas Employment Law has been drawn for it to be in accordance with the time and international standards. According to Myanmar-Thailand Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in employing workers, undocumented Myanmar migrant workers who were in Thailand illegally were legalized by issuing identity, temporary passport, ordinary passport and foreign worker identification. From 2009 to end November 2017, a total of 2.4 million have been provided with the documents.

Increasing cooperation between the two countries on migrant workers will greatly support the economic and social development of the country. Migrant workers should seek overseas jobs legally and they should understand the work condition, employer/employee agreement, rules, laws and regulations of the respective country and work site requirement.

A gap in the labour market, decreasing in number of legal migrant workers and access to the illegal market have attracted migrant workers. To eradicate the illegal migration, cooperation of not only the host country and country of origin but the employment agencies, international organizations and civil society organizations (CSOs) is required.

We are doing our best in doing everything according to the policy on migration on the matter of migrant workers said the Union Minister.

It is to be noted that migration can bring benefits like providing livelihood for the family, increasing the living standard and provide education to the children as well as harms such as facing unfairness and undergoing unforeseeable sufferings.

Furthermore, women and children are especially vulnerable to exploitation. Therefore in providing them with protection, understanding and obtaining the full rights according to the relevant country’s labour law depend not only on the government but the cooperation of all stakeholders and CSOs, said the Union Minister.

Next, IOM Chief of Mission Mr. Aki Nakayama read the messages from the United Nations Secretary General and International Organization for Migration (IOM) Director General.

Afterwards, Union Minister U Thein Swe presented certificates of honor to officials of Education and Development Foundation, Group on Cooperating for Myanmar People’s affairs and Bangkok based Myanmar Migrant Workers Network who helped the affairs of Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand, including the education, health and social affairs of the family members. The Union Minister also presented education support money for children of migrant workers.

The Union Minister then took commemorative group photo with event attendees and viewed the photo record of activities on migrant workers, displayed books and magazines.—

Myanmar News Agency

(Official Translation)
Number of tiger and wildlife species in Hugaung Tiger Reserve collected

POPULATION of tiger and wildlife species dwelling in Hugaung Tiger Reserve and their habitats are being surveyed in cooperation with the Forest Department, said U Aung Kyaw from Wildlife Conservation Society (Myanmar Programme).

Hugaung Tiger Reserve and Khakaborazi National Park, under the guard of a forest officials, the police and WCS members, are being protected from hunting and cutting trees. Awareness campaigns concerning wildlife conservation activities will also be conducted for public participation in the drive, said U Aung Kyaw. A training will be conducted with foreign experts in a bid to improve capacity of WCS and Forest Department’s staff.

The trainees will receive skills in survey, patrolling and use of camera traps, GPS, compass, clinometers, range finders. They will also participate in overseas workshop and meetings.

The authorities will raise awareness about wildlife conservation in Hugaung Tiger Reserve and Khakaborazi National Park to attract people for activities for Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). –Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

Chindwin River Bridge (Khamti) nears completion

A PROJECT to construct a bridge across Chindwin River in Khamti Township in Sagaing Region is currently 80 per cent complete, according to the Bridge Department (Sagaing Region).

Initiated since late 2016, the new project is expected to be finalized by March, said U Myo Khine, one of assistant directors of the Bridge Department. The region government funded Ks19.6 billion to the construction of bridge. Upon completion of the project, socio-economic development of local villages in the upper Sagaing Region and Naga area would be improved. The new bridge will be 809.5-meter long and will include a 5.5-meter wide road motor and one-meter wide platforms. The bridge department under the Ministry of Construction has constructed the new RC bridge linking Khamti Town in the east of the Chindwin River and Hsinthay Village in the west of the river.

The new bridge is situated one mile from Khamti and it is on the route to Lahe Town in Naga area. After completion the project, villagers will enjoy the smooth transportation between Naga Self-Administered Zone and other towns in Sagaing Region and Kachin State. People in Naga area are facing difficulties especially in the wet season, because of uneasy access to Sagaing Region.

Residents expect that the new bridge would reduce the travel time between Naga and other areas.—Win Oo (Zeyataing)

Myanmar Navy seizes four boats carrying illegal timber logs in Hainggyikyun Township

A vessel from Myanmar Navy seized four boats carrying illegal timber logs in the Andaman Sea near Zeeyang Village, Hainggyikyun Township in Ayeyawady Region on 17 December afternoon.

The boats were owned by U Thein Lwin, U Ohn Kyin Lay and U Myint Aye from Phaung Toe Village and U Aung Aung from Thamban Village.

A total of 20 people were also arrested along with at least 24 tons of timber logs, said a local.

Arrangement is being made to transfer the seized timbers to local authorities and 20 people on board are being questioned at Hainggyikyun local police station, according to the initial news.—Myanmar Daily News

Endangered Ayeyawady dolphin found dead in Katha

AN endangered Ayeyawady dolphin measuring 7 foot-6-inch-long and four-foot-eight-inch-wide was found dead near Kyaukpon Village in Katha Township on 17 December in the morning. A local fisherman found dead dolphin while he was catching the fish in Ayeyawady River, said a villager from Kyaukpon Village. The officials from the township Department of Fisheries examined the dead dolphin and buried it with the help of the villagers.—Myanmar Digital News

Slight earthquake jolts near Rakhine State’s An Township

A slight earthquake of magnitude 4.0 Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar about 37 miles Northwest of An, about 202 miles Southwest of Mandalay seismological observatory was recorded at 12 hr 15 min 18 sec M.S.T on 18th December, 2017, according to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology.—Myanmar Digital News
Fishery export income up by US$74 million over past nine months

EXPORT earnings from fishery sector as of 8th December in current FY amounted to about US$434 million, which is an increase of $74 million compared to that of last FY, according to the statistics released by the Commerce Ministry.

Fishery export at Thai-Myanmar border land points of entry- Myawady, Kawthoung and Myeik increased more than last FY.

Myanmar fisheries are exported to markets of European Union countries, America, Japan, Singapore and Thailand.

Local fishery sector is faced with difficulties due to high price of aquatic feedstuff.

Also, there has illegal inflow of fishery from Thailand, prompting authorities to conduct surprise check.

The fishery export sector attained the highest income of over US$650 million in 2012-2013 FY and thereafter, the value of fishery export gradually declined due to erratic weather and scarcity of fish resource caused by illegal fishing methods.

Myanmar Fishery Federation (MFF) is exerting concerted efforts to increase fishery export earnings by developing fish farming lakes which meet international standard and adopting advanced fishing techniques. — Htet Myat

Seventh Day of the 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium

THE seventh day of the 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium continued yesterday morning at Mani Yandana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

Local and foreign gems merchants viewed the Myanmar raw uncut jade and gems displayed inside and outside Mani Yadana Jade Hall, and submitted their tenders.

About 4421 local and foreign merchants attended to buy gems lots through the tender system.

At the 2017 Mid-Year Myanmar Jade and Gems Emporium, 2659 Jade lots at the price of 165.323 million euros have been sold under an open tender system on 18 December. The schedule for the sales of lots includes 19 December jade lot no. 3451 to 4600, on 20 December jade lot no. 4601 to 5750, on 21 December jade lot no. 5751 to 6685, will be sold under an open tender system. This emporium will be held till 21 December; it was learnt.—Myanmar Digital News
State Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadaws and Rector Sayadaw receive China Tibet Research Center delegation

STATE Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadaws and Rector Sayadaw of Theravada Buddhist Missionary University received a Tibet cultural delegation led by the head of China Tibet Research Center Department yesterday morning and afternoon.

In the morning, head of China Tibet Research Center Department led a Tibetan cultural exchange delegation to a meeting with Theravada Buddhist Missionary University Rector Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Nanda Mala Bivamsa and heads of departments sayadaws in the central hall of Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Mayangon Township, Yangon. Matters relating to teachings conducted in the university and China Tibet culture were explained and discussed. In the afternoon, the delegation met with sayadaws led by State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee member Sayadaw Thaylin Min Kyaw Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Sandima Bivamsa and the sayadaws explained about the works of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, status of works on promotion and propagation of the Sasana, Theravada missionary works in Myanmar, teaching of “Pariyatti” and the practice of “Patipatti”. — MNA

Chinese government donates US$500,000 to JMC-U

Chinese government donated US$ 500,000 to the Union Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U) yesterday in support of the committee’s ceasefire efforts with the ethnic armed groups.

Mr. Sun Guoxiang, Special Envoy of Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, handed over the cash to Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, Chairman of Union Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U), as he called on the chairman at National Reconciliation and Peace Center yesterday. At the meeting, they discussed the current efforts of JMC-U at all levels together with the signatories and non-signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

At the meeting, Mr. Sun Guoxiang, Special Envoy of Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, conveyed the message of Chinese government on its support to the peace process in Myanmar, to the JMC-U. — Myanmar News Agency

Local merchants to buy rice from Rakhine

Local merchants has offered to buy rice from Rakhine State at the price of Ks 310,000 for 100 baskets, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation.

“Most of the merchants are from Rakhine State. We are giving priority to the local merchants to buy the rice,” said U Thaung Win, the member of Central Executive Committee of Myanmar Rice Federation.

Ripe monsoon rice in Buthidaung and Maungtaw region is being harvested by Agricultural Mechanisation Department (AMD) to prevent waste, with the harvested rice systematically handed over to rice receiving and storing committees.

The Rakhine State government committee will take measures for selling the rice from the paddy farms which were abandoned by owners.

“The government committee will give back the money from selling rice to the owners when they come back to their home,” said U Thaung Win.

“Currently, the paddy was harvested in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State with the assistance of the Agricultural Mechanisation Department. There are also many farmland which need harvesters. It can produce maximum 2 million baskets,” said U Kyaw Win, the vice chairman of Myanmar Rice Merchants Association.

The Agricultural Mechanisation Department is planning to harvest paddy in more than 20,000 acres in Maungtaw region within three months. Myanmar Rice Federation has already made arrangement to provide the storage service for the post harvest paddy if it is learnt.— Zar Lin Thu (AMIA)

Three pairs of dryers installed in Rakhine State

Three pairs of dryers which were manufactured in South Korea have been installed in Rakhine State with an aim to prevent wastage of harvested rice, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Those three pairs of dryers have been established in Alethankyaw and Kyevenchaung villages in Maungtaw township and Buthidaung township.

Moreover, 12 KUBOTA Japan brand harvesters have been sent to Sattigyi, Panhpawyiin, Gwason, Aungkaungtaung, Theinthaung, Thameehla, Kyaukpaaw, Kalarchaung and Hwaylaungtin villages in Yathedaung township to harvest paddy timely.

Meanwhile, 10 harvesters have been supplied to villages in Maungtaw township. Since October 2017, Myanmar Rice Federation has been provided the assistance to the villages with the cooperation of Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation (MAPCO). — Min Min
Kayin New Year ceremonies held countrywide

Kayin national New Year festival organizing committee (Greater Yangon) for the year 2757 continued the second day of traditional boxing competition yesterday afternoon in Insein railway compound football ground, Insein Township, Yangon attracting crowds of (boxing) enthusiasts.

There were 12 ordinary and special bouts with most ending in a knock out or stopped by referee making the bouts enjoyable and interesting for the spectators.

The Kayin national New Year festival was being held in Maha Hsay Wingaba Arlane Nga Hsint monastery, Insein Township from 17 to 19 December and yesterday morning saw a flag raising ceremony, following by saluting the national and Kayin flags followed by Kayin traditional performances and talks. In the evening, in addition to Kayin “don” dance, Kayin traditional culture and music entertainment program were conducted in Myanmar Convention Center – MCC hall in Mindhamma Road, Mayangon Township.

In Kyonpar Village, Thaton Township, Mon State, 79th Kayin New Year ceremony was held on Kayin Year 2757, 1st Waxing of Pyatho, the Kayin New Year day, yesterday morning. The New Year ceremony was held with an aim to retain Kayin history, literature, culture and language and Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan delivered a speech praising the virtues of the Kayin ethnic nationals. This was followed by reading of the New Year message, history of the Kayin New Year was explained in three languages (Myanmar, Poe Kayin and Sgaw Kayin) and then the ceremony was concluded with singing of Kayin song meaning “unity in strength”.

After the ceremony, traditional festivals were continued followed by Kayin traditional lunch. The ceremony and festivals were attended by State Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Speaker, state government ministers, southeast command commander and high ranking officials from the civil and military, Taiwan, China, Japan, Thailand, Myanmar and other business persons who were attending the Kayin State Investment Forum, representatives of regional peace organisations and Kayin ethnic nationals.—GNLM

Kayin New Year celebrations in Thaton. PHOTO: MNA

Kayin New Year celebrations in Hpa-an, Kayin State. PHOTO: MNA

Kayin New Year ceremonies held countrywide

Kayin dance troupe performs at the National Races Village in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Kayin nationals perform to mark Kayin New Year Festival at National Races Village. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Traditional fighters take part in the Letwai challenge fight marking the Kayin New Year Festival at the Myanma Railways Football Playing Ground in Insein, Yangon. PHOTO: ZAW GYI (PANITA)
All-Inclusive Conservation of the National Cultural Heritages

By Khin Yadana

MYANMAR launched the campaign for the “new tourist sites” in June 2017, and the Global New Light of Myanmar’s correspondent M. YADANO has been in various regions across the country recording these new tourist sites. Thein Aung (Ministry of Tourism) reported to the Global New Light of Myanmar’s correspondent M. YADANO that “there are more than 30 new tourist sites in Myan-

MAHARBA YADANO

集体安全架构安全化为实现人道主义目标，最大的危险是移民工人的危险。

集体安全架构安全化为实现人道主义目标，最大的危险是移民工人的危险。
Unidentified corpses uncovered in Indin Village cemetery, Maungtaw Township

ACTING on a tip off provided by a villager on condition of anonymity, security forces discovered several unidentified corpses buried in Indin Village cemetery, Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State. Detailed investigation is underway to uncover the truth said a news release from the Tatmadaw True News Information Team. Action would be taken against those who involved in the killing in accordance with the law, said the statement released by the Tatmadaw.

After the August 25 terrorist attacks by ARSA, security forces conducted the law enforcement measures to restore the rule of law in Buthidaung and Maungtaw region. — Myanmar News Agency

Road Construction in Maungtaw

Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin inspected the construction of roads in Maungtaw, yesterday afternoon.

Deputy Minister and party went to the construction site conducted by Asia World Foundation and inspected the paving of Ahnghu Maw-Maungtaw road which is 49 miles and 6 furlongs long. He viewed Buthidaung-Thatbeik Taung-Nyaung Chaung-Aung Zeya-Ange Maw earthen road which was constructed in 2017-2018 fiscal year. The road is 46 miles and 5 furlongs long and it can improve smooth and better transportation to eastern villages of Mt. May Yu in Yathedaung Township.

Then they inspected Kyauk Pan Nu-Inn Din-Zedi Pyin Taung Road conducted by No. 17 Special Team, Road Department. This road is 10 miles and 7 furlongs long and can connect eastern and western villages of Mt. May Yu.—Myanmar News Agency

Rakhine traditional ‘Kyin’ wrestling demonstration in Sittway

Rakhine ‘Kyin’ wrestling demonstration was made yesterday in Sittway, Rakhine State.

The demonstration, which was organized by AKYAB Co., Ltd and ‘Kyin’ wrestling lovers, was opened at the Sittway Sports Ground, with demonstration of Kyin wrestlers. The sport game held from December 17 to 18.

Prominent ‘Kyin’ wrestlers U Maung Tun Hla, U Sein Maung Hla and U Bu Maung Hla, demonstrated the wrestling skills and it was recorded documentary films in order to raise the awareness of the young Rakhine generation. Kyin or wrestling contests were held resoundingly in urban and rural areas for the vigorous strength, health and fitness. Every youth of Rakhine national has to preserve Kyin Sport to be skillful from generation to generation.

This demonstration aims to preserve the ‘Kyin’ wrestling which is nearly die out and to uplift the spirit of the young generation as well, according to the U Maung Maung Gy, member of the ‘Kyin’ wrestling committee.—Win Min Soe (IPRD)

Road work in Maungtaw. PHOTO: MNA

Wrestlers demonstrate kyin. PHOTO: WIN MIN SOE

Wrestling demonstration was made yesterday in Sittway, Rakhine State.
Yemen air strike kills eight women, two children, say residents

DUBAI — Eight women and two children from the same Yemeni family were killed when an air strike by forces of the Saudi-led coalition involved in the country’s three-year-old war hit a wedding party, residents said on Monday.

The 10 people were returning on Sunday evening from a wedding in Marib province, an area east of the capital Sanaa held by the Iran-allied Houthi group, when their vehicle was struck, the sources said. A spokesman for the coalition, which denies targeting civilians and says that every report of an attack is investigated, did not respond to an email requesting comment.

The residents said the victims, all female, were part of the same family, but gave no further details on their ages or if anyone else was travelling with them.

The coalition has been conducting regular air strikes in Houthi-held areas as part of a campaign to restore President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to power.

The United Nations says that more than 60,000 people have been killed or wounded in the conflict, which also displaced more than two million and triggered a cholera epidemic that has infected about one million people.—Reuters

Lebanon detains suspect in murder of British embassy worker—source

BEIRUT — Lebanese security forces have arrested a Lebanese taxi driver suspected of killing Rebecca Dykes, a British woman who worked at the British embassy in Beirut and was found dead on Saturday, a security source said.

The security source said preliminary investigations showed the motive was purely criminal, not political.

Lebanon’s NNA news agency reported that the suspect had admitted to the crime and had picked Dykes up in his taxi in Beirut’s Gemmayzeh district on Friday evening before assaulting and killing her.

Police traced his car through surveillance cameras on the highway, NNA reported. Dykes’ body was found strangled by a security forces.

Details of the attack remained unclear after a group of armed men seized a building under construction in a heavily populated area of the city.

“The number of attackers, possible casualties and their target is not yet clear,” said Najib Danish, spokesman for the Ministry of Interior.

The Afshar area of Kabul where the attack was under way is close to a training facility of the National Directorate of Security, the main Afghan intelligence agency, as well as a private university.

Another government official said the attack was near the intelligence agency training centre.

Islamic State claimed responsibility in a statement issued by its Amaq news agency, in which it said two of its fighters had attacked an intelligence agency centre in Kabul.

The group, which first appeared in Afghanistan in 2015, has claimed responsibility for a number of attacks in Kabul over the past several months. But much remains unknown about how it operates and many observers are sceptical about its ability to mount complex attacks on its own.—Reuters

ISIS claims attack on spy agency centre in Afghan capital

KABUL — Islamic State claimed responsibility for an attack near a training facility of Afghanistan’s main intelligence agency in the capital, Kabul, on Monday as gunmen exchanged fire with security forces.

Details of the attack remained unclear after a group of armed men seized a building under construction in a heavily populated area of the city.

“The number of attackers, possible casualties and their target is not yet clear,” said Najib Danish, spokesman for the Ministry of Interior.

The Afshar area of Kabul where the attack was under way is close to a training facility of the National Directorate of Security, the main Afghan intelligence agency, as well as a private university.

Another government official said the attack was near the intelligence agency training centre.

Islamic State claimed responsibility in a statement issued by its Amaq news agency, in which it said two of its fighters had attacked an intelligence agency centre in Kabul.

The group, which first appeared in Afghanistan in 2015, has claimed responsibility for a number of attacks in Kabul over the past several months. But much remains unknown about how it operates and many observers are sceptical about its ability to mount complex attacks on its own.—Reuters

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS MYANMA RAILWAYS INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Opened Tender is invited by Myanma Railways, Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar from reputed manufacturers or their bona fide agents from the Republic of India for the supply and delivery of the following:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr No</th>
<th>Tender No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Tender Issuing Date</th>
<th>Tender Closing Date and Time</th>
<th>Tender Document Fee (per set)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16/MR/India (E)2017-2018</td>
<td>(1) Track Recording Car EM 80 (1) No Recommended 10% Spare Parts for No.1 (1) Lot</td>
<td>20.12.2017</td>
<td>20.2.2018 (14:30 Hr)</td>
<td>US$ 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) Small Track Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tender Documents are Only available at the Office of the Deputy General Manager (Supply), Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar during office hours on payment of non-refundable fee as stated above. Further enquiries about tender can be made to Deputy General Manager (Supply), Supply Department, Myanma Railways by fax to (Fax No. 95-1-291194, 95-67-77016) or by phone to (95-1-291991, 95-1-291985) during office hours.

Bids are to reach the office of the Deputy General Manager (Supply), Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar on or before the Closing Date and Time.

All Bid not accompanied by earnest money (Bid Bond) will not (not) be considered. No Telegraphic/Cheque/Fax/email proposal will be considered or accepted.

Myanma Railways reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without furnishing reasons. Tender will be accepted only from Bidder who has purchased Tender Documents officially.

The above Goods are to be purchased by the proceeds of the loan from the Government of the Republic of India

Managing Director, Myanma Railways
Ministry of Transport and Communications, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Kremlin says US tip-off about planned attack ‘saved many lives’

NEW YORK — Financial advisers and accountants are working overtime as many US taxpayers scramble to pay the rest of their 2017 taxes before 1 January when the proposed Republican tax overhaul would sharply cut the amount they can deduct on federal tax bills.

The tax legislation, which took US Republicans said on Sunday they expected Congress to pass this week, caps the amount of state, local and property taxes individuals can deduct from their federal tax bills at $10,000.

The average American who itemized his or her tax bill in 2015 claimed more than $27,000 in deductions. While taxpayers have until 15 January to pay the final installment of their 2017 taxes, Tom Holly of the accounting firm PwC said he received dozens of calls over the weekend from concerned clients eager to pay sooner.

“It’s going to be a very busy holiday season for advisers,” said Holly, who heads the firm’s wealth and asset management division.

Lisa Feathergill, managing director of wealth planning at Wells Fargo’s Abbot Downing, said she was skipping a family trip to the Valley Alamo Bowl football game in Texas on 28 December in order to work.

Feathergill said wealthy clients and their accountants were not just trying to figure out if it makes sense to estimate and pay the rest of their 2017 itemized taxes this year, but also working to see if they should itemize at all.

Some taxpayers, particularly those in high-tax states who have income above $100,000, may end up paying the alternative minimum tax, which limits the deductions a person can take against his or her federal income tax.

“People really have to run the numbers because if they are subject to alternative minimum tax, some of those taxes wouldn’t be deductible anyway,” said Feathergill.

Last week, according to media reports, state officials in New York received calls from residents asking to pay their 2018 state, local and property taxes before 1 January in an effort to claim the higher amount of deductions before the Republican tax bill takes effect.

In response, the US Treasury Department issued guidance over the weekend saying that any pre-payments for 2018 tax liabilities would not be deductible on federal tax bills.

If passed, the tax bill would be the biggest US tax rewrite since 1986. The legislation would cut the corporate income tax rate to 21 per cent from 35 per cent but offer a mixed bag for individuals, including middle-class workers, by roughly doubling a standard deduction that does not require itemization, but eliminating or scaling back other popular itemized deductions and exemptions.

US taxpayers rush to claim deductions under threat from tax bill

Copies of tax legislation are seen during a markup on the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act” on Capitol Hill in Washington, US on 15 November, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Germany’s SPD warn Merkel: Our members need to be convinced

BERLIN — Germany’s centre-left Social Democratic party (SPD) on Monday warned Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conservatives that it would not win approval from its members for a new coalition government if it gave way on key election promises. The SPD agreed only reluctantly to enter talks, after voters rewarded it in September for the last four years of “grand coalition” under Merkel by handing it its worst result since 1953. SPD members will have the final say on any deal to renew the alliance with Merkel’s Christian Democrats (CDU) and their Christian Social Union (CSU) Bavarian allies.

General Secretary Lars Klingbeil said they would demand distinctive leftist policies, along the lines of the single “citizen’s insurance” that the SPD wants to replace Germany’s private and public healthcare systems.

“The Union (CDU/CSU) knows that the SPD members have the final say — and we need to be able to convince them on substance,” Klingbeil told the public broadcaster ZDF. The SPD, which shed support to the far right and to the hard-left Die Linke in the election, says the existing hybrid health insurance system discriminates against the poor. Conservatives, including Merkel, say switching to a unified system would erode competition and worsen services.

SPD members gave leader Martin Schulze the green light at a party congress last week to launch talks with Merkel’s conservatives, raising hopes of an end to months of political deadlock created by an inconclusive election result. — Reuters

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. PHOTO: REUTERS

MOSCOW—A US tip-off about a planned attack in St Petersburg helped save many lives and Russia and the United States should try to cooperate in the same way in future, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday.

Washington provided intelligence to Russia that helped thwart a potentially deadly bombing, US and Russian officials said on Sunday, in a rare public show of cooperation despite deep strains between the two countries.

“It cannot be called anything but an ideal example of cooperation in fighting terrorism,” Peskov told reporters at a conference call. “We should aim for such standards.”

The tip-off resulted in the detention of seven alleged supporters of the Islamic State militant group in St Petersburg last week, Peskov said.

Russia’s Federal Security Service said on Friday that IS had planned attacks in public places on Dec. 16 and weapons and explosives were found when the suspects were searched.

Peskov said Russian and American security services have contacts but this was the first time when their cooperation was so efficient. “This was very meaningful information that helped to save many lives,” the spokesman told reporters.

As asked if President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump and Putin had discussed the same way in future, Peskov replied that the issue “had not been brought up yet.” —Reuters

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
No.(2) Mining Enterprise
Invitation for Opening Tender

1.

Sr. No. | Materials Classifies | Weight (MT) | Location | Tender Closing Date / Time | Delivery Term
---|---|---|---|---|---
1 | Tin Concentrate | 25.815 | Dawei, Tanintharyi Region | 17.1.2018 / 2:00 PM | F.O.B (Dawei)
2 | Tin & Wolfram Mixed Concentrate | 80.801 | | | |
3 | Tin Concentrate | 17.720 | Myik, Tanintharyi Region | 17.1.2018 / 2:00 PM | F.O.B (Myik)
4 | Tin - Wolfram - Scheelite Mixed Concentrate (65% minimum) | 4.856 | Loikaw, Kayah State | 18.1.2018 / 2:00 PM | F.O.B (Loikaw)
5 | Tin - Wolfram - Scheelite Mixed Concentrate (55% minimum) | 111.369 | Loikaw, Kayah State | 18.1.2018 / 2:00 PM | F.O.B (Loikaw)

No.(2) Mining Enterprise could provide necessary documents to interested companies and contact under mention address within office hours.

No.(2) Mining Enterprise
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
Office Building No.(19), Nay Pyi Taw,
Phone: +95-(0)67-3409391
Email: metwo@e-monrec.gov.mm

Tender Committee
No.(2) Mining Enterprise
Trump stresses importance of anti-terror cooperation between US and Russia

WASHINGTON— US President Donald Trump, who had a telephone conversation with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, on Sunday, stressed the importance of the two countries’ intelligence services to defeat terrorist, the White House said in a press statement.

“President Trump stressed the importance of intelligence cooperation to defeat terrorists wherever they may be,” the White House said.

The Russian president called his US counterpart to thank “for the advanced warning the United States intelligence agencies provided to Russia concerning a major terror plot in Saint Petersburg, Russia,” the statement said.

“President Trump appreciated the call and told President Putin that he and the entire United States intelligence community were pleased to have helped save so many lives.”

“Both leaders agreed that this serves as an example of the positive things that can occur when our countries work together,” it added.

According to the White House, Putin “extended his thanks and congratulations to Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director Mike Pompeo and the CIA.”

Later, Trump Pompeo to congratulate him, “his very talented people, and the entire intelligence community on a job well done!”

The CIA press service was unavailable for comment.

The Kremlin press service said earlier on Sunday that President Putin had called the US leader to thank him for CIA information that helped arrest terrorist who had plotted bomb attacks in St Petersburg’s Kazan Cathedral and in other crowded places in Russia’s second largest city.

“The Russian president thanked his US counterpart for information shared by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) that helped trace, expose and detain a group of terrorists who had plotted explosions in St Petersburg’s Kazan Cathedral and in other crowded places in that city,” the press service said, adding that the conversation was initiated by the Russian side.

According to the Russian president, the CIA information was enough to expose and detain the criminals. Putin asked Trump to convey thanks to the CIS director and intelligence officers who had obtained this information.

The Russian leader reassured the US president that “Russian security services, should they have information about possible terrorist threats to the United States and its citizens, will swiftly and unconditionally share it with the US colleagues via partner channels,” the press service stressed.

The press office of Russia’s Federal Security Service (FSB) reported earlier that seven members of a terrorist cell had been detained for plotting terror attacks.

They planned to commit a series of murders and improvised bomb attacks in crowded places in St Petersburg on 16 December.

One of those detained confessed to court he had planned a bomb attack in the city’s landmark Kazan Cathedral.—Tass
Elton John praises his anti-AIDS talk with Russia’s Health Minister in Moscow

MOSCOW — British singer and composer Elton John spoke highly of his meeting with Russia’s Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova in Moscow. The two discussed measures to fight AIDS.

The musician posted his joint photo with the Russian minister on Instagram on Friday.

“So delighted to have the chance to discuss with Dr Skvortsova closer collaboration between the Elton John AIDS Foundation and the Ministry of Health to fight AIDS in Russia,” the musician wrote. He also called this cooperation “important and urgent work”.

The Elton John AIDS Foundation was founded in 1992 to finance AIDS programs. On Thursday, the singer performed in the Russian capital. During the concert Elton John, in particular, noted that his foundation and Russia’s Health Ministry had agreed on a closer partnership in order to fight AIDS in Russia.—Tass

Hollywood actor Dustin Hoffman accused of exposing himself to a minor

LOS ANGELES — More accusations! Legendary actor Dustin Hoffman is again in the spotlight after three women spoke to US magazine Variety about his sexual misconduct, including exposing himself to a 16-year-old in a hotel room.

Hoffman’s attorney Mark A Neubauer called the accusations against the actor “defamatory falsehoods”. Hoffman himself hasn’t made comments. According to the report, Cori Thomas was a high-school classmate of Hoffman’s daughter Karina when she met the actor in Manhattan, New York in 1980. When Thomas was waiting for her parents to pick her up, she was left in the hotel room with the actor alone.

Hoffman allegedly came out of the hotel bathroom with a towel wrapped around him and then dropped it and stood naked. He later put on a robe and sat on the bed and asked her to massage his feet, which she did. She then took the chance to leave when her mother called her from downstairs. Melissa Kester said the Oscar-winner groped her and conducted unwanted sexual conduct with her while recording audio for the 1987 film “Ishtar”.

A third woman who didn’t reveal her name told Variety that Hoffman also sexually assaulted her in a station wagon while working on “Ishtar”. But she had a subsequent sexual encounter with him, which she didn’t know how to define. Earlier, three women stepped forward to accuse the Hollywood actor of sexual harassment which they said happened decades ago. The first was author Anna Graham Hunter, who alleged Hoffman of gropping and making inappropriate comments when she was a 17-year-old intern on the set of the 1985 TV movie of Death of a Salesman. Hoffman had previously denied abusing Hunter. —Xinhua

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle to marry on 19 May

LONDON — Britain’s Prince Harry and his American fiancée, Meghan Markle, will marry on Saturday 19 May, his office Kensington Palace said on Friday.

Queen Elizabeth’s grandson, fifth-in-line to the throne, and Markle, who stars in the US TV legal drama “Suits”, announced their engagement last month with the marriage to take place in Windsor, England in what commentators said was a break with royal tradition.

The royal family have said they will pay for the core aspects of the wedding, such as the cost of the church service and reception.

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle to marry on 19 May

LONDON — Britain’s Prince Harry and his American fiancée, Meghan Markle, will marry on Saturday 19 May, his office Kensington Palace said on Friday.

Queen Elizabeth’s grandson, fifth-in-line to the throne, and Markle, who stars in the US TV legal drama “Suits”, announced their engagement last month with the marriage to take place in Windsor, England in what commentators said was a break with royal tradition.

The royal family have said they will pay for the core aspects of the wedding, such as the cost of the church service and reception.

Markle, 36, who attended a Catholic school as a child but identifies as a Protestant, will be baptised and confirmed into the Catholic Church before the wedding.

She intends to become a British citizen, though she will retain her US citizenship while she goes through the process.

The Gothic St George’s Chapel is located in the grounds of Windsor Castle, which has been the family home of British kings and queens for almost 1,000 years. Within the chapel are the tombs of ten sovereigns, including Henry VIII and his third wife Jane Seymour, and Charles I.

On Wednesday, Kensington Palace announced Markle would join the queen and other senior Windsors for their family Christmas celebrations at her Sandringham estate in eastern England in what commentators said was a break with royal protocol under which such an invitation would normally only be extended to Markle after the wedding. — Reuters

Britain’s Prince Harry poses with Meghan Markle in the Sunken Garden of Kensington Palace, London, Britain on 27 November, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS
Does Pentagon still have a UFO programme? The answer is a bit mysterious

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon acknowledged on Saturday that its long-secret UFO investigation programme ended in 2012, when US defence officials shifted attention and funding to other priorities.

But as to whether the Advanced Aviation Threat Identification Program has continued to investigate UFO sightings since its funding ended five years ago could rank as an unexplained phenomenon.

The New York Times reported on Saturday that the hush-hush program, tasked with investigating sightings of unidentified flying objects, or UFOs, ran from 2007 to 2012 with $22 million in annual funding secretly tucked away in US Defence Department budgets worth hundreds of billions of dollars.

Its initial funding came largely at the request of former Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid, the Nevada Democrat long known for his enthusiasm for space phenomena, the newspaper said. Yet according to its backers, the program remains in existence and officials continue to investigate UFO episodes brought to their attention by service members, the newspaper said.

The Pentagon openly acknowledged the fate of the program in response to a Reuters query.


“It was determined that there were other, higher priority issues that merited funding and it was in the best interest of the DoD to make a change,” she said.

But the Pentagon was less clear about whether the UFO programme continues to hover somewhere in the vast universe of the US defence establishment.

“The DoD takes seriously all threats and potential threats to our people, our assets, and our mission and takes action whenever credible information is developed,” Ochoa said.

What is less in doubt is former senator Reid’s enthusiasm for UFOs and his likely role in launching the Pentagon initiative to identify advanced aviation threats.

“If you’ve talked to Harry Reid for > 60 seconds then it’s the least surprising thing ever that he loves UFOs and got an earmark to study them,” former Reid spokeswoman Kristen Orthman said in a message on Twitter.

Or as Reid himself said in a tweet that linked to the Times’s story: “The truth is out there. Seriously.” —Reuters

Marshall Islands’ traditional handicrafts take on Japanese moniker

MAJURO — The tradition is theirs, but the name is Japanese.

Handicrafting has been with the people of the Marshall Islands, an archipelagic country in the central Pacific, from even before the Japanese occupied it in the early part of the 20th century.

Loretta deBrum of the Marshall Islands Visitors Authority told Kyodo News that before the Marshallese people adapted the Japanese word “amimon” to refer to handicrafts, they used the local word “monakjen.”

“We have this tradition already on our own. We knew how to make ‘amimon.’ I heard it being called ‘amimon’ when I was growing up,” Gradel Alfred, who owns a handicraft shop in the capital Majuro Atoll, said in a separate interview. Alfred, 83, was born in 1934 during the Japanese occupation of the Marshall Islands, a nation in the heart of the Pacific Ocean above the equator made up of 29 atolls and five islands.

The relatively young country of some 60,000 people now is known as a former nuclear bomb testing site of the United States after World War II, and as among those presently bearing the brunt of climate change.

Japan took military possession of the Marshall Islands in October 1914 when World War I broke out. Prior to that, it was a colony of Germany.

From 1914, Japan expanded its presence in the island nation and went on to establish military fortifications on several atolls in the late 1930s.

French president Macron celebrates birthday with panda cub Yuan Meng

PARIS — French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday visited Yuan Meng, the country’s first-ever panda cub, while he was celebrating his 40th birthday with family at Beauval zoo in central France, the zoo said in a statement.

“The President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron came to celebrate his 40th birthday at the ZooParc de Beauval, with his family, during a private visit...to Yuan Meng, the baby panda godson of Brigitte Macron,” the zoo added.

During a naming ceremony on Dec. 4, French First Lady, new panda’s godmother, announced with Chinese officials that the four-month-old cub’s name was Yuan Meng which means “dream comes true” in Chinese.

Born on 4 August, the baby panda had been called as “Mini Yuan Zi”, referring to his father Yuan ZI, who arrived with his female partner Huan Huan in central France’s Beauval zoo in January 2012.

The panda baby, who will return home at the age of three, can be seen by visitors to the zoo as of 13 January. —Xinhua

Season’s micro-greetings: Scientists claim smallest Christmas card

LONDON — British scientists have created what they believe is the world’s smallest Christmas card, a seasonal greeting so tiny that over 200 million of them could fit into a standard postage stamp.

The card, created by the National Physical Laboratory (NPL), the UK’s national measurement standards laboratory, measures 15 x 20 micrometres. A micrometre is one millionth of a meter.

It is made from platinum-coated silicon nitride, and was illustrated using a focused ion beam.

The card’s cover features an etching of a snowman, above the words “seasons greetings,” as well as a seasonal message inside.

One of the card’s inventors, NPL’s Dr David Cox, who created the card along with his colleague Dr Kin Mingard, said the technology used in its making had more practical uses.

“We are using the tools that created the card to accurately measure the thickness of extremely small features in materials, helping to unlock new battery and semiconducting technologies. It’s a genuinely exciting development.”

The NPL said that the previous smallest Christmas card measured 200 x 200 micrometres, making their effort over 100 times smaller. —Reuters
Barcelona’s Lionel Messi misses a penalty during the match of La Liga Santander between FC Barcelona and Deportivo de La Coruna at Camp Nou in Barcelona, Spain on 17 December, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Barca extend Liga lead before Clasico by thrashing Deportivo

BARCELONA — Barcelona moved six points clear at the top of La Liga and warmed up for next week’s ‘Clasico’ against champions Real Madrid by easing to a 4-0 win at home to Deportivo La Coruna on Sunday with doubles from Luis Suarez and Paulinho.

Suarez slotted a generous cutback from Lionel Messi into an open goal in the 29th minute to deservedly put Barca ahead, while Brazil international Paulinho got the second in the 41st, tapping in on the rebound after Messi had hit the post.

Messi endured a frustrating night in front of goal and was unable to add to his 14 league goals for the season despite hitting the woodwork three times and also having a penalty saved by former youth team mate Ruben Martinez while the score was 3-0.

Suarez then scored his fourth goal in three league games by firing in a Sergi Roberto cross from inside the area two minutes into the second half and Paulinho completed the rout in the 75th, pouncing after Jordi Alba’s shot had come off the post.

Barca hit the woodwork a total of five times in the game, while striker Paco Alcacer was taken off injured in the first half and will miss the ‘Clasico’ after being ruled out for three weeks.—Reuters

Manchester City to offer Guardiola long-term deal — reports

LONDON— Manchester City will hold talks with manager Pep Guardiola at the end of the season about extending his three-year deal, British media reported on Sunday.

The reports said that convincing the 46-year-old to sign a new contract would top the agenda at next May’s end-of-season review traditionally held by City Chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak and CEO Ferran Soriano.

Sky Sports, citing sources connected to the runaway Premier League leaders, reported that City are confident everything is in place to persuade Guardiola to stay longer at the club.

City are 11 points clear at the top of the table after extending their English top-flight record winning run to 16 games in a row with a 4-1 victory over Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday that maintained their unbeaten league campaign. Guardiola is halfway through his contract, worth up to 20 million pounds ($26.63 million) annually according to The Daily Telegraph. Guardiola failed to win a trophy for the first time in his managerial career last season, but as well as being hot favourites to win the league this campaign, his side visit Leicester City in the League Cup quarter-finals on Tuesday and Swiss side FC Basel in the Champions League last 16 in February.—Reuters

Griezmann apologises for painting himself black for picture

MADRID — Atletico Madrid forward Antoine Griezmann apologised on Sunday after receiving criticism on social media for posting a picture of himself on his official Twitter account dressed as a Harlem Globetrotter, covered in black paint and wearing a wig.

The France international, who used the caption ‘80’s party’ to accompany the picture, responded to the criticism with another post saying: “Calm down my friends, I’m a fan of Harlem Globetrotters and that beautiful era, this is a tribute.” Griezmann, a passionate basketball fan who has travelled to the United States to watch NBA games, later issued a third tweet saying: “I recognise that this was clumsy from me. —Reuters

China has 20,000 schools featuring football education

BEIJING — China has a total of 20,218 primary and middle schools featuring football education to spearhead campus football development, according to the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Xu Zhen, deputy head of the sport, health and art education division of the MOE, said that football development is taking the lead in physical education reform and will boost the development of other ball games and campus sports.

According to Xu, 102 counties or districts have been chosen as pilot locations and a four-tier football competition system has been set up.

—Xinhua

—Reuters

AGDBANK
TRADE FINANCE SERVICES
Maximize your profits with AGD Bank Trade Finance.

For more information: Tel. 01-376599 ext. 3112
Email: tradefinance@agdbank.com