Honouring the 73rd Armed Forces Day

The Kainggyi Dam, which is one of the 26 dams being constructed by the Irrigation and Water Utilisation Management Department in Maungtaw Township, is expected to complete by April. PHOTO: AYE MIN THU

Presidential election on Wednesday

THE election of the president will be conducted by the Presidential Election College on 28 March 2018 (Wednesday) at 10 a.m. where the president and vice-presidents will be elected.

The announcement came at the seventh regular session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw held its 19th-day meeting yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. At the meeting, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Thaung read and submitted to the Hluttaw the report of the Presidential Electoral College on the assessment and evaluation of the vice president nominated by the elected Pyithu Hluttaw MP group. The report said the elected Pyithu Hluttaw MP group elected U Win Myint of Tamway constituency as vice president, and the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker informed the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker about this via a letter on 23 March 2018.

The Presidential Electoral College was formed with Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, Daw Khin San Hlaing of Pale constituency as vice president, and the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker informed the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker about this via a letter on 23 March 2018. The Presidential Electoral College was formed with Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, Daw Khin San Hlaing of Pale constituency from the Representatives Group of the Pyithu Hluttaw.
The Yangon-Bawnetkyi road is being improved through the development of Yangon City Development Project, the Greater Mekong Sub-Region project and the Yangon-Mandalay expressway.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin commented on the discussions and suggestions of the MPs on the US $360-million loan from ADB and ASEAN Infrastructure Fund for the Ministry of Construction to develop roads in the Greater Mekong Region. The project will be implemented under a BOT system by the Oriental Highway Company.

Another road project to be conducted under the ADB loan is the Yangon-Mandalay expressway, and the 40 miles Yangon-Bawnetkyi road section of this project is a portion that is to be implemented in relation to the Hanthawaddy International Airport project. By connecting the Yangon Inner Ring Road with the Yangon-Mandalay expressway, cars can reach Hanthawaddy International Airport from downtown Yangon in a short time.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win explained that the Myanmar government can obtain this special low interest rate loan. As per the loan term, the Ministry of Construction is responsible to implement the two-lane road work and the Dawei Special Economic Zone management committee will systematically amend the concession agreement signed with the Italian-Thai Company Group and re-sign it with the Ministry of Construction. This road is outside Dawei Special Economic Zone and is included in it as related work. With the Ministry of Construction taking over the responsibility of constructing this road, it will be a government-owned road that the public can use at a fair rate.

Deputy Minister Dr. Tun Naing further added that by implementing this road project quickly, it will support the development of other projects and related regions, Dawei Special Economic Zone, Tanintharyi Region, the country’s economy and the image of the government.

In his explanation, Deputy Minister Dr. Tun Naing explained that the loan is a government-to-government loan and Italian-Thai (Company Group) could not accept this loan. Only the Myanmar government can obtain this special low interest rate loan. As per the loan term, the Ministry of Construction is responsible to implement the two-lane road work and the Dawei Special Economic Zone management committee will systematically amend the concession agreement signed with the Italian-Thai Company Group and re-sign it with the Ministry of Construction. This road is outside Dawei Special Economic Zone and is included in it as related work. With the Ministry of Construction taking over the responsibility of constructing this road, it will be a government-owned road that the public can use at a fair rate.

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The Public Accounts Joint Committee Report (5/2018) on the committee’s findings and comments on the Union Auditor General Office report for the fiscal year 2016-2017 Pyidaungsu Hluttaw fund was then discussed by U Khin Cho of Hlaingbwe constituency, U Aung Thike of Seikgyu constituency, U Sai Oo Kham of Hsenwi constituency, U Aung Kyaw Oo of Mongton constituency, U Pe Thun of Myebon constituency, U Sit Aye of Taungtha constituency, U Kyaw Hlay of Leshi constituency, U Aung Kyaw Zan of Pauktaung constituency, U Whey Tin of Chin constituency (11), U Nyan Hein of Thanbyuzayat constituency, U Sein Aung of Paletwa constituency, Dr. U Lin Lin Kyaw of Myittha constituency, Dr. Sein Mya Aye of Dala constituency, U Tin Aung Tun of Magway Region constituency (5), U Wom Hla of Nanpyu constituency, U Win Aung of Moemaung constituency, U Ar Moe Si of Khaunglangpu constituency, U Kyaw Kywe of Mandalay Region constituency (7), U Zarni Min of Shwegu constituency, U Thein Tan of Hlegu constituency, Dr. Daw Khin Nyo of Dedaye constituency, U Lai Min Htan of Chin State constituency (10), Daw Khin Hnin Thit of Padaung constituency, U Oo Tun Maung of Ponngayung constituency, U Khin Maung Latt of Myaungmya constituency, Daw Cho Cho of Ottwin constituency, U Myint Kyi of Katha constituency, U Zaw Hein of Taninthayi constituency (7) and Daw Nau Ni Myint of Taungup constituency.

After the discussions, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced that the members of union-level organisations will respond to these discussions on the 29th-day meeting of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the date of which is yet to be informed, it is learnt.
**NATIONAL 3**

**27 MARCH 2018**

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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**Actions to be taken against those who make false statements**

**Notification**

At the Myanmar Motion Picture Academy Awards Presentation Ceremony for 2017 held at Myan-anmar Event Park, Yangon on 23 March 2018, Pianist Tin Win Hlaing was awarded the best music award and in his acceptance speech and in his meeting with the media after the event included personal attacks and untrue accusations against the Ministry of Information and Myanmar Radio and Television. The personal attacks and accusations were put up online and this notification is being issued in order to inform the public that the points mentioned were not true.

The main attacks and accusations of Pianist (U) Tin Win Hlaing are being explained as follows.

(a) “Chay Chay Myit Myit Nhit Nhit Kar Kar” (meaningful and vital) programme was not broadcast for more than a year. This programme was broadcast every Tuesday evening by MRTV and episode 152 was broadcast on 20 March. The programme contributor’s family was contacted repeatedly between June 2017 to 22 March 2018 but daughter of (U) Tin Win Hlaing replied that (U) Tin Win Hlaing had to undergo an eye surgery and to continue the shooting of the programme only after the Academy Awards Ceremony.

(b) “Not a single RCA stylus left in hand”: This is totally untrue. RCA (Radio Corporation of America) record players were used by Myanmar Radio for more than 70 years. Although the original manufacturer has ceased production of spare stylias, MRTV has collaborated with foreign experts to repair and use a machine. The songs on records and tapes were being digitalized using modern machineries and digitization of more than 123,148 songs was completed. Digitization of television and radio programmes is ongoing and the statement “Myamna Radio will be submerged in the ground” is totally untrue.

(c) “Recording of songs is costly. Without money no records are made”: This is not an accusation against an entity but the entire government and the ministries. If money had to be paid, report can be made to the relevant ministry or the Anti-Corruption Commission. Investigations and actions were being taken against any complaints. It is unacceptable to make such an unfounded accusation against entities and ministries.

(d) It is totally untrue that Pianist (U) Tin Win Hlaing could not come near the Union Minister. He never contacted MRTV, Ministry of Information office, other entities or staff of Ministry of Information verbally, in writing, through telephone or email or in person to meet with the Union Minister. There are no records of officials from the ministry preventing a meeting or ignoring a request for a meeting with the Union Minister.

(e) His accusations are personal attacks as well as inappropriate against Tatmadaw personnel who were transferred to the civilian part of the public service. If any of the personnel are not serving according to the public servant regulations, official written complaint that includes name(s) should be made. But the unsubstantiated accusation against all Tatmadaw personnel who were transferred to the civilian part of the public service is just an unsubstantiated accusation.

The slanderous unsubstantiated accusations of Pianist (U) Tin Win Hlaing were being relayed on the social media network and the media. To prevent the public from being misled, relevant entities will issue open letters about the event, conduct press conferences and interview relevant personnel.

Legal action will also be taken against those who make such false statements as well as those who relay those false statements.

Information Team of Ministry of Information
26 March 2018
(Unofficial Translation)

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**Presidential election on Wednesday**

FROM PAGE-1

U Aung Kyi Nyunt of Magway Region constituency-4 from the Representatives Group of the Amyotha Hluttaw and Maj-Gen Than Soe of the Tatmadaw Representative Group by office of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw order 22/2018 on 23 March 2018.

The report further stated that the Presidential Electoral College held a meeting at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker’s room at 9 a.m. on 26 March to scrutinize U Win Myint of Tanway constituency elected by the elected Pyithu Hluttaw MP group. The Presidential Electoral College found U Win Myint qualified to be elected as presidential candidate.— Thuya Zaw, Aye Aye Thant/Myanmar News Agency

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**Concrete road inaugurated, bridge opened to traffic in Kayin State**

A new concrete section on Kayin Seikgyi-Chaugzon Road in Kayin Seikgyi Township, Kayin State was put into service yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw, Chief Minister of Kayin State Daw Nang Kinh Hlwe Myint, Chief Minister of Mon State Dr. Aye Zan, Kayin State Minister for Environmental Conservation, Mining, Forestry and Road Transport U Saw Pyi Tha and the Director-General of the Road Department U Ohn Lwin formally opened the new concrete road section.

The 40 mile and 5 furlong long newly inaugurated road was 18 ft wide and 8 inches thick and was constructed at a cost of more than Ks. 12 billion from the state budget in the fiscal year 2017-2018. The road connecting Kayin Seikgyi Township and Phayathonezu Myaung U Township is 18 ft wide and 8 inches thick and was constructed at a cost of more than Ks. 12 billion from the state budget in the fiscal year 2017-2018.

The newly opened bridge is expected to help facilitate better flow of commodities produced in Kayin State and Thailand.

Kayin State Minister for Construction U Han Zaw attends the opening ceremony of the new concrete road section in Kayin Seikgyi Township. **Photo: MDN**

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**Coordinated patrols along Myanmar-Bangladesh border**

The Myanmar Border Police and Bangladesh Border Police forces conducted coordinated patrols along the Myanmar-Bangladesh border fence, from border posts 40 to 41, on 25 March.

After coordinating with each other, the security forces conducted coordinated patrols 20 times; 14 times from border posts 42 to 55 from 4 to 26 February 2018, and once each from border posts 31 to 34, 34 to 36, 36 to 38, 38 to 39, 39 to 40 and 40 to 41 on 11, 15, 18, 20, 22 and 23 March, respectively. A coordinated naval patrol along the Naf River was also conducted on 5 and 29 March.— Myanmar News Agency
Yangon Water Bus to operate trip to Twantay

Yangon Water Bus service will make a trip to Twantay Township on 27 March, so that travellers can visit the Shwesandaw Pagoda, central market and the pottery workshop.

The ticket cost is Ks7,000 per person, inclusive of a lunch box, coffee, bottled water and travel charges in town. The vessel will depart at 9 a.m. on 27 March.

The Yangon Water Bus has also launched a weekly pilgrimage trip to Thanyin Kyauktan Pagoda every weekend, as of 17 and 18 March.

The water bus will leave at 6.30 am from Botataung Yangon Water Bus Jetty, and the tour, excluding the travel time, lasts two-and-a-half hours.

The cost, inclusive of a lunch box, coffee and bottled water, is Ks6,000 for a local traveller and US$15 for a foreign traveller.

Tickets can be bought in advance at Insein and Botataung jetitories on Friday, and at the Botataung jetity on arrival.

The Yangon Water Bus also launched operations in the Insein-Botahtuang route, as of 23 March, and will also extend its route to Hlaingthaya and other townships.—GNLM

MR eyes 47 million railway passengers this FY

MYANMA Railways (MR) has targeted to increase its ridership to more than 47 million commuters this fiscal year (FY), according to a report in Myawady Daily yesterday.

MR is upgrading its circular railway and the Yangon-based railway services step by step to increase the number of commuters. More than 42 million railway passengers used the services in the 2015-2016 FY, while more than 44 million passengers used them in the 2016-2017 FY. MR is expecting more than 47 million railway passengers to avail of the services this year. The MR will also shut down services that cater to only a few passengers.

MR earned Ks60 billion from the railways annually. The number of passengers taking the Yangon circular trains has increased significantly with the change in tickets fares. The MR is now charging Ks100 for a 15-mile route and Ks200 for longer distances.

DEAF persons in Kayah State received free medical treatment under a Myanmar-Thailand joint programme titled ‘Ear Surgery Mobile Unit’, according to a source from the Information and Public Relations Department.

The programme, jointly organized by the Ministry of Health and Sports of Myanmar and the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand and Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, was launched at a 500-bed People’s Hospital in Loikaw, the capital of Kayah State yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, Kayah State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col Myint Wai extended greetings before Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar Mr. Jukr Boon-Lang gave a speech. Afterwards, Medical Superintendent of the hospital Dr. Ye Myint Aung spoke words of thanks and had a documentary photo taken together with those present.

The Kayah State Chief Justice, the Deputy Speaker of Kayah State Hlutlaw, Kayah State cabinet members, Kayah State Advocate-General, Kayah State Auditor-General and the guests gave words of encouragement to the patients who are receiving medical checkup and treatment at the hospital.

Around 400 deaf people have already enlisted in the programme that runs until 28 March.

A Thai mobile medical team led by Dr. Soontom Antarasen from Bangkok’s Rajavithi Hospital provided the local people with free healthcare services for the first time in Kayah State in cooperation with the surgeons from Yangon’s University of Medicine (1) — Myanmar Digital News
YSX to form special task force for new companies entering market

By May Thet Hnin

The Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) will form a special task force, in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), to provide consultation to new companies that want to enter the stock exchange, said an official from YSX during the second-year anniversary celebrations of the YSX held on 23 March.

At the ceremony, Myanmar Securities Exchange Commission Chairman and Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win said, “Our country is still in the early stage of development and is yet to gain momentum, but will do so soon. The country is promoting the YSX market, and so, has formed a special task force to provide consultancy for new companies who want to list themselves with the exchange.”

“Companies that have the potential to be listed on the exchange have to hire a lawyer and an accounting firm to register with the stock exchange. This is a complicated task (for an ordinary company), so the special task force will provide a one-stop service for such companies. This group will provide consultation to new companies,” said U Thet Htun Oo, executive senior manager of YSX.

Currently, five companies have listed on the YSX in two years. They are First Myanmar Investment Company, Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Public, Myanmar Citizens Bank, First Private Bank and TMH Telecom Company. Five more companies are planning to register with the YSX this year. During this two-year period, the stock market saw more than 5.2 million shares being traded, at an estimated value of Ks6 billion.

Although the YSX market is in a fair condition, the market still needs to try very hard to catch up with other Asian region stock markets, said U Yin Myo Zaw, Managing Director of YSX.

“We could not set up a perfect stock market in a short period. To become a perfect market, we need a fair number of investors and timely market information must be provided. There should be no monopolistic behaviour in the market,” he added.

Author and financial advisor U Kyaw Myo Tun noted that stock exchanges in other countries also took three to four years to run smoothly, and these also started with a small number of listed companies. “Although more security companies and listed companies should be attracted to the Myanmar stock exchange market, it is more important to have a qualified company listed,” he said.

Regulators had granted permission for online trading in the YSX by the end of 2017, with an aim to attract more investors to the country’s stock market, as well as raise the volume (value) of stock trading. Due to this, the number of trade orders increased 30 per cent last year.

The YSX will soon increase its number of trade matching sessions from two to four per day to raise the trade volume and attract more investors.

According to the newly passed Myanmar Companies Law, foreign investors are permitted to buy up to 35 per cent shares in a local company. This rule will come into force on 1 August 2018, and the YSX is drafting a system to manage the participation of foreigners in the exchange.

Moreover, the YSX is cooperating with developed Asia region stock exchange markets and collaborating with the ASEAN Stock Exchanges CEOs’ conference, ASEAN Capital Market Forum and stock exchanges in the Mekong region, said U Yin Myo Zaw.

The YSX is also conducting awareness talks and stock exchange training sessions in Yangon and other regions to increase the number of investors in the market. More than 50 training sessions have been conducted recently, he added.

The YSX is also arranging to sign a contract with Mono Tech Company, e-Trade Myanmar and Zee Kwet to share stock exchange information through the internet, telephone and SMSes. The YSX saw more than 20,000 shares, worth some Ks100 million, being traded daily in the 2016-2017 fiscal year (FY). In the 2017-2018 FY, only some 10,000 shares, worth some Ks70 million, were traded daily.

Myanmar’s trade deficits significantly lower due to rising export volume

Since Myanmar’s export volume has increased this budget year from April 2017 to March 2018, the nation’s trade deficit has significantly decreased, according to the figures of the Department of Trade, under the Ministry of Commerce.

The trade deficit this budget year of 2017-2018 fell to US$3.5 billion, compared to the previous year’s amount. In the budget year 2016-2017, the trade deficit was more than US$5 billion.

“Rice export volume this year has increased. It is the main reason of increased export volume this year. The volume of re-export this year has also increased. We re-export Thailand’s sugar to China and other countries,” said U Thein Myint Wai, Assistant Director of the Department of Trade.

Although bean and pulse exports have dropped this year, rice exports have increased which has led to a steady surge in Myanmar’s export volume. The total trade volume last year was more than US$29 billion. But this year’s trade volume until the end of January is more than $27 billion and it is expected to be $32 billion after calculating the trade volume in February and March. However, Myanmar’s import volume is still higher than its export volume because it is a developing country. If the amount of imports is higher than the export volume, the country’s trade deficit will be higher. If export volume is higher than the import volume, the trade deficit will be decrease; thereby more projects can be conducted to develop the country to more self-sufficient.

Myanmar’s trade deficit will gradually decrease in the coming years because the country’s exports and re-exports have been steadily increasing and Thilawa SEZ is developing year after year, experts have predicted. —Myanmar Digital News
Wooden portrait sculpture of Senior General Min Aung Hlaing handed over to Tatmadaw Museum

A CEREMONY to donate a wood- en portrait sculpture of Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in hon- our of the 73rd anniversary of the Armed Forces Day was held at the Tatmadaw Military History Museum, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning.

The Tatmadaw command- er-in-chief accepted the donation. On behalf of the donor, U Kyaw Kyaw explained the reason for donating the Paduak (Pterocarpus macrocarpus) wooden portrait sculpture to the Tatmadaw commander-in-chief.

Next, the donors presented the wooden portrait sculpture, which was accepted by the Tat- madaw commander-in-chief, who in return gave U Saw Hla Aye and his party a certificate of honour and gifts.

The wood portrait sculp- ture was carved from more than a 100-year-old Paduak tree in Myaingyingu area near the Myanmar-Thailand border. The wood was donated by U Saw Hla and gifts.

Aye and the carving was done by wood sculptor U Ye Yint Naung Latt, who worked on the sculp- ture for some two months. The wood portrait sculpture weighted a tonne, and the work is estimat- ed to have cost some Ks100 milli- on. —Myanmar News Agency

Psychotropic drugs caught in Yaychanpyin Port, Sittway

POLICE forces seized around 649,600 psychotropic drug tablets, estimated to be worth Ks 1,948.8 million, hidden in seventeen SCG cement bags in one of the motor vehicles aboard the Mayu Bayin watercraft en route from Yaychanpyin Port, Sittway Township to Angumaw Port, Yathedaung Township on 24 March.

Yaychanpyin police force searched the watercraft around 4:55pm and found the drugs wrapped in clear plastic in an SCG cement bag in a SKAT truck onboard. The drugs were branded with the letters WY/R on them.

Upon inspection the po- lice force discovered the car belonged to Kyaw Kyaw Lin, son of Upper Clark U Htun Hla from Maungtaw District Education Office, and his driver Htun Aung Lin (a) Maung Chay from Ward-1, Maungtaw City.

The two men escaped the ship and police forces kept a lookout in checkpoints near the area. Police forces halted and inspected a WISH (4L/5194) car on the Angumaw-Maung- taw road near Ward-9 in Yathedaung Township. The car belonged to Nay Zaw Min, son of U Hla Maung from Pyitawtaw Ward in Sittway City, and his wife Ma Mya Thandar, a middle school teacher from Kamaung Seik B.E.H.S in Maungtaw Township. Police officers apprehended Kyaw Kyaw Lin who was in the car and confiscated Ks429,000 from him.

The opening ceremony of Innwa Bank's new branch in Mandalay. PHOTO: MNA

47th Bangladesh Independence Day, National Day held

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettle- ment Dr. Win Myat Aye and wife Professor Dr Mya Thida were welcomed by Bangladesh Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Manjurul Karim Khan Chowdhury at a ceremony to mark the 47th Bangladesh Independence Day and National Day which was held in Sedona Hotel in Yangon at 6:30 pm on 26 March. —MNA

Aungmyaythazan Branch of Innwa Bank opened

AUNGMYAYTHAZAN branch of Innwa Bank branch held an opening ceremony yester- day in Mandalay as a gesture of honouring the 73rd Armed Forces Day. Central Command Commander Brig-Gen Kyaw Swar Lin, Union Minister for Security and Border Affairs Mandalay Region Colonel Kyaw Kyaw Min, Myanmar Economic Corporation Deputy Managing Director U Eant Zaw and Managing Di- rector U Aung Ngwe Oo opened the ceremony by cutting the rib- bon. Next, Brig-Gen Kyaw Swar Lin formally opened the bank by unveiling a sign. The Command- er sprinkled it with scented wa- ter and his party viewed around the bank.

The 48th Innwa Bank branch is ready to offer financial services for local people and beyond. The bank is located at the first floor of Mandalay Call Center at the corner of 26th street and 66th street in Manda- lay Region. —Myanmar News Agency
China urges US to ‘stop economic intimidation’ over tariffs

BEIJING — China on Monday lashed out at US “economic intimidation” following President Donald Trump’s announcement of new import tariffs, but said it was open to negotiations to resolve trade frictions.

The two countries have traded threats and heated rhetoric in recent days, ratcheting up fears that the world’s two biggest economies are heading towards a damaging trade war.

Trump said last Thursday that the United States would impose new tariffs on some $60 billion of Chinese imports over the “theft” of intellectual property, rattling global financial markets.

Vice President Mike Pence boasted that the measures mean that the “era of economic surrender is over”.

Asked about the remarks, Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a press briefing on Monday that “it would have been more appropriate to say that it’s time to stop the US’s economic intimidation and hegemony”.

Beijing has not stood idle. On Friday, it unveiled a list of $3 billion worth of US goods, including pork, fruits and wine, that could be targeted with tariffs in retaliation for steel and aluminium tariffs — if negotiations fail.

“We also have the confidence and the capacity to safeguard our legitimate and legal interests, whatever the circumstances,” Hua said. “Now the ball is in the US court.”

While the two sides have traded barbs in public, US and Chinese officials have begun behind-the-scenes negotiations to improve American access to the Asian country’s huge market, according to the Wall Street Journal.

“We keep saying that the Chinese side is willing to negotiate with the US to properly manage divergences, on the basis of mutual respect and equal mutual benefits,” Hua said when asked about the report. “Our door is always wide open to dialogue and consultation.”

Malaysia proposes 10 years’ jail for ‘fake news’

KUALA LUMPUR — The Malaysian government on Monday proposed a “fake news” law which would carry a maximum 10-year jail term, including for articles published abroad, sparking fears of a crackdown on dissent as elections loom.

Governments in several countries, emboldened by US President Donald Trump’s fulminations against “fake news”, are considering such legislation. But rights groups warn that authoritarian regimes are likely to use such laws to silence opposing voices.

Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak has already been targeting critics in politics and the media who have attacked him over allegations that huge sums were looted from sovereign wealth fund 1MDB. Najib and the fund deny any wrongdoing.

The proposed law, introduced in parliament on Monday, fuelled fears the government is seeking to intensify a clampdown before a general election, which must be called by August but is widely expected sooner.

Opposition MP Charles Santiago said the bill was “a powerful weapon for the government to silence dissent in the country”.

“It is timed for the elections and to silence discussions on 1MDB,” he told AFP.

The bill, which described fake news as a “global concern”, includes a maximum 10 years in jail or fine of up to $500,000 ringgit ($130,000) for anyone guilty of creating or disseminating what authorities deem to be fake news. It said anyone — including foreigners — who breaks the law outside the country by publishing fake news can face punishment in Malaysia, as long as what is published concerns Malaysia or a Malaysian citizen.

Fahmi Fadzil, spokesman for the opposition People’s Justice Party, said it suggested the government was seeking to target foreign media, which have led the coverage of 1MDB.

Phil Robertson, Asia deputy director for Human Rights Watch, accused the Malaysian government of employing “Trump-style scare tactics to grant itself powers to arbitrarily determine what people can say about Malaysia in the world”.

On chaotic SE Asian roads, local hero Grab zips past Uber

SINGAPORE — Uber may be the world’s biggest ride-hailing company but it was left in the dust in Southeast Asia by homegrown upstart Grab, which knew better how to navigate the chaotic highways and byways of an eclectic region.

Spanning 10 countries, from wealthy, ultra-organised Singapore to places like Indonesia and the Philippines that are home to traffic-choked cities, coming up with a ride-hailing service for the whole of Southeast Asia was never going to be easy.

But Grab’s Malaysian chief executive, Anthony Tan, combined his local knowledge with sharp business sense from his time at Harvard Business School to set up a service well adapted to the region and quickly raced past Uber.

After a years-long fight that cost both companies huge sums as they aggressively slashed fares and rolled out special offers, the California-based company threw in the towel Monday and sold its ride-sharing and food delivery services to Grab for an undisclosed sum.

“Grab is more familiar with its home territory, Southeast Asia,” said Song Seng Wun, a regional economist with CIMB Private Bank.

“They saw the Uber model and tweaked it to adapt to local conditions, giving Southeast Asians what they want.”

In 2015 they added motorbike taxis to their ride-hailing app in Indonesia, where many commuters get around on two wheels due to heavy traffic, helping them to rival local taxi Go-Jek, which had pioneered the service.

Uber followed slowly up the rear, only adding motorbike taxis to their service in the Indonesian capital a year later, by which time the market was saturated.

Uber’s disadvantage was that they lacked local knowledge and relied heavily on the model which had allowed them to lead in developed markets, according to Song.—AFP

China has unveiled a list of $3 billion worth of US goods, including pork, fruits and wine, that could be targeted with tariffs in retaliation for steel and aluminium tariffs — if negotiations fail.

PHOTO:AFP

PHOTO:AFP

Malaysia has unveiled a list of $3 billion worth of US goods, including pork, fruits and wine, that could be targeted with tariffs in retaliation for steel and aluminium tariffs — if negotiations fail.
The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MNREC) has been monitoring Myanmar’s forests closely. As of the latest report, Myanmar has one of the highest forest cover rates in Southeast Asia, with a forest cover of approximately 32%. This includes both natural and plantation forests. The MNREC has implemented various programs to conserve and rehabilitate the country’s forests, including afforestation projects, forest management plans, and community forest management programs. These initiatives are aimed at reducing deforestation, enhancing biodiversity, and improving the livelihoods of communities dependent on forest resources. Myanmar has also ratified important international conventions such as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), which further strengthens its commitment to forest conservation. In addition, Myanmar has set a target to achieve a forest cover of 35% by 2030, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15.5 to protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial and inland aquatic ecosystems and their services. These efforts by the MNREC and other stakeholders are crucial in maintaining Myanmar’s rich biodiversity and ensuring sustainable development for the future generations.
Lawyers decline Trump legal team invite

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump insisted on Sunday there was no shortage of lawyers willing to help him fight a collusion investigation as two more attorneys decided against joining his defense team.

Days after the resignation of John Dowd as Trump’s lead attorney in the handling of allegations of collusion with Russia, US media reported that Joe diGenova and Victoria Toensing had reversed a decision to come on board.

“The President is disappointed that conflicts prevent Joe diGenova and Victoria Toensing from joining his Special Counsel legal team,” Jay Sekulow, another of Trump’s lawyers, was quoted as saying in a statement.

The White House had announced last week that DiGenova and Toensing were hired to bolster the legal team tasked with responding to special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation into last the 2016 US election.

His hiring came amid reports that another high-profile attorney Theodore B. Olson — who served as solicitor general under former president George W. Bush — had turned down an invitation to sign up with the Trump team.

Writing on Twitter on Sunday, Trump denounced any suggestion that he was struggling to attract top legal talent as “fake news.”

“Many lawyers and top law firms want to represent me in the Russia case...don’t believe the Fake News narrative that it is hard to find a lawyer who wants to take this on,” the president wrote.

“Fame & fortune will NEVER be turned down by a lawyer, though some are conflicted.”

Problem is that a new lawyer or law firm will take months (if for no other reason than they can bill more), which is unfair to our great country — and I am very happy with my existing team.”

Dowd quit days after Trump directly attacked former FBI chief Robert Mueller’s sprawling Russia investigation as a “witch hunt,” raising fresh questions about whether the president was interfering with the probe.

Mueller is expected to seek to interview the president over allegations that his campaign team colluded with Russia during the 2016 presidential election and that Trump himself may have obstructed the investigation.

Trump said on Thursday that he was still willing to be interviewed by Mueller.

The increasingly embattled Trump is also fighting off allegations that he had an affair with the porn star Stormy Daniels, with his defense by his longtime personal lawyer Michael Cohen.—AFP

Gunmaker Remington files for bankruptcy

LAS VEGAS — US gunmaker Remington filed for bankruptcy on Sunday, as the more than 200-year-old firearms manufacturer vies to restructure its massive debts.

“Directors have determined that it is advisable and in the best interests of the Company that the Company file, or cause to be filed, a Voluntary Petition commencing the Chapter 11 Case,” the bankruptcy filing says.

Remington had announced it would file for bankruptcy in February, just two days before a shooting at a Parkland, Florida high school killed 17 people and reignited a national debate on gun control.

The restructuring agreement will allow Remington to reduce some $700 million of its consolidated debt, according to the company, as well as inject a contribution of $145 million of new capital into its operating subsidiaries. In February Remington said its “business operations will continue to operate in the normal course and will not be disrupted by the restructuring process.”

Remington’s financial woes illustrate a paradox of the Trump era: weapon manufacturers ramped up production in anticipation of a Hillary Clinton presidency that would drive sales of those fearing increased gun control.

Instead, they got a period of political dominance for the powerful National Rifle Association gun lobby — with Republicans controlling Congress and the White house — that was none-the-less accompanied by financial fragility for gunmakers. The company has also been hit with lawsuits by families of victims of the Sandy Hook school shooting that killed 20 small children and six adults in 2012. The families say 20-year-old killer Adam Lanza would never have been able to carry out his 264-second attack if he had not had access to a high-capacity weapon which had been “specifically engineered” for military use in combat. More than a million Americans flooded streets of cities nationwide on Saturday demanding tighter gun control on Saturday, marches that were spearheaded by teenagers from Parkland who survived the shooting.—AFP

Not rude, just French: fired waiter claims discrimination

PARIS — A French waiter fired for being “aggressive, rude and disrespectful” says his behavior wasn’t out of line — he’s simply, well, French.

Guillaume Rey, who worked at a Vancouver restaurant on Canada’s Pacific coast, filed a complaint with British Columbia’s Human Rights Tribunal against his former employer, claiming “discrimination against my culture.”

The restaurant, operated by Cara Operations, accused Rey of violating its code of conduct and said he persisted in his behavior despite verbal and written performance reviews.

In alleging discrimination Rey said French culture just “tends to be more direct and expressive.”

He owes his sacking to his “direct, honest and professional personality,” which he acquired while training in France’s hospitality industry.

Both parties agree Rey performed well at his job despite his allegedly disagreeable demeanor. The restaurant and its parent company had attempted to dismiss the complaint but tribunal member Devyn Cousineau denied that application, clearing the path for a yet unscheduled hearing.

She said the application’s denial should not be seen as an indication of the case’s outcome.

“Mr Rey will have to explain what it is about his French heritage that would result in behavior that people misinterpret as a violation of workplace standards of acceptable conduct,” she wrote in her decision.—AFP

A French waiter fired for being “aggressive, rude and disrespectful” says his behaviour wasn’t out of line — he’s simply, well, French. PHOTO: AFP
Egypt heads to polls to choose between Sisi and ‘rival’

CAIRO — Egyptians headed to the polls on Monday in a presidential election to choose between incumbent Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and a little-known politician who has struggled to make the case he is a serious contender.

Polling stations opened at 9:00 am (0700 GMT) for the three-day vote, in which Sisi is all but guaranteed to win a second four-year term.

The president was among the first voters, shown on Egyptian television casting his ballot at a school in Cairo’s Heliopolis district under tight security.

Voters turned up early at polling stations and queued to cast their votes. Outside some stations, musical troupes showed up to celebrate the election.

“What’s the alternative other than Sisi? If we don’t come to vote would that benefit the country?” said Adel Sameeh, 66, an insurance consultant.

Security forces were deployed across the country to protect polling booths and armoured vehicles were stationed at several points around Cairo.

“Nothing will scare the Egyptian people. Not terrorism or anything else,” Prime Minister Sherif Ismail told state television after casting his vote.

The Islamic State group’s Egyptian affiliate, which has killed hundreds of soldiers and civilians, has threatened attacks on election infrastructure.

On Saturday, two policemen were killed in a car bomb attack targeting the provincial head of security for the northern Alexandria governorate. The security chief was unharmed.

Some 60 million people in Egypt, the most populated Arab country, are registered to vote on 26, 27, and 28 March. Official results are expected on 2 April.

They will have the choice between Sisi and Moussa Mostafa Moussa, who registered immediately before the close date for applications, saving the election from being a one-horse race.

Moussa, who has denied he is a “puppet”, had been leading a Sisi re-election campaign until the moment he registered as a candidate.

Other opponents have been sidelined, including former military chief of staff Sami Anan, who was detained in January, shortly after announcing his candidacy.

The military said the reserve general broke the law by illegally declaring his candidacy.

Authorities hope for high turnout

 Authorities hope for high turnout

In an interview broadcast on Egyptian television last week, 63-year-old Sisi said the lack of serious opponents was not his doing.

“I wish we had one, or two, or three, or 10 of the best people and you choose however you want,” he said.

Sisi won his first term in 2014, a year after the former army chief ousted his predecessor Mohamed Morsi following mass protests demanding the divisive Islamist’s resignation.

In that election, Sisi faced Hamdeen Sabbahi, an established left-wing politician much better known than Moussa. Sisi won with 96.9 per cent of the vote.

With Sisi’s victory effectively guaranteed, authorities will be hoping for a large turnout to enhance the vote’s legitimacy.

Sisi has stressed in his pre-election appearances the importance of voters turning out in large numbers.

In 2014, about 37 per cent of voters participated in the two-day election, prompting authorities to add a third day to obtain a final participation rate of 47.5 per cent.

It is unlikely that this year’s turnout will even reach the 37 per cent threshold, said analyst Mostafa Kamel al-Sayed.

“The result is known in advance, and this does not encourage Egyptians to go out and vote,” he said.

During the campaign, Sisi appeared frequently on television and in newspapers, hail ing factories and infrastructure projects built over the past four years.

Egyptian cities, especially Cairo, are flooded with banners showing Sisi and messages of support from business owners. Posters vowing support for Moussa, 65, are rarely seen.

But with an economic crisis and grueling price hikes — and the return of a regime seen as at least as authoritative as that of ex-leader Hosni Mubarak — support for Sisi appears to be slightly in decline.—AFP

Saudi forces intercept new Yemen rebel missile over Riyadh

RIYADH — Saudi forces intercepted a Yemeni rebel missile over Riyadh on Sunday, in the latest strike on the capital which coincides with the third anniversary of the Saudi-led coalition’s intervention in Yemen.

The Iran-aligned Huthi rebels claimed their target was Riyadh’s King Khalid International Airport, with residents reporting loud explosions and bright flashes in the sky shortly before midnight.

Authorities reported no immediate casualties from the attack, which comes after the US defence secretary last week urged Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during his visit to Washington to pursue “urgent efforts” to end Yemen’s wrenching conflict.

The Huthi-run Al-Masira television channel claimed the rebels also fired multiple missiles at airports in southern Abha, Jizan and Najran provinces, but Saudi state television only reported the attack on Riyadh.

“Saudi air defence forces intercept a missile northeast of Riyadh,” Saudi state news channel Al-Akhbariya said in a brief report.

The attack is the latest in a series of Huthi missiles fired at Riyadh since November, all of which Saudi forces say they intercepted.

The first attack, which also targeted Riyadh international airport on 4 November, triggered the tightening of a longstanding Saudi-led blockade of Yemen — already on the verge of famine.

Another attack on 19 December targeted Riyadh’s Yamamah palace, the official residence of King Salman.

Saudi Arabia has accused its arch foe Iran of supplying the missile to the rebels, a charge Tehran strongly denied.

The Huthis expelled pro-government forces from the capital in September 2014 and went on to seize swathes of the impoverished Arabian Peninsula country.

This prompted a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia to intervene in Yemen on March 26, 2015, to help the government push back the Shiite rebels.—AFP
Puigdemont in German court as arrest ignites Catalan protests

BARCELONA — Former Catalan president Carles Puigdemont is to appear in court on Monday following his arrest in Germany which triggered a wave of protests in Catalonia where thousands of separatists faced off with police.

Puigdemont spent the night in a German jail cell following his arrest on Sunday after he crossed the border from Denmark, under a European warrant issued by Spain.

The arrest comes five months after Puigdemont went on the run as Spanish prosecutors sought to charge him with sedition and rebellion in the wake of a vote by the Catalan parliament to declare independence.

It marks the latest chapter in a secession saga that has bitterly divided Catalans and triggered Spain’s worst political crisis in decades.

According to Puigdemont’s lawyer Jaume Alonso-Cuevillas, he was on his way back to Belgium, where he fled after Spanish authorities moved to impose direct rule over Catalonia.

The ousted Catalan leader, 55, will be brought before a German court Monday to confirm his identity. It will later decide if he is to remain in custody pending extradition proceedings.

‘Delicate’ situation

“It will take place in the course of the day, probably in the afternoon,” a spokeswoman for the prosecutor’s office for Schleswig-Holstein state told AFP.

Calling the situation “very delicate”, Alonso-Cuevillas told Catalonia’s Rac1 radio it was “very likely that he will not be allowed to leave Germany”.

When asked whether the case would weigh on relations with Spain, Seibert responded with a simple “no”.

“It angers us that they arrested Puigdemont, he is our highest representative,” 22-year-old architecture student Judit Carapena told AFP at the Barcelona protest.

Catalan parliament speaker Roger Torrent appealed for calm in an address broadcast on regional television.

“I have no doubt that Catalan society will act as it always has, with non-violence,” he said.

Aside from Puigdemont, nine other Catalan separatist leaders are in jail in Spain over the region’s failed bid for independence.

His arrest came two days after Spain’s supreme court issued international arrest warrants for 13 Catalan separatists including Puigdemont and his nominated successor Jordi Turull.

The court said they would be prosecuted for “rebellion”, a charge which carries a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison.

Twelve more face less serious charges like disobedience.

Issuing the warrant for Puigdemont on Friday, Judge Pablo Llarena accused the ousted Catalan leader of organising an independence referendum in October last year despite a ban from Madrid.

The vote had been swiftly followed by the Catalan parliament’s declaration of independence on 27 October.

‘Revenge and repression’

Puigdemont had been visiting Finland since Thursday, but slipped out of the country before Finnish police could detain him.

Elsa Artadi, a lawmaker with Puigdemont’s Together for Catalonia party, said he should fight his extradition.

“Spain does not guarantee a fair trial; only revenge and repression,” she wrote on Twitter.

While separatist parties won Catalonia’s regional elections in December called by Madrid, they have been unable to elect a president and form a government as they have picked candidates who are now either in exile, in jail or facing prosecution. After Puigdemont was forced to withdraw his bid for the presidency as he could not return to Spain without facing arrest, another pro-independence leader Jordi Sanchez followed suit when a judge refused to let him out of jail to be sworn in.

The third candidate, Turull, was placed in custody on Friday.—AFP

Russians choose names for newest weapons — Defence Ministry

MOSCOW — Russians have chosen names for the country’s newest weapons by participating in a poll on the Defence Ministry’s website, a ministry source said.

While delivering his State of the Nation Address to the Federal Assembly on 1 March, Russian president Vladimir Putin suggested that the country’s people choose names for a combat laser complex, an underwater drone and a nuclear powered cruise missile.

“The name Peresvet won the vote for a name for the combat laser complex. Most people voted for the nuclear powered cruise missile to be named Buranetsnik, while the name Poseidon was chosen for the underwater drone,” the Defence Ministry source said.

The poll on the Russian Defence Ministry’s website concluded at 20:00 (17:00 GMT) on Thursday, the source added.

This is the first time in Russia’s history that weapons has been named by a popular vote as in the past, the military used to choose names for weapons and military equipment.—Tass

Russians have chosen names for the country’s newest weapons by participating in a poll on the Defence Ministry’s website. PHOTO: TASS

Protesters held a banner reading “Freedom to political prisoners” during a demonstration in Barcelona after Catalonia’s former president was arrested in Germany. PHOTO: AFP
6.4 quake off eastern Indonesia, tsunami alert lifted

JAKARTA — A 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck off eastern Indonesia in the early hours of Monday, triggering a brief tsunami alert that was swiftly lifted, according to seismological monitoring organizations.

The quake struck deep at some 171 kilometres (106 miles) below the earth's surface in the Banda Sea, the US Geological Survey said.

A tsunami alert was initially triggered by the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWMS). However IOTWMS followed up with a second bulletin that said there was “no threat to countries in the Indian Ocean”.

The quake's epicentre was located in a sparsely inhabited part of the Banda Sea, 380 kilometres from Ambon, the capital of Maluku province.

Local officials said there were no reports of damage or injury. “The tremor was felt mildly for two to three seconds by the locals, there was no panic and no tsunami threat,” disaster mitigation agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho told AFP.

A similar 6.1-magnitude quake hit close to Monday's epicentre on 26 February and caused no damage.

Indonesia sits on the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire, a seismic activity hotspot.

It is frequently hit by quakes, most of them harmless. However the archipelago remains acutely alert to tremors that might trigger tsunamis.

In 2004 a devastating tsunami caused by a magnitude 9.3 undersea earthquake off the coast of Sumatra killed 220,000 people in countries around the Indian Ocean, including 189,000 in Indonesia.—AFP

Chinese Korean war dead set to return home

INCHON — A Chinese officer saluted on Monday as the remains of 20 former comrades were arrayed in a South Korean military facility ahead of their return home, decades after they died in the Korean War.

The brown-stained bones — including some near-complete skulls — were laid out on tables at the temporary ossuary in Incheon before being placed in identical boxes pending their repatriation on Wednesday.

It will be the fifth annual return under a 2013 agreement which has so far seen 569 sets of remains sent back. Communist Chinese forces played a crucial role in support of the North during the 1950-53 Korean War, but former South Korean president Park Geun-hye offered to return the bodies of Beijing's war dead as a goodwill gesture.

Mao Zedong sent millions of troops to intervene as US-led United Nations forces drove Kim Il Sung's army back towards the Chinese frontier in late 1950, saving the North from defeat in a decisive turning point in the war. South Korean and UN forces were pushed back south, losing control of Seoul before recovering to recapture the capital and end up in a stalemate along what is now the Demilitarized Zone. Casualty figures remain disputed but Western estimates commonly cite a figure of 400,000 Chinese deaths, while Chinese sources mention a death toll of about 180,000.

The repatriations take place ahead of China's annual Qingming — tomb-sweeping — festival, when many people visit and clean the graves of their ancestors. The bodies being sent back on Wednesday were exhumed last year from multiple sites in Gang-won province in South Korea's northeast, a defence ministry spokesman told AFP.

Hundreds of North Korean soldiers remain interred at a special cemetery plot in Paju, just south of the heavily fortified border with North Korea, but Pyongyang has ignored Seoul's offers to return them despite sporadic talks on the issue.—AFP

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO. ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

PHONE: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V VICTORIA-82 VOY. NO. ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V VICTORIA-82 VOY. NO. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.STL-1 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S RK SHIPPING & TRADING PTE, LTD

PHONE: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE) PTE LTD

PHONE: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MAENAM-1 VOY. NO. (010)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MAENAM-1 VOY. NO. (010) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT 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.
Korean media reports said, citing top stars including K-pop girlband Red Velvet. Including K-pop group April — feature many top stars planned inter-Korean summit in their kind for more than a decade. North Korea next week for two Korean pop acts are set to visit concerts by South Korean artists SEOUL—Seoul is pushing for inter-Korean summit in their kind for more than a decade. North Korea next week for two Korean pop acts are set to visit concerts by South Korean artists

Date nights are important, says Megan Fox

LOS ANGELES—Actor Megan Fox believes date nights are important for a relationship to survive. The 31-year-old actor, who has kids Noah, five, Bodhi, four, and Journey, 18 months, with her husband Brian Austin Green, said spending quality time with her partner has been key to keeping their romance alive. "We don't do it often, but we went to Nobu for Valentine's Day and that was nice. The thing about that is that so essential is you remember why you like the person that you had kids with. "When you have so many people pulling at you and needing stuff, you kind of forget. You become like business partners and then you go on a date and you're like, 'ugh! I'm attracted to you!' So it's important to do that. I'm going to try and do it more often," Fox told Us Weekly.

The actor had filed for a divorce from Green in August 2015, but the duo sorted out their differences.

**Kanye West’s muse Abloh takes over Louis Vuitton menswear**

PARIS—American designer and celebrity DJ Virgil Abloh is to take over menswear at Louis Vuitton, the brand said Monday, in a dramatic shake-up at the top of men’s fashion. The appointment of rap star Kanye West’s longtime friend and creative director to the French luxury label shows the massive impact street style is now having on fashion. Abloh, 37, a former architect, who has won plaudits for his own Off-White label, posted a picture of a vintage Louis Vuitton travel chest to his 1.6 million Instagram followers to announce the move. He had earlier teased them with a post of a white T-shirt with the initials “SHM”, which stood for “something huge Monday”. He is the second black man to head one of the big Paris fashion houses, with French designer Olivier Rousteing responsible for both Balmain’s men’s and women’s lines.

They follow in the footsteps of British creator Ozwald Boateng, who led Givenchy menswear from 2003 to 2007. "It is an honour for me to accept the position of men’s artistic director for Louis Vuitton," Abloh said in a statement released by the brand, the largest in the luxury giant LVMH’s stable.
Second Kadu ethnic traditional festival celebrated

THE second Kadu ethnic traditional festival was celebrated in Indaw Township in Sagaing Region on 27 March, 2018.

The festival was opened by Sagaing Region Deputy Hluttaw Speaker U Bo Than Nyunt, Chin Ethnic Affairs Minister U Lar Htang Htan, Katha District Management Committee Chairman U Tint Wai Thone, Indaw Township No 2 region constituency Hlut-taw representative U Than Win and Kadu ethnic group’s patron U Pyi Thein by cutting ribbon while Sagaing Region Hluttaw Speaker U Than unveiled the archway.

Then, Sagaing Region Hluttaw Speaker U Than de-
Checkmate or knockout: Chess boxing lands a punch

BERLIN — With his dental guard still in his mouth and a slightly queasy feeling in his gut, a shirtless Thomas Czezneuve was exuberant after checking his opponent during a chess boxing bout in Berlin, the world capital of the unusual sport.

Just as deft in the movement of his rooks as with his fists, Czezneuve claimed victory against his Ukrainian challenger after seven alternating rounds of boxing and chess.

The match played out before a crowd of curious onlookers drawn to the spectacle of the so-called “Intellectual Fight Club”.

Chess boxing was born 16 years ago when its founder Iepe Rubingh brought to life a seemingly far-fetched idea from a French graphic novel, “Cold Equator” by Enki Bilal.

Today, Rubingh has set his sights on introducing chess boxing to the Olympics and even looking at sending robots into battle, as the multidisciplinary sport gains popularity.

The rules of chess boxing are simple.

Three minutes of gentlemanly chess played on a board in the ring is alternated with three-minute bouts of intense boxing over 11 rounds — six of chess, five of boxing.

The winner has to earn either a boxing knockout or a checkmate on the chessboard, but either chess boxer can be disqualified for taking too long to make a chess move or by breaking the boxing rules.

“We were sober”

“You need to be good in both disciplines, which can be quite complicated. But it’s true that one mustn’t be afraid of being punched,” said Rubingh.

The biggest difficulty may be staying lucid to pull off the winning chess move despite the physical demands of boxing.

“It was my toughest fight with a rival who is a total all-coverer, and who has left me exhausted, especially in boxing,” said Czezneuve, 34, a recruitment consultant.

“I held on thanks to my mental strength,” he added. In fact, “60 percent of the winning moves are made on the chessboards and 40 percent in boxing,” said Rubingh, a 45-year-old Dutchman.

Recalling the sport’s gestation, chess-lover Rubingh said that it began in 2002, when after a round of chess that ended in stalemate, he suggested to a friend that they go for a boxing bout at a bar in Amsterdam.

“The idea was born, but we were sober,” he said.

“Combined, the two sports are the amalgamation of the most beautiful capacities of human beings to create a type of supreme being,” he said. The author of the graphic novel, Bilal, told AFP that he found it “rather amusing that the idea that was potentially absurd had become reality”.

‘More Kasparov than Tyson’

While it was considered more a curiosity than a real sport in the beginning, chess boxing has gained a strong following, including chess fans who have crossed over to the more physical realm of boxing.

Alina Rath, a 29-year-old German, has been a member of a chess club for 20 years but only began adding boxing to the mix in August.

“Chess boxing breaks down cliches of the rough guy who only knows how to beat up the weak intellectual,” said the accountant.

Although Rath says she feels “more like Kasparov than Tyson”, she said she was tempted to sign up for the dual discipline after five years of practice in mixed martial arts.

Some 3,500 people are card-carrying members of 11 federations in countries including Britain, Iran and Russia.

And it is Berlin that is the undisputed headquarters of the sport after the World Chess Boxing Organisation was set up there in 2004.

Man versus robot?

Regular exhibition games are organised, pitting players of all nationalities.

“Our aim this year is to create a professional league financed by investors and partners,” said Rubingh, who is pushing for the sport to be included in the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024.

To gain publicity for the sport, Rubingh has another seemingly space-aged idea up his sleeve.

This time, he is turning to science fiction guru Isaac Asimov for inspiration.

Taking a leaf from Asimov’s series depicting man’s fight against the machine, Rubingh wants robotic companies to partner him in organising a series of matches pitting men against robots.

“I would fight against a robot with artificial intelligence and which is much stronger than us in chess but also weaker in terms of reflexes,” he said.

“Every year, I would challenge the best of the robots and it would become increasingly difficult for me to win as they improve. “The day that I lose, the machine will have overtaken mankind,” said Rubingh, who is dreaming of a million-dollar fight in New York’s Times Square.

Checkmate or knockout: Chess boxing lands a punch

Nishikori knocked out in 3rd round of Miami Open

MIAMI, Florida — Kei Nishikori was defeated by Argentina’s Juan Martin del Potro in straight sets on Sunday and was forced to make a third-round exit at the Miami Open.

Nishikori could only muster one break-point opportunity against the world No 6, which the Argentine saved in a 6-2, 6-2 rout over the Japanese in 72 minutes.

“I started out well, but I’m still lacking confidence and don’t feel stable enough. I made so many mistakes in the second set that I felt like it wasn’t even a game anymore,” Nishikori said. “But I wasn’t completely overwhelmed, and there were some positive things that came out of it.”

The former world No 4 Nishikori held Del Potro back until the Argentine turned the first set 3-2, going on to win 77 per cent of both his first and second serves. Del Potro shot six aces to Nishikori’s two and converted four of 13 break points in the lopsided victory.

“It’s frustrating that I couldn’t play at 100 percent. I wanted to play a little harder,” Nishikori said.

At this tournament, the world No 33 received a bye in the first round as the 20th seed and beat Australian John Millman in the second round.

He returned to competition in January after a season-ending wrist injury last August but withdrew from the BNP Paribas Open earlier this month due to illness.

Del Potro, who has won six of eight matches with the Japanese, advanced to a fourth-round meeting with Serbia’s Filip Krajinovic.

Nishikori is expected to play in the 15-22 April Monte Carlo Masters, the first clay court match of the ATP season in Europe.