President U Win Myint receives outgoing Indian ambassador

PRESIDENT U Win Myint received Indian Ambassador Mr. Vikram Misri, who has completed his tour of duty in Myanmar, at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed promotion of Myanmar-India bilateral relations and cooperation, democratic reform and the internal peace processes in Myanmar, bilateral trade, promotion of investment and tourism sector, health and science, energy issues, and the export of beans and pulses to India.

Also present at the call were Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Min Thu and officials.

— MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi receives ASEAN Secretary-General

STATE Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw at 09:45 a.m. on 18 December 2018.

During the meeting, they discussed about the recent developments in Rakhine State including the measures taken by the Government of Myanmar for the repatriation of verified displaced persons, the dispatch of a needs assessment team from the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) to facilitate the repatriation process and the programme entitled “Strengthening Myanmar Government to Lead National Disaster Response through Structured Capacity Building Programme.”— MNA

ASEAN Secretary-General’s office, Union government discuss ASEAN cooperation in returnee repatriation

A COORDINATION meeting of high-level officials for discussing ASEAN cooperation in receiving returnees in Rakhine State was held between the office of the ASEAN Secretary-General and the Myanmar Government at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday.

In this meeting, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye said Myanmar was consistently striving for the stability and development of Rakhine State. The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State has already been formed and that they were doing their best for implementation of the suggestions, he said. He expressed his wish for the undertakings to be objective, and added that this cooperation would support the activities of the trilateral MoU signed between the Myanmar Government, the Red Cross, UNDP and UNHCR.
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves ROK Government’s EDCF Loan US$ 93.779 mln

THE Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw tenth regular session held its tenth-day meeting at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday where Government of Republic of Korea’s (ROK) Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) Loan US$ 93.779 million was approved.

30-month work report of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee put on record

At the meeting Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee Vice Chairman (1) U Saw Than Hut read and submitted the committee’s 30-month work report after which Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Maung nyuan announced the Hluttaw putting the report on record.

Paragraph wise decision on 2017 Myanmar Gemstone Bill

Next Hluttaw approves a motion tabled by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee joint secretary Dr. Myat Nyana Soe on 2017 Myanmar Gemstone Bill in which the two Hluttaws were in disagreement after Hluttaw representatives discussed and decided on it paragraph by paragraph.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves EDCF Loan

Afterwards Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung explained again about the EDCF Loan US$ 93.779 million for e-Government Integrated Data Center (e-GIDC) construction project. The e-GIDC will construct its own Cloud system or cloud computing technology where the country’s data and information can be stored without requiring it to be stored in any foreign countries and thus it’ll be added protection and security as well as reducing expenses.

Once the construction of e-GIDC is completed e-Government services such as online payment, taxation, e-mail, e-ID, e-Visa, One-stop-services, Online news, Instant messages will be available 24/7 safely, securely and speedily. As the development of e-Government works will support the country’s all-round development the Hluttaw is requested to approve the loan explained the Union Minister.

In his explanation on the matter Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win said the ministry will manage and administer the signing of the loan agreement, utilization of the loan, loan principle and interest payments.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker then announced the Hluttaw’s approval of the matter after the Hluttaw voted 453 for, 9 against and 2 abstaining.

Hluttaw discusses government debt report for FY 2017-2018 and report (10/2018)

Following this Annual Report on the government debt for financial year 2017-2018 and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee Report (10/2018) on the finding and comments on the Annual Report were discussed by Dr. Daw Thet Thet Khaine of Dagon constituency, U Khin Cho of Hlaingbywe constituency, U Win Maung of Magway Region constituency 6, U Bo Gyi of Chaik constituency, Dr. Saw Naing of South Okkalapa constituency, U Hla San of Magway Region constituency 1, U Tun Tun of Pwintbyu constituency, Daw Wint War Tun of Shadaw constituency, Taungdaw Amyotha Hluttaw representative Lt-Col Myo Tun Aung, Daw Khin San Hlaing of Pale constituency and Daw Cho Cho of Ottwin constituency.

Hluttaw discusses Union Legal Supporting Group six-month report

Later Hluttaw representatives discussed the Union Legal Supporting Group six-month report.

In his discussion U Win Win Wun said the ministry stated reports that some ministries were weak and some while some were in connecting and working with the Group in assessing and reviewing the complaints received. Therefore, in future reports names of ministries, state/region governments, departments and organizations that are weak in cooperation should be mentioned suggested U Win Win.

The report was also discussed by U Win Myint Oo @ U Nay Myo of Nyangshwe constituency, U Nyan Lin of Swaybeck constituency and U Kan Oo of Salin constituency.

Hluttaw discusses national plan annual report for FY 2017-2018 and report (13/2018)

As a final agenda of the day FY 2017-2018 National Plan Annual Report sent by the Union Government and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee Report (13/2018) on the finding and comments on the Annual Report were discussed by Daw Naw Chris Tun @ Dr. Aung Kar Moe of Kayin State constituency 7, U Wai Sein Aung of Rakhyine State constituency 1, U Zaw Hein of Taninthayi Region constituency 7, U Thant Zin Hun of Dekhamathiri constituency, U Zon Hie Hian of Chin State constituency 4, Daw Cho Cho of Ottwin constituency, U Hwei Tin of Chin State constituency 11, U Khin Cho of Hlaingbywe constituency, U Khin Myo Win of Taninthayi Region constituency 12, Dr. Khan Win Thaung of Kachin State constituency 11, U Tun Tun Oo of Mandalay Region constituency 2, U Thun Soe @ Than Soe (Economic) of Yangon Region constituency 4, Daw Aye Mya Mya Moe of Kyaiktiyo constituency and U Aung Myo Latt of Mandalay Region constituency 3.

The eleventh-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s tenth regular session will be held on 21 December it is learnt. —Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant (MNA)

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker receives EU/IDEA representative, party

PYIDAUNGSU Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Public Accounts Committee Chairman U Tun Tun Hein received Dr. Johann Hesse of European Union (EU) Delegation in Myanmar and party at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw D Block first floor meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting matters relating to EU and International IDEA’s support and implementation process on Parliament's Oversight for Better Service Delivery and implementation were discussed.

Present at the meeting were Joint Public Accounts Committee Deputy Chairmen U Aung Min and U Saw Than Hut, committee members and advisors, International IDEA Myanmar representative Mr. Mark MacDowell, JPAC Support Team members and officials from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.—MNA

Photo: MNA
VP U Myint Swe attends 2018 International Migrants Day ceremony

Vice President U Myint Swe delivered an opening address at the 2018 International Migrants Day ceremony at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II (MICC- II) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The event was attended by Union Ministers U Kyaw Tint Swe, Dr. Pe Myint, U Thein Swe, Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, Dr. Myint Htwe and Dr. Win Myat Aye, Deputy Ministers Maj-Gen Than Htut, and U Kyaw Myo, MPs from the Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, ambassadors and diplomats from embassies in Myanmar, permanent secretaries, UN officials, representatives from INGOs, NGOs and invited guests.

In his opening speech, Vice President U Myint Swe said that the purpose of marking this event was to raise public awareness on the experiences faced by Myanmar migrant workers, safeguarding their rights, and measurements being taken by the Union Government and its associate partners in order to safeguard the rights and social wellbeing of migrant workers, and future schemes going forward.

The UN General Assembly declared December 18 to be International Migrants Day in 2000, and it has been seven years since Myanmar has been marking this event, said the Vice President.

The Vice President said that migration throughout the world have increased across the globe on account of differences between economic development and population growth in many countries, employment opportunities, labour workforce, wages of inequality, occurrence of natural disasters, man-made conflicts, socio-economic crisis, and development news, having easy access to communication and transportation technologies.

According to the UN, it is estimated that one out of seven people in the world today are international migrants.

According to the 2014 population census, approximately two million workers from Myanmar are employed in foreign countries although Myanmar has vast potential to achieve economic development. According to the 2017 World Bank report, the remittance amount of Myanmar migrant workers amounted to US$ 35 million in 2016 and US$ 700 million in 2017.

The Vice President said we can observe that the number of international migrants is on the rise due to the mechanisms of globalization, and that they can contribute to the socioeconomic and human resource development in their country of origin and their host country. In many countries, migrant workers enjoy fundamental rights and services with low standards while facing threats, bullying, violence, discrimination, lack of due respect and dignity.

As for the migrant workers, endeavours are needed to accumulate relevant information and costing while learning required skills for the workplace, basic language skills, their culture and traditions before their departure. Or else, they might happen to encounter many hardships and difficulties, said the Vice President.

Although the process on migration might be harsh, it can be beneficial to the whole community if the relevant organizations could manage with humanitarian spirits and systematic approaches, and which can help poverty-alleviation and joblessness. Moreover, the remittances can increase the inflows of foreign currency, accumulation skills and capital investment, making creativity, embarking on a new venture and commitment to community.

Cooperation and systematic arrangement are also needed to have a safe migration. In doing so, effective results could be come out through cooperation among all ministries, respective regional governments, international organizations and partnership organizations.

The United Nations has adopted the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this regard, Myanmar has carried out the inclusive frameworks of the Sustainable Development Plan MSDP in cooperation with ministries, partnership and organizations. Myanmar signed the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers at 31st ASEAN Summit held in Philippines. Discussion on this issue had been made at the ASEAN meetings in Singapore and the progress in 2019 could be appraised.

Regarding the international migration, the intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration has been in Morocco from 10-11 December, 2018. Myanmar has participated in the implementation process of the conference together with other countries.

As for the Minister of Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe delivered addresses on the 2018 International Migrants Day.

Next, International Organization on Migration (IOM) Chief of Mission Mr. Akio 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 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 attendees viewed the documentary photo of activities on migrant workers, displayed books and magazines.—MNA (Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)
Vice President U Henry Van Thio attends Christmas dinner

VICE President U Henry Van Thio attended a Christmas dinner at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The ceremony was held by the Federation of Myanmar Catholic Bishops, the Myanmar Council of Churches, the Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance (MECA), the Myanmar Christian Propagation Cooperative Federation and it was attended by Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U’ Thun Tun Hein and wife Dr. Sein Sein Thein, Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U’ Aye Tha Aung, Union ministers and their wives, the Union Attorney-General, deputy ministers, bishops, representatives of Christian churches and invited guests.

At the ceremony, Major Nay Lin Tin, member of the Myanmar Council Churches, said prayers. Afterwards, Mahn John Hsane Hgyi of the Federation of Myanmar Catholic Bishops and Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko extended Christmas greetings.

Rev. Dr. Aye Min, Chairman of the Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance (MECA) sent out good wishes to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, leaders of the country and the people.

Afterwards, General Secretaries of the Christian federations Rev. Dr. Maurice Hlyan Nan, Dr. Yaw Han, and Maurice Nyunt Wai read the bible.


Next, Rev. U Ohn Mying and attendees sang psalms, followed by prayer said by Steven Than Myint Oo, Chairman of the Myanmar Council of Churches.

While the attendees enjoyed dinner, vocalists Phyu Phyu Kyaw Thein, Jesse, Sayar San Pi, Sa Lukar and Mai Kyi Kyi Win sang songs of thanks and psalms. — MNA

(Translated by JT)

Bangladesh Ambassador visits Sittway

BANGLADESH Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Manjurel Karim Khan Chowdhury and party arrived in Sittway, Rakhine State yesterday morning and met separately with Dhamma Thukha Monastery Sayadaw, Rakhine State Chief Minister and State Hluttaw Speaker.

During the meeting with Dhamma Thukha Monastery, Sayadaw Agga Maha Gandha Vasaka Panita Bhaddanta Thawma, the Ambassador asked about religious matter and the Sayadaw explained about Bhaddanta-samādhi (or four cardinal virtues or sublime state of mind) — loving kindness or benevolence (metta), compassion (karuna), empathetic joy (mudita) and equanimity (upekkha).

Next the Ambassador and party met with Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu in Rakhine State government office guest hall and Rakhine State Hluttaw Speaker U San Kyaw Hla in Rakhine State Hluttaw Building guest hall at 11 a.m. and twelve noon respectively.

In the meetings matters relating to cooperating for more development in trade and economic matters in the border regions and cooperating to successfully conduct the repatriation of returnees to Rakhine State were discussed and views exchanged.

Later in the afternoon, the Ambassador and party visited a Cyclone Shelter in Chaung Nwe Min Gan Village, Sittway that was constructed with donation from Bangladesh Government. — Mawsi, Ko Min

(Translated by Zaw Min)
Senior General, wife and family offer ‘soon’ to Sanghas, novices, nuns

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and family offered ‘soon’ (day meal) to Sanghas, novices and Thilashins yesterday. The Sanghas, novices and Thilashins were sitting in the 31st Thamaray Kyaw examinations that were held at the Tatmadaw Dhammayone, Shin Samanes Dhammayone and Mingala Byuha Dhammayone examination centers in Shwedagon Pagoda from 17 to 19 December.

At first, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and party gave encouragement to the Sanghas, Novices and Thilashins sitting for the examinations.

Next they offered ‘soon’ to Sanghas led by Dwi pitakadhara Pali Paragu Bhaddanta Wazya Pani Linkara Vimansa.

Afterwards they offered ‘soon’ to Sanghas, Novices and Thilashins sitting for the examinations according to news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. — MNA

MOI & MOHS discuss promoting sports

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun received Deputy Minister for Health and Sports, Dr. Mya Lay Sein, at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. They discussed disseminating general knowledge on sports and promoting interest in sports among the public, invoking widespread public interest in State and Regional-level sports competitions, and for networking local media with the International Olympic Committee to promote the sports media role in the country. — MNA

Union Election Commission talks on new electoral roll compilation software

The Union Election Commission (UEC) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) held a meeting on nationwide voter list update launch and planning at the UEC office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Attending the meeting were UEC Chairman U Hla Thein, UEC members U Aung Myint, U Soe Yu, U Hla Tint, U Myint Naing, and U Tha Htaw, officials from the UEC office, and state and region election sub commissions, focal persons for voter list compilations, and IFES officials.

The UEC Chairman delivered remarks at the meeting. He said the UEC transitioned from compiling voter lists by hand to an electronic system in 2015. He said the first software used has a lot of weaknesses but the 2020 general elections must be conducted based on a similar software. He said the election sub commissions throughout the country were asked to submit the strengths and weaknesses of the software and a new software is currently under development.

The UEC Chairman said Chapter 3 of the unpublished Strategic Plan 2019-2022 includes setting up a comprehensive and legitimate voter list compilation sector. He said suggestions made during this meeting will be gathered into a guidebook for compiling voter lists. He said the data input system outlined in the guidebook will be taught to election commission officials and IT professionals in States and Regions from 9 to 11 January next year. The coordination meeting will continue today. — MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives French ambassador

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received French Ambassador H.E. Mr. Christian Lechervy at Zeyathiri Beikman in Yangon yesterday. The Sanghas, novices and Thilashins were sitting in the 31st Thamaray Kyaw examinations according to news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

(Translated by Zaw Min)
Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint inspects ‘All Who Can Read Should Read’ campaign preparation

YESTERDAY afternoon Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint inspected preparations made for the successful holding of “All Who Can Read Should Read” campaign that is scheduled to be held at Myanmar International Convention Centre-II (MICC-II), Nay Pyi Taw from 20 to 21 December.

First Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint inspected the books on display in the mobile library vehicles that will be exhibited. Next the Union Minister inspected the exhibits in the exhibition, preparation made for the opening ceremony, books on display, meeting rooms and arrangements made for luncheon and provided guidance where necessary.

The campaign will be held for two days under a theme of “All participate and help for all who can read reads” with an aim of encouraging and developing the good practice and habit for all in Myanmar who can read to read.

“All Who Can Read Should Read” campaign will include discussions and paper readings and interested persons are invited.

— MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

ASEAN Secretary-General’s office, Union government discuss ASEAN cooperation in returnee repatriation

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye and ASEAN Secretary-General Mr. Lim Jock Hoi, center, pose for a documentary photo with attendees of a high-level meeting on ASEAN cooperation.

FROM PAGE-1

The Union Minister also said this undertaking would support the implementation of the agreements between Myanmar and Bangladesh. He said it is an important collaboration for not only countries in the region but also for the international community because it would be an example of cooperation with ASEAN countries.

Secretary-General of ASEAN Mr. Lim Jock Hoi also delivered his remarks and said he was very glad for the trust placed on ASEAN by the Myanmar government. He said needs assessments based on the ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) Guidelines would be conducted in accordance with the host country’s rules and regulations, prioritized processes, and protocols.

Next, Executive Director of AHA Centre, Ms. Adelina Kamel, explained about the duties of the needs assessment team and the assistant director from the ASEAN Secretary-General’s office explained on ASEAN ERAT’s local training program. Attendees gave advice and discussed based on the explanations given.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Thu, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung, representatives from Rakhine State Government and officials. — MNA (Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Two villagers attacked by unidentified men

Two villagers from Kywintaung (Middle) Village in Maungtaw Township were attacked by unidentified men while fishing in a creek on the night of 17 December.

Maung Thar Hla and Saw Tun Oo were abducted from their boat by unidentified men who approached in two boats. However, Maung Thar Hla jumped into the creek and managed to escape, though he suffered five machete wounds. Saw Tun Oo was brought to the bank of the creek where he reported that three men cursed in other languages, while punching and kicking him. The victim then ran across the creek to seek help, where he was picked up by the head of Ahtet Pyuma Village and ten villagers. The unidentified attackers reportedly left the area by boat, heading towards the Naf River. —District IPRD

(Translated by JT)

St. Mary’s Cathedral hosts 5th Asia Interfaith Youth Network Conference

MYANMAR hosted for the first time the Asia Interfaith Youth Network Conference in Yangon yesterday morning. The 5th conference of Asia Interfaith Youth Network was held at St. Mary’ Cathedral in Botataung Township, Yangon.

First representatives from Asia Interfaith Youth Network sang an interfaith song and Asia and Pacific Interfaith Youth Network presenter Mr. Takashi Hashimoto delivered a message of greeting.

Next, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko delivered a speech saying the conference was jointly organized by Asia Pacific Interfaith Youth Networks, ACRP Seoul Peace Education Centre (SPEC) and United States New York based United Nations recognized RFP (Religion for Peace) International.

It is with honor and much happiness to learn that RFP International aims to cooperate and work towards peace process for all, transform and terminate conflicts among different religions in the countries of the world, develop united and just social structures and to protect the world.

Today’s conference is held together with interfaith religious leaders, project regions of Asia Pacific Interfaith Youth Network and interfaith youths in Asian countries such as Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

RFP International occasionally conduct interfaith youth network conferences continuously in Myanmar as well as Asian countries and is believed to establish friendship, understanding, unity among youths of different religions that will successfully implement world peace said the Union Minister.

Next, attendees including RFP Asia Senior Advisor Rev. Masamichi Kamiya and U Aye Lwin of RFP Myanmar address the meeting.

The conference was then conducted under the theme of interfaith cooperation participating in climate change movement. The conference will be held until 20 December it is learnt. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)
Additional statistical bulletin on drug seizures, acting on information

1. In order to prevent and eradicate the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the Office of the President has formed the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department on 26 June 2018 to systematically accept and respond to reports on drug abuses and other related cases from the general public.

2. With orders from the Office of the President, the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department relayed information on reports on drug-related offenses up to 15 December 2018 to the Ministry of Home Affairs to take action, as displayed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Nature of report</th>
<th>Details on seizure and legal action taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Information received of Daw Si Ma from Kyauk Mhaw Village, Hlaingtaung Township, Sagaing Region, selling illegal drugs.</td>
<td>On 11-12-2018, police searched Daw Si Ma’s (a) Daw Hla Yin’s house in Kyauk Mhaw Village, Hlaingtaung Township. Police discovered Daw Si Ma’s (a) Daw Hla Yin, 58, together with two of his relatives’ houses, and 250,000 stimulant tablets. A case has been opened with MaMaSa (Hlaingtaung MaYa/T) 45/2018 under Section 19-A of the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Information received of MaSha from Shwebonetha Ward, Bokpyin Township, Tanintharyi Region, selling illegal drugs.</td>
<td>On 9-12-2018, police searched MaSha’s house in Shwebonetha Ward, Bokpyin Township. Police discovered MaSha’s arrested together with two of his relatives’ houses, and 800,000 stimulant tablets. A case has been opened with MaMaSa (Bokpyin MaYa/T) 45/2018 under Section 19-A/20-A of the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Information received of Thein Zaw Win from Wine Wine Lay Restaurant in 10th street, Oakkyuttan (10) Ward, Toungoo Township,Bagu Region, selling illegal drugs.</td>
<td>On 11-12-2018, police searched at Wine Wine Lay Restaurant where Thein Zaw Win lives in 10th street, Oakkyuttan 10 Ward, Toungoo Township. Police discovered Thein Zaw Win, 45, together with two of his relatives’ houses, and 250,000 stimulant tablets. A case has been opened with MaMaSa (Bokpyin MaYa/T) 45/2018 under Section 19-A/20-A of the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Information received of Hein Lin (a) Kyaw Moe living in Myodaw Newspaper Staff Housing, Thayettaw (North) Ward, Kyimyindaing Township, Yangon Region, selling illegal drugs.</td>
<td>On 14-12-2018, police searched Hein Lin’s (a) Kyaw Moe’s house in Myodaw Newspaper Staff Housing, Thayettaw (North) Ward, Kyimyindaing Township. Police discovered Hein Lin (a) Kyaw Moe, 45, and Aung Naing Win (a) Aungyee, 31, living in the same ward and Khin Aung, 48, Swen Htet Hein, 50, together with two of their relatives’ houses, and 1,600,000 stimulant tablets. A case has been opened with MaMaSa (Kyimyindaing MaYa/T) 31/2018 under Section 19-A/20-A/21 of the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Information received of selling illegal drugs on the hill in Group (10), Ward 4, Kothaik Village, Thanlwin Township, Tanintharyi Region.</td>
<td>So far 28 cases have been opened as of last week, 25 men and 3 women have been arrested, together with heroin and stimulant tablets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Out of the information sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs, so far 435 cases have been opened as of 15-12-2018, and 564 men and 109 women have been arrested with seizures of 5,594,37 g of heroin, 25,01 g of ICE, 38,569 g of opium, 329.6 g of low-quality opium, 12,263.28 g of opium powder, 7,273.99 g of speciosa, 198,683 stimulant tablets, 370.1 3 g of marijuana, 0.1 liters of opium tincture, 227.4 g of opium blocks, 60 g of poppy seeds, 1.65 g of crushed stimulant tablet powder, 0.001 g of crushed ecstasy powder, 13 firearms, 194 different bullets, and 1 grenade. Efforts for fighting the drug trafficking has been stepped up and the ministry will report on further exposed cases.

4. In addition to the investigations and arrests conducted on drug-related complaints mentioned above, the Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police Force have also carried out separate investigations on drug complaints, searches and arrests at border gates, and searches of vehicles acting upon given information.

During the previous week, multiple arrests were made in the border regions and joint-surveillance gates. On the road of Hopin-Lonelone-Nayunghin Village, Hopin Township, Kachin State, a Hilux Surf car was stopped for investigation then four men from the car ran away and 5,720 g of heroin, 666,900 stimulant tablets and 14,370 g of opium blocks were discovered from the car. In Ward 1, Myawady Township, Kayin State, one man was arrested with 5,000 stimulant tablets. At Gold Power Car Gate, Mansu highway bus terminal in Lashio Township, Shan State, 2,400 stimulant tablets were discovered from a paper carton box sent to Monywa without the passenger. In Wonkyaut Village, Namhsan Township, one man was arrested with 2,475 stimulant tablets. In Aungchantha Ward, Huhseng Township, one woman was arrested with 4,295 stimulant tablets. In Yadan Ward, Shwemyaung Township, two men were arrested with 1,010 stimulant tablets. In Naunggarin Ward, Mgonzong Township, one man was arrested with 1,120 stimulant tablets. At 144/3 milepost, near Lweiwonotoke Village, Hopong Township, cars were stopped for investigation then one woman from Mongsu-Taunggyi Express car was arrested with 2,640 g of heroin. In Katpakauk Village, Maungtaung Township, Kakhin State, 292.5 stimulant tablets were discovered from a bag buried at water diversion canal of a shrimp lake. At Yachayngyiin Fort, Sithray Township, one three wheel motorcycle was stopped for investigation then two men were arrested with 1,300,000 stimulant tablets and one three wheel motorcycle. In Aungkhone Village, Lew Lim Township, Nay Pyi Taw, a stopped Toyota Landcruiser car and motorcycle were searched for investigation then 2,000 stimulant tablets were confiscated from three men and one woman. Near Nangmyakine Village, Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, on the road of Shwebo-Myihtkyina road, one Toyota VOXY car was stopped for investigation then two men were arrested with 114,000 stimulant tablets, 4,410 g of heroin and one car: On the road of Baryunathakyaung road, Tatkhate Ward, Myeik Township, Tanintharyi Region, one motorcycle was stopped for investigation then one woman was arrested with 1,300,000 stimulant tablets and one motorcycle. In Watwon Village, Pyin Oo Lwin Township, Mandalay Region, one man and one woman were arrested with 1,200 stimulant tablets and one motorcycle. On the road to Peik Chin Myaung Cave, one motorcycle was stopped for investigation then two men were arrested with 380 stimulant tablets and one motorcycle. Further investigation led to search in a house in Nyaungthok (South) Village, Nwakho Township, 3,177 stimulant tablets were discovered from the house. In Ward 1, Tagaung Township, one man and one woman were arrested with 1,985 stimulant tablets. Near Kan Dau Gyi Gate 1, Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region, one man was arrested with 9,800 stimulant tablets. In No (60) Ward, Laminaw Township, one man was arrested with 9,500 capsules of Tramadol, 70 bottles of Mophine Injection, 1,900 bottles of Diazepam and 45 bottles of Diazepam Injection. In Shweynymtho Street, Shwelinban Village, Hlithathaya Township, one motorcycle was stopped for investigation then one man was arrested with 2,000 stimulant tablets and one motorcycle. In (42) Ward, Dagon Myothit Township (North), police searched at a house and one man and one woman have already fled then 25 g of heroin and 8,010 stimulant tablets were discovered from the house. There have been two seizures of ammunitions. In Bhaungsein Ward, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, two men were arrested with 53 stimulant tablets, one gun and 88 cartridges. In Nowlin Village, Nwakho Township, Shan State, one man was arrested with 2,801 stimulant tablets and two guns. There have been two arrests involving foreigners. Near Holaung Village, Muse Township, Shan State, four stopped six-wheel Dongfeng car were searched then three Chinese citizen men who entered to Myanmar illegally were arrested with 8,304 liters of Hydrochloric Acid, 17,280 liters of Acetone and four cars. At a KTV in Yemyantaung Ward, Mahaungnye Township, 12 men, six women and one Chinese citizen man were arrested with 3.5 g of marihuana, 3,301 g of Ketamine, 0.5 g of ICE, 1 tablet of Ecstasy and one Calfina car. In Hlitha Township, Yangoon Region, at DHL Yangoon Head Office, 900 g of Ketamine were found from two parcels which will send to foreign and further investigation is still in the process.

There have been 217 cases opened between 9-12-2018 and 15-12-2018, and 280 seizures were made of 14,058.011 g of heroin, 25.89 g of ICE, 1 g of opium, 2,524.2 g of speciosa powder, 19,596 g of speciosa, 2,432,066 stimulant tablets, 34.7 g of marijuana, 14,376 g of opium blocks, one tablet of Ecstasy, 903.501 g of Ketamine, 9,500 capsules of Tramadol, 70 bottles of Mophine Injection, 1,900 tablets of Diazepam and 45 bottles of Diazepam Injection. In 8,304 liters of Hydrochloric Acid, 17,280 liters of Acetone, three guns and 88 Cartridges.

5. To seize further drugs and to arrest drug dealers, people are urged to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs, region and state governments and to inform huge cases of drug trafficking and other suspicious cases directly to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President via following contact numbers:

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Email Address</td>
<td><a href="mailto:antinarcotics@presidentoffice.gov.mm">antinarcotics@presidentoffice.gov.mm</a></td>
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**Roundtable Discussions on the Reform Program in connection with Social Security benefits (Part two)**

The Social Security Board caters to people in the 18-59 age group, but goes considerably beyond the age limit to provide as much support as it can.”

**Moderator:** Kindly explain the current difficulties facing the Social Security Board.

**Director-General:** The social security project is implementing the 2012 Social Security Law and that we have a base of challenges. The social security project is aimed at covering the whole of the country. What we have to do is to make many tasks such as an increase in number of hospitals and clinics. On the whole, there are 10 million in the formal sector and 14 million in the informal sector. We are trying to develop infrastructure, but we have some problems. When we encountered budget cut, we have to reduce the costs. The social security board is borne by the funds contributed by the employers and the workers, and therefore, we have two types of contributions. The one is employer's and the other is own budget. Pay and allowances of the officers and staff members are incurred for the government budget, while the other two contributions are borne by the capital funds, current assets, normal expenditures, medical expenses and allowances which are incurred from the contributed budget.

**Minamar** Region and Bago Region asked allocation for the construction of hospitals. For which I am aware of the fact that the responsible persons are still trying to build a clinic at the site, which is not far from the hospital. The ISB persons have been gathered at the industrial zone in providing information to them, however, they usually never enquire in the dreary session back to the workers at the worksite, making in a right position. We asked them to keep in touch to get updated information for better management. The workers are building holding different ID cards from different factories at different times, and carrying out in old procedure, making us difficult to manage contribution funds. The issuance and holding of barcodes can be a mess as it is involved to three persons. The solution is to aim at the information and technology (IT) system and discard the existing paper system. Stepping into the IT system, we need the cooperation of the employers and the trade unions, and therefore, we asked them to assist us. We are trying to build on our ability of the good of the employees and the workers in accordance with the prescribed law and regulations. We always asked and discuss to work together.

**Moderator:** The representative of the employer may kindly explain the relationship among the employers, the workers and the social security board.

**Representative of the Em- ployer:** I am representing the Myanmar Industrial Association, and that I am responsible as Chairman for South Dagon Industrial Zone Management Committee. It is kind of employers association. We would like to share our employers’ views and our voices at an appropriate time while responding with the responsible persons.

The Social Security Board is established on good foundation with considerable vision, is functioning diligently. However, in the eyes of the employees association, the Social Security Board is facing many restrictions while working for the social security of the workers. The ISB is facing many restrictions, and that I have witnessed by myself. Generally speaking, the location of all the clinics should be in an appropriate distance from the accident prone worksites. However, the clinics are located in accordance with the prescribed law and regulations. We always asked and discuss to work together. The ground reality is different from the fact that the accumula- tion funds are to be spent out for many faceted of expenditures under the social security benefit system such as after retirement care, disabled condition care, accidental mishaps, and total retirement cases. We have to study all these expenditures for the workers. There are many necessary expenses that have to be incurred in the extended period. The Social Security Board caters to people in the 18-59 age group, but goes considerably beyond the age limit to provide as much support as it can.”

**OPINION**

**U Win Naing, Representative of Employers**

**Myanmar Daily Weather Report**

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of slight decrease of wind speed in almost regions. It will be about 5 to 6 knots at 50 degrees.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19 December 2018:** Partly cloudy. Light breeze (4 to 8 knots) from South and South-west direction. Temperatures will be in the range of 12°C to 29°C. The air will be slightly humid.

**Ground Truth:** The system for it is not only for workers, but also for their dependents. A lot of roles of the employees association, the Social Security Board is not easy while working for the social security of the workers. The ISB is facing many restrictions, and that I have witnessed by myself. Generally speaking, the location of all the clinics should be in an appropriate distance from the accident prone worksites. However, the clinics are located in accordance with the prescribed law and regulations. We always asked and discuss to work together. The ground reality is different from the fact that the accumulation funds are to be spent out for many faceted of expenditures under the social security benefit system such as after retirement care, disabled condition care, accidental mishaps, and total retirement cases. We have to study all these expenditures for the workers. There are many necessary expenses that have to be incurred in the extended period. The Social Security Board caters to people in the 18-59 age group, but goes considerably beyond the age limit to provide as much support as it can.”

**EARTHQUIKED NEWS**

A slight earthquake of magnitude 3.2 (Escale Scale with its epicentre inside Myanmar tabulated at 3.1 units west-southwest of Chaukhi, latitude 23.68° N, longitude 94.73° E), 48 kilometers about 240 southwest of Nauk U earthquake observatory was recorded at 09:50 UTC (00:50) on 19 December 2018.

**SPECIAL REPORTS AND INQUIRIES**

We welcome all reports and inquiries on the Social Security benefit system and how they can be improved. We are open to any feedback and suggestions from the public and the staff. We are always ready to serve and support the workers and their families.

**Call**

Thin Thin May, 09251023555

09974424848

**Tranlated by UMT (Aikon)**
Yangon circular railway upgrade to be complete by end of 2019

THE project to upgrade the Yangon circular railway is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2019, said U Tun Aung Thin, the general manager of the Myanmar Railways (Lower Myanmar).

He made the remark at a meeting about the project held yesterday at the MR (Lower Myanmar) office. Work on the project is slated to start on 21 December.

The project has been divided into two parts. The Shwetaung Company will upgrade the eastern part of Yangon railway, while work on the western part will be carried out by A1 Company.

The western part from Insein to Kyimyindaing railway stations, spanning 5.5 miles, and the eastern part from Danyingon to Payaut-seikgon, spanning 7.25 miles, will be upgraded simultaneously.

“While work is ongoing, trains travelling upstream and downstream will run on a singletrack railway, while the other track will be upgraded. We will try not to reduce the number of trains by a great extent. The Hledan Thirmyaing and the Thamine Myothit stations will be temporarily opened during the project’s term. Work on that section will be finished within 4 months,” said U Zaw Lwin, the divisional traffic manager for the No.7 division of MR.

“When the project is in progress between the Danyingon and Payaut-seikgon stops, the 3.5-mile Danyingon-Kyaik-kale section will be upgraded, while one track will be kept open for train services. The railways will operate trains between the Kyik-kalae and Insein stations. Work on that part will take 4 months to complete,” he said.

“When the 3.75-mile Kyik-kalae-Payaut-seikgon railway section is upgraded, both tracks will be closed. That phase of the project will take 6 months,” he added.

Myanma Railways will try to ensure adequate travel services during rush hour so that passengers do not face any inconvenience.

“This will pose some challenges. But, we will make sure not to reduce the number of trains during rush hour,” said U Tun Aung Thin, the general manager of MR (Lower Myanmar).

“As services will be temporarily halted on the Kyaikkalae-Payaut-seikgon section, MR is discussing ways to accommodate passengers from Mingladon market, Mingladon, Waibargi, and Oakkalapa railway stations with the Yangon Region’s Transport Authority. Over 2,400 passengers travel from those stations to Yangon every day. There are about 600 passengers traveling to Danyingon,” said U Zaw Lwin.

“We will have to provide more routes to facilitate the passengers,” said U Hla Aung, the joint secretary of the YRTA.

Prior to the start of the project, the number of commuters using the Yangon circular railway and suburban railway totalled 88,168 per day on average.

In September, while the project work was on, there were 76,570 passengers on average per day. The month of October saw 74,284 passengers. A total of 8,015 foreign passengers used the services in November. Train schedules will be notified at the respective stations, through vinyl hangings and pamphlets. The MR is providing services to about 80,000 commuters daily.

—Nyein Nyein  (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

ROK donates 650 tons of rice for natural disaster victims in Bago

THE Republic of Korea (ROK) donated 650 tons of rice for victims of natural disaster in the Bago region during a ceremony in the Taw Win Han Thar hall of the Bago region’s government office on 18 December, under the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APRERR) Programme 3.

The Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein delivered a speech at the ceremony. The Agricultural Department’s (Head office) Deputy Director General, U Aye Ko Ko, and General Manager of the APRERR secretariat, Mr. Chanpithya Shimpalee, also spoke at the event. The Representative for the ROK Embassy, Mr. Jung Yong Soo and General Manager of APRERR Secretariat, Mr. Chanpithya Shimpalee, made donation to Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein. PHOTO: MNA

Yung Soo made the donation to the Bago region’s government office. In turn, U Win Thein presented them with a certificate of honor and souvenirs.

The ceremony was also attended by Bago region ministers, the government secretary and officials, Agricultural Department officials, and personnel from regional agencies.

A total of 16,250 donated rice bags will be distributed among the townships of the region. As a donation, 3,471 bags will be handed to Thyang, 6,173 bags to Ye-dashe, 272 bags to Kyaukkyi, 338 bags to Phyu, 182 bags to Ottwin, 18 bags to Htantabin, 1,850 bags to Bago, 326 bags to Thanpyin, 977 bags to Kawma, 236 bags to Wae, 745 bags to Nyaunglbin, 39 bags to Daik U, and 1,201 bags to Shwe-egyin township. —Tin Soe (Bago)  (Translated by Hay Mar)
Myanmar Investment Commission discusses post-permit activities

The Myanmar Investment Commission-MIC held its meeting 21/2018 at the meeting room of the commission in Yangon yesterday.

The post-permit activities of MIC-permitted businesses were discussed in the meeting. The meeting was attended by U Thaung Tun, Chairman of Myanmar Investment Commission, Dr. Than Myint, Vice Chairman of MIC and 11 members.—MNA

MADB, MI, Sompo to conduct trials for weather index-based crop insurance

WITH the approval of the Ministry of Planning and Finance, the Myanmar Agriculture Development Bank, Myanmar Insurance, and Sompo Japan Nipponkoa Insurance Inc. yesterday signed an agreement to test a weather index-based crop insurance scheme in Myanmar to protect farmers from losses due to adverse weather.

The insurance product designed by Sompo Japan was transferred to MI after Dr. Sandar Oo, the managing director of MI, U Min Thu, the managing director of MADB, and Mr. Keiji Okada, a representative from Sompo Japan, signed an agreement at the Myanmar Insurance office.

“Farmers have to take loans from MADB to cultivate crops. It is hard for them to pay off their loans if their crops are damaged due to erratic weather conditions, which lands them in a debt trap. This being so, the weather index-based crop insurance scheme will be implemented in Shwebo Township of Sagaing Region and Pyay Township of Bago Region.

The weather index-based crop insurance will be available for purchase between February and April. Farmers will be able to buy the insurance when they get loans,” she said.

THE event ended after a commemorative photo session.—Myint Maung Soe/ Ko Khant ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Thrice-weekly Hangzhou-Yangon Flights launches

YANGON International Airport (YIA), Myanmar’s largest and busiest airport, announced yesterday that it has begun flying travellers directly from Hangzhou to Yangon, China, thrice a week via Sichuan Airlines.

The new route, which launched yesterday, is Sichuan Airlines’ second connection between Yangon and China, following the launch of the Yangon-Xi’an route in November this year. Sichuan Airlines will use 189-seat A329 aircraft for the thrice-weekly flights.

The announcement comes against a backdrop of rising visitor traffic from mainland China, thanks to the Myanmar government’s new visa-on-arrival service. It is expected to boost tourism for both Yangon, Myanmar’s commercial capital, and Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang province and southern terminus of the ancient Grand Canal waterway.—MNA ■

Sichuan Airlines launches its new route from Hangzhou to Yangon at Yangon International Airport. PHOTO: SUPPLIED
Xi warns no one can ‘dictate’ China’s path, 40 years on from reforms

BEIJING (China) — President Xi Jinping warned on Tuesday that no one can “dictate” China’s economic development path as the Communist Party marked 40 years of its historic “reform and opening up” policy amid a stern challenge from the United States.

In a speech at the grandiose Great Hall of the People, Xi vowed to press ahead with economic reforms but made clear that Beijing will not deviate from its one-party system or take orders from any other country.

“The great banner of socialism has always been flying high over the Chinese land,” Xi told the party faithful.

“The leadership of the Communist Party of China is the most essential feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the greatest advantage of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics,” he said.

The commemoration of the reforms enacted under late paramount leader Deng Xiaoping on 18 December, 1978, came as China is locked in diplomatic spats and a bruising trade war with the United States.

The rivals have agreed to a 90-day truce as they seek to negotiate a solution, with the United States seeking a reduction in its massive trade deficit as well as deeper reforms in China to stop the alleged theft of intellectual property.

Without directly referring to the United States, Xi said China “poses no threat” to any country but warned that it would not be pushed around.

“No one is in a position to dictate to the Chinese people what should or should not be done,” Xi said.

“We must resolutely reform what should and can be changed, we must resolutely not reform what shouldn’t and can’t be changed.”

China’s President Xi Jinping applauds during a celebration meeting marking the 40th anniversary of China’s “reform and opening up” policy at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on 18 December, 2018.

PHOTO: XINHUA

While Xi promised more reforms, he did not offer any specifics. The United States and Europe have long complained of lingering obstacles to fully entering China’s massive market while Chinese companies enjoy the benefits of open Western economies abroad.

The reforms pulled hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and turned China into the world’s second biggest economy.

But it is currently facing a debt mountain and a slowing economy, which grew by 6.9 per cent last year and is expected by the government to slow to around 6.5 per cent this year.

‘One-party dictatorship’

Deng’s reforms broke with the chaotic policies of his predecessor, Chairman Mao Zedong.

Tuesday’s ceremony included the awarding of medals to more than 100 individuals whom the party recognized as key contributors to the country’s development, from people involved in rural reform and poverty alleviation to China’s richest man, Alibaba founder Jack Ma, and retired NBA legend Yao Ming.

China now boasts the most dollar billionaires in the world with 620, according to Shanghai-based magazine publisher Hurun Report.

But the economic transformation has not brought changes to the Communist Party-controlled political system, with authorities harshly cracking down on the Tiananmen protests in 1989 and activists complaining of a deterioration of human rights in recent years.

“Reform and opening up let the Communist Party maintain its dictatorship and let it keep its rule from collapsing after the Cold War and survive,” Beijing-based political analyst Wu Qing told AFP.

“I think China now is state capitalism under a one-party dictatorship, or party-run capitalism,” he said.

Second reform?

Wu said the trade war could be a chance for China to enact more changes.

“If the Communist Party is smart enough, it may transform it into the starting point of a second reform and opening up and change the role of the party and the state,” Wu said.

When the party enacted the reforms under Deng, China was still suffering from famine and was emerging from the Cultural Revolution, a period of intense social and political upheaval launched by Mao.

This new “revolution” started in the countryside, where authorities began to de-collectivise land and dismantle communes, but it quickly spread to cities.

Wary of an opposing power base in economically powerful Shanghai, Deng chose the extreme south of the country as the guinea pig for his reforms.

Southern cities including Shenzhen, which borders Hong Kong and was still a fishing village, were designated China’s first Special Economic Zones that became powerhouses and models for the rest of the country.

Shenzhen has become a global technological hub, with China’s internet giant Tencent and telecom titan Huawei choosing the city for their headquarters.

The poverty rate among the rural population dropped to 3.1 per cent last year from 97.5 per cent 40 years ago.

—AFP

Embattled Australia PM eyes tax cuts before election

SYDNEY, (Australia) — Flattening the polls and facing a rout in the May general election, Australia’s Prime Minister Scott Morrison looked to shore up support on Tuesday, teasing AUS$9 billion worth of tax cuts.

“We support lower taxes,” said treasurer and deputy prime minister Josh Frydenberg, touting “important” tax decisions ahead. A mid-year budget released on Monday showed the government running a smaller deficit than expected and possible surplus next year.

That amounts to a much-needed AUS$9.25 billion (US$6.7 billion) election war chest for Morrison.

His conservative coalition is ten points back in the polls and facing a thumping loss to centre-left Labour, according to a recent Newspoll survey. Hoping for a little Christmas cheer to improve his sagging fortunes, Morrison looks almost certain to dole out the goodies to sceptical voters.

The government did not spell out what the tax cuts could be, but they were budgeted for in the fine print of the plan under “decisions taken but not yet announced.”

“This is tax cuts (or possibly spending measures) due to be announced between now and next year’s election,” said Andrew Hanlan, an economist with Westpac.

Experts said the smaller deficit was thanks to higher tax revenues stemming from stronger growth and higher commodity prices.

Australia’s economy has been growing steadily for decades, but has started to slow amid trade disputes between China and the United States and domestic pressures.

An election date has not yet been set, but it is widely expected by May next year.—AFP

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (29/2018)

1. Open tender is invited for supply of the following services in United States Dollars.

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<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Tender No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>(a)</td>
<td>MOGE-C001/2018</td>
<td>Provision of 3D Seismic Data Acquisition Services for Onshore Block RSF-1</td>
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2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Services with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.myoe.com.mm) as from 19 December, 2018. Tender forms will not be sold.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the Technical Specifications with Original Bid and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 14:00 pm on 15 January, 2019.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time – 15-1-2019, 14:00 pm

Ph No. + 95 67 – 3411206
NGOs launch legal action against France over climate change

PARIS (France) — A group of NGOs including Greenpeace and Oxfam have launched a lawsuit against the French state, accusing it of taking insufficient action to tackle climate change.

It comes after similar action was launched by farmers in Germany, and the Dutch government lost a landmark case brought by an environmental rights group on cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

“The failure of the state in the fight against climate change reflects a lack of respect in its obligation to protect the environment and the health and security of the population,” the NGOs said in a joint statement on Monday.

The French government will have two months to respond to the legal action. “We are seeking redress for damages and asking the state to act straight away at all levels,” Greenpeace campaigner Laura Monnier said.

The NGOs allege that France, where greenhouse gas emissions rose again in 2015, has not met its short-term climate objectives. President Emmanuel Macron, who has attempted to paint himself as a leader in fighting climate change since his election last year, recently backed down on anti-pollution fuel tax hikes in the face of country-wide “yellow vest” protests. In October, the Dutch government lost an appeal against a ruling which ordered it to slash greenhouse gases by at least 25 percent by 2020.

Environmental rights group Urgenda fought the successful case on behalf of some 900 Dutch citizens who accused the Netherlands of doing too little to prevent dangerous climate change. In Germany, dismayed farmers who have suffered damage to their crops and dairy farms as a result of record drought have also filed a lawsuit, with the aid of Greenpeace, against Berlin to force action. Last month the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) said in a report that warming is on track toward an unliveable 3C or 4C rise, and avoiding global chaos will require a major transformation. A deal reached at the UN’s COP24 climate summit earlier this month was criticised for not matching the ambition of the world’s most vulnerable countries.—AFP

EU agrees to cut emissions from new cars by 37 percent by 2030

BRUSSELS (Belgium) — European Union members and the European Parliament on Monday agreed to slash carbon dioxide emissions from new cars by 37.5 per cent by 2030, the European Commission announced.

The announcement comes two days after the end of the COP24 summit in Poland where one of the largest disappointments for countries of all wealth and sizes was the lack of ambition to reduce emissions shown in the final text. Emissions from new vans will have to be 31 per cent lower than in 2021, according to Monday’s agreement. “With this legislation in place, we are setting the right targets and incentives to tackle emissions from the transport sector,” said Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel Arias Canete.

“It will help our industry to embrace innovation towards zero-emission mobility and further strengthen its global leadership in clean vehicles.”

The deal is a compromise between the demands of states like Germany which wanted a cut of 30 per cent and the European Parliament which had wanted a reduction of 40 per cent.

The European federation of transport NGOs, Transport & Environment (T&E), said it was a step in the right direction but not good enough. “Europe is shifting up a gear in the race to produce zero-emission cars.

The new law means by 2030 around a third of new cars will be electric or hydrogen-powered. That’s progress but it’s not fast enough to hit our climate goals,” said Greg Archer, clean vehicles director at T&E.

The automobile industry meanwhile has strongly rallied against the move warning that it could affect jobs.—AFP

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC SHANGHAI VOY. NO. (1847/1848)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC SHANGHAI VOY. NO. (1847/1848) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19-12-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/T.M.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.

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (005 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (005 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19-12-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V MAERSK WIESBADEN VOY. NO. (1827/1828)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MAERSK WIESBADEN VOY. NO. (1827/1828) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19-12-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T/T.M.I.P 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.
GENERAL SANTOS (Philippines) — Philippine boxing legend Manny Pacquiao said he is “stronger and faster” than ever ahead of his world title defence at 40, feeling 25,” Pacquiao said, making clear he’s looking forward to facing American Adrien Broner next month.

“I feel stronger and faster, and by God’s grace I am wiser at 40,” Pacquiao said, adding, “You have not yet seen the best of Manny Pacquiao,” he added.

The Filipino southpaw, 60-7 in as many weight classes, has in as many weight classes, has in as many weight classes, has in as many weight classes, has in as many weight classes, has retired Texas Ranger in “Hell of Leonardo da Vinci, a silk mill incorporating one of his designs is still shuttling some of the finest fabrics made in the late 17th century in Europe. Its looms date back to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, but the jewel at its heart is a machine designed by Renaissance genius Leonardo da Vinci, who died in 1519.

“It’s a museum that is also a working silk mill, featuring 40 looms, an ancient bobbin cabinet, and a warping machine. It is still shuttling some of the finest fabrics made in the late 17th century by Renaissance artist Leonardo da Vinci. The mill is located in Florence, Tuscany, Italy.

Jeff Bridges to be honoured with Cecil B deMille Award at Golden Globes

LOS ANGELES — Veteran actor Jeff Bridges is set to receive the Cecil B deMille honour at the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) has announced.

The Cecil B deMille award is given annually to a talented individual who has made a lasting impact on the world of entertainment.

“The Hollywood Foreign Press Association is delighted to bestow the 2019 Cecil B deMille Award on Jeff Bridges. Bridges’ brilliant body of work across diverse genres has captured the hearts and minds of audiences worldwide for more than six decades. We look forward to celebrating ‘the Dude’ and his remarkable career and philanthropic achievements at the awarding of the Golden Globe Awards,” said HFPA President Meher Tatna.

Bridges’ first Golden Globe nomination came in 1984 for best actor in “Starman”. Seven years later he received his second Golden Globe nomination for his performance in “The Fisher King”, which also starred Robin Williams.

He got another Golden Globe nomination in 2001 for his role in “The Contender”, Rod Lurie’s political thriller, co-starring Gary Oldman and Joan Allen, in which Bridges played the president of the United States.

In 2017, he received another Golden Globe nomination for best supporting actor as a retiring Texas Ranger in “Hell or High Water”, a modern action heist thriller set in West Texas.

Past honourees of Cecil B deMille Award include George Clooney, Robert De Niro, Audrey Hepburn, Harrison Ford, Jodie Foster, Sophia Loren, Sidney Poitier, Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Meryl Streep, Barbra Streisand, Denzel Washington, Robin Williams, and Oprah Winfrey.

Golden Globes award ceremony, which will be hosted by Sandra Oh and Andy Samberg, will take place on 6 January, 2019.—PTI

Da Vinci design jewel still key for Tuscan silk weavers

FLORENCE (Italy) — Five hundred years after the death of Leonardo da Vinci, a silk mill incorporating one of his designs is still shuttling some of the finest fabrics made in the late 17th century in Europe. Its looms date back to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, but the jewel at its heart is a machine designed by Renaissance genius Leonardo da Vinci, who died in 1519.

“It is a warping machine made in the late 17th century according to the maestro’s original design, and we still make passementerie (tassels, cords, trimmings) today using it, silk worker Beatrice Fazzini told AFP.

The polymathy’s device is used to upright the threads before they are placed on the loom, following a technique that has been closely guarded down the centuries. Golden chenille, damask and taffeta with floral or geometric motifs are among the fabrics made here and sold for between 200 euros ($226) and 3,000 euros ($3,500) per metre. The workshop, which since 2010 has belonged to the family of Italian fashion designer Stefano Ricci, manufactures fabrics, lace and ribbons in styles and colours favoured by the historic House of Medici, an Italian banking family and political dynasty. It was during the Medici’s rise to power that silk manufacturing enjoyed a boom along the banks of the Arno River.

Mustard yellow, petrol blue

Fabrics produced by L’Antico Setificio Fiorentino can be found in places of grandeur both home and abroad, from Italy’s palaces and the famous Uffizi Galleries in Florence, to the royal residence in Denmark and the Kremlin in Russia. Pope Francis and opera singers Maria Callas and Andrea Bocelli have also worn garments created on its aged looms.

“It is a museum that is also a factory,” said Brizza Datti, director of the commercial sector: “The hand looms move to the weaver’s rhythm and bear “the imprint of the family to which they belonged in the past,” she said. The designs and fabrics produced down the ages are preserved in the workshop’s historical archives, which can be visited by school children or tourists.”—AFP
Tokyo tech venture’s AI-mounted robot pet LOVOT goes on sale

TOKYO — The Tokyo-based tech venture Groove X on Tuesday unveiled an artificial-intelligence equipped robot pet that can sense people’s emotions and communicate with them.

The doll-like robot named “LOVOT” will be shipped in the autumn of 2019 as a set of “LOVOT” will be available in 2020 and will cost 349,000 yen plus a monthly fee of around 10,000 yen.

The big eye robot, featuring a bevy of sensors, recognizes its owners’ facial expressions and obeys commands, Groove X said.

Weighing 3 kilograms and standing 43 centimetres tall, the mechanical pet has an internal camera and learns the layout of its household so it can move around without crashing into furniture.

The name LOVOT comes from a combination of the words love and robot, as it is designed to be “a new home robot that stirs your instinct to love,” according to the company. Groove X was founded in 2015 by Kaname Hayashi, who was involved in the making of SoftBank Group Corp’s humanoid robot Pepper.

—Kyodo News

IKBZ’s dash cam scheme to provide law enforcement technology

As part of efforts for enforcing traffic rules, IKBZ Insurance announced yesterday that it will provide dash cams to its customers.

The decision to gift dash cams to drivers came after the World Health Organization revealed its survey that Myanmar ranked second in road accidents and deaths in South East Asia.

Myanmar has seen a rise in road fatalities over the previous decade with 4,420 deaths in 2015, up from 1,283 in 2005, as the volume of car traffic has increased considerably.

The dashboard cameras would come to the customers as a new year gift and the cams would bring safety to customers and their families on the roads and prevent accidents due to negligence.

A dash cam can record the situation of the road and significant accidents. —GNLM

Israeli spacecraft gets special passenger before moon journey

The general manager of the Israel Aerospace Industries Opher Doron speaks to the media during a presentation of the space probe due to travel to the moon in early 2019 on 17 December, 2018. PHOTO: AFP

YEHUD (Israel) — Israeli scientists making final preparations to launch the country’s first spacecraft to the moon added a special passenger on Monday that will accompany the journey.

A time capsule of three digital discs containing thousands of files was ceremoniously placed within the space pod by organizers wearing white dust coats at the plant where it is being constructed and tested.

They included drawings by children, pictures of Israeli symbols like the flag, Israeli songs and a booklet written by a Jewish man of his personal account of the Holocaust.

One of the founders of the nonprofit organization behind the launch, SpaceIL, compared the time capsule to prayers written on bits of paper that worshippers stuff into Jerusalem’s Western Wall, one of Judaism’s holiest sites.

“Today we are putting all those dreams on the spaceship like you would take a note and put it in the Kotel, wishing for a bright future,” said Yonatan Winetraub, using the Hebrew word for the Western Wall.

The spacecraft weighing some 585 kilogrammes (1,300 pounds) is expected to be launched in the coming months, though a precise date has not been set. Organizers are hoping for February.

It will be sent via a Falcon 9 rocket from American entrepreneur Elon Musk’s SpaceX firm and will take around a month and a half to arrive.

The launch will be from Cape Canaveral in the United States.

The cost of the project is some $95 million (84 million euros), with private philanthropists providing funding. SpaceX has also partnered with state-owned Israel Aerospace Industries, among the country’s largest defence firms.

Budget of almost $10 mn

Organizers say if successful it will not only be Israel’s first spacecraft to land on the moon, but also the first private one. Israel would be the fourth country to land on the moon.

It is called Beresheet, or Genesis in Hebrew, a name chosen by the public, and resembles a tall, oddly shaped table with round fuel tanks under the top.

It will measure the magnetic field as part of efforts to investigate how the moon was formed. The data will be shared with US space agency NASA.

“I’ve seen hundreds of kids look at the spacecraft and you see in their eyes that they say, ‘Wow, if a small country can do this maybe little old me can do almost anything,’” said Opher Doron, general manager of IAI’s space division.

The project began as part of the Google Lunar XPrize, which in 2010 offered $30 million in awards to encourage scientists and entrepreneurs to come up with relatively low-cost moon missions.

Although the Google prize expired in March without a winner having reached the moon, Israel’s team pledged to push forward.

Asked whether the project had so far gone as planned, SpaceIL co-founder Yariv Bash said “hell no”.

“Back when we got started, we thought it was going to be a two-year-project, the budget would be less than $10 million, and the spacecraft will weigh less than five kilograms,” he said.

“And here we are eight years later with a project with a budget of almost $100 million.” —AFP

Saturn is eating away its icy rings: NASA

WASHINGTON — The United States space agency NASA confirmed that Saturn is quickly losing its rings due to the planet’s magnetic field.

The study published on Monday in the journal Icarus has shown that the iconic rings are being pulled into Saturn by gravity as a dusty rain of ice particles.

The rings of Saturn, a ring system orbiting about the Saturn, consist of countless small particles made almost of water ice with a trace component of rocky material. Their origins remain controversial, but now they are disappearing.

The “ring rain” drains an amount of water that could fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool in half an hour; according to the study’s lead author James O’Donoghue with NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Centre.

The entire ring system will be gone in 300 million years, and taking into account the materials falling into the planet equator, detected by NASA’s Cassini spacecraft, the rings may have less than 100 million years to live.

“This is relatively short, compared to Saturn’s age of over 4 billion years,” said O’Donoghue.

Tiny particles, previously in a balanced position between gravity and their orbital velocity, can get electrically charged by ultraviolet light from the Sun or by plasma cloud from small meteoroid bombardment, which changes the balance dramatically, according to the study.

Then, the ring particles will drop into Saturn's upper atmosphere where they vaporize and the water can chemically react with Saturn's ionosphere. Those reaction led to an increase in the lifespan of electrically charged particles called H3+ ions and those ions, energized by sunlight, can glow in infrared light, according to the study. The NASA team observed the infrared light with Keck telescope in Hawaii.

“We are lucky to be around to see Saturn's ring system, which appears to be in the middle of its lifetime. However, if rings are temporary, perhaps we just missed out on seeing giant ring systems of Jupiter, Uranus and Neptune, which have only thin rings today,” said O’Donoghue. —Xinhua
Manchester United sack Jose Mourinho: club

MANCHESTER (United Kingdom) — Manchester United have sacked manager Jose Mourinho after the club made their worst start to a season in almost 30 years, the Premier League club announced on Tuesday.

The 55-year-old Portuguese’s last match in charge was the 3-1 defeat by league leaders Liverpool on Sunday which left them 19 points behind their opponents.

It is United’s worst start in the league since 1990 and even his ambition of reaching the top four and a Champions League qualification spot is in danger with the club 11 points adrift of those places.

Despite the club having reached the Champions League knockout stages — they face an intimidating last-16 tie with Paris Saint-Germain — a mix of the results, dressing-room discord and criticism of the board’s transfer policy proved potent factors in the decision to dismiss him.

“Manchester United announces that manager Jose Mourinho has left the club with immediate effect,” a club statement said.

“The club would like to thank Jose for his work during his time at Manchester United and to wish him success in the future.

“A new caretaker manager will be appointed until the end of the current season, while the club conducts a thorough recruitment process for a new, full-time manager.” — AFP

Myanmar wins 4 silver, bronze medals in 19th AUG

Myanmar athletes won 4 silver medals in vovinam, chess and soccer competitions, and 4 bronze medals in sepak takraw, karatedo and vovinam competitions during the eleventh day of the 19th ASEAN University Games yesterday.

At Wunna Theikdi Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar bagged third place in the men’s sepak takraw four-member team competition.

Myanmar tied with Malaysia for third place in the women’s karatedo team kumite competition.

In the vovinam competitions, Myanmar’s Kyaw Thu Soe Aung won second place in the men’s single swordplay contest and Wyne Chit scored second in men’s karate 54 kilo combat contest. Myanmar also garnered third places in Male + Female four-member team contest and in the women’s dual display.

Myanmar finished at second place in both the women’s chess contest and the football finals after beating 2-0 by Thailand. Union Minister Dr. Myo Thein Gyi awarded the gold medal to Thailand while Deputy Minister Dr. Mya Lay Sein conferred the silver medal on Myanmar. So far, Myanmar has won 24 gold, 26 silver, and 29 bronze medals.

—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

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Manchester United sack Jose Mourinho: club

Karatedo athletes compete in the dual contest at the 19th ASEAN University Games yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Players in action during basketball match between Indonesia and Thailand at the 19th ASEAN University Games. PHOTO: MNA

Chess player Ma Htet Htet Than Sein (left) from Myanmar plays against Maria L.A.V. Tilman from Timor Leste (right) in a match at the 19th ASEAN University Games yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Myanmar and Thailand football players in action during the 19th ASEAN University Games yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Karatedo athletes compete in the dual contest at the 19th ASEAN University Games yesterday. PHOTO: MNA