State Counsellor talks at length on importance of early childhood care

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivered a speech at the launching ceremony for the Myanmar Early Childhood Care and Development Strategy and a national-level negotiation which were held at the Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Attending the ceremony were Union Ministers, Deputy Ministers, MPs from the Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaws, state and regional ministers for social affairs, high-level department officials, officials from UN affiliated agencies, representatives from INGOs, NGOs, and specially invited guests.

Education as a fill-in for underdeveloped countries

In her address, the State Counsellor said Myanmar’s most precious and important resource was its human resource, and thus, it was important to aim for human development and recognize the value of human resources. She said childcare education should begin in the womb and the first steps to protecting and developing our human resources would be taken if mothers were provided with proper healthcare and taught to understand the importance of ensuring correct development and providing sufficient nutrition in the first 24 months of a child.

The State Counsellor said the healthy development of physical and mental aspects of a child were important, adding that a developing country such as Myanmar was likely to face more obstacles. Rich and developed countries provide full nutritional support and healthcare services to both mother and child, while developing countries do not have the means to fulfill these criteria, said the State Counsellor. She said her administration could not give as much support as they wished to, but the key to resolving this lay in educating mothers to enable them to provide the best future for their children with all resources at their disposal.

Malnutrition in childhood affects adulthood

The State Counsellor said malnutrition could have serious long-term consequences, saying that Myanmar’s athletes could not perform as well as they should have in the recent 19th ASEAN University Games due to lack of a healthy diet in their early childhood. She also said Myanmar’s footballers could not keep up with teams from more developed countries in the second half of the matches not due to lack of perseverance or spirit but childhood malnutrition issues.

SEE PAGE-4
Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw approves motion urging government to raise livelihood of ethnic people

By Aye Aye Thant (MNA)

IN the final agenda of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw’s tenth regular sessions 16th-day meeting held yesterday, the Hluttaw approves a motion urging the Union Government to draw up and implement a plan to raise the livelihood of ethnic nationals living in far off and remote areas.

**Question and Answer session**

The first agenda of the meeting was the question and answer session where the first question was raised by Dr. U Saw Naing from South Okkalapa constituency. He asked if there is a plan to construct a new office building for the township immigration department as the present building is quite old and deteriorated. Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe said the ministry is annually request-
State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s speech

Let us strive collectively for the emergence of a just and free nation — a nation which will guarantee equal rights and equality, a nation which practices a pure ideology.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1 April 2018)

State Counsellor receives Ambassador of Republic of Belarus

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, received H.E. Mr. Vladimir A. Goshin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of Myanmar with residence in Hanoi, at 11:00 am on 19 December 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on matters related to the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation including economic, agricultural and cultural fields between Myanmar and Belarus.

19th ASEAN University Games conclude successfully

THE 19th ASEAN University Games (AUG) came to a close yesterday as Vice President U Myint Swe delivered a speech at the official closing ceremony held at the Wunna Theikdi Indoor Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw.

List of attendees

Attending the closing ceremony were Union Ministers Dr. Aung Thu, U Ohn Win, U Thein Swe, Dr. Myo Thein Gyi and Dr. Myint Htwe, Union Civil Service Board Chairman Dr. Win Thein, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung, ASEAN University Sports Council (AUSC) Chairman Prof. Dato Dr. Hassan Basri bin Awang Mat Dahan, Commander of the Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Myint Maw, Deputy Ministers U Kyi Min, U Win Maw Tun and Dr. Mya Lay Sein, MPs from the Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaws, ambassadors and diplomats from foreign embassies in Myanmar, responsible individuals, sports association leaders and members from the competing countries, chairpersons from judge committees, medical experts, international technical officers, judges and jury members who helped to keep the competitions fair, coaches and athletes from the competing teams, members of the media, donors, and enthusiastic sports fans.

Vice President U Myint Swe delivers the closing speech at the Closing Ceremony of 19th ASEAN University Games in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Entertainment and processional


Next, flagbearers and marching bands led the way into the stadium as the athletes took their positions corresponding to their country’s rank in the English alphabet, while the announcers called out the number of athletes who participated in the different sports categories and the gold medals they have earned.

Speeches from officials

Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Education and Chairman of the 19th AUG Steering Committee, then explained about the closing ceremony and the AUSC Chairman delivered a speech.

Next, Vice President U Myint Swe, in his capacity as patron of the 19th AUG Steering Committee, then explained about each other’s institutions and culture and traditions.

“The AUG has created great friendship among South East Asian countries under the theme of “Youth and Friendship”. During the games, athletes from ASEAN universities demonstrated their sporting skills, and established friendship and unity among themselves. In addition, I believe that they had an opportunity to learn about each other’s institutions and culture and traditions.”

“The AUG has created great opportunities for establishing and strengthening understanding, trust and friendship among South East Asian countries. The scenes of athletes from 11 countries including Myanmar, participating in the games with true sporting spirit will remain forever in our hearts.”

“I would like to conclude by expressing my sincere thanks to distinguished guests from participating countries; international technical officers and juries who carefully assessed the performances of the athletes; responsible personnel who put all possible effort into making this AUG a success; coaches who provided support in different events; athletes who competed as true sportsmen and sportswomen and as good friends; and spectators from all over the country,” said the Vice President and declared that the 19th ASEAN University Games have been successfully concluded.

Final routines

Afterwards, the AUSC Flag was lowered from its podium and Dr. Thein Win, steering committee secretary and Director-General of the Department of Higher Education, handed over the flag to the AUSC Chairman.

The flagbearers, marching band and athletes then exited the stadium in an orderly fashion.

The ceremony successfully concluded after athletes and students from the Department of Fine Arts and National University of Arts and Culture performed to the song ‘Pyin Sone Mo’ (Let’s meet again). — MNA (Translated by Zau Htet Oo)
State Counsellor, authors participate in dinner gathering

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi participated in a dinner gathering with authors at the Tungapuri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

It was attended by Union Ministers U Kyaw Tint Swe, Dr. Pe Myint, Thura U Aung Ko, Dr. Myo Thein Gyi and Dr. Win Myat Aye, and Deputy Ministers U Aung Hla Tun, departmental heads of the Ministry of Information and authors.

At the dinner, the State Counsellor had documentary photos taken together with the authors and greeted them individually.

Afterwards, Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint explained the purpose of the dinner. On behalf of the writers, writer Khin Khin Htoo expressed words of thanks.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and the writers talked about literature openly while enjoying dinner. — MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends the dinner gathering together with the authors at the Tungapuri Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor talks at length on importance of early childhood care

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech at a launching ceremony for the Myanmar Early Childhood Care and Development Strategy in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

FROM PAGE-1

She said everyone in the country knew how important a healthy diet was for children but not many realize the need for healthy brain development.

People in the country would not conclude that a child did not have proper nutrition in their diet if they did not succeed academically; instead they may assume the child was not studying or that their family could not create a conducive learning environment, said the State Counsellor.

She added that malnutrition in the first two years would not allow a child's brain to fully develop and would affect their physical and mental development as well.

She said everyone needed to be involved in early childhood care. It was not enough to just lecture on what should be done; pragmatic methods should be offered as well, she said.

ECCD outreach to remote locations crucial

The State Counsellor said children also needed proper vaccinations in addition to proper nutrition.

Mothers needed to be healthy and free from diseases during pregnancy and before childbirth, and both the parents and the nation should be mindful to ensure that children receive the required vaccinations on time, she said. She expressed her wish for the 5-year 2018-2022 Strategy to be administered equally throughout the country.

The State Counsellor highlighted that there were educational papers, documents and books written in ethnic languages. She explained that this was to give more attention to ethnic children as they usually lived far away from big cities. She said the Union Government was attempting to provide full development opportunities regardless of the place of residence or childbirth.

Myanmar does not have full peace yet and there were still children living in IDP camps throughout the country, said the State Counsellor. She said officials at those camps need to be extra sensitive to the children's needs, since children living in unusual circumstances tend to lose developmental opportunities. She said the government was doing its best to ensure every child in the country had access to all necessary protection, adding the public needed to help too.

Conclusion and formalities

The State Counsellor said looking out for the next generation secures the future of the country. Ensuring the correct development and growth of the children who will take care of the future of the country was extremely important. She concluded by cordially requesting everyone to participate in this endeavor with the belief that they could make a significant contribution to the best of their capabilities.

Afterwards, two videos entitled 'Giving priority to early childhood to prevent delays in development' and 'Young butterfly children' were shown to the audience.

The State Counsellor then took documentary photos with the participants and toured the photo exhibition on display.

High-level discussions commence

Firstly, Union Ministers Dr. Myo Thein Gy, Dr. Myint Htwe and Dr. Win Myat Aye discussed various topics including facts that should be included in the national ECCD strategy; facilitating cooperation between ministry departments, relevant organizations and the general public to accomplish the processes outlined in the ECCD strategy; attracting investment to develop human resources; to acquire short-term and long-term benefits; expanding social protection processes; identifying children without normal development and administering timely responses; and devising other methods to protect orphaned children in addition to support from government or philanthropic organizations.


At noon, domestic and foreign professionals and senior officials from the Department of Social Welfare discussed sustainable development goals and ECCD, the global perspectives and Myanmar’s opportunities and on-going services for ECCD, the social welfare department’s plans for ECCD, plans to support expectant mothers and their children under 2-years of age, and assessment and protection schemes for ECCD.

The high-level discussions will continue till 21 December at the Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.— MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat receives French ambassador

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received the French Ambassador H.E. Mr. Christian Lechervy, member of the Economic Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly Mr. Jean Francois Mbaye yesterday in the guest hall of the Pyithu Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged views and openly discussed matters related to building friendship between governments, parliaments and peoples of France and Myanmar, cooperation in health, education, economics and environmental conservation sectors via development of technology, and foreign investment.

Also present at the meeting were Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein, Chairman of the International Relations Committee U Zaw Thein, secretary of Economic and Financial Development Committee U Khin Mg Soe and officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw Office. —MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Pyithu Hluttaw approves motion urging government to raise livelihood of ethnic people

FROM PAGE-2

2nd Amendment Bill to Union Civil Service Board Law submitted to Hluttaw Next, 2nd Amendment Bill to Union Civil Service Board Law was submitted to the Hluttaw by Union Civil Service Board Chairman Dr. Win Thein.

Bill Committee member Dr. Wai Phyo Aung read the committee's report on the bill and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced for Hluttaw representatives who want to table an amendment to register their names.

Hluttaw approves a motion urging the government to raise the livelihood of ethnic nationals. Afterwards a motion urging the Union Government to draw up and implement a plan to raise the livelihood of ethnic people living in far off and remote areas tabled by U Ar Moe Si of Khaunglanphu constituency. The motion was approved with 212 in favor, 137 against and 2 abstaining. The motion was announced as approved by the Hluttaw.

Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun inspects preparations for All Who Can Read Should Read campaign

THE Deputy Minister for Information, U Aung Hla Tun, inspected the preparations for the opening ceremony, the readiness of rooms to accommodate for hosting of talks, and the place assigned for the purpose of shooting documentary photos.

The campaign to promote reading will be launched with a ceremony on 20 and 21 December. The campaign activities will include exhibition, public talks and paper reading sessions. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Min)

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint holds talks with British Ambassador Mr. Daniel Patrick Chugg

THE Union Minister for Information, Dr. Pe Myint, met with the British Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. Daniel Patrick Chugg, at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw at 11 a.m. yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to jointly organizing press briefing on the functions of government's communications, ensuring the safety of journalists, and raising awareness of the responsibility, accountability, and professional code of ethics of journalists. —MNA (Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)
Senior General attends Defence Service Medical Academy graduation ceremony

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, addressed the 19th intake of the Defence Services Medical Academy held at the parade grounds of the DSMA in Yangon yesterday morning.

At the graduation ceremony for the 19th intake, the Commander-in-Chief received the salute of the medical officers as he inspected the graduating companies. Afterwards, the companies of medical officers honoured the Senior General with a slow and quick march parade.

As part of the graduation, the Senior General presented excellence awards, including: Best Medical Officer award to Cadet Bhone Pyai Kyaw; award for excellent performance in training to Cadet Wai Yan Pyai Sone; and the award for excellent performance in study to Cadet Kaung Pyai Sone.

Afterwards, the senior general noted the accomplishments of the elite graduates not only as medical doctors, but also as military officers.

In his speech, the Senior General also urged the cadets to carry out any task dutifully that they were given as a good soldier.

Upholding the nine oaths taken by the cadets at every graduation ceremony; the medical officers were to have goodwill, kindness, compassion and sympathy while observing the medical ethics and research ethics.

As the Tatmadaw’s mobile medical teams were providing health care to the people in regions and states, the cadets were to actively participate in public health care services in areas they were assigned, said the Commander-in-Chief.

Myanmar, China consult cooperation on border management

THE Fourth Round of Myanmar and China (2+2) High-Level Consultations led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Defence was held on 18th December 2018 at Zhong Wei Kunming Green Lake Hotel in Kunming, Yunnan Province, China. The meeting was attended by the Myanmar Delegation led by U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Co-operation and Lt. Gen. Tun Tun Naung, Ministry of Defence and the Chinese Delegation was led by Mr. Kong Xuanyou, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Lt. Gen. Shao Yuanming, Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff Department of the Central Military Commission.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views in a friendly and cordial atmosphere on border related issues focusing on China’s constructive support for the peace process of Myanmar, promoting rule of law, peace and stability along Myanmar-China border; stabilization of the situation of Northern Myanmar; confidence-building measures and development of border areas to promote the interests of the population in those areas.

Moreover, the two sides agreed among others to step up collaboration and coordination through bilateral mechanisms and cooperation at different levels in various areas such as Myanmar-China border management, combating narcotic drugs, human trafficking and preventing illegal entries and illegal trade, to adhere to the Boundary Treaty in construction of structures, fences, retaining walls and river banks maintenance works to prevent erosion of river banks and cooperation on the matters pertaining to resolving boundary issues through joint inspection.

On 18th December 2018, Myanmar Delegation led by the Union Minister attended the dinner hosted by Mr. Zhang Guohua, Vice Governor of Yunnan Province of the People’s Republic of China.

The (2+2) High-Level Consultations Meeting led by Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence at the central level was established aiming at intensifying and consolidating cooperation in security and management in the Myanmar-China border areas more effectively. The 3rd Myanmar and China (2+2) High-Level Consultations led by Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence was previously held on 17th January 2018 in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA

Union Government sets new pension figures for retired civil servants

THE Union Government has decided to increase the pension of civil servants including Tatmadaw personnel during their cabinet meeting (22/2018) on 12 December.

The decision will take effect starting January 2019, as stated in the Notification No.101/2018 announced by the Ministry of Planning and Finance yesterday.

The announcement stated the union government considers civil servants and the defence service personnel who fulfilled their duties most admirably, and thus, as part of the efforts to promote their livelihoods, the Union Government is making adjustments to their cost of living.

The announcement stated the pension of the pensioners in Myanmar, retired before 1-4-2018, will receive the payment equal to the pension that will be received by working civil servants when they retire, starting from from January 2019.

The pension increase will be calculated, in accord with the pension laws, based on the pensioner’s last salary range before retirement that equals to the increased salary range announced by Ministry of Planning and Finance on 29-4-2018. Similarly, political pensions were also increased. — MNA
BY NYEIN NYEIN

THE Yangon Bus Public Company (YBPC) incurring a loss of about K15,000 per bus per day on passenger fares, according to an internal report of the company, said U Hla Aung, the joint-secretary of the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).

“The YBPC appointed staff to the buses to calculate the number of commuters per day. It found that as some unscrupulous passengers have not been putting the full payment into cash boxes, the company is losing K15,000 in fares per bus everyday,” said U Hla Aung.

“The YBPC is running 500 units. If passengers take free rides, the company faces losses of K3 million,” said U Hla Aung.

To combat this, the YRTA is trying to adopt a cashless payment system for bus fares with the use of prepaid cards.

The Yangon Region government’s Tender Supervisory Committee had invited tenders for the Yangon Payment Services (YPS) and had announced the list of shortlisted companies for YPS in the preliminary stage. Excel KC Myanmar Co. Ltd was originally selected by the Tender Supervisory Committee on 10 January. But the company’s tender was revoked when checks showed noncompliance with rules. Afterwards, Any Pay Payment Services Co. Ltd and Asia Starmar Transport Intelligent Co. Ltd were considered for the project on 24 April in accordance with tender rules and regulations and their names were submitted to the Yangon Region government.

The Yangon Region Government meeting (20/2018) held on 17 May, the tender was granted to Asia Starmar Transport Intelligent Co. Ltd.

Asia Starmar is currently developing the new system and is working with related government institutions, said U Hla Aung.

“The company is working with related government institutions, said U Hla Aung.

“We have selected the tender winner for the YPS. The company is holding discussions with the related government institutions such as the Central Bank and the Myanmar Investment Commission,” he said.

Meanwhile, the Power Eleven Company is also facing a slew of difficulties due to unscrupulous passengers and an unfamiliar card system.

“Around 80 per cent of bus lines do not see accurate full payment. Some passengers hand in torn and dirty notes, while some take free rides. Some passengers are even using counterfeit notes,” said Ko Tayoate Lay, the managing director of the Power Eleven Company.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Golden honeydew cultivation declines in Sagaing Region on seed shortage

CULTIVATION of golden honeydew has fallen by about 70 per cent this year compared with last year on account of low seed supply, said U Soe Lwin, the chair of the Sagaing Region’s Watermelon, Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association.

“Winter plantation of golden honeydew has plunged 70 per cent against last year. The border merchants have not been able to meet the demand for seeds as China has incurred losses in the yield of honeydew seeds. As golden honeydew generates good profit, both new and old growers were enthusiastic to plant them. However, they faced a shortage of seeds for planting. With some growers turning to other melon varieties, cultivation has dropped around 70 per cent,” said U Soe Lwin.

Golden honeydews produced in the last monsoon season are currently being sent to the border markets. About 30 small and heavy trucks are leaving from ChaungU and Myaung areas for border areas. During the early harvest season of monsoon golden honeydew, a kilo of golden honeydews fetched over 6 Yuan. But the price plummeted to 2 Yuan in December on account of lower consumption in China.

“As the weather is getting colder in China, honeydew demand has fallen. The low demand is drastically affecting the market. On 18 and 19 December, the price of golden honeydews rose slightly to 3 Yuan per kilo. The prevailing exchange rate against Chinese yuan is Ks225 per yuan. A single golden honeydew weighs about 2-3 kilograms,” said U Soe Lwin.

For planting an acre of honeydew, farmers require 25 to 30 seed bags. The price of one bag of seeds has increased 300 per cent from Ks22,000 to Ks50,000.

“Myo Win Tun (Monywa) (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Fishery exports fetch $173 mln in current fiscal year

MYANMAR’s exports of fishery products between 1 October and 7 December totalled about US$173 million, an increase of $29.6 million compared with the same period last year, according to statistics released by the Commerce Ministry.

Fishery exports at the Thai-Myanmar border points of Myawady, Kawthoung, and Myeik registered an increase in the first two months of the 2018-2019 FY compared with the previous financial year.

Myanmar exports fishery products such as fish, prawn, and crabs to 40 countries, including countries in the European Union, China, Saudi Arabia, the United States, Japan, Singapore, and Thailand.

Saudi Arabia’s suspension of fish imports from Myanmar beginning April has affected rohu fish suppliers this year. Myanmar keeps only 25 per cent of rohu fish for local consumption and exports the remaining 75 per cent to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bangladesh.

Myanmar exports farmed fish to Saudi Arabia, which accounts for 30 per cent of farm-raised fish exports and 40 per cent of rohu exports. The local fishery sector is also facing difficulties due to high aquaculture feed prices.

Myanmar’s fishery exports touched a high of over US$650 million in the 2012-2013 FY. Thereafter, the value of exports has gradually declined due to erratic weather and scarcity of fish on account of illegal fishing methods.

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) is making concerted efforts to increase export earnings by developing fish farming lakes which meet international standards and adopting advanced fishing techniques. There are 480,000 acres of fish and prawn breeding farms across the country. Myanmar’s fisheries sector earnings were pegged at over $717 million in the last fiscal year.—Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Private traders help boost exports of manufactured goods

THE value of exports of manufactured goods in the last two months of the current fiscal year totalled US$1.45 billion on the back of rising exports from the private sector.

Between 1 October and 7 December, public sector exports of manufactured goods stood at $489.56 million, declining 115.8 million from the same period last year, according to data from the Commerce Ministry. Private sector exports fetched $960.69 million compared with $523 million in the same period last year.

Myanmar’s manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles on a cut-make-pack (CMP) basis, which contributes to the country’s GDP to a certain extent.

CMP has emerged as a promising industry in the export sector. The value of CMP exports was just $500 million in the 2015-2016 fiscal year; but tripled within two years to $2.5 billion in the 2017-2018 FY, according to the Myanmar Global Investment Forum 2018 held on 12 September.

Garment producers are eyeing Myanmar for investment because of its inexpensive labour; which has sometimes led to conflicts between factory owners and labourers, according to market observers.

There are currently more than 400 garment factories in Myanmar, employing over 300,000 workers. The manufacturing sector is expected to retain its top position in attracting FDIs in the current FY.

The majority of the country’s CMP products are exported to Japan, while some are shipped to Europe and South Korea. At present, CMP garment enterprises have expressed their concern over EU’s possible withdrawal of GSP status to Myanmar as the move can hurt the industry.—Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)
Opinion

Need for eliminating malaria, dengue

A

n outbreak of malaria in Myanmar has claimed 30 lives in 2017 and nights deaths from January to November this year. The country saw a total of 1,25,200 dengue cases with a total 192 dengue-related deaths last year.

Myanmar registered a total of 31,864 cases of malaria infections this year. There were 31,288 cases of dengue with a total of 5,952 cases. According to WHO, the 2017-2030 Malaria Elimination Action Plan to achieve the goal.

For combating mosquito-borne diseases, stronger surveillance and intervention systems hold great potential. Building on and strengthening the existing surveillance systems, it will be in a better position to provide effective and reliable information on the number of cases and deaths in the region, and thus, allow for increased awareness and preparedness among the local population.

Another reason for the rising frequency of dengue is the habit of Myanmarese people to store water, which increases the number of places where mosquitoes can breed.

The most effective way to eliminate mosquitoes-borne diseases is encouraging public participation in mosquito control. People must take part in prevention programs by keeping namely habitually dry and standing water in or around their homes for the vector to breed. The Ministry of Health and Sports recently distributed mobile tablets to its staff in the public health sector as part of efforts to enhance skills of medical staff, make active dissemination of health-related information, which is the one reason for the rising frequency of dengue is the habit of Myanmar people to store water, which increases the number of places where mosquitoes can breed.

As experts, according to experts, are climate change and a higher breeding rate of the Aedes mosquitoes. But another reason for the rising frequency of dengue is the habit of Myanmar people to store water, which increases the number of places where mosquitoes can breed.

Dengue is a mosquito-borne disease caused by the flavivirus group of RNA viruses. It is transmitted to humans and animals through the bite of infected mosquitoes. Dengue is a highly contagious disease that can be transmitted from person to person. The symptoms of dengue include fever, headache, muscle and joint pain, rash, and bleeding.

The Global New Light of Myanmar is encouraging people to participate in mosquito control programs and raise awareness about the risks of mosquito-borne diseases. People should be encouraged to keep their houses clean and dry by removing any standing water sources, installing screens on windows and doors, and taking other precautions to prevent mosquito bites.

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In conclusion, the habit of Myanmar people to store water, which increases the number of places where mosquitoes can breed, needs to be addressed to control the spread of dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases.
Yangon International Gems, Jewellery Fair to be held in Jan

THEE, Second Yangon International Gems and Jewellery Fair will take place at the Lotte Hotel in Yangon from 9 to 12 January.

“The Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association is looking to invite international entrepreneurs, although some American merchants and jewelers have refused to buy Myanmar’s gems and jewellery,” said U Aung Myint, the vice chairman of the Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association.

The purpose of the fair is to develop the gems and jewellery trade in the country, penetrate international markets, and develop cooperation in the local market. The event will feature regular sales as well as sealed auctions, which will allow participants to buy high-quality items.

“About 600 international gems and jewellery traders, over 6,000 local traders, and over 7,000 visitors attended the first exhibition held on 13 January. The first exhibition’s sales did not meet our expectations,” said U Aung Myint.

Sales amounting to K300 million were recorded within two days of the first event, according to the association.

For the second exhibition, the authorities have made arrangements so foreign buyers can take their purchases home without delay. They will be required to pay only 6 per cent tax on their purchases. Local buyers will have to pay 11 per cent tax, including a 5 per cent commercial tax.

Local and foreign visitors will be able to make purchases with master cards, visa cards, union pay cards, JCB cards, and MPU cards at the fair.

The event will also include lucky draws for buyers making purchases of above K500,000. Additionally, local and foreign experts will be invited to host workshops, awareness talks, and seminars at the fair.

All those who are interested in the event will have to bring their passport, NRC card, driving license, or student ID for registration.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

300,000 travellers visit Bagan Archaeological Museum last year

OVER 300,000 local and foreign travellers visited the Bagan Archaeological Museum in NyaungU District, Mandalay Region, in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, said U Nyi Moon, the Deputy Director of the Archaeology and National Museum Department.

The Bagan Archaeological Museum is situated south of the Gawdawpalin temple in old Bagan, NyaungU Township. It is open daily from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm, except on Mondays and public holidays. The museum charges an entrance fee of K500 for local travellers and K5,000 for foreign tourists and special groups.

Bagan Archaeological Museum in NyaungU District, Mandalay Region.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Bagan Archaeological Museum

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(Translated by Hay Mar)

Illegal consignment of raw jade stones seized in Mohnin

POLICE searched a six-wheeled truck near the Hopin toll gate in Mohnin Township, Kayin State, on Tuesday and seized an illegal consignment of raw jade stones, weighing 3,781 kilograms.

The truck was at the wheel tax gate when officials with the Hopin police asked the driver, identified as Tha Naing Oo from Mogaung Township, to follow them to the police station. The police searched the vehicle and found 630 pieces of jade stones, which were being transported illegally.

The driver and two other persons on board, identified as Sai Thiha from Zeebingyi Village, Pyin Oo Lwin Township, have been arrested and face charges under Section 42(A) of the Gemstone Law.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Illegal consignments of Padauk, Tamalan teak seized in Mandalay

A combined team comprising staff from the Forest Department found 146 illegally logged Padauk and Tamalan teak blocks, weighing 7,287 tons, at the Mhan Tan ward monastery in Amarapura Township on 16 December. The team is continuing investigations in the case to find the owner of the illegal blocks of teak.

In a separate operation on the same day, a joint team from the Forest and Customs departments stopped and searched a vehicle at the 16 mile checkpoint on the Mandalay-Pyin Oo Lwin road in Pathetnews Township and found an illegal consignment of 35 Padauk blocks, weighing 1,032 tons. The police have registered a case and are continuing their investigations.

(Translated by Maung Pyithu)

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Translated by Hay Mar

Translated by Maung Pyithu
Dr. Pe Myint holds separate meetings with Yunnan Media Group Vice Chairman, Korean Film Council Chairman

THE Union Minister for Information, Dr. Pe Myint, held separate meetings with delegations led by the Vice Chairman of the Yunnan Media Group, Mr. Ma Jianyu, and the Chairman of the Korean Film Council (KOFIC), Mr. Oh Seok Geun, at the Korean Film Council (KOFIC), Mr. Oh Seok Geun, at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They discussed collaboration to jointly produce the “The New Southern Silk Road” TV series with six episodes, the shooting of a documentary film on the new Southern Silk Road, holding the New Year Spring Festival in January 2019 and the Myanmar-China Cultural Week with the aim of achieving cultural exchanges programs between Myanmar and PRC.

Dr. Pe Myint met with the KOFIC Chairman at 2 p.m. yesterday. They discussed cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Myanmar for the development of the film industry, arrangements under preparation by the ROK for opening the Asian Film Center for ASEAN countries, inclusion of Myanmar as a member country in the center, and inviting Myanmar’s participation in a roundtable discussion on films to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia, in February 2019.

The Deputy Minister for Information, U Aung Hla Tun, and officials also attended the meeting. — MNA

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Myanmar, Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrol along border

MYANMAR and Bangladesh conducted a coordinated patrol from border post 47 to 48 from 10:50 am to 12 noon on 18 December, according to the information released by the Myanmar Police Force.

The patrol of Myanmar was led by Police captain Khin Maung Zaw from No.5 Border Police sub-division (Aung Thabyae), Area 1, Maungtaw Township, while the Bangladeshi side was led by Naib Subedar Abu Hanif from No.11 Putili Outpost of border guard force of Bangladesh.

Similarly, a troop of border police led by Police Major Kyaw Win of No.2 Border Police sub-division (Ngakhuya) station, Maungtaw Township, conducted a coordinated patrol with two water crafts along the Naf River from 10:40 am to 12:10 pm together with Bangladesh border guard force.

The troops in the two water crafts met with Bangladeshi troop led by Subedar Usuf Ali of BGB 2 on their two water crafts at the middle of the Naf River and patrolled together from border post 11 to 15 along the river according to the Police Information Department.

After the patrol, the two forces held a discussion on a watercraft. —GNLM

(Translated by JT)

Two fishermen found dead with necks slashed in Maungtaw

TWO fishermen were found dead with their necks slashed in a village in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State, on 19 December.

The two men have been identified as U Maung Tun Aye, 56, and U Maung Maung Than, 51, from the upper Pyuma Village of Maungtaw Township. They reportedly went to the Pyuma Creek for fishing on 17 December.

When they did not return home, U Maung Tun Aye’s daughter informed the police in Ngakhura, Maungtaw Township. Following this, a combined team of officers from the Ngakhura outpost and about 40 villagers from Pyuma Village launched a search around 8:30 a.m. on 18 December. They searched nearby villages and the creek, and found the missing fishermen’s boat and net about a mile from Yaydwinbyin Village.

The team continued their search and found the bodies of the missing fishermen at a beach along the creek, near the destroyed village of Taungyin, Maungtaw Township. The men were found with cuts 5 inches long and 2 inches deep on their necks. —Maungtaw District IPRD

(Translated by JT)

Myanmar National Airlines to start flights between Yangon and Chengdu

THE Myanmar National Airlines will operate flights between Yangon and Chengdu, China, starting 28 December. Chengdu will be the sixth international destination for Myanmar National Airlines.

Flights to Chengdu will operate thrice a week from Terminal 1 of the Yangon International Airport. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Flight No. 803 will depart from the Yangon International Airport at 10 p.m. and arrive in Chengdu at 2:30 a.m. the next morning.

On Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, Flight No. 804 will depart from Chengdu at 3:35 a.m. and land at the Yangon International Airport at 5:05 a.m.—Myanmar National Airlines will use Boeing 737 NG for the new route. The minimum fare for a round-trip ticket will be US$330.—Aung Thura

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)
Australian police to supervise convicted terrorists on release from prison

CANBERRA—Australian authorities are seeking the power to manage convicted terrorists throughout their entire lives, even when they have been released from prison. News Corp Australia on Wednesday reported that the Australian Federal Police (AFP) has applied for a control order against an unnamed Islamic extremist, who is set to be released from prison in February, 2019. The man will be the first Islamic State-inspired terrorist to be released from prison, leaving authorities with questions over how best to manage his release. Under new laws, police can apply for an extended supervision order, which would result in the offender being locked up for longer but authorities have said a judge is unlikely to grant the order in this case. Instead, Attorney-General Christian Porter has promised to change laws so that the AFP could apply for extended supervision orders, which judges are more likely to grant than extended incarceration.

Similar control orders already introduced in New South Wales prohibit the subject from associating with other extremists, limit their use of the Internet and restrict the phones they can use. In more extreme cases, subjects can be prohibited from going near places such as airports or prisons. Extended detention or control orders could be applied to 33 of the 36 individuals currently in Australian prisons for violating national terror laws. Control orders can also be applied for prisoners who police can prove were radicalized while incarcerated and thus pose a threat to the community upon their release.—Xinhua

One out of five foreigners in S Korea experiences discrimination: data

SEOUL—One out of five foreigners in South Korea experienced discrimination while staying here, a government data showed on Wednesday.

According to Statistics Korea, the number of foreigners aged 15 or above, who stayed here for at least 91 days, was 1,301,000 as of 15 May, up 6.2 per cent, or 76,000, from a year earlier. Among the total foreign nationals, 40 per cent were ethnic Koreans from China, followed by the Chinese with a share of 11.5 per cent and the Vietnamese with 10.9 per cent.

Foreigners here, who said they were discriminated against by South Koreans at least once for the past year, reached 21.2 per cent of the total. Among those who suffered discrimination, 60.9 per cent cited their nationalities as the reason for the discrimination.

The lack of Korean language proficiency was cited by 23.7 per cent, while their appearance and occupation were picked by 6.6 per cent and 2.6 per cent, respectively.

The number of paid workers of foreign nationality was 846,000 as of 15 May. Among them, temporary employees or daily workers reached 350,000.

It was higher than 23.8 per cent, the portion of South Korean workers who were employed temporarily or on a daily basis.—AFP

Ex-Goldman Malaysian banker faces US extradition over 1MDB scandal

KUALA LUMPUR (Malaysia)—Malaysia on Wednesday moved to extradite to the United States a former Goldman Sachs banker embroiled in the multi-billion-dollar 1MDB scandal, even as he faces charges in the Southeast Asian country.

Huge sums of public money were allegedly stolen from Malaysia’s 1MDB sovereign wealth fund and used to buy everything from yachts to artwork, in a scheme that allegedly involved former premier Najib Razak and contributed to his government’s shock election defeat in May.

Goldman helped 1MDB to issue $6.5 billion of bonds but Kuala Lumpur accuses the bank and its former employees of misappropriating $2.7 billion during the process.

Washington had requested the extradition of Ng Chong Hwa—a Malaysian former managing director at the bank—in October after bringing three criminal charges against him during the process.

Goldman helped 1MDB to issue $6.5 billion of bonds but Kuala Lumpur accuses the bank and its former employees of misappropriating $2.7 billion during the process.

Deputy public prosecutor Shukor Abu Bakar told AFP that a legal application has been filed under the extradition treaty between the two countries.

Goldman has pledged to fight the charges, insisting it was misled by the former Malaysian government and 1MDB.

The alleged offences by Ng—commonly known as Roger Ng—are punishable by jail in the United States.

Ng will fight the extradition attempt, his lawyer Tan Hock Chuan said.

On Monday, Malaysia’s new government announced it was also filing criminal charges against Ng, his boss and Southeast Asia chairman Tim Leissner, and Goldman Sachs.

Ng was brought to court on Wednesday and will be charged, officials said.

Leissner has pleaded guilty to conspiring to launder money allegedly siphoned from 1MDB and paying bribes to Malaysian and Emirati officials.

Fugitive Malaysian financier Low Taek Jho—commonly known as Jho Low—the alleged mastermind of the fraud, was also charged by Malaysia this week with conspiring with Leissner and Ng. He maintains his innocence.—AFP

Okinawa appeals rejection of lawsuit seeking halt of US base transfer

NAHA (Japan)—The Okinawa prefectural government appealed on Wednesday a high court ruling rejecting its lawsuit to stop the controversial relocation of a key US base within the southern prefecture.

Following the 5 December ruling by the Naha branch of the Fukuoka High Court, the central government on Friday began full-fledged landfill work in the Henoko coastal district of Nago for the replacement facility for US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

The high court upheld a lower court ruling in March without examining the substance of the lawsuit, citing a 2002 Supreme Court ruling that stated the central or local governments cannot bring suits seeking that others comply with ordinances or rules.

The Okinawa government had claimed the central government was acting illegally by moving forward with the relocation plan without permission from the local governor for work that involves damming the seabed where fishing rights have been granted. Many residents of Okinawa, which hosts the bulk of US military facilities in Japan, want the Futenma base moved outside of the prefecture rather than relocated from a crowded residential area of Ginowan to the less populated Henoko district.

Japan and the United States agreed on the Futenma base transfer in 1996 after public anger was fueled by the rape the previous year of an Okinawa girl by three US servicemen. The central government later selected Henoko as the relocation site.—Kyodo News

Protestors stage a rally in front of the Japanese Consulate General in New York on 18 August, 2018, against landfill work for the relocation of a major US military base in Japan’s southern island prefecture of Okinawa. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS
How Germany will turn lights out at last black coal mine

BERLIN (Germany) — After more than 150 years, Germany’s last black coal mine will close in the Ruhr region, due to a giant geological and environmental challenge to the former industrial heartland.

How to close a mine

The Prosper-Haniel mine’s galleries were painstakingly excavated over decades by workers with pickaxes and later pneumatic drills.

Now they have been sealed off by enormous stretches of concrete.

Mining company RAG, in charge of clean-up at the site, has nearly finished removing tonnes of steel, equipment and cables from the tunnels.

The final concrete blocks remain to be placed for Prosper-Haniel to fall silent once and for all.

Within around 10 years, the galleries more than 600 metres below the earth will fill up at least partially with groundwater.

RAG will drain and pump this water as part of its “eternal task” as the owner.

“If this system of ‘eternal tasks’ did not exist, 80 to 100 years from now the water would rise and two-thirds of the Ruhr region would be flooded,” the professor and hydraulic engineer in charge of the project, Andre Niemann, told AFP.

Environmental risks

The water found in mines is particularly acidic after trickling through a kilometre of underground sediment, and contains more salt than seawater.

If it reaches the water table just below the surface, it could contaminate drinking water resources in the region.

Hence the requirement for RAG to constantly pump it away — as well as treating it before it can be diverted into a river like the Rhine.

Meanwhile, the tunnel floors in the mine contain so-called polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), chemicals used for mining production.

“There is a study to determine the concentration of PCBs and how dangerous it is,” Niemann said.

“A plant for treating it has already been set up,” he added.

A new chapter?

“As long as the water is regularly pumped out, there’s no risk of subsidence or flooding” in areas above the pit, Niemann said.

And so-called “fire-damp” methane explosions are unlikely as long as the galleries are sealed away from the open air.

“The gigantic concrete blocks we poured to close the tunnels are designed for this, so even if there is an explosion they won’t budge,” the engineer said.

Some coal still squirmed away will be burned to heat the homes of people in the region, while the naturally warm mine water will flow through the underfloor heating of houses in the area.

Part of the Prosper-Haniel site will be covered with grass and plants, turning it into a park alongside tourist landmarks and museums aimed at keeping the memory of mining culture alive.—AFP

Outrage as six baby seals decapitated in New Zealand

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — Six baby seals have been found decapitated in New Zealand in what wildlife rangers on Wednesday branded a “cruel and senseless” act against a protected species.

The bodies of the New Zealand fur seal pups were found by a tourism operator on Monday at Scenery Nook near the South Island city of Christchurch, the Department of Conservation said.

The department’s local operations manager Andy Thompson said the animals, which are protected under New Zealand law, were estimated to be 11 months old.

“Due to the disturbing, brutal and violent nature of this crime... it has been reported to the police,” he said.

Thompson said the seals’ heads were nowhere to be found and it appeared they had been killed elsewhere then dumped in the beauty spot from a boat.

“We believe it’s incredibly unlikely sharks would have bitten the heads off six seals but left the bodies untouched,” he said.

Thompson added the killers may have mistakenly believed the seals were competing with local anglers for fish.

“Regrettably, antagonism towards seals is often due to the misplaced belief that seals are eating large amounts of fish species valued for human consumption,” he said.

“That isn’t the case.

Research shows 90 per cent of Banks Peninsula fur seal diet is made up of lantern fish which are not sought after in fishing.”

The DOC has appealed for information about the killings.

In 2011, a South Island teenager was jailed for two years after he admitted to bludgeoning 25 seals to death, including newborn pups.—AFP

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CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (Khad 0112 NS)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (Khad 0112 NS) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-12-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

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CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

MV SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (082NN/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. (082NN/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-12-2018 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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185
K-pop’s BTS ‘worth $3.6 billion a year’ to South Korea

SEOUL (South Korea)—South Korean boyband BTS are worth more than $3.6 billion to the country’s economy every year—equivalent to the contribution of 26 mid-sized companies—a research institute said on Tuesday.

The floppy-haired songsters were also the reason that one in every 13 foreign tourists visited South Korea in 2017, the Hyundai Research Institute said.

Known for their boyish good looks and meticulously choreographed dance moves, BTS—short for Bangtan Sonyeondan, which translates as Bulletproof Boy Scouts—have become one of South Korea’s best-known and most valuable musical exports.

Earlier this year the septet became the first K-pop band to top the US album charts, a sign of the genre’s growing global appeal. That appeal has helped boost the brand image of South Korean products abroad, the institute said, making BTS a valuable economic asset.

Researchers estimated the group’s so-called annual productivity inducement effect—the total economic value generated by related industries—at 4.1 trillion won ($3.63 billion) annually, the same as 26 mid-sized South Korean companies. Some 800,000 tourists were believed to have chosen South Korea as their destination last year because of BTS—more than seven percent of the total visitors to the country.

More than $1 billion in consumer exports, such as clothes, cosmetics, and foodstuffs, were associated with them, it said.

If BTS maintain their popularity they can be expected to generate an economic value of 41.8 trillion won over the next 10 years, the institute added.—AFP

PARIS (France)—More than a million people have flocked up to see a digital exhibition dedicated to the Austrian artist Gustav Klimt in Paris, according to the organizers. The show at L’Atelier des Lumieres, which claims to be the biggest video projection gallery in the world, comes as another show featuring Klimt’s pupil Egon Schiele has become a hit on the other side of the French capital.

The immersive exhibition in an old foundry in eastern Paris uses 140 projectors to flood the walls and floors of the space with the Viennese master’s work on a 35-minute loop.

Culturespaces, the private company behind the Klimt show, said it will be extended until 4 January. The exhibition will be followed in late February by another sound and light show using some of the best-known canvasses by Vincent Van Gogh, including “Sunflowers” and “The Starry Night.” The Schiele show at the Fondation Louis Vuitton in western Paris closes on 14 January.—AFP

S Korean grain silo transforms into world’s largest mural

INCHEON (South Korea)—A dreary grain silo that was transformed into an enormous colourful artwork in South Korea has been named the world’s largest mural.

The mural was commissioned by the city’s government and port authority as part of efforts to improve the negative view of aged industrial facilities, an idea which originated from the community art projects of the 1920s that swept the United States and Mexico, according to the South’s Yonhap news agency. Twenty-two artists used more than 850,000 litres of paint to tell the story which reflects the seasons and resembles 16 individual book covers, at a cost of $550 million won (US$487,000). It topples the previous record holder by a significant margin—the Pueblo Levee Project in Pueblo, in the US state of Colorado, at 16,554 square metres.—AFP

UK tabloids fall out of love with ‘Duchess Difficult’ Meghan

LONDON—The honeymoon period for former actress and newly-minted British royal Meghan Markle, it seems, is over.

Six months on from her fairy-tale wedding to Prince Harry at Windsor Castle, Meghan is faced with a daily barrage of tabloid headlines criticising her courtly manner and warning her against becoming “Duchess Difficult.”

Pregnant Meghan was credited with breathing fresh air into the royal institution when she married Prince Harry in May, but a series of reported palace fallouts and resignations have raised questions about her methods.

Senior courtiers have quit amid suggestions that Meghan is a demanding boss, firing off e-mails to staff in the early hours of the morning. British tabloids have reported she made sister-in-law Kate cry during preparations for the wedding. Related Video: Meghan Markle’s Father Feels ‘Ghosted’ and ‘Shunned’ by Daughter. The family insists that Harry and Meghan’s plan to move out from next door to his brother Prince William and Kate is driven by the imminent arrival of their first child, but many believe it is a sign of a deteriorating relationship. Queen Elizabeth II was also believed to have been angered by Meghan asking to be loaned her emerald wedding tiara, according to newspaper reports. It emerged last week that highly-respected courtier Samantha Cohen would be leaving after Meghan’s baby is born next spring following 17 years of royal service. Another of Meghan’s assistants also resigned six months after the wedding, tabloids reported. To her supporters, the duchess is suffering blowback for her modernising ways and has become a scapegoat for the family’s underlying problems.

“It is interesting how Meghan... has become such a lightning rod for so many controversies, from the royal family’s—shall we say—race issues to the British media’s obsession with pitting women against one another, with claims that she and Kate... are at one another’s throats,” wrote The Guardian’s Hadley Freeman.—AFP
China’s petaflop supercomputer help improve vehicle R&D quality

TIANJIN—A supercomputer-based simulation platform for the research and development of vehicles has been launched in the National Supercomputer Centre in north China’s Tianjin.

Supported by China’s first petaflop supercomputer the Tianhe-1, the platform can help researchers and engineers develop key components of vehicles, said Meng Xiangfei, head of the center’s applied research and development department.

A car is composed of thousands of parts and fittings. A computer simulation can complete around 80 per cent of the work in design and research of automobiles, he said. International automakers like BMW, Volkswagen, and General Motors have founded their own supercomputer-based simulation platforms.

Meng said the centre has established cooperative relations with automakers and institutions such as China Automotive Technology and Research Centre Co Ltd, Foton Motor Group and Tianjin FAW.

The Tianhe-1 supercomputer can complete an average of 1,400 online tasks on a daily basis, such as supercomputing for visual analysis and processing.

Meng said Tianjin FAW was the first to try the platform, which has optimized the company’s research and development process for two types of its self-designed cars. Using the supercomputer, the company shortened its research time by 80 per cent, saving more than 7 million yuan (around 1 million US dollars) in costs.

The Tianhe-1, unveiled in 2010, is capable of at least 1 quadrillion calculations per second. It has served in a number of fields including digital mining research and development, animation, online finance, and big data, as well as e-governance of the Binhai New Area in Tianjin.

The National Supercomputer Center has completed the development of China’s new-generation exascale supercomputer the Tianhe-3. The final version of the Tianhe-3 will be operational by 2020 when it is expected to be 200 times faster and have 100 times more storage capacity than the Tianhe-1.—Xinhua

Second launch of Progress freighter to ISS under three-hour scheme planned for March 2019

MOSCOW—The second launch of a Progress cargo spaceship to the International Space Station (ISS) under the three-hour scheme is scheduled for March 2019. Manned space flights under this scheme may begin in 18 months, chief of Russia’s state space corporation Roscosmos Dmitry Rogozin said on 17 December.

“We plan to repeat the launch of the Progress freighter under the ultra-short two-revolution scheme in March next year. The flight duration is three hours. In some months, we will be able to take cosmonauts and space tourists to the ISS in a shorter time than to fly from Moscow to Brussels,” he wrote on his Twitter account.

The ultra-short three-hour technique (of two revolutions around Earth) was first used in July when the Progress MS-09 cargo spaceship reached the ISS in a span of three hours and 40 minutes.

Before that, the Progress freighters used a four-revolution scheme to reach the station in about six hours.—Tass

Green leafy vegetables can reduce fat in liver: study

WASHINGTON—Eating more green leafy vegetables may reduce the risks of developing fatty liver, according to a study published on Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Researchers from Karolinska Institutet in Sweden showed that a large intake of inorganic nitrate, an ingredient naturally occurring in many vegetables, could reduce fat accumulation in the liver.

Liver steatosis, or fatty liver, is a common liver disease that affects about 25 per cent of the global population, but there has been no approved treatment for it until now.

They supplemented dietary nitrate to mice with a high-fat, high-sugar diet, and those mice went with a significantly lower proportion of fat in the liver.

The researchers also observed reduction of blood pressure and improved insulin/glucose balance in mice with type 2 diabetes. Previous studies have shown that a higher intake of fruit and vegetables has a beneficial effect on cardiovascular function and on diabetes.

“We think that these diseases are connected by similar mechanisms, where oxidative stress causes compromised nitric oxide signalling, which has a detrimental impact on cardiometabolic functions,” said Mattias Carlstrom, associate professor at the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology at Karolinska.

“We now demonstrate an alternative way to produce nitric oxide, where more nitrogen in our diet can be converted to nitric oxide and other bioactive nitrogen species in our body,” said Carlstrom. Carlstrom suggested that we look at least 200 grams green leafy vegetables per day to obtain the protective effects.—Xinhua

Elon Musk bores tunnel to revolutionize city driving

HAWTHORNE (United States)—Elon Musk on Tuesday took a break from futuristic electric cars and private space travel to unveil a low-cost tunnel he sees as a godsend for city traffic.

The billionaire behind Tesla and SpaceX late Tuesday put the spotlight on the 1.14 mile (1.8 kilometre) tunnel created by his Boring Company for about $10 million.

The sample tunnel is part of Musk’s vision to have an underground network that cars, preferably Teslas, can be lowered to by lifts then slotted into tracks and propelled along at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph).

“The only way to solve this is to go 3D, for the transport system to match the living quarters,” Musk said of solving the problem of traffic congestion in urban areas.

“It’s all relatively simple, no Nobel Prize is needed here.” An entrance to a sample tunnel was shown publicly for the first time in this city near Los Angeles as the initial stage of Musk’s project to revolutionize city traffic by zipping along below congested streets.

Musk founded the Boring company two years ago as a self-financed, side-project to his work at Tesla and SpaceX. Specially designed equipment drills tunnels wide enough to accommodate a car on a track. The network envisioned is an infinitely expandable mesh of tunnels and elevators capable of having more than 4,000 cars pass through per hour.

“The deepest mines are deeper than the tallest buildings,” Musk said.

“The profound breakthrough is very simple: it’s the ability to turn a normal car into a passively stable vehicle by adding the deployable tracking wheels, stabilizing wheels, so that it can travel at high speed through a small tunnel.”

Tunnels will eventually be open to all complete self-driving electric vehicles, but for now Boring is using Teslas in the tube.

The idea for the project came to the billionaire of South African origin when he was fuming at the wheel of his car, trapped in traffic jams between his chic Bel Air villa and the SpaceX offices in Hawthorne.

It is a journey that takes him more than 90 minutes and he considered soul-crushing. The “tunnel test” unveiled Tuesday appeared simple: a narrow tube, only 3.65m in diameter (12 feet), freshly painted white, in which a Tesla Model X is fitted with tracking wheels to stay in a track and avoid bumping the walls.—AFP
Win Naing Tun named best player in Viet Nam football tourny

WIN Naing Tun, a young striker from the Myanmar U-21 national football team, took the award for the best player at the Thanh Nien Newspaper International U-21 Football Tournament in Hue City, Viet Nam, held from 12 to 18 December, according to the Viet Nam Football Federation.

Win Naing Tun also secured the award for the first goal of the tourny. Viet Nam’s Nguyen Thanh Than was adjudged the best goalkeeper and Dinh Thanh Binh won the award for top scorer.

Viet Nam defeated Myanmar 5-3 in a penalty shootout in the final of the tourny. The two teams were tied 2-2 after 90 minutes of the official match.

The host team took USD 12,000 as prize money after winning the tourny, while runner-up Myanmar received USD 7,000. A total of four teams - Gimhae CFC of the RoK, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Viet Nam - participated in the tourny.—Lynn Thit(Tgi)

‘Caption this’: Pogba deletes cryptic post after Mourinho axed

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Manchester United midfielder Paul Pogba quickly deleted a controversial social media post of him smiling after manager Jose Mourinho was sacked by the club on Tuesday. Mourinho was dismissed on Tuesday after United’s worst start in 28 years left them trailing Premier League leaders Liverpool by 19 points.

The volatile Mourinho’s exit was in part triggered by the breakdown of his relationship with France midfielder Pogba, who did not even make an appearance as a substitute for Sunday’s dismal 3-1 defeat at Liverpool.

Pogba took to Instagram just moments after news of Mourinho’s sacking broke, posting a picture of himself smiling and writing “caption this” next to it. The 25-year-old’s post was widely interpreted as celebrating Mourinho’s departure and he was criticised by former United defender Gary Neville, who responded on Twitter by writing: “You do one as well!”, suggesting he should leave the club as well.

Over 64,000 people had “liked” Pogba’s cheeky message, but he deleted the post 10 minutes later amid claims it was actually part of a marketing campaign for Adidas.

The controversy was an appropriately rancorous end to the World Cup winner’s stormy relationship with Mourinho.

Pogba joined United for a club record (280 million ($312 million) just weeks after Mourinho was hired in 2016.

But the former Juventus player was repeatedly criticised by Mourinho during his two-and-a-half year reign.

After his inspired performances helped France win the World Cup in Russia in July, Mourinho opted not to praise Pogba, instead infuriating the star by publicly asking why he did not try as hard for United.

Pogba was stripped of the United vice-captaincy earlier this season. The pair were captured having a frosty exchange on the training ground as Mourinho grew angry with his key midfielder’s lethargic performances, dropping him on several occasions to spark talk he would be sold by the end of the season.

Former United midfielder Darren Fletcher knew Pogba during the Frenchman’s first spell with the club as a youngster and he says his old team-mate “needs a kick up the backside”.

Fletcher fears Mourinho’s sacking could convince the flamboyant Pogba that he can now get away with whatever behaviour he feels like, unless the new manager clamps down quickly.—AFP

Myanmar star Aung Thu joins Thailand’s Muangthong F.C.

MYANMAR star footballer Aung Thu, 22, recently signed up with the Thai League 1 giants Muangthong F.C. for a term of one year, according to a statement from the Thai football club.

Aung Thu’s move has been okayed by both his local club, Yadanarhon F.C., and his former Thai club, Police Tero F.C.

After playing for Police Tero F.C. in the previous season, Aung Thu got an offer from Muangthong F.C. and decided to join them,

“I would like to thank Police Tero and Yadanarhon for giving me a chance to play in the Thai League. It feels great to move to Muangthong. They are one of the leading clubs in Thailand with many talented players and amazing fans,” said Aung Thu.

Aung Thu will wear the No. 9 jersey for the team, said an official with the Thai team.

Aung Thu will now join the team for training sessions ahead of the Thai football season, scheduled to start in February, according to a statement from the Muangthong F.C.—Lynn Thit(Tgi)

Pochettino won’t rule out United move

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino has refused to rule out replacing Jose Mourinho at Manchester United. Pochettino is believed to be United’s top choice to succeed Mourinho following his sacking on Tuesday.

The Argentine signed a new five-year contract with Tottenham in February, according to a statement from the club. Pochettino won’t rule out replacing Mourinho at Manchester United.

Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino has refused to rule out replacing Jose Mourinho at Manchester United. Pochettino is believed to be United’s top choice to succeed Mourinho following his sacking on Tuesday. Pochettino is also vexed by Tottenham’s tight wage structure and the failure of chairman Daniel Levy to sell players he no longer wants. Perhaps aware he may have to deal with financial restrictions at Tottenham for several more years because of their expensive and delayed stadium move, Pochettino left the door open for United when he admitted he could not predict what might happen at the end of the season.—AFP