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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends 71st Kachin State Day ceremony

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races who was in Kachin State, Myitkyina attended the 71st Kachin State Day ceremony held at Myitkyina Sitapu Ward Manaw grounds yesterday morning together with Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, U Min Thu, U Ohn Win and Dr. Win Myat Aye, State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung, Deputy Minister U Hla Maw Oo, state ministers and officials.

Northern Command Commander Maj-Gen Tayza Kyaw, Hluttaw representatives, Manaw festival organizing committee members, ethnic nationals, invited guests, local people and officials attended the ceremony together with the State Counsellor and party.

At the ceremony State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung read the 71st Kachin State Day message sent by President U Win Myint.

Next, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivered a speech.

"I'd like to extend warm greetings to our children of the Union who are here with us at the Kachin State Day ceremony. It is our national pride to have a diverse gathering of ethnic nationals in one place. Our President U Win Myint has already talked at length of the need for union peace in



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, dressed in traditional Kachin attire, participates in the Manaw festival on the 71st Kachin State Day celebrations in Myitkyina, Kachin State yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

his message of greetings so I won't get too much into the subject. I want you all to think about the roots of the Manaw Grounds we are gathered in. Their beginning leads back to nat worshipping. Why did they worship nats? We worship the religion we believe in."

"Worshipping is similar to reliance. You worship nats so you can rely on them. You rely on God. But God, nats, and Thagyamin want us humans to rely on ourselves. It is the duty of all ethnic nationals to cultivate the courage necessary to rely on their own strength. Only then will we have the means to establish our country in line with the image that we wish for."

"There is a saying that people in leadership roles have to be like the Sun and the Moon. This includes people leading in Union government, state governments, or any organization for that matter. The Sun appears in the morning and gives light. People in ancient times waited in anticipation for the Sun. They worried at night whether the light will come another day."

"When the Sun rises it gives us light and in the cold season it gives us warmth. But direct sunlight is not so welcome. So, a leader has to be like the Sun and give off light and warmth but they must not blind people with direct sunlight."

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Union Biblical Seminary holds 18th graduation ceremony

AT the 18th graduation ceremony of the Union Biblical Seminary held at the Methodist English Church at No. 65 Alanpya Street, yesterday afternoon in Yangon, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than was honored among others for outstanding works in all sectors, including social and religious works during the year.

At the ceremony Union Biblical Seminary Chairman Dr. Morris Remial Liana delivered a message of greetings, gave blessings and presented degrees to the graduates and award winners.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than in return delivered a message of thanks.

Union Biblical Seminary Chairman Dr. Morris Remial Liana said, "The Hluttaw Speaker was selected because he was not only the Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw but promoted development of Myanmar in a leading position.



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, (Left), speaks words of gratitude on receiving an honorary doctorate at the 18th graduation ceremony of the Union Biblical Seminary at Methodist English Church in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**



He also provided social support to those in need."

The Union Biblical Seminary was established in 1999 and had honored those who had conducted beneficial religious works and presented degrees to 400 students. The Union Biblical Seminary also

selected and honored people regardless of race and religion who had conducted outstanding social works in all sectors.

At the 18th graduation ceremony, 23 were presented with religious degrees and six namely Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn

Win Khaing Than, Myanmar Missions International (MMI) Director Mr. Joshua Ngun Hei, Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance Public Relations Director Mr. Peter Ngun Za Cung, Yangon City Development Committee Deputy Director U M Hla

Thaung, Future Myanmar United Development Co., Ltd. Managing Director Daw Aye Aye Cho, Global Talent Development and Deere & Company Manager Mr. Rena M. Gainev were honored with honorary doctorates. —MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Union Election Commission Chairman receives USA, EU, Canadian ambassadors

THE Union Election Commission Chairman, U Hla Thein, received Mr. Scot Marciel, Ambassador of the United States of America, Mr. Kristian Schmidt, Ambassador of The European Union, and Mrs. Karen Mac Arthur, Ambassador of Canada, at the UEC's guest hall yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, the

UEC Chairman explained the formation of the Union Election Commission, the success of the 2017 and 2018 by-elections, formation of sub-commissions ongoing capacity building processes, and ongoing strategic planning for general election 2020. Ambassadors, Mr. Jeremy Kruse, the Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of Australia, and

Mr. Joe Rolling from the Embassy of Britain explained about their visits to polling stations and gave recommendations for holding a better general election in 2020. Afterwards, they openly discussed assistance for the 2020 General Elections and other electoral matters. —MNA ■

(Translated by Su Mon Khaing)



Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein and UEC members hold a meeting with ambassadors from the USA, EU, and Canada at the office of UEC in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Independent Commission of Enquiry issues press release

THE OFFICE of the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) issued a press release yesterday following their fifth meeting from 8 to 10 January 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon.

The press release stated that the ICOE met with Dr. Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Chairman of the Implementation Committee on the Recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State.

ICOE was briefed on the work undertaken by the Implementation Committee to address some of the critical issues affecting Rakhine State: development; human rights; security; initiatives for returnees and social cohesion.

The ICOE also met with Lt. General Aye Win, Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and Team Leader of Military Investigation Team (2016) and (2017). During the meeting, information was shared related to the military investigations of the incidents in Rakhine in 2016 and in 2017.

The dialogue between the Commission and U Zaw Myint Pe, Secretary of Maungdaw Investigation Commission (2016)

was most informative and useful for enhancing ICOE's work.

Dr. Kyaw Yin Hlaing, Advisor to the former President of Myanmar and Director of the Center for Diversity and National Harmony, briefed the Commission on his work in Rakhine. The lessons learned from his experiences were useful for ICOE's work, said the commission.

ICOE also met with Mr. Stephan Sakalian, Resident Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) who shared the work and modalities of the ICRC in Rakhine. ICOE held extensive discussions on the progress of the work of its Evidence Collection and Verification Team (ECVT). It discussed recruitment of personnel necessary for its effective work. It also discussed visit to Cox's Bazar and second visit to Rakhine State.

The deadline of the "Call for Submissions" had been extended from 31 January 2019 to 28 February 2019.

The Independent Commission of Enquiry was established as part of Myanmar's national initiative to address reconciliation, peace, stability and development in Rakhine.—GNLM ■

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends 71st Kachin State Day ceremony

FROM PAGE-1

“In the same way ancient people relied on the Moon at night after the Sun has set. The difference with the Sun is that the Moon didn’t appear every night. The Sun came out every day but it would be blocked out if there was heavy rain or snow. The Moon, on the other hand, has different phases but we can accurately predict when it will appear next. Because we eventually managed to chart out the phases of the Moon over time, we began to associate loyalty and trust with it.”

“Likewise, leaders have to nurture trust in the people they are lead-

ing. They must keep their word and accomplish tasks they have promised to do so. Each of us are both leaders and followers in a way. We must lead when we need to and follow other’s guidance when required. If we do that, then we will get the approval of our nats or god.”

“I believe our gathering for Kachin State Day in the Manaw grounds today symbolizes our willingness to rely on one other and to give strength and take strength from each other as we walk together on the nation’s path.”

“Our ethnic races have different costumes, so it fills me with joy to see so many different ethnic

nationals in their costumes in one place. This is our country, our Union. We are different from one another but each of us has our own unique charm.”

“It is this unity that has led to the formation of our Union. But this Union is not the democratic federal union we are hoping for yet. The Union government is working tirelessly to achieve this goal but we without a doubt require the cooperation of the people as well. Just relying solely on the government is not a democratic approach. Democracy is based on the people and the government relies on the strength of the people to perform its duties.” “We do not want to think that a certain day celebrates only a certain race of people. For example, Kachin State Day today is relevant to all the ethnic nationals living in Kachin State. Kachin State Day came about within the same year as Independence Day, so it will not be too much of a stretch to say today symbolizes our nation’s independence as well.”

“President Sao Shwe Thaik who attended the first Kachin State Day was a Shan ethnic national. His attendance at the Kachin



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addresses the crowd gathered at Manaw grounds in Myitkyina, Kachin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

If our country achieves all-round peace, I believe there will be visible development and changes not just in ten years, like the President said, but possibly within a year. The changes will be evident within a year after the fires of internal conflicts have been quenched.”

State Day shows that it is a celebration relevant to all the ethnic nationals in the country. No matter what ethnic day or State day it is, it is something for everyone born in our Union to be celebrating.”

“If you ask whether the head or your little finger is more important, many will say the head is more important but if you hurt your little finger your head registers it, and your whole

body registers the pain when you hurt your head too. That is why you must cultivate understanding on one another and realize that one person’s pain concerns another person. If our country achieves all-round peace, I believe there will be visible development and changes not just in ten years, like the President said, but possibly within a year. The changes will be evident within a year after

the fires of internal conflicts have been quenched.”

“The responsibility to systematically bring about a firm and solid situation in ten years’ time as the President said rests on each and every one of us. The first step is the most important one to be taken on a journey. Let me remind you that the first step we have taken to establish a strong and developed Union is the peace process. “In conclusion, I’d like to emphasize that gatherings like this ought to be a joyous occasion. I want our gatherings to be energetic, motivational, and for you to feel joy in seeing another person’s happiness. Something I always take pride in is a photo that we used to have in the living room when I was a child. It’s a picture of my father together with Kachin ladies in Myitkyina. It’s not because he took a picture with ladies, it’s because of his energetic smile. He is showing us that it is joyful and pleasing to exist in harmony with other ethnic nationals. I’ve asked why my father was smiling so much. They told me someone teased him when the photo was taken that my mother would be angry when she sees the Bogyoke surrounded by Kachin ladies.”



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a photograph with students from No. 1 Basic Education High School in Myitkyina, Kachin State during her travel there on the 71st Kachin State Day. **PHOTO: MNA**

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends 71st Kachin State Day ceremony

FROM PAGE-3

"I wish for all the sons and daughters of the Union good health, prosperity, safe from harm, fulfillment, and peace of mind on Kachin State Day, where we gather as if reuniting with our brothers and sisters, and with joy and peace in our hearts."

Afterwards Rev. Jone Khaung blessed the ceremony.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung, State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung, Kachin Traditional Culture Central Committee Chairman U Hton Phu Dagun and festival organizing committee chairman U Kim Yaw Tan Gun then cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the Manaw compound for performance of Manaw dance and participated in the Manaw festival.

Following this the State Counsellor arrived at the Manaw House and met with heads of the Kachin cultural group and the Manaw festival organizing committee members.

At the meeting the cultural group members paid respects to the State Counsellor under the Kachin cultural tradition of Magun Lit program.

This was followed by Kachin Traditional Culture Central Committee Chairman U Hton Phu Dagun and Vice Chairman U Faw Yan Bauk Taung presenting Magun Lit present and 71st Kachin State Day painting to State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The State Counsellor then took commemorative group photos with the reception group members and greeted individually the heads of Kachin cultural group and Manaw festival organizing committee members. The



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a photograph with Kachin ethnic women donning their traditional costume at the dinner hosted in honor of 71st Kachin State Day in Myitkyina, Kachin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor also took commemorative group photos with heads of Kachin cultural group and Manaw festival organizing committee members.

Later in the afternoon the State Counsellor met with religious leaders and representatives and representatives of ethnic nationals at the Palm Spring Hotel.

At the meeting KBC joint secretary Rev. U Ze Khaung, Roman Catholic Diocese secretary Father U Luan Daung, State SasanaNugaha Association Chairman U Nyunt Shwe, Kachin State Peace Metta Group Vice Chairman U Khin Aung, All Myanmar Gurkha/Hindhu Dhamma Sub-Group (Myintkyina) Chairman U Lop Bahadur, Jinghpaw national secretary Duwa In Baw Bun, U Sai Myint Kyaw from Taisa national and Bama national chairman U

Than Naing explained about matters they want the government to do.

In response to the explanations, the State Counsellor in return explained about matters that can be handled immediate-

of her happiness in seeing people of different religions and ethnics living in harmony and peace. This is the union spirit and she'll handle the matters raised as soon as possible.

She added that she will not

The first step we have taken to establish a strong and developed Union is the peace process.

ly, matters that can be handled quickly and matters that need to be handled taking time. She spoke of her gladness in receiving the explanations that were given openly. She took this as showing the trust they had on her. Matters can be resolved only when it is discussed openly. She also spoke

give a promise unless she is doing it. The Union Government promises only what they can do for the states and regions. And it will be done fairly and equitably among states and regions covering the whole country. Cooperation and participation of today's representatives are important for Kachin State unity. She spoke of her appreciation for giving the time to come and concluded the meeting by thanking for openly discussing about requirements.

Later in the evening the State Counsellor arrived to No. 1 Basic Education High School Malikha Hall and met with grade ten students of the school, grade one students attending Sumprabum Hall, grade two students from Padauk Hall and KG students from Cherry Hall and enquired about teaching/learning situation, progress in education, availability of teaching aids and teaching/learning sports and arts.

She then went to the Palm Spring Hotel and met with Kachin

State government members. At this meeting the State Counsellor provided instructions and guidance on fulfilling matters raised by the people, religious leaders and ethnic national representatives she had received on this trip.

The Union Ministers and the Deputy Minister who participated in the trip then explained about their work programs. The State Counsellor provided additional guidance on the work programs and concluded the meeting.

Afterwards the State Counsellor and party attended a dinner hosted in honor of 71st Kachin State Day by the Kachin State government.

The dinner was attended by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, U Min Thu, U Ohn Win and Dr. Win Myat Aye, State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung, State Hluttaw Speaker U Tun Tin, State High Court Chief Judge U Tu Ja, Deputy Minister U Hla Maw Oo, state ministers, Kachin cultural group, Manaw festival organizing committee members, Kachin Traditional Culture Central Committee member, ethnic nationals, ethnic national cultural troupes, invited guests and officials.

After the dinner, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Union Ministers and states ministers presented fruit baskets to ethnic national cultural troupes that performed during the dinner and took commemorative group photos. The State Counsellor then cordially greeted the guests in attendance. —MNA

(Translated by
Zaw Min/ Zaw Htet Oo)



Young Kachin performers entertaining the audience with traditional songs and dances at a dinner hosted in honor of 71st Kachin State Day in Myitkyina, Kachin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

Six aquaculture factories meet food safety standards; to proceed with their exports to ROK

By Aye Yamone Oo

ONLY 6 out of the 9 aquaculture factories in Myanmar cleared a food safety inspection by South Korea in November and were allowed to continue shipping their products to the country, according to the Fisheries Department.

The factories mainly export fish, prawn, soft crab, cuttlefish, and squid to South Korea. A team of officials from South Korea visited the factories located in Yangon, Kyauktan, and Myeik in the first such inspection conducted by the country.

"There were 9 Myanmar aquaculture export factories which were shipping products to South Korea. Only 6 factories met the inspection criteria, while the remaining factories were rejected. During the inspection, factories getting 85 points were cleared, but some factories which got between 70 and 80 points need to bring their standards up to

the mark," said U Thet Naing, the head of the chemistry laboratory of the Department of Fisheries' Fish Inspection and Quality Control Section.

Aquaculture factories are required to follow food safety plans and guidelines adopted by the Fisheries Department. The department plans to submit a proposal for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the South Korean government for export of marine products. The signing of the MoU will boost bilateral trade between Myanmar and South Korea.

Currently, Myanmar exports farmed fish as well as wild-caught fish to South Korea. It exports aquatic products including fish, prawn, and soft crab to over 40 countries, including Thailand, China, and Japan. The country exports more than 20 varieties of fish, including Hilsa, Giant Sea Perch or Bectic, Rohu, Barb, and Striped Catfish. ■

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Growers relieved as Kyin San Kyawt gate reopens

THE Kyin San Kyawt gate, which was shut down on 25 December as part of security measures, was reportedly reopened at 9 a.m. yesterday following negotiations between Myanmar and China. However, trade will resume from 7 a.m. today, said U Soe Lwin, the chair of the Sagaing Region Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association.

"The gate was reportedly reopened at 9 a.m. yesterday. But, trading will start from 7 a.m. today. At present, muskmelons are fetching 5 yuan per kilo and watermelons are priced at 3 yuan per kilo. The price is higher than what it was prior to the closure of the gate. The delay in trade hiked up the price of watermelons by K40,000 a ton. The price rise is temporary and the rates are likely to drop soon. Growers are delighted at news of the gate's reopening," said U Soe Lwin.

"It is good news that the

gate was reopened yesterday. Growers are hoping for an official release from the related department. We are happy with this piece of good news and will be more delighted when the official notification comes out," said U Wai Myint, a watermelon grower from Myaung Township.

Dr. Than Myint, the Union Minister for Commerce, attended a coordination meeting with officials from the People's Republic of China at his ministry on 7 January, where they discussed opening the Kyin San Kyawt border gate to enable smoother trade between Myanmar and China. They also negotiated to open more border checkpoints to boost border trade.

In the last two weeks, changes in security protocols at the Sino-Myanmar border coupled with traffic congestion have caused losses to traders and suppliers as fruits have a short shelf life, and any delay can impact their quality.

The Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association have asked the Commerce Ministry to grant them legal access to the Kyin San Kyawt gate as it is an illegitimate trade channel.

Myanmar's watermelon exports were estimated to be 500,000 tons in the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year, over 560,000 in the 2015-2016 FY, and over 170,000 tons in the last mini-budget period from April to September.

The volume of muskmelon exports was registered at over 110,000 tons in the 2014-2015 FY, over 100,000 tons in the 2015-2016 FY, and over 40,000 tons in the mini-budget period.

Watermelons and muskmelons are primarily grown in the Mandalay and Sagaing regions and Shan State.

Myanmar's watermelons and muskmelons enjoy a large share of the Chinese market.—Myo Win Tun/ Ko Khant ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Crown Advanced Construction Co., Ltd

Times City will be held

- Hilton Yangon Hotel signing ceremony
- Jewellery Mall & Times Mall shops leasing promotion event
- Big Expo & performance show.

We would like to invite you to come and visit to know about Times City.

This Event will be held on

* Event date & time *

- 12.1.2019 (Saturday) 11:00 am to 05:00 pm
- 13.1.2019 (Sunday) 09:00 am to 05:00 pm

* Event place *

- Times City, Hanthawaddy Road & Kyun Taw Road, Kamaryut / Sanchaung Township, Yangon.



Public Health Dept to conduct anti-elephantiasis campaign



The central level meeting on conducting elephantiasis vaccination campaign in session at the Public Health Department in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Department of Public Health held a central level meeting to conduct elephantiasis vaccination campaign 2018 yesterday at the meeting room of the disease eradication office at the department in Nay Pyi Taw.

In his opening speech, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Sports Dr. Tha Tun Kyaw said a total of 856 million people in 52 countries around the world are threatened by elephantiasis disease, and the disease has infected over 120 million people. About 70 million people are affected by elephantiasis but it showed no exter-

nal sign of infection. A total of seven countries out of ten ASEAN nations are affected by elephantiasis, and Myanmar is one of them. There are 45 districts that are affected by elephantiasis in Myanmar. The patients will have to take the vaccine and medication once a year, for five consecutive years. The health department has provided drugs treatments to 32 million people from 192 townships and 33 districts in Myanmar during 22-31 January, 2018.

Next Deputy Director-General of Disease Control Department Dr. Thandar Lwin,

Deputy Director Dr. Nay Yi Yi Lin explained about the on-going process of the conducting elephantiasis vaccination campaign 2018, and attendees took part in the discussion.

The event was also attended by directors-general, deputy directors-general, directors, specialists, and officials from Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, officials from Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, project managers and officials from the World Health Organization (WHO). —MNA

(Translated by
Win Ko Ko Aung)

56th Myanmar Gems Emporium planned in March

UNDER the supervision of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, the 56th Myanmar Gems Emporium will be held from 11 to 20 March 2019 at Mani Yadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

Gem, jade and pearl lots will be sold in the emporium and local gem dealers must submit the jade lots they intend to trade to the jade enterprise committee from 21 to 25 January.

The jade lots and gem lots will be inspected from 4 to 23 February and the pearl lots will be inspected from 4 to 6 March, after which the committee will fix the floor prices and move all the lots to the showroom.

All licensed and authorized buyers are entitled to participate in the 56th Myanmar

Gems Emporium, according to the rules and regulations.

Local traders, who are licensed according to the gems law, are also entitled to purchase these gems and jewellery at the emporium.

The organizing committee will help local traders attend the emporium, in cooperation with Mandalay and Mogok Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association, from 16 to 22 February.

The registration process will be carried out for local and foreign traders at the gem merchant registration building in Mani Yadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw starting from 25 February.

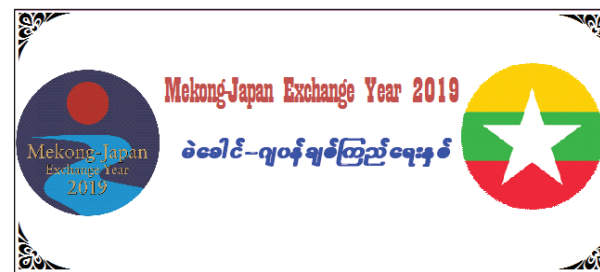
Online applications and registration can also be made and the entry/attendance forms can be downloaded at

websites; www.mining.gov.mm and www.mge.gov.mm starting from 16 February and application can also be submitted via Online Pre-Registration System from www.mge.gov.mm.

Details about the gems emporium can also be enquired at Myanmar Gems Emporium Central Committee, Head Office of Myanmar-Gems Enterprise (Nay Pyi Taw), Myanmar Pearl Enterprise (Nay Pyi Taw), Myanmar Gems Museum (Yangon), Jade Mining Department (Lone Kin), Gem Mining Departments (Mandalay, Mogok, Mongshu) and Jade Mining Departments stationed in Myitkyina, Khamti and Mohnyin townships.—MNA

(Translated by
Myat Thandar Aung)

2019 designated as Mekong-Japan Exchange Year



IT was agreed at the 10th Mekong-Japan Summit meeting held in 2018 October to designate 2019 as Mekong-Japan Exchange Year to increase the friendship and cooperation between Japan and Mekong countries.

Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 was designated under Mekong-Japan cooperation program for the development of social and economic sectors in Mekong region countries. Mekong-Japan cooperation program was started in 2007 with participating member countries Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and Japan.

The aim of Mekong-Japan Exchange Year is to strengthen friendship between Japan and Mekong countries, exchange economic and culture and to increase travel sector works.

The logo for Mekong-Japan Exchange Year will depict Mekong River and the sun representing Japan. The logo was created by Mr. Toru Narumi from Hokkaido, Japan and was approved at 10th Mekong-Japan Summit meeting.

The logo will be used in Myanmar-Japan bilateral cooperation activities and Japan-Mekong cooperation activities throughout the year 2019.

Organisations, entities and businesses cooperating and working with Japan want to commemorate the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year in their activities during 2019 are to obtain permission and register. These activities will be shown in Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 website's Event Calendar.

Details about requesting permission and application form can be obtained at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Organizations and Economic Department, SRCD Section (phone 067-3412447) and Embassy of Japan in Myanmar Information and Culture Section, Natmauk Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, phone (+95)-(01)-549644-8, fax (+95) (01)-549643, email info.cul@yn.mofa.go.jp. Requirements are also posted at https://www.mm.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_en/index.html it is learnt.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Myanmar-Japan music festival coming to Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay

'MYANMAR National Symphony Orchestra with Japan Concert 2019' will be held at the National Theatre in Yangon on 18 January, at Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 January and at the National Theatre in Mandalay on 14 February.

The festival will showcase 60 musicians from MRTV, musicians from hsaing ensembles and music bands, and musicians from Japan, said Dr. Toe Kyaw, Director of Music of MRTV, at the press conference in Yangon yesterday.

Director Mr. Koji Sato from Japan Foundation (Yangon) gave 18 rehearsals for holding the joint concert. He said the festival will be held for three nights and invited all music lovers to attend. Mr. Yamamoto Yunosuke, conductor of the

Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra and cellist, Ms. Koyama Kyoko, consultant, and Kuroda Reison, Ajima Mihoko, and Kamiya Shunichiro will be performing in the concert. In the event, Myanmar songs 'Na Pan San' and 'Shwe Bo Thanakha', in addition to classical western and Japanese music will be played.

The concert will be held with cooperation between the MRTV and The Japan Foundation. Admission is free.

This year's music festival is held to commemorate the opening of the new The Japan Foundation office in Nat Mauk Lane 1, Bahan Township on 24 January, and the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019. The Japanese Government will be donating 19 musical instruments, valued at US\$90,000.—MNA (Translated by Su Mon Khaing)

Tourists discover Myanmar culture on Ayeyawady River cruise

TAKING a cruise along the Ayeyawady River to observe the daily lives of local people has become popular among travellers since the tourist season started.

Several tourists from Switzerland took the Bagan-Yandapo-Sagaing-Seinpankone-Kyaukmyaung-Tagaung-Moetha-Bhamo-Mandalay-Yangon cruise from 31 December to 8 January.

The journey was arranged by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and the Golden Myanmar Butterfly Travels and Tours Co. Ltd. Tourists extended their journey to visit the Ayeyawady River and the Chindwin River to observe the villages and the natural scenery at the second defile on the Ayeyawady River, the traditional and social life of the fishermen, the elephant camp, traditional pottery, and the beautiful scenery in the evening along the Ayeyawady River. Tourists have been visiting Myanmar to observe its beautiful landscapes and the traditional culture of ethnic groups on domestic cruise ships during the tourist season.—GNLM ■ (Translated by JT)



A riverboat sailing along the Ayeyawady River with tourists onboard. PHOTO: MOHT

Myanmar Academy Awards event 2018 to be held on 23 March in Yangon



Chairman of MMPO, U Zin Wine. PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT

MYANMAR Motion Picture Organisation announced that the 2018 Myanmar Motion Picture Academy Awards will be presented at Shwe Htut Tin Compound in Yangon on 23 March.

Chairman of MMPO, U Zin Wine said, “Event date is on 23 March. We have already roughly planned to hold the event at Shwe Htut Tin Compound. But, we are also finding a place where can sumptuously hold. Once this is confirmed we will inform.”

There were 83 movies released in 2018 and 47-member Myanmar Academy award scrutiny board that includes patrons of the MMOP and experts had already selected Best Cinematography, Best Director, Best Picture, Best Screenplay, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actor, Best Supporting Actress, Best Music, Best Sound, and Best Editing awards and in addition to these 11 awards, Special Lifetime Achievement award, Best Child Actor, Best Costume, Best Makeup and Hair, Best VFX. Animation and Best Sound Design will be awarded as special awards. Myanmar Academy Awards event was started since 1952 and 2018 is the 63rd year. MMPO took responsibility to hold the event in 2014 and this year is the 5th year MMPO is organising the event.—Thi Thi Min ■ (Translated by MTA)

Gems and Gold Market Implementation Committee to be reformed

THE State-led Gems and Gold Market Implementation Committee will be reformed, said U Min Min Oo, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation. “The committee was instituted on 28 December, 2017. After the committee is dissolved, it will be reformed to include related departments and civil society organizations,” he said. “Earlier, the Central Bank of Myanmar and other appraising bodies were not involved with the committee. Of the many private gold associations, only the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association participated in the committee. The Yangon and Mandalay Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association will join the new committee,” said U Min Min Oo.

The committee will work to facilitate gold and jewellery trading at the same place, draft the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for implementation processes; identify suitable sites for gold and jewellery market in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw, and Mandalay; ensure transparency and smooth procedures for imports and exports, in compliance with the existing laws, by laws, and rules of the related ministries; and, establish the necessary working committees. Additionally, the committee will assess the quality assurance of gold and jewellery, and organize the market by formulating SOPs. The Ministry has submitted a request for the reformation of the committee to the office of the Attorney General of Myanmar, said U Min Min Oo. The Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association has also formed a gold and gems central market implementation committee in late 2018 with the aim of working with and lending support to the Gems and Gold Market Implementation Committee, said U Kyaw Win, the chairman of the association.—Nyein Nyein ■ (Translated by EMM)

Tourist entry from International airports and border gates

Sr.	International airports and border gates	December 2017		December 2018		Remark
		Tourist	Business	Tourist	Business	
1.	Yangon Airport/Sea Port	48145	15862	60643	14613	
2.	Mandalay Airport	9058	2890	13710	3669	
3.	Nay Pyi Taw Airport	1346	229	427	323	
4.	Myeik Airport	0	0	0	0	
5.	Tachilek	471	227	4668	83	
6.	Myawady	1278	301	1606	729	
7.	Kawthoung	3090	95	874	80	
8.	Hteekhee	134	15	102	28	
9.	Tamu	0	0	440	13	
10.	Reedhorda	0	0	4	0	
Total		63522	19619	82474	19538	

Tourist entry from International airports, sea ports and border gates

Sr.	month	From April to December 2017			From April to December 2018		
		Tourist	Business	Total	Tourist	Business	Total
1.	April	34367	19605	53972	31198	20392	51590
2.	May	28446	20518	48964	29096	21425	50521
3.	June	26565	18034	44599	28844	18636	47480
4.	July	33498	20634	54132	30496	20673	51169
5.	August	34604	18922	53526	32068	19807	51875
6.	September	30693	19283	49976	30768	21451	52219
7.	October	46693	21253	67946	52647	21005	73652
8.	November	63529	21828	85357	77498	21482	98980
9.	December	63522	19619	83141	82474	19538	102012
Total		361917	179696	541613	395089	184409	579498

Realizing our hopes and dreams

THE Ayeyawady River—the lifeblood of Myanmar—originates in Kachin State, which is endowed with valuable natural resources, snow-capped mountains, and beautiful landscapes. But the region's people are not free to utilize its natural landscapes and resources yet. In some areas, one can still hear the sound of gunshots and see ethnic people fleeing from armed conflicts.

Once peace is ensured in the entire region, development will surely follow. Our neighboring countries can be seen enjoying the benefits of peace and stability. They have managed to conserve their natural environment and transform themselves into thriving tourist destinations. Their people enjoy good employment opportunities and are content and happy.

In his message of greetings on the 71st Kachin State Day,

President U Win Myint said: "I want all of you to visualize how significantly Kachin State will develop, with good momentum, within a period of ten years, if armed conflicts cease in the state. Ethnic nationals within Kachin State have been hoping for many years to realize their dream of a peaceful, happy, and developed state. Everyone is waiting to see representatives of Kachin State participate in the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong meetings."

Long-drawn armed conflicts have caused much difficulties and hardships for ethnic nationals, in addition to impeding regional development. Myanmar's image in the eyes of the world and the ASEAN region has suffered on account of the conflicts.

That is why the Union government has been striving for the establishment of a Union

based on democracy and a federal system to bring about national reconciliation and internal peace. Doing so will lead to the realization of not just the dreams of the Kachin people, but also the hopes and aspirations of the entire nation.

We must take lessons from our experiences in the past and the present and accept the need for establishing equality and trust. We need to reassess whether we are truly turning our aspirations into reality. At present, the Union government is striving for the economic development and advancement of ethnic nationals. Ethnic nationals, in turn, must foster loving kinship and work to dispel animosity. We must preserve the Union spirit we have inherited from our forefathers. Establishing a democratic federal union is the hope and dream of all ethnic nationals in the country.

Now is the time for all ethnic nationals of Kachin State and the entire country to work for unity to achieve lasting peace, so that all of our hopes and dreams can become a reality.

Myanmar Economic Development: Past, Present and Future

By Dr. Maung Aung

Myanmar Economy in the Past

Chronicle of Myanmar economy could be seen under various eras such as the last of Kong-baung Dynasty, the post era of 1886 and the British colonial period, the post independence and multiparty democracy period, the Revolutionary Council and subsequent Myanmar Socialist Economic era, the Tatmadaw Government period, and then Multi-Party Democracy eras.

Myanmar economy during pre-war period was enveloped with Laissez-Faire Policy, the policy of allowing private businesses to develop without government control, of the British where rice trade was the main focus, and Myanmar stood as the top rice exporting country in the world edging over Asian countries.

As the rice demand of the world grew wild, the British brought the Indian nationals into lower Myanmar for expanded cultivation of paddy resulting with the yearly export of three million tons of rice.

The development of Myanmar economy during colonial era was healthy due to the Laissez-Faire economy; however, the split stories erupted among political leaders and the political parties.

On the other hand, the divide and rule policy of the British had shattered the unity of the nationalities in the country. Due to political instability in the country, the Revolutionary Council came into power through the coup d'état in 1962, and switched into socialist economy, resulting with nationalizations ending the market economy.

In quest of economic development, the government adopted inward looking policy, while trying to stand on own two feet with the attempt of industrialization through import substitute arrangement.

At that juncture, the Asian countries were building their nations after gaining independence.

Myanmar economist Professor Dr. Hla Myint advocated Outward Looking Policy, and that Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore embraced and applied as their economic policy.

With a host of weaknesses in the administration sector and the market economy, the nation is swallowed by black market system and experienced the economic hardship, resulting with price hikes in all the commodities in a downhill journey of the nation's economy.

The leading status of Myanmar in the South East Asia economy in the 1960s had jumped into the Least Developing Country list in 1987. With the surging dissatisfaction of the people, the demonetization of legal tender notes had ignited the 1988 upheaval of the public in the country; however, the Tatmadaw took hold of the state power.

At that time, the Outward Looking Policy adopted by the Asian countries for about three decades showed tangible economic developments, and we all learned the lesson that the economic development of a nation depends on the correct decision in policy making.

Tatmadaw Government aftermath of 1988

Socialist economic system had been abolished and market oriented economic system had been initiated. The government-owned enterprises with loss had been transferred to the private hands, and the foreign trade had been encouraged.

With the open market, some agricultural items were exported, and due to the opening up of Indian market, the peas and bean trade flourished and expanded in the country, making the cash crops for the farmers.

During the administration of the Tatmadaw government, the Myanmar economy functioned better than the socialist economic era. When the dishonored business people and the corrupted official manipulated the economy, the people were frustrated and demanded for multi-party democratic system, resulting with the end of Tatmadaw administration in 2010.

A lesson was learned that market oriented economy was better than the socialist economic system even under the pressure of international sanctions.

First Democracy period (2010-2015)

The administration was in

the hands of the Union Solidarity Development Party (USDP), backed by the Tatmadaw leaders, which continued the market oriented economic system and some of the state enterprises were transferred to the private sector in momentum.

While driving for the economic reform, the Foreign Investment Law was enacted and the Special Economic Zones were initiated added with many changes in financial matters.

Motley assortments of reforms were seen in sectors such as that of the vehicle imports, that of telecommunication operators, that of the privilege in getting GSP that of allowing for

ment, elected by the people, the 12-point economic policy has been adopted along with the market oriented economic system with vision of Outward Looking Policy. The NLD government reduced the intervention of the government with a view to encouraging the market oriented economic system.

The Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan – MSDP (2018-2030) had been adopted in 2018 for multi-purpose development by integrating with the Sustainable Development Goal being mapped out by the UNGA. The MSDG has three main pillars with five objectives spanning (28) strategies with

to invest more in Myanmar, and that (35) per cent of foreign investment is being allowed to roll into Myanmar companies. Within two years, many economic reforms are being implemented for the investment sector including the establishment of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

In the years ahead, more investments are in the pipelines and the nation's economy has a silver lining. The Ministry of Commerce is paying more attention on the trade development, pushing the trade value up, and gradually pulling down the trade deficits being encountered during the previous years, reflecting the real growth in the export value.

Especially, the 2017-2018 financial years had witnessed the export of rice over three million tons, a record breaking figure during (70) years' time coming on a par with the pre-war period of rice export.

At a time when the connectivity is much better in the region, more investment is likely to roll in that could elevated the value added export items of the country hooking up with the Global Supply Chain, with expectation of multiplying trade value.

More reforms have been carried out such as that of the lending of the SMEs that could be carried out without depositing property or loan guarantee in taking out more soft loans, that of lending farmers with added crop loans, that of enhancing the basic pay of the low income workers, that of the recommendation of the minimum wages of the workers, that of the permission granted to the foreign banks to function in support of financial matters in the country, that of enhanced support in the infrastructure sector such as electricity, road communications and transport, that of profuse supplementing budgets towards education and health.

Lessons learned from the past

In retrospect over the past economic situations of the country during the time of successive governments and eras, it could be generally said that the socialist economic system had insti-

tutionalized the inward looking economic policy, and that the remaining eras had adopted the outward looking economic policy.

It could be assessed and evaluated that the period of inward looking economic policy had experienced the downswing of economy, and that the eras of outward looking economic policy had at least lifted the economy upward.

It is to be noted that the macro economy is the State-level economy of the nation, and the micro economy is the working level economy, in other words, which could be termed as the pragmatic economy of the people of the country. Only when the people could enjoy the fruits of economic development, the economy may remain sustainable.

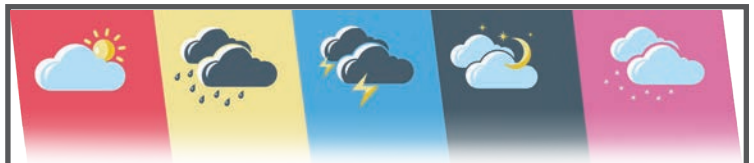
The Myanmar economy during pre-war era was buoyant, but it served only to the foreigners and the people were deprived of the benefits. Similarly, the socialist economic system had ignored the lives of the people that become poorer each day.

The lesson we learned is that we must constantly observe and assess people on the ground, and respond with appropriate solutions in time. When we looked back on the world economy, amazing and incredible economic development had occurred twice. Unbelievable development was witnessed during the Industrial Revolution was the transition to new manufacturing processes in Europe and the US, in the period from about 1760 to sometime between 1820 and 1840.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe and US added up with machineries, trains, steamers that pushed up the production and trade in miraculous pace making the nations in that region developed and prospered. The change began in the 18th century, when agricultural societies became more industrialized and urban. The transcontinental railroad, the cotton gin, electricity and other inventions permanently changed society.

(To be continued)

Translated by UMT (Ahlone)



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued on Thursday 10 January 2019)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs MST:

During the past (24) hours, rain has been scattered in Yangon Region, isolated in Ayeyawady Region, Kachin, (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Kayin states and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above January average temperatures in Mandalay and Ayeyawady regions, Northern Shan, Kayah and Kayin states, (5°C) above January average temperatures in Bago Region, (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Mon states and about January average temperatures in the remaining regions and states. The significant night temperatures were (-1°C) in Haka, (3°C) in Ramthlo, (4°C) in Tiddim, (5°C) in Matupi. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Hlaingbwe (0.31) inch, Kungyangon and Pyapon (0.08) inch each and Mongyan (0.04) inch.

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 11 January 2019: Rain will be isolated in Taninthayi Region, Kachin, Shan, Kayin and Mon states and weather will be generally fair in Magway Region, Chin and Rakhine states and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3-5) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Chin and Rakhine states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11th January, 2019: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 January 2019: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR Mandalay and NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 January 2019: Partly cloudy.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to **ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com** with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).—Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Tour guide licenses must be issued only to Myanmar citizens: association

By Aye Yamon Oo

THE draft of the Myanmar Tourism Rules must clearly define the authority of the tourism police, and include a provision for issuing of tour guide licenses only to Myanmar citizens as it has been seen that foreign tourists are travelling with their own guides instead of hiring local guides, according to the Myanmar Tourist Guides Association.

The association has been asked to share its opinion on the draft Myanmar Tourism Rules with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism by 11 January. It held a meeting to discuss the draft rules at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) in Yangon on 9 January.

"The ministry doesn't issue licenses to foreigners. But, we have found that many tourists are travelling the country without local guides. We have been discussing this issue for a long

time. But there has been no solution yet. Tour guides must be Myanmar citizens according to the law. We want to make sure that such a provision is enshrined in the rules. Tourists are going around the country with their own groups, unaccompanied by local tour guides. Some tourists are bringing their own tour guides, but they just keep the tour guides inside their cars and discuss by themselves. So, we want to protect this kind of issue," said Daw Ei Thu Htut, the General Secretary of the Myanmar Tourist Guide Association.

According to Section 2 (D), Chapter 1, of the Myanmar Tourism Rules (draft), a tourist guide is a person providing direction and suggestions on places and things of tourist interest, for commercial purposes, to ensure the convenience of tourists throughout a trip. Under this definition, a private organization or company staff can welcome tourists, arrange for their accommodation, offer information, act as interpreters, arrange meals,

entertainment or recreation, and similar services in the region where their organization is located, without engaging the services of any outside guide.

"Although tourists say a person providing tourism guidance is their guide, he or she can be a member of a company's staff. So, we only check their license. Some guides are too young and are underpaid. They accept low pay mainly to gain experience. There will be some problems in the long run, for instance, an inexperienced guide may use improper words. Once, a Korean tourist beat his guide with his shoe for the latter's poor choice of words," said Daw Ei Thu Htut.

"Foreign guides can give inaccurate information about Myanmar religion and culture. Therefore, the draft Myanmar Tourism Rules must only allow licensed Myanmar guides to provide services to tourists," she said.

According to Section 49 (D), Chapter 12, of the draft Myanmar Tourism Rules, an inspec-

tion team has to submit its report on any complaints within seven days.

"Company staff cannot be deemed as tour guides. The problem tourist guides are facing needs to be resolved right away. Within seven days, a troublemaker can move out to another country. We don't want the solution to these issues delayed. So, we need more tourism policemen. In this regard, the role and the authority of the tourism police are not clear and explicitly prescribed yet. Therefore, we need to embody such an explicit provision in the Myanmar Tourism Rules," she added. The new Myanmar Tourism Law was enacted on 17 September 2018.

According to Section 39 (A) of the law, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism issued the Myanmar Tourism Rules (draft) with the approval of the Union Government, and now, the government has sought the opinions of the tourism industry on the draft rules. ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

Mandalay General Hospital performing two kidney transplants per month

TWO kidney transplants were successfully performed at the Mandalay General Hospital on 8 and 9 January.

The operations were performed by professor surgeons, physicians, and specialist doctors from various departments, including Urine and Kidney, Anesthesia, Pathology, and Cardiovascular Surgery.

The hospital has performed 61 kidney transplants since resuming the operations.

In the 60th kidney transplant operation, a 45-year-old patient received a kidney from his 47-year-old sister.

In the 61st transplant, a 29-year-old patient received a kidney from his 29-year-old cousin. The operations took one and a half hours each.

The Mandalay General Hospital has been successfully performing two kidney transplants every month in a cost-effective manner while



Surgeons performing kidney transplant operation at Mandalay General Hospital. **PHOTO: MAUNG PYITHU (MANDALAY)**

complying with the international standards.—Maung Pyithu

(Mandalay) ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

More tourists flock to Ayeyawady Region

THE Ayeyawady Region welcomed more tourists in 2018 compared with the previous year, according to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

"Two beaches — Ngwehsaung and Chaungtha — were visited by most travellers. We are developing two trips to increase the number of local and foreign travellers. We are also upgrading roads for smooth transportation, supplying electricity, and upgrading hotels and tourism services in the region,"

said U Zaw Lin Tun, the Deputy Director of the Ayeyawady Region's Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

"With the increase in the number of travellers, the coast was littered with rubbish. If travellers continue to throw rubbish in an undisciplined manner, the beaches will get damaged," he said.

In 2017, 71,739 local and 1,393 foreign travellers visited Patheingyi Township, Chaungtha Beach received 71,739 local and

1397 foreign travellers while 188,769 local and 33,907 foreign tourists visited the Ngwehsaung beach in the Ayeyawady Region.

As of November 2018, the Patheingyi Township received 50,143 local and 753 foreign travellers, the Chaungtha Beach saw 962,365 local and 722 foreign visitors, and the Ngwehsaung beach welcomed 118,768 local and 33,471 foreign tourists, according to official statistics provided by the Ayeyawady Region's Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

"We are providing culinary and customer service training to hotel staff. We are also assisting those who want to invest in the Ayeyawady Region," said U Zaw Lin Tun. There are about 86 hotels with 3,455 rooms in the Ayeyawady Region. The authorities are now planning to construct 9 hotels with 385 rooms in the region, according to the region's Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.—Min Tun Zaw (Min Thar Lon) ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

US detained over 50,000 illegal immigrants in December

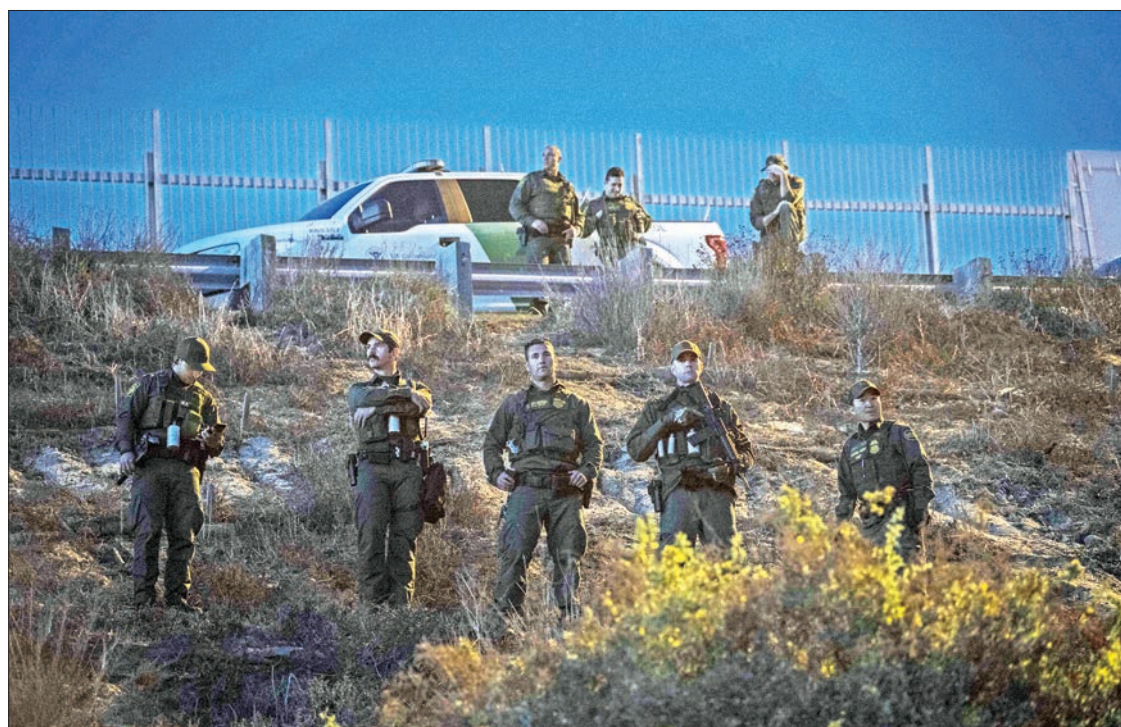
WASHINGTON (United States)—Illegal border crossings into the United States continued at a high pace in December, with more than 50,000 people detained for a third straight month as the number of families illegally entering surged, US Customs and Border Protection said on Wednesday.

With the US government in its third week of a shutdown as President Trump demands that Congress fund the construction of hundreds of miles of new wall on the border, CBP said it detained 50,753 individuals who had entered illegally last month.

Another 10,029 people were blocked from crossing the border without documents at official ports of entry.

The total was roughly the same as October, when migrant crossings surged from earlier in the year, but below the 62,456 detained and blocked in November. The figures for the past three months have been the highest since a short-lived surge in 2014.

People arriving as families



US Border Patrol agents stand guard as they look for illegal immigrants in US soil after people jumped over the US-Mexico metal barrier from Playas de Tijuana in Mexico, on December 2, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

accounted for more than half of the total. A record 27,518 people who crossed the border as families were apprehended, and the number of unaccompanied children detained remained high at 4,766 for the month.

CBP said 96 per cent of

those apprehended after crossing the border were from the impoverished Northern Triangle countries of Central America: Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

Most are seeking asylum, citing the poverty and pervasive

violence in their countries.

The Trump administration has failed in efforts to deter them, and is being forced to quickly process them and release them into the country pending official status hearings.—AFP ■

80,000 stimulant tablets busted in Patheingyi Tsp

THE Drug Enforcement Division at the 16-mile Kyauk Chaw Paung inspection check point in Patheingyi Township confiscated 80,000 stimulant tablets (each worth K5,000) from two men, identified as Gam Aung and Tin Htoo Maung from Phaung Sai Village, Kutkai Tsp on 9 January.

A case has been opened with Ohn Chaw Area Police Station MuYit(Pa) 4/2019 under Sections 19-A/21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. —GNLM ■
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Over 3 kilos of heroin seized in Waingmaw Tsp

POLICE confiscated 3.465 kg of heroin (estimated at K277,200,000) from two men, identified as Hun Tan Kyi and Xie Eain Zhuan, in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State, on 9 January. Police confiscated 0.121 kg of heroin from the duo and discovered an additional 3.344 kg of heroin at their home.

A case has been opened with Waingmaw Police Station MuYit(Pa) 10/2019 under Sections 19-A/21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Investigations continue. —GNLM ■
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Myanmar, Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrol

MYANMAR and Bangladesh conducted a coordinated patrol along the Naf River at 10:00 am yesterday according to information released by the Myanmar Police Force.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Inspector Kyi Soe from No.1 Border Police sub-division (Kyi Kyun), Area 3, Maungdaw Township, while the Bangladeshi side was led by Subedar Shaik Abdul Jalil from No.2 Whykong Outpost of Border Guards Bangladesh. The two troops met at the middle of the Naf River and patrolled together from nautical mile 15 to 18 along the Naf river.—GNLM
(Translated by JT)

British PM suffers fresh Brexit defeat

LONDON (United Kingdom)—British MPs voted on Wednesday to force Prime Minister Theresa May to quickly set out an alternative plan for Brexit if she loses a crucial vote on her EU withdrawal deal next week, in a second parliamentary defeat in 24 hours.

The House of Commons voted to reduce the time the government has to outline a “plan B” from 21 days to three if, as expected, lawmakers reject the Brexit agreement in a vote on Tuesday.

Members of May’s own Conservative party led the revolt amid fears that the current timetable takes Britain too close to crashing out of the European Union on 29 March with no deal at all. It was the second setback in as many days for the prime minister, after MPs voted late Tuesday to deny the government certain taxation powers in a no-deal scenario—another attempt to avoid such an outcome. Speaking to MPs earlier, May said: “The only way to avoid no deal is to vote for the deal.” But her spokesman added: “If that were not to take place... we would respond quickly and provide

certainty on the way forward.” Opposition Labour spokesman Keir Starmer said MPs could then start debating alternatives to her plan — and raised the prospect of delaying Brexit.

“I actually genuinely think we can’t do it on 29 March this year. It’s simply not viable, for so many practical reasons,” he told the Commons. “So we’re going to have to look at what are the available options that realistically are still on the table.”

‘Cosmetic’ changes

The parliamentary manoeuvres came at the start of five days of debate on the deal May struck with the EU last November, which has been strongly opposed from lawmakers on all sides.

She set out further clarifications she hopes will win over her own Conservative MPs and Northern Ireland’s Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which props up her government in parliament.

The most controversial element of the agreement is the “backstop” arrangement, which could see Northern Ireland continue to follow certain EU trade rules after Brexit to avoid bor-

der checks with Ireland.

The government promised a greater say by British politicians, including devolved politicians in Northern Ireland, over the operation of the backstop, as well as guarantees on the free flow of trade between the province and mainland Britain.

But DUP deputy leader Nigel Dodds said the proposals were “meaningless and cosmetic”. May is also seeking further assurances on the temporary nature of the backstop from European leaders, which she hopes to deliver before the vote next week—but they insist they will not reopen the deal.

The prime minister has already postponed the vote once—in December—to avoid defeat by MPs, but insists next week’s will go ahead.

No deal fears

May has warned that if MPs reject her deal, Britain would still leave the EU on 29 March, with or without any new arrangements. Britain triggered two-year legal withdrawal process in March 2017 that will run its course unless London delays or revokes it. One of her own



Britain’s Prime Minister Theresa May leaves from 10 Downing Street in central London on 9 January, 2019, before heading to the House of Commons to attend the weekly Prime Minister’s Questions (PMQs). **PHOTO: AFP**

ministers this week raised the idea of a delay, which has been the source of speculation for weeks in Brussels, but May has rejected the idea. Both this week’s revolts were driven by Conservative MPs seeking to prevent a “no deal” scenario, which they fear would cause huge economic disruption.

Late on Tuesday, opposition MPs and more than a dozen former Conservative ministers voted to restrict the government’s taxation powers in a “no deal” scenario.—AFP ■

Australia FM visits Thailand amid Saudi asylum seeker saga

BANGKOK (Thailand)—Australia's foreign minister Marise Payne met her Thai counterpart on Thursday, as her country appeared poised to offer to asylum to a young Saudi woman who fled her family to Thailand in a drama relayed in real-time over Twitter.

Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun's attempt to flee the ultra-conservative kingdom has become a cause celebre for rights groups since the 18-year-old landed in Bangkok from Kuwait over the weekend. Thai authorities had threatened to deport her but with the help of activists, diplomats and a hastily opened Twitter account Qunun launched an impassioned campaign for asylum. As global interest surged, Thai authorities backed down from the deportation threat, handing her into the care of the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) in Bangkok, which has urged Australia to offer resettlement. Payne's scheduled visit comes after Canberra dropped strong hints it would accept Qunun. Australia on Wednesday said the UNHCR had studied her case and designated her as a legitimate refugee.

Qunun alleges abuse by her family, while rights groups also said she had renounced Islam,



Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne (L) shakes hands with Thai Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai (R) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok on 10 January, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

risking prosecution in conservative Saudi Arabia. Her father, who denies mistreating her, will remain in Bangkok "until he knows which country she is going to", Thailand's immigration police chief Surachate Hakparn told reporters on Thursday. The Saudi embassy in Bangkok has said it did not demand the teenager's deportation and that the case was a family affair. Saudi Arabia has

come under fire since the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the country's consulate in Istanbul last year.

No sanctuary in Thailand

In a statement ahead of her trip, Payne did not mention Qunun's case. But she said she would lobby for the return of former Bahraini national footballer Hakeem Alarabi, who was grant-

ed refugee status in Australia after fleeing a crackdown during the Arab Spring. He is wanted in Bahrain on charges linked to rioting, which he denies. Alarabi was detained in Bangkok in November while trying to go on vacation with his wife. Qunun's case has revived interest in the plight of the footballer, who has been held in detention since his arrival in Thailand. —AFP ■

Australian charged with sending dangerous parcels to diplomatic missions

SYDNEY (Australia)—An Australian man was charged on Thursday with sending dozens of packages believed to contain asbestos to embassies and consulates around the country.

Savas Avan appeared in a Melbourne court after being arrested at his home in rural Victoria state on Wednesday, the same day several consulates in Melbourne received the suspicious packages, authorities said.

Local media reported that Avan, 49, attended court wearing a T-shirt featuring a character from the animated film Minions, with the slogan "more than meets the eye".

Police allege he sent 38 parcels containing a dangerous substance to consulates and embassies in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

Local media quoted court documents saying the substance was asbestos, a cancer-causing material once widely used in construction, but a police spokeswoman declined to confirm or deny the reports.

Police did not put forward a motive for Avan's alleged actions.

He was charged with sending dangerous materials through the post. The charges carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison, police said.

Avan was ordered held without bail and is due to appear in court again in early March. On Wednesday, emergency services raced to a string of diplomatic facilities in Melbourne that had received the suspect packages.

There was no obvious pattern to countries targeted, with consulates of the United States, China, Italy, India, Japan and New Zealand suffering scares.

The first suspect packages were found at three consulates and embassies in Sydney and Canberra earlier in the week, leading the Department of Foreign Affairs to send notes to all diplomatic missions on Tuesday "alerting them to the possibility of suspicious packages being delivered by mail". —AFP ■

N Korea's Kim voices eagerness to talk with Trump again

BEIJING—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un pledged to make efforts to hold fresh talks with US President Donald Trump on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula during a recent meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, China's state-run media said on Thursday.

During the meeting, which took place on Tuesday at a time when Pyongyang's denuclearization negotiations with Washington are at a stalemate, Xi and Kim also agreed to work together to resolve issues related to the divided peninsula.

In his New Year's address on 1 January, Kim said, "I am ready to meet the US president again anytime," while promising not to make nuclear weapons in the future. Kim, however, warned that North Korea may seek a "new path" if Washington maintains pressure on Pyongyang, indicating that it may return to a policy of pursuing weapons of mass destruction. Speculation is rife that Trump and



Motorcycles lead a car believed to be carrying North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Beijing on 9 January, 2019. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Kim may hold a second summit early this year. The North Korean leader was accompanied to China by Kim Yong Chol, who has led negotiations with the United States, and Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho, the Korean Central News Agency reported.

At their historic meeting in Singapore in June 2018, Kim and Trump agreed that Washington

would provide security guarantees to Pyongyang in exchange for its "complete denuclearization." Negotiations between the United States and North Korea, however, have been at an impasse, against a backdrop of the Trump administration's skepticism about Kim's intent to give up nuclear weapons.

North Korea has called on

the United States to ease economic sanctions aimed at preventing Pyongyang from developing ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons, saying it has already started to take concrete measures toward denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

China has expressed support for North Korea's position, with Kim recently committing to put more emphasis on rebuilding his nation's economy, which is considered to be sluggish due largely to the sanctions, than on strengthening its nuclear capacities. Xi told Kim that China hopes the United States and North Korea "will move forward together," according to the Chinese media. Beijing and Pyongyang fought together in the 1950-1953 Korean War against US-led United Nations forces. The two countries have been described as "blood brothers." Washington and Pyongyang have no diplomatic ties and remain technically at war.—Kyodo News ■

Trump officially taps former coal lobbyist to lead EPA

WASHINGTON (United States) — US President Donald Trump on Wednesday formally nominated Andrew Wheeler, a former coal industry lobbyist, to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.

The nomination of Wheeler, who is currently the acting EPA chief, requires Senate confirmation. Wheeler, 54, has been the interim agency administrator since Scott Pruitt resigned in July amid a flurry of ethics scandals, including over excessive spending of federal funds while in office.

If confirmed, Wheeler is expected to pursue Trump's agenda of rolling back environmental regulations put in place by the Republican leader's predecessor Barack Obama.

Among the measures taken under Trump are the scrapping of anti-pollution



The acting administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency, Andrew Wheeler — seen here testifying on Capitol Hill — has now been nominated to take up the job permanently. **PHOTO: AFP**

rules for coal-fired power plants and the launch of a procedure to soften emissions standards for cars after 2025. That makes Wheeler a popular choice for the energy industry itself — and a disastrous candidate for environmental activists.

“Putting a coal lobbyist like Andrew Wheeler in charge of the EPA is like

giving a thief the keys to a bank vault,” the Sierra Club, a top environmental defence group, said in November. “He should be swiftly rejected by any senator who cares about protecting the health of their constituents.”

In November, Trump had vowed to push Wheeler's nomination forward, saying he was doing a

“fantastic job” as acting EPA chief. The EPA is also looking to roll back clean water rules protecting the nation's waterways and wetlands, fulfilling a pledge from Trump to farmers.

The agency has also proposed looser restrictions on mercury and other toxic air pollutants from power plants.

All of these measures will take years to implement. Deregulation is just as time-consuming as instituting regulations. And some of the EPA proposals have been met with court action designed to block them. Wheeler, 54, launched his career at the EPA as a lawyer, before heading to Congress as a Senate staffer. As a lobbyist, he represented coal producers, as well as companies in the chemical and uranium industries. —AFP ■



The animals became stuck in the town of Roddickton-Bide Arm, Newfoundland after nearby waters suddenly froze over nearly a week ago, preventing their return to the ocean. **PHOTO: AFP**

Canadian Atlantic village seeks help with seal invasion

OTTAWA (Canada) — A Canadian Atlantic coast town asked for help from the federal fisheries department on Wednesday to help get rid of some 40 stranded seals wreaking havoc, and blocking roads and doors to homes and businesses.

The animals became stuck in the town of Roddickton-Bide Arm, Newfoundland after nearby waters suddenly froze over nearly a week ago, preventing their return to the ocean. Because it is illegal to interfere with marine mammals under

Canadian law it has led to some awkward face offs with the unyielding seals. They also bite. Two have been accidentally struck by cars at night, and several townsfolk have expressed concerns to local media that the chubby, big-eyed beasts may soon starve without access to food. “We’re seeing them more lethargic, they’re not moving as fast,” Roddickton-Bide Arm mayor Sheila Fitzgerald told *The Northern Pen* newspaper. “It’s really disheartening for people to watch these animals suffer.”—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V CHERRY VESTA VOY. NO. (005N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CHERRY VESTA VOY. NO. (005N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
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AGENT FOR: M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING
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INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited by Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports for the supply of Medical Products, Consumable in the (2018-2019) Budget year.

Tender documents are available during office hours at the Procurement and Supplying Division, Department of Medical Services office No (4), Ministry of Health and Sports Commencing from (14.1.2019).

Sealed bids are to be submitted to the office, not later than (15-2-2019), 15:00 hour, after which no bid will be accepted. No telegraph/telex proposal will be accepted.

For detail information please contact the Phone No. 067-3411510, 067-3411544, Procurement and Supply Division Office, Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports.

Procurement and Supply Division
Ministry of Health and Sports

Invitation for Price Quotations

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Electric Power Project (EPP). The IDA No. of the financing agreement is No. 5306 MM. The Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy in its role as implementing agency of the EPP, intends to apply the portion of the proceeds of this credit towards eligible payments under the contracts for which this invitation for Quotation is issued.

MOEE now invites eligible suppliers to express the interest in supplying the following items.

Item No.	Reference No.	Description	Quantity	Units
1.	G-10 (Tender No. 35/ EPGE/ 2018-2019)	Laptop Computer	20	Nos

Eligible Suppliers having expressed interest will receive a Request for Quotation by E-mail, sealed Quotations will be submitted to the address below at the latest at the deadline (Tuesday 29th January 2019 at 2:00PM Myanmar Time), after which no Quotations will be accepted.

Suppliers will be selected following the shopping Method as per the “Guide for procurement of Goods, words and non-consulting services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers dated January 2011 (revised July 2014).

Please submit sealed Quotation to; U Khin Maung Win, Managing Director, Electric Power Generation Enterprise Office No. (27), Nay Pyi Taw, for detailed information please contact to U Soe Win, Chief Engineer, Gas Turbine section, mobile phone +959428601033 and U Aung San Win, General Manager, Procurement section, mobile phone +959457733044 or Office phone +95678104319, E-mail: procurementepge.wb@gmail.com. Please indicate your E-mail address as only electronic copies of the ITQ will be send.

Wedding Announcement

*Both parents are pleased to
announce the marriage agreement of*

KHIN KHIN SAN AUNG

Daughter of

AUNG MYINT + SAN SAN MYINT,

No. 47, Lanthit Street,
Lanmadaw Township, Yangon,
to

ROCKY KAW

Son of

(PO YONE KAW) + WAI WAI DAW,

14127 Dartmouth CT, Fontana,
CA 92336,

*in the presence of both parents,
relatives and elders in the Yangon
East District Court on 8th January,
2019, and the wedding reception
took place at Maha Thein Taw Gyi on
10th January, 2019.*

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Elvis Express: fans rock n' roll their way to outback festival

SYDNEY (Australia) — Elvis Presley may have “left the building” four decades ago, but his spirit was alive and well at Sydney’s main station on Thursday, as hundreds of fans boarded trains to an outback festival celebrating their idol.

Dressed in colourful sequined jumpsuits, blue suede shoes and having used copious amounts of hairspray, lookalikes sang and danced to hits belted out by tribute artists.

The party atmosphere was a fitting tribute to the cultural and musical legacy of “The King”, whose appeal has spanned decades and generations, and reached far beyond his American roots.

The revellers at Central station were boarding the “Elvis Express” and “Blue Suede Express”, two trains put on to take them to the small outback town of Parkes, 300 kilometres (190 miles) west of Sydney.

“He was just a gorgeous guy and I just loved all the music and his love songs,” said Lynette Mar, who was set to board the 1950s-era diesel “Blue Suede Express” to celebrate her 60th

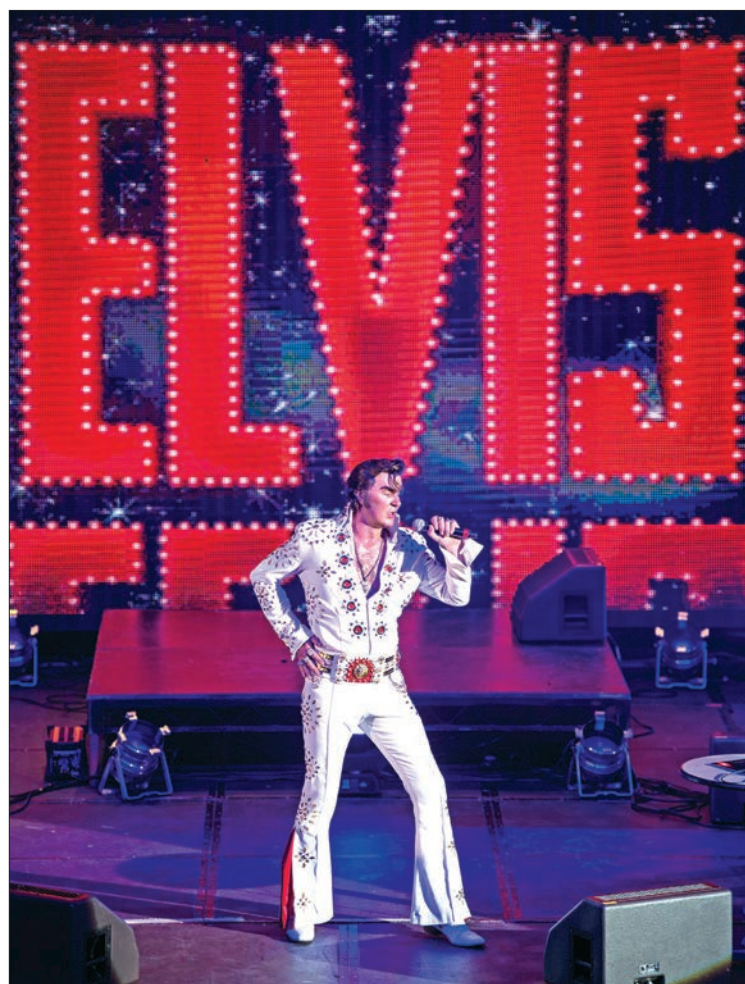
birthday with friends in Parkes. **“It’s just great dance music.”**

Each year, Parkes — whose radio telescope played a pivotal role in bringing Neil Armstrong’s 1969 moon landing to the world — transforms into a haven for Elvis enthusiasts when it hosts a five-day tribute festival.

First held in 1993 to coincide with the singer’s 8 January birthday, the Elvis Festival has placed the mining town on the tourist map and earned it the moniker “Elvis Capital of Australia”.

Regular attendee Jenny Dollin — who wore a plastic cap shaped like Elvis’ pompadour hairstyle, a white tunic top and bell-bottoms — said she loved the energy and excitement of the festival.

“I go to Parkes because it’s so much fun. We have a lovely time, I love the Elvises,” Dollin told AFP. Over 25,000 visitors are expected to descend on Parkes to take part in the festivities, more than twice the population of the town. “The people at Parkes are so friendly,” Dollin said. “Everyone on the train is very friendly and it’s just a really good time.” —AFP ■



Elvis Presley tribute artist Jason Dale performs on the opening day of ‘Elvis Celebration 2018’ at the Blackpool Winter Gardens in north west England on 29 June, 2018. The three day festival to celebrate Elvis Presley, brings together many tribute artists, traders and fans of the ‘the King’. **PHOTO: AFP**



A picture taken on 28 July, 2017 shows a film crew shooting a scene of the movie — currently with the working title “To See Stalin” — in a forest near Voskresensk, outside Moscow. **PHOTO: AFP**

Patriotic tank film busts Russian box office record

MOSCOW (Russia) — A Russian war film that tells of a Soviet soldier’s “devotion to the Motherland”, the latest in a line of state-funded patriotic blockbusters, has broken box office records after its New Year release.

“T-34”, named after a tank used in World War II, had the best opening weekend of all time for a Russian-made movie with around 713 million rubles (\$10.6 million) in takings, according to an industry newsletter.

“This is a drama about how a concentration camp prisoner escapes from fascist captivity in an attempt to preserve his life, love and devotion to the Motherland,” a culture ministry statement said.

Director Alexei Sidorov said the aim of the picture was to “tell a war story in a way that attracts young people and does not provoke objections from those who still remember the Great Patriotic War,” the statement added.

Memories of the Great Pa-

triotic War, as the conflict with Nazi Germany is known in Russia, have become a key tool in promoting patriotism during President Vladimir Putin’s long years in power.

Criticism of the official heroic narrative of the war, in which an estimated 26 million Soviet citizens died, are discouraged or silenced. Also released over the New Year was “The Holiday”, a black comedy set during the siege of Leningrad, one of the war’s darkest moments.

But in contrast to “T-34”, which has been heavily trailed in state media, director Alexei Krasovskiy decided to screen his film exclusively over YouTube after officials condemned his project, requesting donations from viewers. Lawmaker Sergei Boyarsky said the idea was a “blasphemy and a shame” when it was reported in the Russian press last year.

The privately funded film has racked up almost 800,000 views on

YouTube, compared to 1.5 million in theatres for “T-34”.

Films require a permit for a cinematic release from the Russian ministry of culture.

The ministry has been known to reject or delay permits for projects deemed problematic, such as the British comedy “The Death of Stalin”, which was pulled at the last minute in 2018.

The government has funded a number of patriotism-promoting pictures in recent years, not just focused on the Soviet war victory. In December 2017 a film based on the Soviet Union’s unexpected 1972 Olympic basketball victory over the US became the highest-grossing Russian film of all time.

And in November last year the rom-com “Crimean Bridge: Made with Love!” hit theatres shortly before the structure became a flashpoint in a naval standoff between Russia and Ukraine.—AFP ■

Amazon’s Bezos, world’s wealthiest man, to divorce

NEW YORK (United States) — Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, rated the world’s wealthiest person, announced on Wednesday on Twitter that he and his wife MacKenzie Bezos were divorcing after a long separation.

“We want to make people aware of a development in our lives,” Jeff Bezos, 54, and MacKenzie Bezos, 48, said in joint statement posted to Bezos’ Twitter feed.

“As our family and close friends know, after a long period of loving exploration and trial separation, we have decided to divorce and continue our shared lives as friends.”

The Bezoses said they felt “incredibly lucky” for their 25 years together and would remain involved with each other as close

friends and parents. “Though the labels might be different, we remain a family and we remain cherished friends,” the statement continued. MacKenzie Bezos is the author of two books, including “The Testing of Luther Albright,” a psychological novel about the

challenges facing a Sacramento, California father and his family after an earthquake.

She was one of the first employees of Amazon at its founding and in 2014 launched Bystander Revolution, an anti-bullying organization.—AFP ■



Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and his wife Mackenzie Bezos. **PHOTO: AFP**

‘Repeating’ radio waves from deep space baffle scientists

PARIS (France)—Astronomers in Canada have detected a mysterious volley of radio waves from far outside our galaxy, according to two studies published on Wednesday in *Nature*. What corner of the universe these powerful waves come from and the forces that produced them remain unknown. The so-called repeating fast radio bursts were identified during the trial run last summer of a built-for-purpose telescope running at only a fraction of its capacity. Known by its acronym CHIME, the world’s most powerful radio telescope—spread across an area as big as a football pitch—is poised to detect many more of the enigmatic pulses now that it is fully operational.

“At the end of the year, we may have found 1,000 bursts,” said Deborah Good, a PhD student at the University of British Columbia and one of 50 scientists from five institutions involved in the research. Fast radio bursts (FRBs) flash only for a micro-instant, but can emit as much energy as the Sun does in 10,000 years. Exactly what causes these high-energy surges of long waves at the far end of the electromagnetic spectrum remains the subject of intense debate. More than 60 bursts have been catalogued since 2007, but only one other—observed in 2012 at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico—was a repeater.

“FRBs, it seems, are likely generated in dense, turbulent regions of host galaxies,” Shriharsh Tendulkar, a corresponding author for both studies and an astronomer at McGill University, told AFP. Cosmic convulsions created by the turbulent gas clouds that give rise to stars, or stellar explosions such as supernovae, are both possible incubators. But consecutive radio bursts are a

special case.

No little green men

“The fact that the bursts are repeated rules out any cataclysmic models in which the source is destroyed while generating the burst,” Tendulkar added. “An FRB emitted from a merger of two neutron stars, or a neutron star and a black hole, for example, cannot repeat.” It is not yet clear whether the breeding grounds of repeating bursts are different from those that produce only a single radio pulse. Significantly, the 2012 and 2018 “repeaters” have strikingly similar properties. CHIME—Canadian Hydrogen Intensity Mapping Experiment—also spotted a dozen single burst radio waves, but with an unusual profile.

Most FRBs spotted so far have wavelengths of a few centimetres, but these had intervals of nearly a metre, opening up a whole new line of inquiry for astronomers. Could these enigmatic radio pulses point to intelligence elsewhere in the Universe? Might they be messages in a bottle? “It is extremely, extremely unlikely,” said Tendulkar. “As a scientist I can’t rule it out 100 percent. But intelligent life is not on the minds of any astronomer as a source of these FRBs.”

Constructed in British Columbia, CHIME is composed of four, 100-metre long half-pipe cylinders of metal mesh which reconstruct images of the sky by processing the radio signals recorded by more than a thousand antennas. “This signal processing system is the largest of any telescope on Earth,” the researchers said in a communique. The other institutions with leading roles are the University of Toronto, the National Research Council of Canada, and the Perimeter Institute.—AFP ■

NASA to continue using Russia’s Soyuz spacecraft — Roscosmos head

MOSCOW—NASA will continue to use Russia’s Soyuz spacecraft to bring astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS), director general of Russia’s state space corporation Roscosmos Dmitriy Rogozin told RBC news agency in an interview published on Thursday. “Statements made by Americans that they will soon use their own spacecraft, turned out to be somewhat hasty,” Rogozin said. “We now have requests from our US partners to continue using our spacecraft for transporting their astronauts. This will be beneficial for us as well,” Rogozin said. Rogozin added that Roscosmos plans to organize space tourist flights on Soyuz and cooperates with many partners, including the United Arab Emirates. Such programs and delivering astronauts to the ISS may bring “hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue every year,” he noted.—Tass ■

Older people, conservatives more likely to share fake news: study

WASHINGTON (United States)—Facebook users aged 65 plus and conservatives are more likely to share fake news on the platform than younger or more liberal counterparts, according to a new study published on Wednesday.

Researchers from Princeton University and New York University analyzed the Facebook posts of nearly 1,200 people who agreed to share their data in the aftermath of the 2016 US presidential election.

They then compared links the respondents had shared on Facebook with several lists—including one compiled by BuzzFeed—of websites known to share false information.

The study, published in *Science Advances*, found less than only 8.5 percent of respondents shared a link from one of these websites.

However, those that did tended to be older and self-identified as being on the conservative end of the political spectrum.

In fact, users over 65—regardless of political affiliations—shared “nearly seven times as many articles from fake news domains” as 18 to 29-year-olds, the youngest age group studied.

“No other demographic characteristic seems to have a consistent effect on sharing fake news,” the authors reported. “It



During the 2016 US presidential campaign, researchers from Princeton University and New York University surveyed over 2,711 Facebook users, of whom 49 per cent agreed to share their profile data when asked after the election. **PHOTO: AFP**

is possible that an entire cohort of Americans, now in their 60s and beyond, lacks the level of digital media literacy necessary to reliably determine the trustworthiness of news encountered online,” they suggested.

The authors also suggested the impact of aging on memory could have an effect.

“Under this account, memory deteriorates with age in a way that particularly undermines resistance to “illusions of truth,” they wrote.

Although the study found that Republicans shared more fake news than Democrats, and ideologically, conservatives shared the most fake news stories—this could be due to the fact that most fake news articles produced during the 2016 pres-

idential campaign favored US President Donald Trump.

“Had the slant of fake news been pro-Clinton instead of pro-Trump, it is possible that more liberals than conservatives would have shared this content,” the authors wrote in a *Washington Post* op-ed.

Facebook has been hammered for failing to stop information manipulation and misinformation, including from Russian organizations during the 2016 US election.

Its leaders have promised more transparency in hearings in the US Congress and elsewhere, and the network has stepped up efforts to find and root out fake accounts and foreign influence campaigns.—AFP ■

Childhood abuse increases risk of suicide in adulthood: research

LONDON—Adults who as children experienced physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or neglect are at least two to three times more likely to attempt suicide in later life, the largest research review ever carried out on the topic revealed on Wednesday.

Psychologists at the University of Manchester and University of South Wales published their findings after an analysis of 68 studies from around the world involving 262,000 adults aged 18 years or older, who were exposed to childhood abuse and neglect.

They found that suicide attempts were three times more likely for people who experienced sexual abuse as a child, and two and a half times more likely for those who experienced

physical abuse as a child, or who experienced emotional abuse or neglect as a child.

Their research published in the latest edition of *Psychological Medicine* showed children who experienced multiple abuse are as much as five times higher to attempt suicide. People not in contact with mental health clinicians were found to be at the highest level of risk.

Dr Maria Panagioti, from the University of Manchester, also based at a patient safety translational research centre in the city, led the research team.

She said: “Around one adult in every three has experienced abuse as a child. This study conclusively gives us solid evidence that childhood abuse and neglect is associated with increased likelihood that they will

be at risk of suicide as adults.”

Panagioti said current treatment for people with suicidal behaviour usually centers around cognitive behavioural therapy, adding: “But that assumes people will seek help themselves. This research identifies that people who are not under the care of clinicians are at risk.” She said a new approach is needed to identify these people, and to focus efforts on effective community intervention.

Dr Ioannis Angelakis from the University of South Wales said: “These findings not only provided a clear picture of the connection between abuse or neglect in childhood and suicide attempts later on in life, but also recognised that efficient interventions should take a broader community-based approach.”—Xinhua ■

Mandalay University to launch Myanmar martial arts course

TO teach self-defense techniques to students, the Mandalay University will launch a course on Thaing, a Myanmar martial art, from 15 January, said an official with the Myanmar Thaing Federation (MTF).

The Thaing course will be supervised by the MTF and the Mandalay University Students' Union (MUSU).

The course is being offered free of charge to interested students from the Mandalay University.

Forms for the course need to be submitted to the Mandalay University Students' Union Office by 14 January, said an official.

Thaing, which can also be termed as "total combat", is an indigenous martial of ancient Myanmar.

Well-known martial arts Bando and Banshay are also branches of Thaing.



Practitioners showcase their skills at the Thaing course in Sagaing. PHOTO: MYANMAR THAING FEDERATION

Beyond the martial elements of Thaing, its practitioners learn to incorporate ethi-

cal principles such as humility, patience, tolerance, integrity, loyalty, courage, knowledge,

physical and spiritual strength, and love of family.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

MNL matches to be broadcast live on MRTV-4, My Sports

TWO matches played among the Myanmar National League (MNL) teams will be broadcast live every week on MRTV-4, said a source close to the MNL.

The other matches of the Myanmar National League will also be streamed live on local sports provider My Sports' Facebook page, said the source. The 2019 season of the Myanmar National League will run from 12 January to 15 September. Week one will feature a face-off between MNL heavyweights, the Ayeyawady F.C. and the Yadanarbon F.C. Yadanarbon was the champion in the previous season of the league. The match line-up for the week includes Yangon United vs Hanthawady United, Sagaing United vs former champion Shan United, Dagon F.C. vs Zwegapin United, Southern Myanmar F.C. vs newcomer Chinland F.C., and Rakhine United vs Magway F.C.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Blow for Real Madrid as Courtois suffers hip injury

MADRID, (Spain) — Real Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois has sustained a hip injury and could miss crunch La Liga games against Real Betis and Sevilla later this month. Madrid confirmed on Wednesday that Courtois has been diagnosed with a grade one injury, the least severe possible, and he was left out of the squad to face Leganes in the Copa del Rey.

"Following tests carried out on our player Thibaut Courtois today by the Real Madrid Medical

Services, he has been diagnosed with a grade 1 injury in the left iliac muscle. His recovery will be monitored," a club statement read. Real sit in a surprising fifth place in the La Liga table, ten points behind leaders Barcelona and as well as the first leg against Leganes on Wednesday, Courtois is likely to miss Sunday's league match away to Real Betis.

Madrid then play the return fixture against Leganes on 16 January before hosting third-

placed Sevilla in the Spanish top flight three days later.

Courtois is likely to be replaced by Keylor Navas, who was named UEFA's best goalkeeper of last season after he helped Madrid win a third Champions League title in a row.

The club still signed Courtois from Chelsea last summer, however, and the Belgian has been first choice since Santiago Solari was appointed coach in November.—AFP ■



Real Madrid's Belgian goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois warms up before the Spanish League football match between Real Madrid CF and Real Sociedad at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on 6 January, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

Man City hit nine past Burton to cruise towards League Cup final

MANCHESTER (United Kingdom) — Holders Manchester City can look forward to defending the League Cup in next month's final at Wembley as Gabriel Jesus struck four goals in a 9-0 thrashing of Burton Albion in their semi-final, first leg on Wednesday.

Kevin de Bruyne, Oleksandr Zinchenko, Phil Foden, Kyle Walker and Riyad Mahrez were also on target against Nigel Clough's League One side as City ensured their visit to the Pirelli Stadium on 23 January is a mere formality.

After also thrashing Rotherham 7-0 in the FA Cup on Sunday with a much-changed side, Pep Guardiola was able to again hand a rest to a number of his key players but named a strong side with De Bruyne continuing his comeback from injury. And the Belgian set the tone for the evening by heading City into a fifth-minute lead as he timed his run into the box perfectly to head home David Silva's cross. Clough admitted before the game it would take a "miracle" for Burton to blunt

the Premier League champions' might over two legs.

So it proved, but the visitors missed a glorious chance to get straight back on level terms when Marcus Harness blasted over Lucas Akins's cross when completely unmarked inside the penalty box. It took City until the half hour mark to double their advantage, but a glut of three goals in seven minutes followed to put the tie to bed before the break. Jesus headed home his first from close range after Bradley Collins had denied Leroy Sane before the Brazilian slotted home Silva's cushioned pass via the inside of the post. City didn't need any luck, but still got some when Zinchenko's intended cross then looped over Collins to make it 4-0.

Other sides may have slacked off in the second period, but with competitions for places so fierce among Guardiola's side, the hosts were ruthless to match the Catalan's biggest ever win as a coach. Jesus powered home a header to complete his second hat-trick of the season.—AFP ■