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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Vice President U Henry Van Thio takes stock of tourism measures in Ayeyawady Region

Vice President U Henry Van Thio and his entourage stroll along the Chaungtha Beach as he inspects measures taken to develop the tourism sector. **PHOTO: MNA**

VICE President U Henry Van Thio took stock of measures taken to develop the tourism sector in Chaungtha and Shwethaungyan in Ayeyawady Region yesterday.

He met with local officials at the Amazing Chaungtha Hotel yesterday, and heard a report on plans for construction of the Coastal Road and the benefits from the project, once it is completed.

The Vice President, his entourage, which comprised Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region U Hla Moe Aung, Deputy Ministers Maj-Gen Myint Nwe, U Tin Myint, and U Hla Kyaw, and officials also discussed the construction of a road linking Ngayokekaung and Yangon, upgrading the Yangon-Pathein Road, as well as the Coastal Road project.

After hearing the report, the Vice President stressed the need to educate local people about how the project will benefit them.

> "The Coastal Road will help improve transportation, attract investment, raise socio-economic conditions, and develop tourism and agro-based production and the fishery sector. "

Upon completion, the project must satisfy the local people and help in environmental conservation, he said.

Once completed, the road will contribute to the economic development of the Ayeyawady Region, said the Vice President.

The 170-mile long Coastal Road is a strategic road which will link the western sea coast of Rakhine State and the Ayeyawady Region. The Coastal Road will help improve transportation, attract investment, raise socio-economic conditions, and develop tourism and agro-based production and the fishery sector. It will also be important in terms of the security on the western front of Myanmar.

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Archival Photograph Exhibit of Chola Temples opens in Yangon

DISPLAYING for the purpose of showcasing the cultural heritages of India to the public, Photo Exhibition on the Chola Temples of India was opened at the National Museum in Dagon Township, Yangon Region, yesterday .

Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Saurabh Kumar, and Deputy Chief of Mission Dr. Sumit Seth opened the exhibition titled "The Grandeur of Chola Temples" by cutting ceremonial ribbons, and then lighted oil lamps.

Mr. Saurabh Kumar then delivered a speech.

Afterwards, Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko gave a speech, saying India and Myanmar have a long and proud shared history filled with common aims for both peoples' benefits.

Cultural exchange programmes are being conducted, and today's event marks an important step in fostering the mutual understanding between India and Myanmar, preserving harmony and friendship related to different religions and faiths of the two nations, the Union Minster said.

Ms. Asawari Bapat, Director of the Culture Department of the Embassy of India, then explained about the Photo Exhibition on the Chola Temples of India.

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko, Mr. Saurabh Kumar and officials then observed the photographs of Dravidian style of temple architecture on display at the event.

The opening ceremony was also attended by officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, officials from the Embassy of India, ambassadors of foreign embassies in Myanmar and invited guests.

The archival photographs exhibition will last until 7 March, and entry is free of charge.

The Great Living Chola Temples are a group of Chola dynasty era temples built during 8th to 12th century CE. They are listed as a World Heritage Site of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1987, and represent an outstanding creative achievement in the architectural conception of the pure form of the Dravidan (pyramid) type of temple.

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko visits the exhibition of Archival Photographs of the Chola Temples of India. **PHOTO : HLA MOE**

The archival photographs exhibition was organized by the Embassy of India with support from India's Ministry of Culture and in collaboration with the Centre for Art & Archaeology American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) and the National Museum (Yangon).—Min Thit (MNA) ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

First-ever Elephant Museum opens in Yangon

AN Elephant Museum was opened with the aim of reducing the elephant-human conflict, said Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win in Yangon yesterday.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the museum, where seized ivory, elephant parts and wildlife parts were also destroyed, the Union Minister said the museum was the first of its kind in Myanmar, and it was opened as a gesture hailing the World Wildlife Day.

He then elaborated on the other goals: the protection of wildlife in their habitats, greater public awareness and involvement in eliminating of wild elephant poaching and trafficking in elephants and their parts, broader knowledge of the tamed elephant management, the nature of elephants and the relation between men and the world's largest land mammals.

Million-year old fossils of elephant-like mammals, a pair of ivory of finest quality, equipment including radio collars and trap cameras, crafts made of ivory and elephant bones that are barred from trading, a complete set of an elephant's skeleton and rate items such as the black ivory are on display at the museum.

Although many items are prohibited from touching, the museum lets the handling of some items for educational purpose, he said.

The Union Minister and officials formally opened the museum at the Natural History Museum, and visited the booths. He also delivered address at the second destruction of seized ivory, elephant parts and wildlife parts, held for the wider public awareness of the global rise in poaching and trafficking of animals such as tigers, elephants, gaurs, pangolins and golden dears, and the public involvement in wildlife protection and conservation.

The first destruction was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 4 October 2018. At the current ceremony, illegal wildlife products will be crushed into pieces. The value of the annual worldwide wildlife trafficking is between US$ 20 billion and US$ 30 billion, which stands as the fourth largest illegal trade after drug trafficking, counterfeiting and trafficking in persons.

At the ceremony, 219 pieces of ivory, 527 bone sections of tigers and leopards, 800 horns of various animals, 134.72 kilos of pangolin scales, 5.5 kilos of turtle shells and dried elephant trunks, valued at K 1700 million or USD 1.1 million were destroyed.

Present at the ceremony were Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein, regional cabinet members, MPs of the two houses, diplomats, representatives of the embassies, officials of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, resident representatives of UN agencies, representatives of NGOs, sister organizations, staff of Forest Department and guests.—*MNA* ■ *(Translation:TMT)*

Union Minister U Ohn Win and officials attend the opening ceremony of the Elephant Museum in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO : MNA**

VP U Henry Van Thio takes stock of …

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Following the meeting, the Vice President and his party inspected the beautification and cleanliness efforts along the Chaungtha Beach, recreational arrangements, and sales of local products.

They also visited the View Point of the Kyauk Maung Na Ma Ocean View Hotel and admired the view.

Afterwards, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and his party went to Shwethaungyan and met with local authorities.

At the meeting, Ayeyawdy Region Development Affairs Minister U Kyaw Myint reported on the region's tourism sector, including the opening of hotels, the maintenance of the beach, services for local and foreign travelers, training sessions for building the capacity of human resources, and plans for expansion of tourist destinations.

After hearing the report, the Vice President urged officials to construct more facilities, including car parks, public restrooms, and gymnasiums, in anticipation of more travelers than last year.

People make their day at the Chaungtha Beach. **PHOTO: MNA**

He also stressed the need to draw the Tourism Development Master Plan based on the current situation and in coordination with tourism organizations. The Vice President arrived back in Yangon yesterday afternoon. —MNA

(Translated by GNLM)

Union Minister praises MHAA for Strategic Plan 2019-2023

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe yesterday praised the Myanmar Health Assistants Association (MHAA) for launching its Strategic Plan 2019-2023, which is also its first roadmap.

Speaking at the launching ceremony at Pullman Hotel in Yangon, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe stressed the vitality of making contacts with sister organizations, assigning specific duties and conducting cooperative efforts for achieving fine results.

He suggested an inclusive meeting in which all the departments and sections under the Ministry of Health and Sports, which also had their own strategies and projects, and the bodies concerned with the MHAA's strategic plan and the MHAA were participants.

By holding such meetings, the participants could effectively use the funds through the practice of reinforcing one another and avoiding repetition of activities in the same place and overlapping, he noted.

"The ministry-compiled Health Partner's Profile (2018) includes sector-wise and region-wise activities of INGOs, NGOs and other bodies," he explained.

"MHAA should further cooperate with the ministry in enhancing public health awareness campaigns," he noted.

"The noble approaches including company spirit, cooperative spirit, and mutual understanding and respect are the foundation of success," he said, and promised the ministry's assistance for all stakeholders in developing the health sector through cooperative efforts.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe and team then viewed the documentary photos of the association.

Also present on the occasion were chairmen of the medicine and medical bodies, officials and guests.—MNA

(Translated by TMT)

Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe observes a poster at the Myanmar Health Assistants Association's ceremony. **PHOTO: MNA**

World Hearing Day commemorated at Yangon's ear, nose and throat hospital

The city of Yangon commemorated World Hearing Day at the Otorhinolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery Specialist Hospital in Tamway Township yesterday.

Speaking at the first event of this kind in Yangon was Prof. Dr. Zaw Than Tun Director-General of the Department of Medical Research. He said as technology improves everyday it becomes easier to provide health protection. The event had planned for performances by children with hearing aids, those who have received ear surgeries, and children with Down Syndrome, said Dr. Zaw Than Tun. He said there will also be a question and answer session on ear health, an information sharing programme, and free ear check-ups to commemorate "Check Your Hearing", the slogan for this year's World Hearing Day.

Next to deliver a speech was Prof. Dr. Aye Aung, Vice President of the Myanmar Medical Association (Central), who explained that the global campaign's objective is to share information and promote actions towards the prevention of hearing loss and improved hearing care.

Another speech was delivered by Prof. Dr. Khin Hla Hla of the Otorhinolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery Department of University of Medicine 1, Yangon. She said the number of people with hearing difficulties is on the rise and this has negatively affected people's health, business, education and other aspects of their lives. She said while there are many reasons for the increase in hearing difficulties, many of them are preventable. She said this is due to people's limited knowledge on taking care of their own health, and thus, this event intends to raise awareness on these critical issues.

Yesterday's event was organized by Myanmar Medical Association (Central), the Otorhinolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery group, and ORL-HNS Society with valuable support from Hearing International, IFOS, AANOA, IAPA, Tamway School for the Deaf, and Mary Chapman School for the Deaf.

The Otorhinolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery Specialist Hospital now has a separate audiology unit that tends to children and adults. An Under 12 Hearing Center was opened on 4 September 2017 and conducted the Ministry of Health and Sports' implementation research. The unit and center has performed check-ups for 855 children, provided 55 hearing aids, and performed 17 ear transplants. In addition, a Vertigo Clinic on par with international standards was opened in March of last year.

The hospital provides these ear check-ups in its outpatient ward from 8 am to 11:30 am on weekends. —MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

90-megawatt gas-fired station opened in Myingyan Tsp

The newly opened 99-megawatt gas-fired station in Myingyan. The station will generate 90 megawatts in summer and 45 megawatts in the rainy season. **PHOTO: MNA**

A 90-megawatt gas-fired station was opened in central Myanmar to serve as an additional power supply in summer when the domestic electricity demand reaches its peak.

Constructed by the Hong Kong-based VPower Holdings Limited and its local partner Zeya & Associates Co. Ltd., under build-operate-own (BOO) system, near a steel factory in Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, the station will generate 90 megawatts in summer and 45 megawatts in the rainy season, during which the production capacity of hydropower stations is high, said Union Minister for Electricuty and Energy U Win Khaing at the launching ceremony.

Normally, the station will burn 20 million cubic feet of natural gas per day supplied by Shwe offshore field, but thanks to the organic rankine cycle (ORC) technology, that raises the efficiency of generators by two percent, it uses less natural gas, the Union Minister explained.

He then explained the tender process and test run of the station that has been supplying power for the public and industries of Myingyan, Taungtha, Nwatoegyi and Bagan-NyaungU townships, water pumping stations in Myingyan District and Myotha industrial zone since 1 February 2019 through the 132-kv subpower station.

The Shwe offshore gas field in Myanmar waters is supply gas for generating 382 megawatts of electricity including in rural areas of Kyaukphyu and Central Myanmar.

Understanding electricity as the foundation for socioeconomic progress, the Union Government has been prioritizing the task of electrifying the whole country by the year 2030, said the Union Minister.

He invited energetic public cooperation in the national electrification process for the progress of multiple fields including health, education and social sectors.

Regional Minister for Electricity, Industry and Construction U Zarni Aung then explained the power station project with audio visual aids, and MP U Chan Myae of Myingyan constituency 1 spoke words of gratitude. Next, Deputy Minister Dr Tun Naing and officials, MPs and company officials formally opened the power station.

The Union Minister and Regional Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Kyaw Oo then observed around the station. On March 2, the Union Minister and party visited Shwesayan substation in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region. Officials reported on the erection of a 230/33/11KV 100MVA transformer and a 230/33/11KV 150MVA transformer for local heavy industries.

After looking into the requirements, the Union Minister inspected the functions of the switchyard.—MNA

(Translated by TMT)

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations attends 7th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership-RCEP Intersessional Ministerial Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia

U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, attended the 7th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Intersessional Ministerial Meeting held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 1-2 March 2019.

At the opening session of the meeting held in Sokha Seam Reap Resort and Convention Center, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, delivered the keynote address. In his address, the Prime Minister emphasized the importance of RCEP initiative in transforming the Asian Economy. He recalled the background of the RCEP Agreement and expressed appreciation to all participating countries for their untiring efforts.

He underscored that Cambodia and ASEAN Member States are highly committed to adhering to the multilateral regime and international cooperation, and to uplifting the multilateral trading system which is open as a basis for growth and regional and global development. He expressed the hope that the negotiations on RCEP trade pact will be concluded by the end of the year.

The RCEP, a proposed free trade agreement between 10 ASEAN Member States and 6 of the partners -Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand-is expected to be one of the largest trade blocs, accounting for 45 per cent of world's population, 40 per cent of global trade and around one third of the world's GDP. The talks on RCEP was launched in 2012.

At the meeting, the Union Minister commended the RCEP Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) for the good progress made to-date on both market access and text-based negotiations but at the same time recognized that more work still needs to be done to advance both aspects of the negotiations. He urged all RCEP Participating Countries (RPCs) to address specific sensitivities while working towards achieving commercially meaningful outcomes.

He also urged all RPCs to intensify engagement for the remainder of the year.

Union Minister U Thaung Tun (4th from right) poses for photo together with other delegates. **PHOTO: MNA**

In the sideline of the meeting, the ASEAN Member Countries and Japan signed the First Protocol to Amend the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.—MNA

Myanmar-Thailand bilateral trade up 5.5% in Q1

MYANMAR-Thailand bilateral trade in the first three months of the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year exceeded US$1.3 billion, up by $69.5 million, or 5.5 per cent, from the corresponding period last 2017-2018 FY, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

When compared with the same period last year, exports have risen by $11.2 million, while imports have grown by $178 million between October and December. For the same period last FY, the bilateral trade totalled $1.25 billion, with $746 million in export and $503 million in imports.

Myanmar conducts trade with neighboring Thailand via maritime routes as well as border points of entry. In border trade, goods are delivered mainly through seven border gates, namely, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Htikhee, Mawtaung, and Maese.

Myawady Trade Zone is Myanmar's second largest border trading post.
PHOTO : HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)

The marketable products between the two countries include watermelon, pineapple, avocado and other fruits, onion, garlic and other kitchen crops, dried tea leaves, manganese dioxide, jellyfish, and eel, cement, construction equipment, leather, iron and steel products, soaps, medicines, cosmetics, food and beverages, stationery, footwear, clothing, and machinery.

During the 2018 mini-budget period (April-September), Myanmar-Thailand trade topped $2.9 billion, with exports worth $1.6 billion and imports pegged at $1.4 billion. Total trade increased by more than $500 million compared with the same time last FY, when Myanmar-Thailand trade stood at $2.5 billion.

According to the ministry's annual statistical report, Myanmar-Thailand bilateral trade was registered at $5 billion in the 2017-2018 FY, $4.3 billion in the 2016-2017 FY, $4.8 billion in the 2015-2016 FY, $5.7 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, $5.6 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, $4.7 billion in the 2012-2013 FY, and $4.5 billion in the 2011-2012 FY.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), Thailand's fresh investments in Myanmar in the current FY reached $23.9 million from four projects. During the mini-budget period, Thai investments touched $64.6 million. In the 2017-2018 FY, Thailand made investments worth almost $123.8 million in the country.—Swe Nyein ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Export of animal products increases by $233 mln

MYANMAR earned US$263 million from exports of animal products between 1 October 2018 and 22 February 2019, increasing significantly by $233 million as against the corresponding period last fiscal year 2017-2018, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

During the period, the public sector exported animal products amounting to $0.238 million, whereas the private exporters sold the same valued at $263.5 million.

At this time last FY, the country exported $30.4 million worth of animal products only from the private sector.

Myanmar sells animal products primarily to neighboring countries—China, India, and Thailand. During the week starting 16 February, the country saw only private sector exports of animal products with a value of $11.331 million.

In the 2018 mini-budget period from April through September, the export of animal products totalled $178 million, with $2.8 million by the public sector and $175 million by the private sector.

The ministry's data indicated that Myanmar's export of animal products was $60 million in the FY2017-2018, $10 million in the FY2016-2017, $8 million in the FY2015-2016, $8.3 million in the FY2014-2015, $15 million in the FY2013-2014, $32 million in the FY2012-2013, and $90 million in the FY2011-2012.—Shwe Khine ■ *(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)*

Myanmar-Thailand border trade peaks from rising export at Htikhee gate

RISE in export through Htikhee border gate between 1 October, 2018 and 22 February, 2019 raised the total Myanmar-Thailand border trade to US$1.3 billion which is more than double amount of last FY.

In the similar period of last FY, Thailand-Myanmar trade were valued only $600 million. Myanmar's export to Thailand surpassed import this FY, with estimated export value of $848 million and $392.7 million in import, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Normally, the Myawady gate sees the largest trade among the Myanmar-Thailand checkpoints.

This FY, trade has grown at Htikhee border gate, with export worth $742.9 million and import valued $17 million. Of the seven border trade points between Myanmar and Thailand, Tachilek, Myawady and Myeik gates witnessed a small decrease in trade in the current financial year 2018-2019 while the remaining gates were registered increase in trade.

The value of trade stood at $28.84 million at Tachilek, $760.2 million at Htikhee, $337.55 million at Myawady, $91.6 million at Myeik, $96 million at Kawthoung, $1 million at Maese, and $9.73 million at Mawtaung.

Myanmar primarily exports fishery products such as crab, fish, and shrimp, as well as onions, sesame, dry tea leaves, coconut, and turmeric to Thailand.

It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, consumer goods such as cosmetics, and food products.—Ko Htet ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Raw material prices hit handloom businesses hard

THE number of traditional handloom businesses is on the decline owing to the high price of raw materials, said handloom weavers from Monywa Township.

Handloom businesses import raw materials from India, and their cost has increased from K27,000 to K29,000 per 1.8 viss bag (1 viss equals to 1.6 kg), prompting owners to cut wages. As a result, job opportunities for local women have shrunk.

"Earlier, handloom weaving business was popular. The price of inputs or raw materials is increasing year by year. Yet, the price of finished fabric has remained constant, forcing workers to shift to other jobs," said Daw Aye Shwe, a handloom weaver. Earlier, commercial handloom weaving was practiced in the Kanpya village-tract, which includes Pegon, Sonegon, and Ywataw villages. Since the last five years, workers have started taking up other jobs, and only 10 weavers now survive.

Weaving is among the traditional and honored crafts practiced in Myanmar, with practitioners passing on skills from generation to generation.—Win Oo (Zeyar Tine) ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

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Union Minister for International Cooperation arrives back after attending meetings on Human Rights and Disarmament in Geneva

THE Myanmar delegation led by U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation arrived back to Yangon on 3 March after attending the High-Level Segments of the 40th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council and the Conference on Disarmament held in Geneva, from 25 to 28 February 2019.

At the high-level segment meeting of the Human Rights Council, the Union Minister delivered a Statement on 26 February stressing the importance of guiding principles of the Council such as promoting human rights through constructive engagement and cooperation instead of confrontation and condemnation and the principles of independence, impartiality and integrity. He also apprised the meeting of the progress and challenges in the efforts of Myanmar Government for peace and national reconciliation, development, promotion and protection of human rights, resolving the issues in Rakhine State and cooperation with the United Nations in promoting human rights.

U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation, attends the Disarmament Meeting in Geneva. **PHOTO: MNA**

On 27 February, the Union Minister delivered a Statement at the High-Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament highlighting the current global security, issues on disarmament and non-proliferation, Myanmar's continued efforts and priorities on non-proliferation and national disarmament agenda as well as its works at the Conference on Disarmament.

While in Geneva, Union Minister U Kyaw Tin, accompanied by Ambassador U Kyaw Moe Tun, Permanent Representative to the United Nations,separately held bilateral meetings with H.E. Ms. Retno Lestari PriansariMarsudi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, H.E. Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal, H.E. Mr. Kiyoto Tsuji, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and H.E. Mr. Marcelino Medina Gonzalez, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba at the United Nations Building.

During the respective meetings, the Union Minister discussed with those Ministers on strengthening bilateral relations and cooperation, and explained the Myanmar Government's efforts in striving for peace and national reconciliation process and promoting and protecting human rights in Myanmar, and resolving the issue of Rakhine State.

The Union Minister also received Ms.AranchaGonzale, Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC) at the Myanmar Permanent Mission in Geneva on 28 February and exchanged views on ongoing cooperation between Myanmar and ITC for promotion of trade, investment and private sector development. He also visited the Permanent Mission of Myanmar in the morning and attend the work coordination meeting with the Myanmar Permanent Representative and the members of the Myanmar Mission in Geneva, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

YCDC upgrading two markets in Shwepyitha Tsp

THE Market Department of Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) is constructing the one-storey steel structure buildings at two markets in Shwepyitha Township for the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Thandin market at 20-ward of Shwepyithar Townhip will have 40'x65' two buildings with 54 shops while Hlawga Nilar market at 15-ward will get 35'x130' three buildings with 88 shops each. Those construction of two markets started in February and it is slated to end in May.

Thandin market ranked "D" level and it was YCDC market department transferred from the former DAC's and now there are 157 shopkeepers. The self-help stalls are installed at market. The shopkeepers will have to draw lots to receive permit for buying the shops when the infrastructures completed.

Hlawga Nilar is a "C" level market which was governed by YCDC market department. After the construction, the shops will be returned to the original shopkeepers, said Daw Nyo Nyo Thin, in charge of market.

"Our market was also built in 1993 by YCDC and the shops were self-built and it was never upgraded before. Therefore, we hope to sell the goods at the upgrade market in dignity, said a shopkeeper from Ngamauk market.—Myint Than Kyi (Shwepyitha) ■

(Translated by La Wonn)

Police seize over 10 mln Yaba pills in durg searches in Ngaphe, Maungtaw

Local police have seized over 10 million Yaba pills in two separate searches in Ngaphe and Maungtaw on Saturday, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

At the Pyinwa check-point in Ngaphe on 2 March, a car driven by Thein Kyaw was searched by the police and over 1.4 million Yaba tablets, K9,189,000 in cash and five mobile phones were found.

Kyaw Min Oo (a) Ko Kyaw Gyi and Aung Sein were found on board.

Similarly, the local police in Maungtaw, acting on a tip-off, searched a Nino parked on the Maungtaw-Agnumaw Road near Waitharli Village on the same day and found 8.775 million Yaba pills in the car.

Myint Soe, a suspect for the drug haul, was later arrested in Maungtaw.

Those who involved in the drug trafficking were charged for drug trafficking under under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — GNLM

Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun

Education Union Minister meets faculty, students of universities, technical schools in Maubin, Hinthada

UNION MINISTER for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi met the rector, the pro-rector, faculty members and students of Technological University (Maubin) yesterday at its convocation hall.

Rector Dr. Kyawt Khin reported on its structure, academic matters and current programs.

In response, the Union Minister said the meeting is to explain the education reforms and the work of the Rectors Committee and solve the problems of universities through collective efforts. All the activities of the Education Ministry can be read on its website: www.moe.gov.mm, he said.

The Union Minister said the ministry has been implementing the national strategic plan (2016-2021) in accord with the schedule.

The work of promoting human resources that meet the prevailing situation and that is included in the sustainable and harmonious development plan of the country is concerned with the education sector, he said.

The higher qualification of teachers is a requisite for the better education, he said, adding that refresher courses must be conducted for English proficiency and ITC skills. Teachers must do research work by themselves, read a lot and have the qualification to contribute in general knowledge journals, he noted. Only then will the teachers be able to utilize the approach that is more realistic.

Union Minister Dr. Myo Thein Gyi addresses faculty of Technological University (Maubin). **PHOTO: MNA**

The Union Minister also suggested to conduct capacity building courses for the office staff to improve their office letter writing and IT skills.

The Ministry has granted the international scholarship awards to the employees in accordance with the rules and regulations, he added.

He stressed the need to conduct exhibition of science and job fairs at universities and schools in cooperation with business entrepreneurs, adding that it is required to uplift the literature, culture, arts and traditional customs of the ethnic people of the country.

The Union Minister also instructed the universities to produce qualified youths by conducting the graduate courses based on development, economy, transportation and interest of the local regions.

Afterwards, attendees at the meeting discussed the matters related to assigning more demonstrators to the universities, transfer of duty, establishing sports and gymnasiums and obstacles faced by students.

Afterwards, the Union Minister and officials went to the Maubin University and government technical schools, and met with rectors, pro-rectors, faculty members, students and staff.

Similarly, the Union Minister and party visited the University of Computer Studies (Hinthada), government technical high schools, Technological University (Hinthada) on 2 March, and met with rectors, pro-rectors, faculty members and students. — MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Tourism, other sectors discussed at Japan-Myanmar SME exchange in Sagaing

ENTREPRENEURS from Sagaing Town recently met with their Japanese counterparts to discuss matters related to the tourism, finance, agriculture technology, energy, and education sectors in Sagaing Region, as part of a Japan-Myanmar SME exchange.

The event was held last Saturday at the city hall of Sagaing town, according to the Sagaing District Chambers of Commerce and Industry (SDCCI).

"We wish Sagaing district becomes developed and prosperous. The region hopes to create business opportunities. This event aims to improve the business potential in Sagaing Region. The businesspersons discussed matters related to tourism, financial business, agriculture technology, energy, and education sectors," said U Myint Than from SDCCI.

Officials from the Japan-Myanmar Economy and Investment Centre and related departments, professors from universities in Sagaing Region, and local entrepreneurs took part in the discussions.

Since August, 2017, the Sagaing Region government has been promoting six tourist destinations — Sagaing, Monywa, Shwebo, Katha, Kalay, and Khamti.

Local pilgrims mostly head to Zalon Taung and a shrine at the Alaungdaw Kathapa National Park. The shrine has a reclining image called Kathapa. These places are crowded with pilgrims during the high season.

Tourist arrivals in Sagaing Region have increased from 385,031 in 2016 to 483,784 in 2017, and 492,097 in 2018.—Ko Min (Indaw) ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

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Govt allots K120 mln for rural development in Kanbalu

THE Rural Development Department is carrying out development projects across Kanbalu Township in Shwebo District, Magway Region, with a budget of K120 million allotted by the government for the purpose for the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

U Han Tun, the assistant director of the department, said the government allotted K10 million each for development works in 12 villages, including projects for construction of roads and bridges, water supply, and electrification. In addition, a waste management system is being implemented in the villages.

The projects are part of Village Development Planning (VDP), an initiative of the Rural Development Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation. The VDP was launched in 2015 to support and enable people-centered and participatory planning for village development, identify priority areas for development, and mobilize finances for priority projects.

The projects being implemented currently include paving of macadam and earthen roads in eight villages-construction of water tanks, pipelines, and a water factory in one village; and, installation of power lines and construction of transformers in three villages.—Aung Win Nyein (Kanbalu) ■ *(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)*

4 MARCH 2019
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Peace be with You

PEACE and prosperity are paramount for everyone.

However, it is regrettable that not everyone or every country gets to enjoy peace or prosperity completely as war has ravaged many parts of the globe. Given the situation, news of more countries preparing for conflict can be quite alarming.

The standoff between our neighbor, India, and Pakistan has raised concerns across Myanmar and the world as a whole. As both nations possess nuclear weapons and are involved in conflict on the ground, it is easy to be anxious.

According to one philosophy, peace and prosperity cannot be achieved through war. The world has been witness to several instances where aggression and military conflict could not resolve issues. At a time when many nations possess state-of-the-art weapons, depending solely on military tactics will only lead people to their doom.

It is human to have differences of thought and philosophy, and this is common across the world. It is important to cultivate a mindset of negotiations to end conflicts and resolve problems. Based on our traditions, our beliefs and values will be different. Sticking with our beliefs and ideas while concentrating on crushing others will turn us into a primitive society.

> It does not matter who emerges the winner or who loses in the end, a war hurts all equally. Therefore, it is time for us to fill ourselves with a peace-loving spirit.

For the sake of world peace, it is important to cultivate a spirit of harmony in diversity, and this idea can help build a civilized society.

Although everyone cherishes peace, the world is aggrieved by conflicts, some of which threaten the survival of our planet.

This is a time to show willingness to compromise on political and cultural differences as well as beliefs.

With Pakistan releasing an Indian pilot captured on its soil, tensions between the two nations will ease by a certain degree. And, this moderate gesture may lead to peace between the two countries. It is heartening to see the people of both nations are satisfied.

It is certain that people do not find acts of aggression arising out of differences acceptable, and this idea needs to be spread across the world.

In the past, we have seen protests against US political and military leaders, which brought about an end to the Vietnam War. Nowadays, the two nations are joining in economic undertakings for their countries. It is proof that they have embraced their diversity and are living in harmony.

It does not matter who emerges the winner or who loses in the end, a war hurts all equally. Therefore, it is time for us to fill ourselves with a peace-loving spirit.

■■■

Leaving No One Behind

By Maung Thaung Win(ex-diplomat)

Water gushed out of a tube-well in Magway in the arid region of central Myanmar. **PHOTO: THAN LWIN (MAGWAY)**

THE United Nations sustainable development goal No. 6 is get purified drinking water by 2030 for the people of the world. In accordance with that principle, the motto" leaving no one behind' has been set to materialize, but practically leaving millions of people around the world without sufficient fresh water.

Women, children, refugees, local populace and other disabled persons are sometimes ignored while trying to get drinking water. That is why authorities concerned have been coordinating on March 22 to get purified water for those ignored. In Myanmar too, arrangements are being made to be held on March 5 (discussions on preliminary subjects) and March 6 (celebrations , discussions and showrooms).

What does water mean?

" You survive for a week without food; but cannot survive one morning without water." So does a saying go. That is the reason that water plays a vital role in living things. We were taught in our school days: in chemistry, water is a combination of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom (H2O). Furthermore, water is found as a liquid under designated temperature and pressure.

Again it is included in ice, moisture, frost , fog and clouds; 70% of earth surface is covered with water, creating seas and oceans.

How much water should we drink?

The amount of drinking water for a man plays an important role in making the healthy body of that man. It is for that man to drink 8-10 glasses of drinking water , according to health experts. It is best for men to be able to drink 13 glasses(3 litres) and 9 glasses(2.2 litres) for wimen. In any way, water is an important ingredient for a man's health. In addition, it is an essential part of human body which is composed of 55% to 78% water, depending on its size. 73% of water is included in the brain and hearts and 83% in lungs.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Advantages

Even though calories and nutrition are not included in water, it plays a vital role in men and other living animals to survive for a long time. If a man consumes enough water, it will not only help the activities of the brain, muscles digestive systems and heart and kidneys but also to help alleviate dry skin, prevent diseases from coming into the body and balance the body temperature. By using enough water, it will reduce tiredness, fresh in mind, reduction in headaches and vomiting, easy digestion and free from constipation, reduction of body weights and toxins and relative temperature in the body is maintained.

Water especially plays a vital role in the world economic enterprises and businesses. People use 70% of water in agriculture; in the same way, availability of water is important for mills and factories.

Suffice to say, 97% of world water resources remains in seas and oceans as salt water. Yearly rainfalls, water resources in rivers, streams, lakes and underground water yield 4 2. Trillion cubic metres.

The volume of that water is four times higher than the requirements of world population.

Depending on the style of living , an individual man needs daily intake of 2000-5000 liters. 60% of clean water remains in the South Pole; the rest in the Central and Latin Americas. That might be the reason the clean is scarce in the Middle East Region.

The scarcity of water

The scarcity of water means that it fails to meet the requirement of water due to water resources. About 2.8 billion of world population are in short supply for a month every year. In addition, 1.2 billion people are in need of drinking water in that period. Water pollution, climate change, drought and floods are the main reasons to cause the scarcity of water. Worst of all, poor management on using water is also one of the reasons.

The reason of waging wars in the Middle East is not of politics but scarcity of water, some experts say. The increasing number of population is the basic cause for scarcity of water. Scarcity of water in the developing countries will be faced by 3500 million people in 2050, according to estimates of United Nations. That is why it should be systematically managed in time, or the scarcity will get higher and higher in the future.

Urbanization, industrialization and indiscriminate felling of trees are basic causes for scarcity of water.Climate change causes extreme heat, drought, heavy rains and floods and thawing of icebergs. Many of supernatural occurrences cause consequences of scarcity of water. In addition, so many tube wells are dug in urban areas to decrease underground water. Water actually plays an important role in the World Economy. Chemical wastes are thrown into rivers, streams, seas and oceans. Mills and factories use water for refrigeration and they use waterways for imports and exports of their products. Furthermore, 70% of fresh water is being used in agricultural sectors. The scarcity can be prevented by proper management of water.

Long-term management

Temperature in Myanmar has gradually increased since of onset of March. Scarcity of water in some areas during summer creates a daily problem of drinking water rather than getting fresh water. Villagers laboriously go for miles to fetch a pot or bucket of water. Domestic cattle take shelter near rivers, lakes and pools. Long-term plans must be carried out by authorities concerned for the benefits of villagers in order to get fresh water because of yearly difficulties.

Leaving No One Behind

Water is an essential thing for living animals. As it is highly valued natural resource, it must be used as the responsibility and duty of all people. Hoping the increasing world population, the water should be used according to their needs. Actions must be taken against the wasteful use of water. Rivers, streams ,lakes and pools and embankments must be maintained to retain the volume of water in them.

As men are highly intellectual, they should avoid using invaluable water foolishly; they should use water according to their needs.

In Myanmar, people face shortage of water during summer. As 70% of them are villagers, they tend to suffer severely from scarcity of water every summer. Our firm conviction is that every citizen should economize as much as he can in using invaluable water under the systematic management in good spirits of each and everyone.

Translated by Arakan Sein

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 3rd March, 2019)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and a few cloud elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 4th March, 2019: Light rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing Region, Northern Shan, Chin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated to scattered rain or thundershowers in Sagaing Region, Kachin, Northern Shan and Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th March, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th March, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th March, 2019: Generally fair weather.

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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Pro-EU liberal, far-right firebrand take on Estonia PM

THE daughter of a former European Commissioner and a far-right firebrand face off against centrist Prime Minister Juri Ratas in Sunday's general election in Estonia.

Here are the top contenders in the race:

Juri Ratas

Ratas became one of the world's youngest leaders when he took over as Estonia's prime minister in late 2016 at the age of 38. With a background in law and economics, Ratas cut his political teeth as the mayor of the capital Tallinn between 2005 and 2007, when he launched the European Green Capital project focused on fostering eco-friendly urban living. It is now an annual award that recognises one European city each year working to improve its environmental record. In 2007, the married father of four won a parliamentary seat on the centrist Centre party ticket and was elected its deputy speaker. In late 2016, Ratas took over as Centre party leader from Edgar Savisaar, whose perceived ties to Russia had scared off potential coalition partners amid heightened tensions with Russia.The move paved the way to Centre leading a three-party coalition government that took office in November 2016.

Kaja Kallas

Kaja Kallas was elected leader of the opposition liberal Reform party in April 2018 after having become an MP in 2011 and an MEP in 2014. A staunch europhile, she is the daughter of former Estonian prime minister Siim Kallas, who also led the Reform party before serving as European commissioner for transport 2010-14.Kallas, 41, has been repeatedly included on lists of the most influential MEPs. In 2017, she made Politico's list of the most influential women in Brussels and the VoteWatch think tank's top 10 most influential MEPs in the areas of digital and communications policy. Kallas is a passionate proponent of innovation who argues that regulations must not hinder the digital technological revolution. Focused on the rights of small and medium-sized enterprises, Kallas believes that borders in the digital world prevent innovative companies from emerging.

Mart Helme

Born in 1949, the leader of the far-right EKRE is significantly older than his two main rivals.

Helme's father was a veteran of the Estonian Legion, a military unit comprised of forcibly drafted and volunteer Estonian soldiers that served as part of Nazi German SS forces in World War II.A historian, Helme became a diplomat in 1994 after Estonia broke free from the crumbling Soviet Union, and served as Estonia's ambassador to Russia for several years.He entered politics in the early 2000s before eventually taking over the leadership of the far-right Conservative People's Party of Estonia (EKRE).His son Martin Helme is currently the party's deputy chairman and leads it in parliament.The eurosceptic EKRE stands to win around 20 per cent of the vote in Sunday's election, according to pre-vote polls.The party opposes same-sex marriage, EU refugee relocation efforts and wants to cut the public funding of abortions. It has also raised the idea of an "Estxit" referendum on EU membership although it says it does not support leaving bloc, which remains very popular among Estonians. The party is deeply suspicious of Russia and favours continued NATO membership.Helme himself has publicly expressed xenophobic, sexist and homophobic views, and the members of his party have included people convicted of violent crimes and Nazi sympathisers.—AFP ■

Far-right candidate Mart Helme has publicly expressed xenophobic, sexist and homophobic views, and the members of his EKRE party have included Nazi sympathisers. **PHOTO: AFP**

For Russians, growing worries over 'eternal poverty'

AINT PETERSBURG (Russia)—At a Saint Petersburg cafe, a singer performs Soviet-era tunes for 50 pensioners enjoying a mid-day meal. In the basement of a central apartment block, the cafe offers free food for the elderly —a group particularly hard hit by the economic strains causing growing anger in Russia.

Despite icy pavements making crossing the northern city difficult, the Dobrodomik —or "good little house"—is full. Inside, pensioners are served hearty stews and given the chance to have a chat, or even a dance. They are overwhelmingly women. "Prices are rising every day. So this cafe is a very, very good idea," 72-year-old Rimma Antsiferova told AFP. She receives a monthly pension of 10,000 rubles ($150/135 euros). After paying her local taxes and buying medicine, Antsiferova is left with only $45 to live on. "And recently, the price of transport went up," she said. Businesswoman Alexandra Syniak and her husband Yevgeny Gershevich opened Dobrodomik this winter to "thank the elderly". In the evening, it turns into a regular restaurant but between noon and mid-afternoon, pensioners from all corners of Saint Petersburg come to eat a warm meal.

'Never been as hard'

Following an oil boom in the 2000s, Russians have seen their purchasing power steadily decline over the last five years. The trend is showing no sign of slowing, despite Russia recovering from a 2015 recession brought on by a fall in oil prices and Western sanctions over Moscow's actions in Ukraine.

When he was re-elected for a fourth presidential term last year, President Vladimir Putin promised to halve Russia's poverty rate.

But soon afterwards, his government raised value-added tax and hiked the retirement age for the first time since the 1930s —a hugely unpopular move. "It's never been as hard for people as it is now," said Igor Nikolayev, director of the FBK Strategic Analysis Institute in Moscow. And this anxiety is starting to show in opinion polls.

According to a January survey by the independent Levada centre, 61 per cent of Russians "feel shame for the eternal poverty and insecurity" of their country, compared to 56 per cent in 2015.

Putin's personal approval rating has taken a hit, too.

In January, Levada found his approval rating at 64 per cent—the lowest since 2014. —AFP ■

Japan to ban physical punishment of children by parents in law

TOKYO—The government and the ruling coalition plan to include a ban on corporal punishment of children by parents in law revisions following a series of recent child maltreatment cases in the name of discipline, sources close to the matter said Saturday.

The planned law revisions are also aimed at strengthening the authority of child welfare centers to ensure prompt separation of children from abusive parents. Foster parents and welfare workers will also be banned from physically punishing children as a means of discipline.

The Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aims to approve the revisions in mid-March and enact the revised legislation during the current Diet session, as it looks to strengthen the prevention of child abuse after the recent tragic death of children in alleged parental mistreatment.

The father of Yua Funato was arrested last year for allegedly assaulting the 5-year-old girl, who died on 2 March last year at their Tokyo home as she had left desperate pleas for her parents to "forgive" her and stop mistreating her.

The death of Mia Kurihara in Noda, near Tokyo, also drew a spotlight after the father of the 10-year-old girl made her stand for long hours as "discipline," according to investigative sources. In the case, lack of communication between a local welfare center and her school, and their slow response to her repeated calls for help were highlighted.

While the current law on prevention of child abuse says that assault and committing lewd acts constitute abuse, it does not clearly stipulate what types of parental discipline are considered physical punishment, saying only that those exercising parental authority "shall give due consideration to appropriate exercise of such authority in disciplining" his or her child.

The government aims to clarify in a guideline what kinds of disciplinary acts constitute physical punishment.—Kyodo News ■

US, South Korea to end key joint military exercises

SEOUL (South Korea)—The US and South Korea announced Sunday an end to key annual large-scale military exercises in support of diplomatic efforts to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programme.

The decision comes days after the conclusion of US President Donald Trump's second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Hanoi, which ended without a formal agreement but with both sides suggesting they would keep talking.

There are close to 30,000 US troops stationed in South Korea, and their annual drills with tens of thousands of South Korean soldiers have been a perennial target of North Korean fury—with Pyongyang condemning the manoeuvres as provocative rehearsals for invasion.

While Trump has ruled out withdrawing the troops, he has repeatedly complained about the cost of the exercises, describing them at a press conference in Hanoi as "very, very expensive". During a Saturday phone call between South Korean Defence Minister Jeong Kyeong-doo and his US counterpart Patrick Shanahan, "both sides decided to conclude the Key Resolve and Foal Eagle series of exercises", according to a Pentagon statement.

Foal Eagle is the biggest of the regular joint exercises held by the allies.

In the past, it has involved 200,000 South Korean forces and some 30,000 US soldiers. It is accompanied by Key Resolve, a computer-simulated war game conducted by military commanders which usually begins in March and runs for about 10 days.

The decision comes days after the conclusion of US President Donald Trump's second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Hanoi. **PHOTO: AFP**

The decision was reached to support ongoing diplomatic efforts for North Korea's denuclearisation and ease military tensions with the North, Seoul's defence ministry said Sunday.

Washington and Seoul will instead conduct "modified" drills starting Monday through to 12 March, a joint military statement announced on Sunday.

The nine-day exercise, officially named "Dong Maeng" or "Alliance", will largely focus on joint defence manoeuvres rather than the offensive posture of the Key Resolve drill, a South Korean military official who requested anonymity told AFP. There was no indication of how many US and South Korean troops will be mobilised for the new exercise. South Korea's foreign ministry said that Lee Do-hoon, Seoul's chief nuclear envoy, will also leave for Washington to hold talks with his US counterpart Stephen Biegun.

"Lee will fly sometime this week," ministry spokesman Noh Kyu-duk told AFP.

Lee and Biegun are expected to discuss the Hanoi summit, which failed to build on the vaguely-worded commitment to denuclearise the Korean peninsula signed by Kim and Trump during their meeting in Singapore last year.

Combat readiness

Opponents of scrapping the drills have warned that it could impact the combat readiness of the combined US and South Korean forces and hand the North a strategic advantage on the divided peninsula, but most analysts said such concerns were exaggerated. "Suspending or downgrading the US-South Korean drills may hurt the readiness of the two militaries, but I don't think it's going to be a serious security threat to South Korea," Ahn Chan-il, the president of the World Institute for North Korea Studies in Seoul, told AFP.

"The South's conventional forces outclass the North's, and given the current situation (with the US and the existing sanctions), it's highly unlikely that Pyongyang will do anything with its nuclear weapons in the foreseeable future," he added.

Retired General Vincent Brooks, a former commander of US forces in South Korea who helped organise Trump's first meeting with Kim in Singapore, said last year that any end to joint training would not hinder the Pentagon's combat-readiness on the peninsula. — AFP ■

Missing Chinese rights lawyer returns home but 'still not free': wife

BEIJING (China)—A prominent Chinese human rights lawyer has reappeared two days after going missing following his release from a jail sentence for state subversion, his wife said on Sunday.

Jiang Tianyong—who took on high-profile cases including those of Falun Gong practitioners and Tibetan protesters—was one of more than 200 lawyers and activists detained in a 2015 clampdown on courtroom critics of Communist authorities.The 47-year-old had disappeared Thursday after completing his two-year jail sentence, before he finally reappeared in his hometown of Xinyang, Henan province, said his US-based wife.Supporters had said police outside the jail he was released from told them he had been "taken away" but did not specify by whom."After not seeing each other for six years, we were finally able to talk and video chat," Jin Bianling told AFP. —AFP

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Individual Consultant
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
Department of Rural Development (DRD)
Myanmar : National Electrification Project (NEP) (IDA Project No. 152936)
Off-Grid - Solar System Implementation Advisor (Reference No. C2-TA 33)

1. This Request for Expressions of Interest follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in *Development Business* online on November 3, 2015.
2. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar *has received* financing from the *International Development Association(IDA)* and applied part of the proceeds of this financing to payments under the contract for an **Off-Grid Solar System Implementation Advisor** for National Electrification Project (NEP) under **ref. no C2-TA33**
3. The National Electrification Project includes an off-grid electrification component with $90 million in IDA credits. IDA support in off-grid areas will target communities located far beyond the existing national grid and, thus, unlikely to receive grid-based access in the next 10 or more years. More importantly, the IDA support will be directed to the peripheral States/ Regions with social and ethnic cohesion and peace building. Off-grid electrification will be technology neutral, depending on technology assessment for target communities, including solar photovoltaic (PV), mini-hydropower, wind, diesel, and hybrid (eg. diesel/solar). Deployment of household solar PV systems in target communities includes households, public institutions (schools, health clinics and other community building) as well as public street light. The Off-Grid Solar System Implementation Advisor shall guide Department of Rural Development - Project Management Office (DRD-PMO) to successfully implement the off-grid electrification component using solar home systems (SHS) for households, and public sector Solar PV Systems.
   The primary responsibility of the Advisor is to support the DRD-PMO to ensure the efficient, effective and on-schedule implementation of the off-grid PV component. The Advisor will support DRD-PMO beginning with the implementation of the first SHS and public facilities tender (currently up to five tenders), serving as the owner's engineer during bid evaluation and negotiation of contract, oversee supply and installation of the PV systems, and help setup maintenance service networks. The Advisor will also provide overall technical support to the Result Based Financing (RBF) program for SHS jointly financed by DRD, the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and to other donors as required by DRD.
4. The Department of Rural Development now invites eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the Services as per criteria below (CV with academic background, experience in similar assignment, knowledge of local conditions (if any) etc.) Consultants may be invited for interviewing, if necessary. The evaluation criteria are:
   (i) At least Professional engineering qualifications and University degree which amount to a Master's level in a relevant field such as renewable energy or engineering are necessary.
   (ii) More than 10 years' developing country experience in off-grid solar PV tendering, hands-on experience in PV systems specifications, PV systems procurement and installation, in maintenance of such systems and in construction supervision.
   (iii) Experience in setting up organizations for PV systems maintenance and providing PV-related training services in developing country context will be an advantage.
   (iv) Fluency in written and spoken English and extensive off-grid PV working experience in developing countries is required. Fluency in Myanmar language will be an advantage, but not required.
   (v) Knowledge of different type of batteries and battery management systems in practice and their benefits and disadvantages for Solar and Public home systems.
5. A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrows dated January 2011 (revised July 2014) ("Consultant Guidelines")*. The attention of interested consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the Consultant Guidelines, setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.
6. Interested individual consultants may obtain the Terms of Reference at the address given below from 09.30 to 16.00 hours or direct request trough e-mail address - *neppmo.drd.@gmail.com, drdnep.procurement@gmail.com*. DRD will provide prompt responses to all interested individual consultants, should there be any questions.
7. Expressions of interest must be delivered by registered mail or by e-mail to the address below no later than April 1, 2019.

Attention
U Maung Win, Deputy Director General, National Electrification Project (NEP)
Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
Office No. 36, Pandita Road, Oattara Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
Tel/FAX : +95 0673 418636, ***E-mail: neppmo.drd@gmail.com, ksaung@gmail.com, drdnep.procurement@gmail.com***

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RCEP ministers vow "upmost effort" to reach deal this year

SIEM REAP (Cambodia)—Ministers from 16 countries negotiating for an Asia-wide free trade pact vowed Saturday to speed up their collective efforts to achieve the target set by their leaders of concluding the ongoing negotiations this year.

The ministers "resolved to exert utmost effort to achieve this target," the countries discussing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership said in a statement issued after their meeting in the Cambodian city of Siem Reap.Cambodian Commerce Minster Pan Sorasak told reporters that the ministers "agreed to intensify engagements for the remainder of the year, including by convening more intersessional meetings."

Photo taken on 14 November 2018, shows a meeting of the leaders of 16 Asia-Pacific nations on creating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership free trade zone.
PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Japanese Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko said that gaps remain in areas where there are conflicts of interest among members, such as market access including tariff reduction.

As Thailand, Indonesia and India are holding national elections in the first half of this year, there is concern about their possible impact on the negotiations.Speaking at the opening of the meeting, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said that if the 16 RCEP countries join hands for mutual benefit, the region would benefit greatly. —Kyodo News ■

India, Pakistan exchange heavy border fire

NEW DELHI (India) —Tensions between India and Pakistan raged on Saturday as heavy firing by their armies killed at least seven people on either side of their fiercely disputed Kashmir border.

The nuclear-armed rivals fired mortars and artillery at each other despite the release of an Indian pilot who had been shot down by Pakistan but then sent back as a "goodwill gesture".

In a fearsome 24 hour spell, two soldiers and two civilians died on the Pakistan side, its military said. On the Indian side, a woman and her two children died after their house was pulverised by a mortar shell.

Indian army chief Bipin Rawat dashed to Udhampur in his country's sector of Kashmir on Saturday to review border security.

Across the region villagers huddled in makeshift bunkers while police ordered non-essential traffic off roads, an AFP reporter said.

At least 12 civilians have been killed on either side of the frontier since the start of the week.

The release of Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman to Indian authorities late Friday following 60 hours in Pakistani custody boosted hopes of a de-escalation.

But a furious backlash erupted in India over a video in which Abhinandan can be seen praising his captors and criticising Indian media. —AFP ■

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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.

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CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. (908S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. (908S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 04-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS

G-9184-MYA: Economic Empowerment of the Poor &Women in E/W Economic Corridor
Bamboo Equipment for Processing Facility in Chaungzone & Kyaikhto Township, Mom State

The above mentioned Project is being implemented by Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MOHT) under a grant from Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) administered by Asian Development Bank (ADB). Part of project proceeds will be used to finance the supply and delivery of Bamboo Equipment (7 units) and food dryer (1 unit) listed below.

Equipment for the Bamboo and Food processing facilities

Item No.	Number of Units	Equipment type/description
1	1 (One)	Bamboo dissection machine (Chaungzone)
2	2 (two)	Bamboo filament machine (Chaungzone & Kyaikhto)
3	1 (one)	Raw bamboo cutting machine (Chaungzone)
4	1 (one)	Bamboo lamination machine (Chaungzone)
5	1 (one)	Bamboo stick size cutting machine(Chaungzone)
6	1 (one)	Multifunctional blade sharpening machine(Chaungzone)
7	1 (one)	Food dryer with at least 10 trays and no more than 20 (no for domestics use), including at least: thermostat, timer, and ventilation control panel (Kyaikhto)

Project Implementation Unit (PIU) now invites eligible suppliers and firms to submit quotations for the above-indicated Bamboo Equipment Machines (7 Units) and Food dryer (1 Unit). Each bidder must submit ONE original quotation-signed, stamped, sealed, addressed and delivered to:

Project Implementation Unit (PIU)
Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Mawlamyine Office)
G-9184-MYA: Economic Empowerment of the Poor & Women in the E/W Economic Corridor
No (118) Phat Tan Quarter, Lower Main Road, Mawlamyine
Phone: +95 42 527 6525, 057-2021446
Also send email to: thanhtutkhaine@gmail.com, monmo3982@gmail.com and pramirez@gmail.com

Deadline for receipt of quotation/s: 11 March 2019

Validity period of offered quotation: at least 21 days from deadline for receipt of quotation/s
Each quotation submitted in the company's letterhead must either be in English or Myanmar language/s. It must include: product description, product guarantee (including period & conditions), maintenance services with detailed description of all services covered, and preferably with manual (paper, digital or video) from the manufacturing company. Offered prices must be in Myanmar Kyats (MMK) and must clearly indicate that all Myanmar taxes have been included, specifying also whether or not land transportation cost/s from the company to Chaungzone and/or Kyaikhto are included.

Payment details- each quotation must clearly specify: name and address of bank, owner of bank account (account owner), and bank account number.

After the winning supplier's receipt of payment/bank transfer, the PIU and the supplier will discuss and coordinate the initial loading of the equipment relating to their transportation to the site/s, before delivery to: "Training Room" Township Cooperative Department, Kyaikhto township, Mon State and "Village Community Centre" at Kularbi Village Chaungzone Township Mon State.

Australia steps up Solomons oil spill help as damage worsens

SYDNEY (Australia)— Australia is ramping up efforts to tackle an oil spill from a cargo ship stranded in World Heritage-listed waters in the Solomon Islands as fears grow of spiralling environmental damage, Canberra said Sunday.

MV Solomon Trader ran aground on 5 February while loading bauxite at remote Rennell Island, some 240 kilometres (150 miles) south of the Pacific nation's capital Honiara.

Around 75 tonnes of heavy fuel oil have leaked into the sea amid failed salvage attempts, while more than 600 tonnes of the oil remains on the stricken 225-metre (740-foot) vessel.

"Given escalating ecological damage, and a lack of action by commercial entities involved, the Solomon Islands government has requested Australia's assistance," Foreign Minister Marise Payne said in a statement.

"In response, we are mobilising an offshore pollution mitigation operation, including equipment, vessels and specialised personnel."The operation will be run by Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and will work alongside the Solomons' own efforts.

AMSA has been using aerial surveillance to monitoring the unfolding environmental disaster, while New Zealand on Friday dispatched two oil spill containment specialists to the area. —AFP ■

Japan proposes UN working group to tackle microplastics pollution

TOKYO —Japan has submitted to the United Nations a draft resolution to establish a working group for coordinating efforts toward combating ocean microplastics pollution, people close to the matter said Saturday.

Norway has tabled a similar resolution, and the two countries have been discussing combining their proposals for the fourth session of the UN Environmental Assembly in Nairobi starting on 11 March, they said.

The resolution, if adopted, would create a new international framework to accelerate study on and promote measures to tackle the emerging issue for food security and marine life.

Undated photo shows plastic waste washed ashore on Laysan Island in Hawaii.
PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Japan and the United States have faced criticism for refusing to sign the Ocean Plastics Charter aimed at making all plastics recyclable by 2030 at the Group of Seven summit in Canada in June last year. Japanese government officials said then that proposed steps in the Canada-led charter could adversely affect Japan's plastics industry and consumers and that more time is needed for preparation.

In its draft resolution, Japan calls for a review of international efforts to deal with plastics waste and their effectiveness, the sources said. —Kyodo News ■

Submission of IEE Study for Onshore Blocks IOR-2 & MOGE-1 Exploration Seismic Campaign

Goldpetrol JOC Inc. is planning to undertake a seismic program in BLOCKS IOR-2 (CHAUK) and MOGE-1 (YENANGYAUNG FIELD). Goldpetrol operates the Chauk and Yenangyaung oil fields in central Myanmar, under two Improved Petroleum Recovery Contracts (IPRCs) with the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE). The IOR-2 seismic area covers Chauk Township, Pakokku Districts of Magway and partially the Nyaung-U District of Mandalay Region. The MOGE-1 seismic area covers Yenangyaung Township, Magway Region. The seismic exploration activity (Short Hole) is planned to commence in 2019.

An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) Study in accordance with Myanmar Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure (2015) for the proposed activity has been prepared by Goldpetrol with third party EIA/SIA consultants International Environmental Management Co Ltd. (IEM) and Environmental Quality Management Co. Ltd (EQM); and will be submitted to Environmental Conservation Department (ECD) in March, 2019. In accordance with Myanmar Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure, the report is publically viewable at the following locations:

- Goldpetrol's office in Yangon: 45 (B), Thiri Mingalar 2nd Street. Between Pyay Road & Baho Road Kamaryut Township, Yangon, Myanmar
- General Administrative Department, MOGE in Chauk and Yenangyaung Township.
- Goldpetrol's office in Chauk and Yenangyaung Townships.
- Environmental Conservation Department, Magway Region
- Chauk and Yenangyaung Township General Administrative Department Office, Magway Region

Feedback on the report can be submitted to Goldpetrol in writing by contacting the following; Han Liqiang at dhanu@goldpetrol.com.mm.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICTY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(10/2019)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	DMP/L-184(18-19)	Spares for Caterpillar C-9 Engine (71) Items	Ks
(b)	DMP/L-185(18-19)	Spares for Kobelco Excavator (22) Items	Ks
(c)	DMP/L-186(18-19)	Spares for Caterpillar C-9 Engine (72) Items	Ks
(d)	DMP/L-187(18-19)	Assorted Sizes of Battery (2) Items	Ks
(e)	DMP/L-188(18-19)	Spares for Drive Group (13) Items	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qtty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricty and Energy Website Portal (www.moee.gov.mm) as from 4 March 2019. Tender forms will not be sold.
3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 14:00 pm on 4 April 2019.
4. Tender Closing Date & Time – **4-4-2019, 14:00 pm**

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 – 411206

TRADEMARK CAUTION

Toshiba Energy Systems & Solutions Corp., a company incorporated in Japan and having its registered office at 72-34, Horikawa-cho, Saiwai-ku, Kawasaki-shi, Kanagawa 212-0013 Japan is the current owner of the Trademark described below, by virtue of the Deed of Assignment dated **10 January 2019** (**Reg. No. 4/14700/2019**) executed between **KABUSHIKI KAISHA TOSHIBA, also trading as TOSHIBA CORPORATION** (Assignor), and **Toshiba Energy Systems & Solutions Corp.,** (Assignee), whereby Assignor, the original owner had registered the Trademark in Myanmar, assigned it to Assignee:

μEMS

Reg. No.4/ 13873/2013 (16 December 2013)

In respect of "Smart meters remote control telemetering machine and instruments; television receivers, telephone apparatus, video cameras, videodisc players, wireless telephone, handsets, walky-talkies; satellite telephones, telephone receivers, telephone transmitters, smartphones, pagers, other telecommunication device and apparatus; personal computers; computers; computer programs; computer software; programs for computers; control devices used to control power within power grids, monitor energy use, distribute power and the like and to promote energy efficient solutions for providing power and their parts, electrical power control systems and their parts, LED display systems and their parts, other electronic machines, apparatus and their parts; fuel cells and their parts; batteries and their parts; solar power generation equipment and their parts" included in **International Class 09;**
"Installation and operation of energy supply systems and power grid systems that connect integrate, monitor and distribute power in grid power systems including different types of energy systems such as solar power, wind power, fuel cells and other types of renewable energy power generation systems" included in **International Class 37**; and
"Computer programs design, computer programming, or maintenance of computer programs; computer software design, creating computer software, or maintenance of computer software; rental of computers; rental of personal computers; providing computer programs; providing computer software; development of energy supply systems and power grid systems that connect integrate, monitor and distribute power in grid power systems including different types of energy systems such as solar power, wind power, fuel cells and other types of renewable energy power generation systems" included in **International Class 42**.

Fraudulent or unauthorised use, or actual or colourable imitation of the said Trademark shall be dealt with according to law.

Daw Htoo Htoo, *H.G.P*
For **Toshiba Energy Systems & Solutions Corp.,**
C/o **Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.,**
Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),
Corner of Mahabandoola Road &
Thein Phyu Road, Botahtaung Township, Yangon,
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
hh@kcyangon.com

Dated **4 March 2019**

Russian Nobel physics winner Alferov dies at 88

MOSCOW (Russia)—Russian scientist Zhores Alferov, who won the Nobel physics prize for his work in semi-conductor and laser technologies, has died, agencies said on Saturday. He was 88.

When Alferov took the prize in 2000, he was the first Russian to win a Nobel since Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was given the peace award in 1990.

The victory provided a boost for the post-Soviet Russian sciences.

"Zhores Alferov died today," his wife said in comments carried by Russian media.

The physicist was also a Communist deputy in the lower house of parliament.

Alferov was honoured for his pioneering work with technology now used in everything from satellites to mobile phones and bar-code scanners.

He shared the award with German-born Herbert Kroemer and Jack Kilby of the United States.—AFP ■

Russian scientist Zhores Alferov was honoured for his pioneering work with technology now used in everything from satellites to mobile phones and bar-code scanners. **PHOTO: AFP**

IN Picture

Highlights of carnival parade in Sao Paulo, Brazil

A reveler from a samba school performs during the first night of the carnival parade in Sao Paulo, Brazil on 2 March 2019. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

National Art Museum unveils photos taken by Lu Xun's son

BEIJING—An photo exhibition commemorating the 90th birth anniversary of Zhou Haiying, the son of famous 20th century Chinese writer Lu Xun, opened at the National Art Museum of China Saturday.

The exhibition, titled "Moments of Memory," for the first time revealed to the public over 100 pieces of photos taken by Zhou.

Content included the lives in Shanghai during the 1940s, in particular the photos concerning middle class families and lanes, as well as lives in Beijing during the 1950s.

Zhou was born in September 1929 in Shanghai and studied in the physics department of Peking University in the 1950s. He was an expert in radio communication.

His father Lu Xun, who died in 1936, was among the leading Chinese writers who helped kick Chinese literature into the modern era with novels such as "The True Story of Ah Q" and "A Madman's Diary.""The sensitivity and vigor of Zhou's photos reflect the social ecology and living environment of people from an era," said Chen Xiaobo, curator of the exhibition.

Organized jointly by the National Art Museum of China and Lu Xun Culture Foundation, the exhibition will last until 17 March.—Xinhua ■

Soweto Gospel Choir riding high after Grammy win

JOHANNESBURG (South Africa)—When the Soweto Gospel Choir was named as winner of the Grammy for Best World Music Album, it earned the ensemble a place in the music history books. Announced by Questlove, drummer from the US hip hop band The Roots, the award sparked an explosion of excitement among the South African singers. "He was almost stuttering, like: 'And the winner is Fr- Fr- Freedom, Sss- Soweto Gospel Choir,' then we jumped up! Like he took long, man," chuckled choirmaster Shimmy Jiyane."I screamed my lungs out," admits choir member Mary Mulovhedzi.

"Then the ululating came, the Sowetans (in us) just came out—we couldn't hold back."

What earned them the award was their album "Freedom"—a 12-track tribute to Nelson Mandela released to mark the 100th year of his birth.

It was the choir's third Grammy in its 17-year existence, adding to accolades which include an Emmy and a debut album called "Voices From Heaven" which reached No. 1 on Billboard's World Music Chart.

"Freedom" gives a modern twist to so-called struggle songs —campaigning music rooted in South Africa's apartheid past, when the black majority were subjugated by the white minority.

"It's a story in a way of what happened during those days," bass singer Mulalo Mulovhedzi told AFP. The album draws inspiration "from the freedom fighters of 1976," he said, referring to a linchpin year in the fight against apartheid—the Soweto uprising."The whole idea (was) that we have to go back to Soweto, where freedom started."

'Food for the soul'

Soweto—a shortened form referring to the South West Townships on the edge of Johannesburg —became a worldwide symbol of resistance. And it is where the group has been based since it was founded in 2002.Much of the choir's captivating sound is composed and arranged in indigenous South African languages including Zulu, Xhosa and even Afrikaans.Yet some of their biggest audiences are in Europe and America.

"When we sing, it's as if people understand us, so that's music —it's universal and it's spiritual and has the power to restore," explains musical director Diniloxolo Ndlakuse, dressed in bright traditional costume. —AFP ■

High note: The Soweto Gospel Choir, seen here in rehearsal, have won a Grammy for 'Freedom,' a tribute to Nelson Mandela. **PHOTO: AFP**

Ice-free Arctic summers could happen in as early as 2030: study

WASHINGTON—The Arctic Ocean could become ice-free as early as in 2030, according to a new study.

Previous studies have predicted that the Arctic is trending towards an ice-free summer around the middle of the century. The climate model used in the new study predicted an ice-free Arctic summer sometime between 2030 and 2050, if greenhouse gases continue to rise.

Moreover, by accounting for a long-term warming phase in the tropical Pacific, the study showed an ice-free Arctic is more likely to occur on the earlier side of that window, closer to 2030 than 2050.

These results need to be interpreted as part of a bigger picture, said lead author of the study James Screen in a press release.

Climate change caused by humans is the main reason for sea ice loss, so the timing of the first ice-free summer will also depend considerably on whether greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise or are curtailed, said Screen, who is an associate professor in climate science at the University of Exeter in Britain.

"You can hedge your bets," he said. But the shift in ocean temperatures in the Pacific means "there's more chance of it being on the earlier end of that window than on the later end," he added.The study was published Wednesday in the American Geophysical Union's journal Geophysical Research Letters.—Xinhua ■

The Arctic Ocean could become ice-free as early as in 2030. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Expression of Thanks

THE bereaved family of Dr. Katherine Ba Thike, Retired Scientist, (WHO Geneva), who passed away at 9:35 am on the 27th of February 2019, wishes to express their thanks to all family friends, professional colleagues and acquaintances, including those from different departments and local and international organizations who sent their messages of condolences as well as helped with the funeral arrangements.

Chinese scientists design heartbeat-powered cardiac pacemaker

BEIJING—Chinese scientists have designed an integrated strategy for directly powering a cardiac pacemaker with the natural energy of the heartbeat.A cardiac pacemaker is one of the most common implantable medical electronic devices for heart dysfunctions. But its built-in battery has a limited life and needs to be replaced surgically every five to 12 years, which can lead to complications, including infection and bleeding.Scientists from Shanghai Jiaotong University have worked to directly power a modern and full-function cardiac pacemaker by harvesting the natural energy of a heartbeat, without using any external energy storage.The generator includes an elastic skeleton and two piezoelectric composites, which can generate enough electricity output for the pacemaker. The device has been successfully tested in pigs. —Xinhua ■

With IPO due, Uber aims to be 'Amazon of transportation'

SANTA MONICA (United States)—Uber, the ridesharing behemoth set to launch a stock offering soon, is aiming beyond sharing car rides to becoming the "Amazon of transportation" in a future where people share instead of owning vehicles.

Uber laid out its vision of a transformed world of personal mobility as it steered toward a keenly anticipated stock market debut that will follow an initial public offering of shares by US rideshare rival Lyft announced on Friday."Cars really were, for us, a kind of starting place," said transportation policy and research chief Andrew Salzberg at an Uber media event in Santa Monica, California."Once we've built this platform for mobility there are a whole host of business lines we can build beyond that."The Southern California beach city was teeming with electric scooters and bicycles from Uber and rivals that may be checked out with a smartphone app. —AFP ■

Prehistoric humans loved their dogs to death

PARIS (France)—Neolithic communities clustered near present-day Barcelona some 6,000 years ago were really keen on dogs, in this life and the next.

Archeological evidence from at least four sites showed prehistoric humans and their four-legged friends living in close quarters, working together, and sharing a common diet of mostly grains and veggies.

"These animals were fully integrated into the Neolithic communities," lead author Silvia Albizuri, a researcher at the University of Barcelona, told AFP.

And the special status accorded to canines even extended to the grave, Albizuri and her team reported recently in the Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports.

In more than two dozen circular burial plots, the partial or complete remains of pooches were carefully laid out next to individual men, women and children.

But the dogs chosen to spend eternity with their masters paid a stiff price for the privilege: they were sacrificed at the time of burial, the study concluded.

The animals ranged in age between one and six years, with a quarter estimated at 12 and 18 months-old.

"The selection of puppies and one-year old animals suggests the intention to sacrifice," said Albizuri.The Pit Grave people, in other words, loved their dogs to death.

Dogs not eaten

The preference for young dogs may also have stemmed from a reluctance to lose older ones already trained up in their guarding or herding duties.

A lack of cut-marks on the dog bones also suggests their flesh was not cut away and consumed before burial.

Canines and humans laid to rest side-by-side have been found at other Middle Neolithic sites in northern Italy and southern France, but the Bobila Madurell tomb—just north of Barcelona—has more dogs than any other, the study said.

The remains of all but nine of the 26 dogs examined were excavated there.

Dogs were first used by humans for hunting and probably transport, scientists speculate.

As humans settled and began to practise agriculture some 10,000 years ago, canines became sentinels against upright invaders and wild animals, especially their evolutionary cousins, wolves.

They also learned to herd other domesticated creatures, such as sheep, goats or cattle.

"Dogs played an important role in the economy of Neolithic populations, taking care of herds and settlements," the researchers noted.

The mid-sized dogs described in the study—standing up to half-a-metre tall, and weighing about 15 kilos—resemble "shepherd dogs of the current Pyrenees," the mountain chain separating France and Spain, Albizuri said.

Bones from livestock found at the Spanish burial sites were scattered in a haphazard manner, further proof that Neolithic canines carefully laid to rest were in a class of their own.The 5th millenium BC in southern Europe was dotted with a few large settlements, along with small villages or hamlets in plains or on hilltops. Archeologists have also unearthed the remains of simple farms, temporary shelters, and silos used to store grain.—AFP ■

Special status accorded to some canines even extended to the grave. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar's Myat Noe Khin (No. 7) poised as she looks for the ball pass over the Philippines defender in yesterday's AFC qualifiers at the Mandalar Thiri Stadium in Mandalay. **PHOTO : MFF**

AFC U-16 Women's Qualifiers: Myanmar beat Philippines 3-0

MYANMAR claimed a 3-0 victory over the Philippines in the final group match of the AFC U-16 Women's Championship Qualifiers at the Mandalar Thiri Stadium in Mandalay yesterday.

Although both teams will not be advancing to the next stage of the championship, they made every effort to showcase their skills at the match.

Myanmar lined up with goal keeper Khin Myat Moe, Su Pyae Pyae Kyaw, Win Win Lae, Kay Kay, Captain Myat Noe Khin, Swe Mar Aung, Wai Phoo Eain, Win Win, Pont Pont Pyae Maung, May Thet Mon Myint, and Phyu Phyu Win.

Myanmar dominated the entire match, and the team's win depended on an early goal by Su Pyae Pyae Kyaw, who managed to score the opening goal just 37 minutes into play.

The opening goal boosted Myanmar's confidence, and the team fought hard for more goals till the end of the first half.

A change in tactic in the second half lead to the teams fighting to keep the ball.

The Philippines team played better defence and attack in the second half. However, Myanmar managed to score the second and the winning goal at 89 and 90 minutes.

The goals were scored by Zin Mar Htwe and Swe Mar Aung, and at the final whistle, the result was 3-0 in favor of the Myanmar team.

In another match, China took the first position in group play by beating Bangladesh 3-0.

China PR and Bangladesh will join the top three teams from the 2017 edition — DPR Korea, Korea Republic, and Japan — along with host Thailand in the finals, scheduled to be held in September.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■

Japan-ASEAN women's football tourney: Myanmar, Japan draw

THE match between Myanmar and Asian powerhouse Japan ended in a 1-1 draw at the Japan-ASEAN U-19 Women's Football Tournament, held in Japan yesterday.

Team Myanmar managed to match the play of the host team, one of the strongest at the Asian level.

Japan is competing with ASEAN football majors at the tournament.

Teams from five nations are participating in the tourney, namely, Japan, Viet Nam, Myanmar, Okinawa, and Thailand.

Currently, Japan is placed at the top with 4 points from 1 win and 1 draw. Viet Nam has 4 points from 1 win and 1 draw, like Japan, but has been placed second on account of a goal difference.

Myanmar is placed third with 2 points from 2 draws.

Okinawa and Thailand are in the fourth and fifth place, with difference in goals.

Myanmar is in good shape, and with two matches still left, it has hopes of advancing to the finals.

Today, Myanmar will play against Okinawa at the Shimonobe Cape Ball Park,Yomitan village Athletics Field.

Team Myanmar will take on Thailand's U-19 team on 5 March.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■

Still loving it: Under-fire Cheika hits out at 'dramatic' critics

SYDNEY (Australia)—Under-pressure Wallabies coach Michael Cheika has hit out at his "dramatic" critics and insisted his working relationship with new boss Scott Johnson would be "straightforward".

The 51-year-old declared "it doesn't matter how many bullets people want to throw at me, I still love it," adding that Australia can take advantage of being labelled underdogs at this year's World Cup after an abysmal 2018.Cheika survived the axe in December after Australia won just four of 13 Tests last year—their worst campaign in decades.But the head coach's powers were diluted by having to answer to Johnson, who has been recruited from Scotland to take up a new director of rugby role later this month.He must also work with a three-man selection panel—himself, Johnson and the recently-appointed Michael O'Connor.

Cheika had not spoken publicly since Johnson was recruited but broke his silence in a video posted on the Wallabies' Facebook page on Saturday evening."It's a game you love and it doesn't matter how many bullets people want to throw at me, I still love it," he said.

"That propensity to be dramatic, or over-dramatic, I am not really sure where that came from. Maybe there are a few people out there that need that to survive in their own world, everything has got to be drama."Truth is important and it usually comes out in the end," he added cryptically.

Another resource

Cheika said he had spoken with Johnson but did not meet him during a recent trip to Britain to watch Six Nations games.

"It's pretty straightforward stuff," he said of the relationship, while offering little further insight into how it would work. "I know it's going to be another resource that we have going on in here. He will have a lot of stuff going on with the greater game, I suppose, as far as the picture is concerned there." Sydney-born Johnson became Scotland's director of rugby in 2013 and has overseen their recent renaissance. He also served as Scotland's interim coach from 2012-2014. Cheika has also met O'Connor, who has made clear he won't be afraid to voice his opinions. "I spoke with Michael here the other day, just to give him an idea of how we do things around viewing, scouting and looking over the players in Super Rugby and what the differences are," he said.

"Then when Scott gets back I am sure we will share ideas around that table and come up with the best selections and the best opportunities as well." Cheika watched Wales, England and France during his trip. Wales are in Australia's World Cup pool group and England and France are potential quarter-final opponents. "There is real intensity over there. Wales and England are both playing a strong, kick, defence, pressure game and they're very good at it," he said."It gave me a really good sense of what's important to those teams."Australia, beaten finalists at the 2015 World Cup, have fallen to number six in the world and few give them much chance of winning in Japan.

But Cheika believes this could work in their favour. —AFP ■

Michael Cheika says being underdogs could be an advantage for the Wallabies at the World Cup. **PHOTO: AFP**