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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla donate offertories to Abbot Sutti Sala May Tee at Wat Bodhisomphon Temple in Udon Thani Province, Thailand yesterday. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE C-IN-C OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Wat Bodhisomphon Temple

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and party, who are on a goodwill visit to Thailand at the invitation of Chief of Defence Forces of Royal Thai Armed Forces General Ponpipaat Benyasri, paid a visit to Wat Bodhisomphon Temple in Udon Thani Province yesterday.

After paying homage to the Buddha image and sacred relics in the precinct of the temple, the Senior General, his wife and party paid obeisance to Abbot Sutti Sala May Tee and donated offerings and cash for nine prerequisites.

Afterwards, they paid obeisance to 600-year Buddha Image made of gold, bronze and metal donated by Laos and 120-year Buddha's footprint and poured water at 90-year Bodi tree in the precinct of the temple.

Then, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party left Wing 23 Airbase of the Royal Thai Air Force for Bangkok. At the airbase, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing took the salute of Guard of Honour of the Royal Thai Air Force.

Afterwards, the Senior General and party arrived at Don Muong Airport Wing 6 Airbase of the Royal Thai Air Force in Bangkok where they were welcomed by Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand U Myo Myint Than, Major-General Nopadon Mungkalaton of the Royal Thai Air Force and officials.

Next, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and party were hosted a working dinner by Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces General Ponpipaat Benyasri and wife Sala Tim Naam at the Thai traditional restaurant, according to the news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. —MNA

(Translated by TMT)

Government, EAOs negotiate to renew formal talks

By Ye Khaung Nyunt

A GOVERNMENT delegation led by U Khin Zaw Oo, Secretary of the Peace Commission, met informally with ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, over the course of three days last week to negotiate resuming their participation in formal dialogues with the government and Tatmadaw for Myanmar's peace process.

Accompanying U Khin Zaw Oo were PC member U Aung Soe, Director-General U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor, member of the UPDJC Secretariat U Hla Maung Shwe, and U Kyaw Linn Oo as technical support.

The government delegation met with the Vice Chairman and secretary of the Karen National Union (KNU) delegation on 8 March, with the Peace Process Steering Team (PPST) on 9 March, and with Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) on 10 March.

The KNU have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) and the PPST represents ten ethnic armed organization signatories, while the KNPP have yet to sign the NCA.

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee holds meeting

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee discussed the Consumer Protection Bill which was sent back with remarks by the President, the Demarcation Bill on which the two parliaments were in disagreement and the Bill amending the Myanmar Engineering Council Law yesterday.

The meeting was attended by U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Joint Bill Committee, secretary, joint secretary and members of the joint committee, officials of the Office of the Union Government, officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Construction, Myanmar Engineering Council, Myanmar Engineering Societies, Union Attorney General Office and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.—MNA ■ *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee being convened. **PHOTO : MNA**

Myanmar Kidney Foundation holds anniversary in Yangon

Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe addresses the Myanmar Kidney Foundation at International Business Center in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO : MNA**

THE Myanmar Kidney Foundation (MKF) held its anniversary at International Business Center in Yangon yesterday, attended by Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe and Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye.

First, the President of the MKF Dr Hla Aung explained the goals and functions of the foundation.Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe said the foundation is prioritizing the preventive measures under specific goals in addition to providing treatment. He elaborated on the benefits of preventive measures against kidney disease. Eating less salt, controlling body weight and blood pressure, reducing blood sugar and staying away from taking compounded medicines are the means to prevent kidney failure and other diseases, he said.

He then explained the ill effects and dangers of kidney disease that may even kill a patient, promising coordination among the medical related bodies to combat the disease.

President of the foundation Dr Hla Aung and Vice President Dr Win Naing thanked the donors for their contribution towards the trust fund of MKF. In the afternoon, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe met the chair, vice-chairs, the secretary, the joint secretaries and the executive committee members of the newly formed Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association.—MNA ■

(Translated by TMT)

Taninthayi Chief Minister, three company officials face corruption charges

THE Anti-Corruption Commission formed an investigation team to look into a corruption complaint against the Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region, Dr. Lae Lae Maw. The team conducted its investigation in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, and Dawei from 4 to 6 February.

According to the investigation team's report, the Taninthayi Region Government assigned F-22 Sunny Construction Co. Ltd the job of erecting the Thingyan central pavilion in April, 2016 and the task of clearing bushes at the Dawei University compound in November, 2016 , along with the Dawei Airport compound, charging what was described as an unreasonable fee.

The Regional Government invited tenders on 15 December, 2016 for clearing bushes in the Dawei Airport compound and F-22 Sunny Construction Co. was awarded the K400 million contract through misuse of the Chief Minister's authority. The act amounted to taking a bribe in favor of an organization, and depleted the Union's budget, as the government paid a higher amount than the prevailing market price, the report stated.

According to the report, without observing the financial rules and directives of the Union Government, Chief Minister Dr. Lae Lae Maw allowed the Road Management Department of the region to draw a lump sum of K1.9 billion, which was used by U Tun Min, husband of the director of the department, to buy two plots of land, N1068 and 1070, under the name 'U Myint Ho'. U Tun Min also ordered construction of a brick wall, at a cost of K14 million, and it was found that the fee was paid only after the investigation was opened, and the failure to pay the actual cost amounted to bribery, the report stated.

According to the investigation, the Chief Minister sold a two-storey house and compound owned by her family on Myeik-Dawei Road, Myoma Ward, Thayetchanung Township, to Global Grand Services (GGS) for K200 million, which was much higher than the actual price of K32 million. She gave permission to GGS to build a fish auction market in Thayetchaung, distribute power in Dawei District, and build a gymnasium in Dawei, a town hall in Palaw, four six-unit four-storey houses in Dawei and Myeik, and a Taninthayi Region guesthouse and staff quarters in Nay Pyi Taw, the report stated. U Thura Ohn, one of the buyers of the Chief Minister's house, was the general manager of the GGS and also had business relations with it, the report stated. U Thura Ohn, along with two other officials from the company — U Thein Htwe and U Aung Myat — bought the property at a price that was six times higher than the market price. According to the report, a power distribution agreement in Dawei District, Taninthayi Region, was reached on 6 December, 2016. The agreement was signed by the secretary of the regional government on its behalf, and U Thein Htwe on behalf of GGS, the report stated.

Failure to implement the project, in accordance with the conditions of the agreement, amounted to violating rules and regulations, and GGS has failed to pay K8,000 million for its gas supply since 1 July, 2017, due to which the Union suffered losses, as the Ministry of Electricity and Energy had to bear the cost, the report added.

It was found that the Chief Minister, and U Thein Htwe, along with U Aung Myat of GGC Company, were involved in the corruption case, the report added.

According to the findings of the team, the Myoma Police Station in Dawei is preparing to file a lawsuit against Chief Minister Daw Lae Lae Maw under Section 55 of the Anti-Corruption Law, and Managing Director U Thein Htwe, Director U Aung Myat, and U Thura Ohn under Sections 55/63 of the Anti-Corruption Law. —MNA ■

(Translated by TMT)

Myanmar Studies Group's Book on Global Affairs launches

The launching of the book on global affairs, compiled by the Myanmar Studies Group, was held at the office of the News and Periodicals Enterprise on Theinbyu Road in Yangon yesterday. Union Minister for Information, Dr. Pe Myint, addressed the ceremony.

In his address, the Union Minister said the development of a country depends on its intellectual development. He added that intellectual development requires researchers to employ subject-wise research made with coordinated efforts, and the findings must be modified through criticisms, suggestions and supplementations.

Also, intellectual development must be supportive of national progress, as it might well produce visions and views that are more realistic, he added.

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint addresses the book launching in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Myanmar studies group compiles papers on the affairs of Myanmar and ethnic peoples, and serves as a venue for exchanging ideas about Myanmar's intellectuals, contacting international researchers, meeting international demands for references on Myanmar and acting as a medium between Myanmar's researchers and global researchers.

The Union Minister requested the attendees to provide input on ways the intellectual sector can supplement Myanmar's national development. He invited them to voice the requirements, shortcomings and other aspects of the periodicals and to add in any ideas that will achieve a measure of success.

Next, senior researcher of the group, U Aye Maung Kyaw, gave a brief account of the book, saying that the book came about as a result of MoI's drive and contribution. He said they received assistance from Singaporeans interested in Myanmar's affairs and the book includes translations of articles from the US, UK, Asian countries and from around the world.

Fellow senior researcher U Zeya then explained the functions of the group and was followed by a question and answer session.

Global Affairs No 1 features translated versions of internationally renowned articles. It contains information on current global schools of thought, interesting national, economic, political and military affairs, predictions for 2019, and other noteworthy articles.

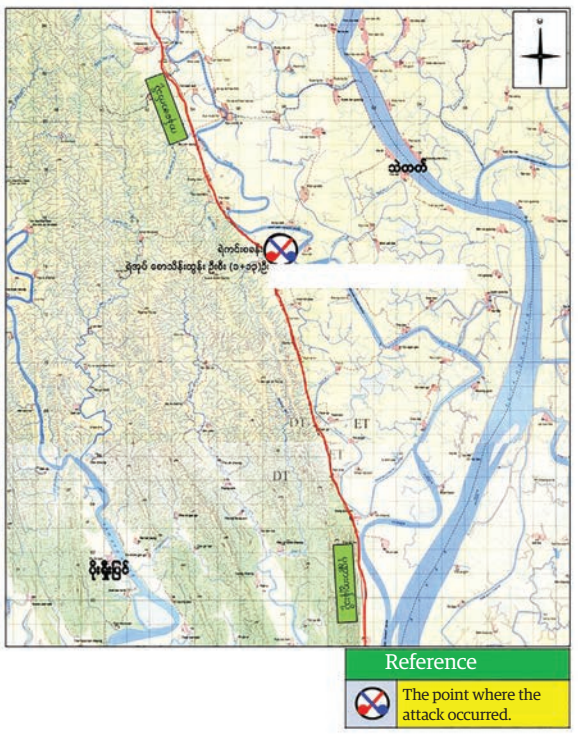
Afterwards, Monywa Aung Shin, Secretary of NLD (Central) Information Committee, said the book included a large amount of knowledge about the world including global perspectives on Myanmar and articles on China and European affairs.

The ceremony was attended by officials from the Ministry of Information, Hluttaw representatives, literary experts, writers, literature enthusiasts and invited guests.— MNA

AA insurgents attack police outpost in Ponnagyun, killing nine personnel

AA insurgents attacked the Yotayoke Police Outpost in Ponnagyun Township, Rakhine State, on 9 March, killing 9 personnel, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

One policeman was reported missing after the attack, they added.



The attack on the police outpost by the insurgents lasted from 11.20 p.m. to 11.50 p.m. The outpost is responsible for security in the area, and maintaining communal peace and the rule of law. The police outpost in Yotakoke Village, headed by Police Inspector Saw Thein Tun, has also been tasked with storing question and answer papers of the ongoing matriculation exams from test centers in the area. The men who died in the attack are ethnic Rakhine locals from Ponnagyun Township and Yotakoke Village, said the Myanmar Police Force. —MNA ■

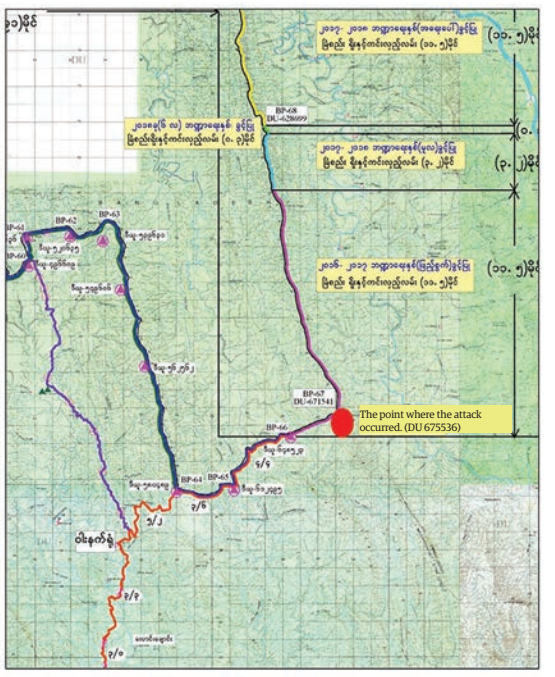
(Translated by KZL)

AA insurgents attack border fence construction site

AA insurgents reportedly attacked a border fence construction site in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State, on 9 March, according to a statement released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

On Saturday afternoon, about 200 AA insurgents launched an attack from three directions, from the neighboring Bangladeshi territory, on the construction site, which is located between BP-67 and BP-68, according to the statement.

Following the fight between the AA insurgents and the security forces, workers at the site were moved to safety.



The map shows the site where attack occurred.

Construction work on the fence along the Bangladesh and Myanmar border began in 2010. The work has been divided into four stages, and so far, more than 120 miles of border fencing has been completed.

According to the statement from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, security forces will carry out appropriate security operations against AA insurgents, as they are threatening the territory and the sovereignty of the State, and the property and lives of the local people. — MNA ■

(Translated by KZL)

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

Yangon Book Street attracts local bookworms, foreign tourists

"THE Yangon Book Street or the Saturday-Sunday Book Street" on Theinbyu Road in Botahtaung Township has attracted local and foreign bookworms.

"I bought several genres of books for my children so that they can read books in summer holidays. Because, I want to encourage their reading habits since their childhood," said U Zaw Win from Thingangyun Township.

The Yangon Book Street, with nearly 70 book stalls, has offered different genres of books _ translated books, books in English, old and new fiction and non-fiction books, short stories, novels, books on religion, social, education, health, culture, medical books, English-Myanmar dictionaries, tales, books for children, etc.

People visit the book street in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO : THANT ZIN WIN**

The Save the Library conducted its Human Library reading program in the morning. In the afternoon, writer Htet Myat gave a literary talk titled "The political literati whom I respect", and Htain Win Publishing House conducted a puzzle programme, with the participation of Actor Shwe Poe Eain.

The Yangon Book Street has reached its seventh week so far for this year.—Min Thit (MNA) ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

A woman prepares for selling palm leaf-based handmade products. **PHOTO : MIN HTET AUNG**

Palm leaf beads making art needs to be preserved

PALM leaf beads have been the symbol or the special souvenir of Shwesayan Pagoda festival normally held in March every year in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region. But the age-old traditional handicraft business of making palm leaf beads, palm leaf fans and palm leaf toys is fading. "Normally, it is a family business, especially suitable to the large families. In the past there were more than ten persons involved in this handicraft industry in our village, but the number has reduced to seven, said U Tar of Nyaungwun Village in Kyaukse Township who produces the beads.

"But we are determined to revitalize this business. There will be palm leaf beads and other palm leaf-based products as long as the pagoda festival lives," he said.—(Min Htet Aung/Mann sub-printing house) ■

Myanmar to send workers to Japan to ease labor shortage

MYANMAR-Japan SEDA and associates have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for sending skilled workers from Myanmar to Japan and for conducting training programs for unskilled workers and students. The MoU was inked last Saturday at the Novotel Hotel in Yangon.

"Labor requirements in Japan are expected to rise in April. Earlier, there was a demand for only industrial workers. Now, they are seeking service workers. About 150 workers will be sent to work at care centers for the aged in Japan," said U Aye Min from Myanmar-Japan SEDA.

The Japanese government has enacted a law to allow employment of foreign workers to ease the labor shortage, and it plans to bring in around 350,000 blue-collar workers for 14 types of jobs.

"Starting April, we will need trainees who can work for five years in Japan on a work visa," said Hideki Matsushita from the Tokio Investment Company.

The MoU was signed between Myanmar-Japan SEDA and associates, including Japanese language schools, overseas job recruitment agencies, and financing groups. They are seeking workers in the 18 to 35 age group who are fluent in Japanese.—Zar Ni Maung ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Pilgrims donate K275 mln to Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda in 1 month

VISITORS to the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda, a well-known pilgrim site in Magway Region, donated more than K275 billion in one month for development works at the pagoda, according to the pagoda's board of trustees.

Located between the Minbu and Ngape townships in Magway Region, the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda has been crowded with pilgrims, hailing from nearby and far-flung areas, since the second week of February, when the Shwesettaw festival season started. Among the most important pagoda festivals in the country, the Shwesettaw festival takes place from mid-February to mid-April. A big draw at the pagoda are two footprints belonging to Lord Buddha.

"This year's festival started on 9 February, and cash donated by devotees has reached K275.626 million in total," said an official with the pagoda's board of trustees.

U Aung Kyi, the treasurer of the pagoda's board of trustees, said a team comprising members of the pagoda's finance department usually collects all donations at 8 p.m. every day, and deposits the cash at the state-run Myanma Economic Bank on a weekly basis. As of February, the pagoda's deposits totalled K6.727 billion. —Zeyatu (Mandalay) ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Marine exports up $26 mln in five months

MYANMAR earned about US$364 million from the export of fisheries products in the first five months of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, increasing by $26 million from the corresponding period last 2017-2018 FY, according to official figures issued by the Ministry of Commerce.

From 1 October to 1 March 2019, the public sector made no trade deal for this kind of product.

At this time last FY, the country's export of fisheries products was $338.9 million.

Myanmar exports freshwater fishes, shrimps and prawns, eels, mud crabs, seafood as well as dried fish, especially to ASEAN member countries, East Asian states and some European nations through border trade camps as well as non-border points of entry.

The country's marine export reached its peak of more than $700 million in the 2011-2012 fiscal year. The value of the same decreased in the three consecutive financial years commencing in the 2012-2013 FY. It rebounded to $469 million in the 2015-2016 FY, $581 million in the 2016-2017 FY and $699 million in the 2017-2018 FY.—Shwe Khine ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Myanmar exports fresh water prawns to the ASEAN countries.
PHOTO : SAI THURA AUNG

Rice exporters seek greater market access from foreign trade partners

By Nyein Nyein

The Myanmar Rice Federation is making concerted efforts to boost rice exports and is working with the concerned government departments to gain access to new markets to lift trade, according to the MRF's spokesperson.

U Ye Min Aung, the president of the MRF, said the federation will help the private sector to develop the country's rice industry, and plans to meet buyers in other countries to boost exports.

U Aung Than Oo, the vice-president of the MRF, said the federation plans to seek new business links, especially with regular Myanmar rice importers, including African states, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Led by the Myanmar Ministry of Planning and Finance and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, officials from the MRF attended the 2nd China-Myanmar Economic Corridor Forum, held in Yunnan Province, China, last month. During the informal meeting with Chinese authorities, Myanmar discussed raising the quota of its rice exports to China to 400,000 tons within this year. In 2016, the country had secured a quota of 100,000 tons of rice from China, according to a press release issued by the MRF on 25 February. In addition, merchants from both countries have been permitted to trade broken rice produced in Myanmar by signing sales and purchase contracts. Merchants are required to apply for licences and pay taxes for such transactions. Myanmar delivers rice to China not only via maritime routes, but also through border trade camps. Rice exports to China have declined due to its crackdown on border rice trade.

"The focus is on outflow of rice. That is to say, trade development must be coupled with increased production. We are not in a position to store our products for long periods. We are trying all possible ways to ship rice to the markets. The policy of the neighboring country is very important for us. The desire of buyers from the neighboring country is also important. The policy, laws, and desires of the neighboring country are to be taken into consideration, even though we want to export rice to other countries. So we plan to meet buyers from the neighboring country," said U Ye Min Aung. As per official statistics, Myanmar exported 2.115 million tons of rice and broken rice to its trade partners between 1 April, 2018 and 15 February, 2019, earning US$699.467 million.

The country currently exports rice to 50 countries and broken rice to 21 countries. ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Rise in exports, lower imports help trim Myanmar trade deficit as of 1 March

THE rise in exports and decline in imports over the last five months of the current fiscal year has helped cut the trade deficit to US$904 million from $1.6 billion in the corresponding period of the 2017-2018 fiscal year, according to the data of the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 October and 1 March, Myanmar's external trade increased to $14 billion which shows increase of $52 million compared with the corresponding period of the previous FY. The figure includes an estimated $6.6 billion in exports and $7.5 billion in imports. Compared with the same period in the previous FY, exports have increased by $339.9 million, while imports have declined by $392 million.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Export earnings from the CMP (cutting, making, and packaging) garment businesses are rising, while reliance on natural resources, such as natural gas and jade, is lessening. The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar's trade deficit stood at $91.9 million in the 2012-2013FY, $2.5 billion in the 2013-2014FY, $4.9 billion in the 2014-2015FY, $5.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY, $5.5 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and $1.3 billion in last mini-budget period, according to statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO).—Mon Mon ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

DICA sets 30 Mar as late registration deadline for MyCO

THE Directorate of Investment and Company Administration has asked companies which failed to register and re-register on the online registry MyCO in January to complete the registration formalities by 30 March.

Companies which fail to meet the deadline for late registration will be struck off from the register list, according to the DICA.

"More than 60,000 companies were previously registered in Myanmar, and they were all notified to re-register on MyCO. The DICA set a six-month period from 1 August, 2018 to 31 January, 2019 for companies to register and re-register on the online registry. Only 47,000 companies had re-registered on MyCO until the deadline expired," said U Myo Min, the director of the DICA.

"Companies which do not re-register within the set period will be struck off the list. Those who want to restore their corporate status will have to shell out a fee, and provide a sufficient reason for failing to complete the formalities," said U Myo Min.

In February, 1,419 more entities registered on the online registry, with total company registrations reaching 59,291.

"Companies must not think they can register by paying a penalty after the six-month deadline expired in January. According to regulations, companies will have to give a sufficient reason why they failed to register before the deadline," said U Myo Min.

Some corporates that failed to re-register may be considered to be running their business in the wrong way, said U Myo Min.

"They seem to stand as corporates, but they do not operate their business in the correct way. Now, we have cleared out those companies. We have notified all the companies to complete re-registration. Those branches of foreign banks have registered," said U Myo Min.

As per Chapter III of the notification (66/2018) issued by the Ministry of Planning and Finance on 23 July, 2018, if an existing company fails to re-register on the electronic registry system within the deadline, the registrar may strike its name off the register and publish a notice in the Gazette. Once the notice is published, the company will be dissolved, while the liability of the directors and the members of the company shall continue to be enforced.

Under Section (d) of Chapter III, a registrar may restore an existing company or corporate body which has failed to re-register, if it provides sufficient cause before its name is struck off the register. Such companies will be restored after they shell out a fee, which will be prescribed by the Union Minister.

Companies will have to pay the prescribed fee and applications for late re-registration will not be accepted after 30 March, on any grounds, according to the DICA.—GNLM ■

Union Minister visits Daewoo Bus assembling project in Yangon

Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho visits the Daewoo Bus Myanmar assembling project in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION MINISTER for Industry U Khin Maung Cho visited the Daewoo Bus Myanmar assembling project, a mutually beneficial joint-venture with No 1 Heavy Industries, in Htauntkyant, Yangon, yesterday, and heard a report on erection of buildings and equipment for producing Daewoo buses and mini buses. In response, the Union Minister looked into the requirements in installing chassis assembly line, coach assembly line and engine assembly line in accord with the designated design, and inspected the erection of the shower test. As all the required machinery had already been arrived at the site, efforts are being made to finish the project soonest. Korean trained Myanmar engineers and technicians trained in Korea will join hands with the engineers from South Korea to carrying out the whole production process.

The project will manufacture standard Daewoo buses soon. Moreover a Daewoo Service Center and Product Showroom will also be opened. In the second phase the project will assemble 29-seater mini buses.

The Union Minister instructed the systematic assembling of buses in accord with the set standard for public safety, the realization of the goal and the environmental conservation measures. He looked around the assembly lines and inspected the Korean-made ambulance cars and passenger buses.

The project includes the erection of charging stations and CNG-used vehicles.

Afterwards, the Union Minister visited the training room and office of the electrician training school of the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection on Kyaikwaing Pagoda Road. He spoke of the need to make cooperate efforts, keep training equipment systematically and the place clean and tidy and to conduct the courses well. —MNA ■

(Translated by TMT)

State-run newspapers to increase in basic price

THE News and Periodicals Enterprise has announced that the basic price for *the Myanma Alinn daily* , *the Kyemon daily* and the joint-venture English daily *The Global New Light of Myanmar* will increase from K50 to K100 starting 1 April 2019.—MNA ■ *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)*

One policeman missing after AA attack boat in Yathedaung creek

AA insurgents attacked policemen on board a boat in Kardi Creek in Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State, yesterday evening, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

One policeman was reported missing after the attack.

About 6.20 p.m. yesterday, a large boat carrying AA insurgents came across a boat with 14 policemen on board, following which the insurgents opened fire. The police officials were on their way to the Nyaungchaung regional office.

The police boat sank, along with three pieces of arms, after being crashed against by the insurgents' boat.

One policeman was reported injured and missing after the attack. The remaining officials were not injured in the attack.

Afterwards, the AA insurgents drove away towards Gwazon along the creek, according to the police. — MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Ethnic entrepreneurs hold meeting

Honorary Patron Dr. Aung Tun Thet addresses the ethnic entrepreneurs meeting in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

"Ethnic entrepreneurs should exchange visits with their counterparts to have understanding of the businesses, traditions and cultures of other ethnic races," said Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Naing Thet Lwin at the meeting Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association-MEEA in Yangon yesterday.

Speaking there as the Honorary Patron of MEEA, the Union Minister said, "Such visits will enhance amity through the understanding of the cultural diversity," adding, "national unity is of vital importance as it is the only force that will clear all doubts and build a Federal Union"

The Union Minister said, "Ethnic handicraft industries must be encouraged. As the country lies between the two most populous countries of the world, it has two large markets. But only quality products can penetrate markets.

"Apart from individual efforts, ethnic entrepreneurs should also make group-wise efforts.

The Ministry of Ethnic Affairs is rendering assistance to form associations in accord with the rules and regulations. Aside from micro industries, they should form joint-ventures with foreign counterparts."

"As the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs is striving for the development of ethnic regions in cooperation with relevant ministries, ethnic entrepreneurs should also join hands in the task," he said.

Honorary Patron Dr. Aung Tun Thet also gave a speech. Rakhin Ethnic Affairs Minister U Zaw Aye Maung and Kayin Ethnic Affairs Minister Naw Pan Thinza Myo of Yangon Region discussed matters relating to the ethnic businesses of the region.

Chairman of MEEA U Yaw Hset and General Secretary U Mahn Banya San explained the history of MEES and its functions.

Ethnic entrepreneurs and representatives of self-administered division and areas presented difficulties. The Union Minister and honorary patrons took coordinate measures to solve their problems. —MNA

(Translated by TMT)

Government, EAOs negotiate to renew formal talks

FROM PAGE-1

The following is an interview with U Hla Maung Shwe, a member of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee Secretariat, on the progress made during the various meetings.

Q: What was the main factor behind these meetings?

A: The KNU had temporarily suspended its participation in all ongoing peace negotiations. These informal meetings intend to find a solution to that.

Likewise, the RCSS (Restoration Council of Shan State) have also suspended discussions with the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) temporarily. This has inconvenienced the ten NCA signatories to continue peace talks and come back to the dialogue table.

This is why we came at a time when the PPST would be meeting together and the KNU would be present. We also decided to meet with the non-signatory KNPP while we were there.

The meetings were informal but they are just as important. We saw there was much more needed to be done. The nature of informal talks is that no decisions are made from them but they also allow us to hold open and unreserved discussions with each other. We get opportunities to build trust between us and explain on things not clear to one another. I believe we were able to take those steps in these informal meetings.

Q: Could you describe your meeting with the KNU?

A: The KNU delegation explained their understanding and approach to us and we explained about this too. Their main concern was that the political dialogues might become one-sided. They expressed their wish to proceed on the path outlined in the NCA. We told them the NCA is more than just us or the KNU and is bigger than the ten signatories, the government or the Tatmadaw. If we are to follow the NCA process then there must be Union Peace Conferences, the UPDJC, and the JMC. Only then can we negotiate with each other and find solutions.

Since the discussions had been postponed there are 16 representatives from 24 political parties that won elections. They are waiting as well. The UPDJC can't discuss their worries and guarantees because of this.

We explained to them that we can include the discussions from the UPDJC in the conference which can then be passed on to the Hluttaw for approval. Both sides were able to have open discussions as we intend to hold all final discussions within 2019 and to resume political dialogue. This is why the KNU will be able to

Representaives from EAOs seen in the meeting. **PHOTO: HMS**

hold meetings with the National Reconciliation and Peace Center (NRPC) and as well as the Tatmadaw soon. We believe the formal talks will commence after their meetings.

Q: How did the meeting with the PPST go?

A: They will hold an EAO Summit with top leaders in May. This is a preliminary meeting to make changes with the UPDJC, the JMC and other necessary steps before the summit. We explained that the UPDJC could be held as informal meetings and we think they largely understood our explanations. We hope to hold informal meetings with them to make necessary changes either in Yangon or Nay Pyi Taw.

Q: And how did the meeting with KNPP progress?

A: The KNPP didn't say they were opposed to signing the NCA nor did they suggest paths outside the NCA process so we were not unfamiliar with each other. We openly discussed some difficulties at the grassroot level and inviting them to meet with the NRPC in Nay Pyi Taw after they hold their own meetings. I understood that they are in favour of holding meetings with the Tatmadaw so I believe they will provide results soon.

Q: Thank you for your time and one last question. Could you tell us the government's current tasks to the peace process?

A: The RCSS will be meeting with NRPC in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 March (today) and they will meet with the Tatmadaw shortly after that. The Peace Commission is continuing talks with EAOs in Northern Myanmar to sign the NCA. We are working on arranging meetings with them.

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

MoI's Dy Minister meets editorial staff of state-run media

Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun meets with editorial staff of the state-run print media in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun met with editorial staff of the state-run print media at *the Global New Light of Myanmar* daily in Yangon yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, he stressed the importannt role of state-run media in Myanmar and newsworthiness in the state-run dailies.

He also highlighted the importance of mutual understanding and coordination in the newsrooms.

The Deputy Minister also underlined the responsibility and accountability of the editorial staff to ensure publishing flawless stories and creating an own house style.

The Deputy Minister then took coordinated measures in looking into the requirements of the editorial staff.

At the Photolitho Printing Press of the Printing and Publishing Department, he inspected the printing of exercise books for schools and ballots for the soon-to-be-held elections at different levels of the Yangon City Development Committee. He stressed the importance of meeting the time schedule, quality, confidentiality, security and preparedness for natural disasters.

The municipal elections are slated to be held on 31 March. — MNA

(Translated by TMT)

11 MARCH 2019
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

National pension for all

ONE of the benefits of serving the country as a civil servant is the pension one draws upon retirement, reflecting the years of commitment and hard work on the job. It is heartening to see that pensioners, who received a relatively inadequate pension under former systems, are now drawing a stipend on par with the current salary slabs in the incumbent civilian government's administration.

And, the news gets better. It was recently announced that the government is working towards a national pension system that will cover retirees from the private sector as well. Leading the way towards the new system is the Implementation Committee of the Central Provident Fund System, formed on 19 February as per Order No. 27/2017 from the Office of the President to ensure civil servants and staff from the private sector can afford housing, have access to healthcare, and get monthly pension upon retirement.

> Governments will come and go, and political systems and economic models will change over time, but our workforce will keep the great engine of our nation running smoothly for perpetuity, and for this, they deserve to be acknowledged.

The implementation committee is the first of its kind for the nation's workforce. Our country is not rich yet, so, while the authorities may not be able to provide an all-encompassing welfare program to the people, we welcome the efforts to fulfil the requirements of staff from the public and private sectors in their later years.

Our workforce enables the coordination between the government and the private sector that drives the mechanisms behind our politics, economy, and society. Governments will come and go, and political systems and economic models will change over time, but our workforce will keep the great engine of our nation running smoothly for perpetuity, and for this, they deserve to be acknowledged.

The annual increase in the number of pensioners and the rise in life expectancy has pushed up government expenditure on pensions year after year. It's not an easy task to keep up with the growing demand, especially given that the government's current pension spend is 1.5 per cent of the nation's GDP, one-sixth of the national revenue, and adds up to 10 per cent of the national expenditure annually.

Thus, we can clearly see there is a need to follow global practices and adopt a provident fund system so that our national pension program is sustainable and the nation's budget can withstand the strain in the long run. It is our belief that if we enact suitable laws for the central provident fund and design a master strategy to implement them in a timely manner, then we can steer away from the challenges that will surely arise in the future as the number of pensioners steadily increases.

■■■

Promoting the role of medical social work and medicare

By Pe Hnin Ngwe

Yangon General Hospital is boosting its capacity in healthcare services . **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

MEDICAL social work is a social service for those who are hospitalized in state-owned hospitals and who are facing socio-medical difficulties that are required to be solved with the help of medical social workers. The service is a small unit known as the Medical Aid Unit under the Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports.

Intentions of helping in-patients

The main objective of this service is to help in-patients concerning their medical and social problems. Medico social problems mean that difficulties result simultaneously from illness. By solving these problems, medical services are expected to be highly successfully.

Thus, laborious works of professionals, public funds, medicines and medical equipment will not go to waste. For the patients themselves, physical and mental health can not only be retained but also gained social satisfaction during a period of their hospitalization.

The history of medical social work began in children's hospital in San Francisco, USA in 1886; it all originated when a health worker was employed for the treatment of infants with inborn defects. Then in 1894, a medical social officer was employed in post-graduate hospital in New York, USA.

Little knowledge on medical social service in Myanmar

Medical social activities have extended not only in developed countries but also in developing countries in the later period of time.

In Myanmar, medical social service started in Yangon General Hospital in 1957. At that time, it was known as "Public Relation Department".

Nowadays, medical social staff have been employed to carry out their respective duties in Central Hospitals , Specialist and General Hospitals and 100-bed hospitals in the Regions, States and Districts.

Medical social service In Myanmar has existed for more than 60 years; but it is little known among the public. Even health workers sometimes don't know about the medical social activities. That might be because there are a few workers of medical social service and a little budget allowance for poor patients due to a set-up; it is also possible that few trainings are conducted for the skills of medical social staff. Now, the government has employed more and more medical social staff in the Region and State Hospitals. At the same time, a budget allowance for poor patients has been allocated in accordance with sizes of the hospitals.

Travelling allowance for health workers

Some patients are basically short of money so that they need help from the medical and social health workers. Some patients, who are released from the hospitals, have no expenses to go back their homes and need help from the medical social workers. Throughout a period of hospitalization, patients find it difficult to buy medicines, clothes, foods and other things (for example, a pair of crutches and wheelchairs) These poor patients could be helped by the government via budget allowance and money provided by individual donors to be worked out by medical staff in line with the health procedures.

Some patients might inadvertently create consequences in their family circle and a household by having infectious HIV/TB. In that situation, medical social staff should share knowledge, encourage and comfort about these infectious diseases to patients, their families and other relatives. If necessary, these patients should be sent to hospitals and other medical centers for further treatments.

Helping abandoned infants and the elderly

Sometimes newly-born infants are abandoned for several reasons; they must be temporarily looked after by medical staff and transferred to adopted parents or to a suitable government center. The elderly and helpless patients can be resettled in the home for the aged poor in consultation with social organizations. Some patients are unwilling to go after release order and some even refuse to go away from the hospital. Medical social staff will discuss with them for a clear and insightful knowledge of releasing from the hospitals. Knowledgeable discussions should be organized to let them know the true situations of our life: those who intend to commit suicide, illegal abortions and abandoned newly-born infants are included in those categories. Some women and children are hospitalized after they are terrorized.

> Now, the government has employed more and more medical social staff in the Region and State hospitals.

They should be helped with effective actions by the medical staff in consultation with organizations concerned by means of instructions, comfort and provisions of financial assistance. In time of natural disasters and a state of emergency, patients arrived in hospitals enmasse; their personal history and summary of events should be collected by the medical staff as much as they can. If necessary, blood donors must sought and collection of corneas must be encouraged from the dead and blood donations should be arranged by medicosocial staff.

Some patients should be reminded of their examinations during hospitalization; examinations should be arranged for primary, middle and high school students as well as for university, college and institute students.

Medical treatments and solutions of their problems

When the new government was in power in 2016, Medical Social Relations Unit was put in two work projects under the work plan of first 100-day government. The first thing to employ many receptionists in state-owned hospitals; their duties are to show out-door patients and send them to their respective beds if necessary.

The second one is that those released from hospitals should be enquired about conveniences or inconvenience during their stay in the hospitals. The reason is how these problems should be solved in accordance with the prescribed framework.

Due to the extension of medical social activities, medical treatments accompanied by patients' general problems could be solved. Furthermore, the physical, mental and social wellbeing of patients and their families is sure to be fulfilled.

Translated by Arakan Sein

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 10th March, 2019)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 11th March, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Tanintharyi Region, Shan and Chin 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 (4 - 6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Generally fair in the whole country.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11th March, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11th March, 2019: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11th 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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Report to the People submitted by the Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State, on its activities from September to December 2018

This report to the people covers the activities of Ministries, Government Organizations and Rakhine State Government involved in the Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State, during the period from September to December 2018.

A thorough assessment of these recommendations will show that while some of them are easily discernible by facts and figures, others remain more subtle and pervasive, likely to take more time to follow them step by step, until a certain stage is reached to comprehend the whole process. This report covers activities and progress which can be easily shown in facts and figures, but is silent on such factors as social cohesion and long-term economic development, which can be seen only on the long-run.

Regular Immunization Program during the period from September to December 2018

Month	Number of preventive innoculations								
	Japanese erisechalitis	BCG	5 categories	Oral polio vaccine	Injection polio vaccine	Severe pneumoa	Measles rubella	Titanus	Hepatitis-B
September	4257	4616	13574	13620	4689	13576	7814	9465	117
October	4286	4176	12979	12979	4672	12979	7846	9090	122
November	4390	4463	13295	13387	4433	13295	8398	9342	260
December	4669	4406	14197	14174	4815	14189	9358	9413	330
Total	17602	17661	54045	54160	18609	54039	33416	37310	829

Drugs

Kyats 25238 Million Worth of Drugs

During the period from September to December 2018, 86 cases of drug abuse involving 104 accused persons including 93 Males and 11 Females, were seized in Rakhine State and legal action was taken against them. Kyats 25238 million worth of drugs were confiscated.

Communal Participation and Representation

Registered 24 Civil Societies

In respect of registration of civil societies in Rakhine State. 14 civil societies were registered and 10 temporarily registered during the period from September to December 2018.

During the same period 4 ward/village executive officers were appointedin Rakhine State.

Security Sector

During the period from September to December 2018, 944 members of thepolice force had attended 2 external training courses designed to promote public participation in police system and upgrade the activities relating to the rule of law.

- Two police officers attended external training course.
- 752 trainees attended 5 multiplier courses of training on community policing system.
- 30 trainees attended one course of training on systematic crowd Management
- 60 trainees attended two courses of gender based violence. training
- 100 trainees attended two courses of multiplier training on maintenance and handling of Tommy guns and shooting.

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Conducting Local Dialect Training

50 members of the Border Police Force are attending local dialect training course during the period from 5th November 2018 to 1st March 2019.

Conducting Coordinated Patrols

Land Patrol 82 times

Water Patrol 20 times

During the period from September to December 2018, bilateral police forces have coordinated in drafting security plan and conducted land patrol 82 times and water patrol 20 times.

Access to Justice

Workshops on Justice

Pamphlets that will incite people's awareness of the rule of law and thereby conduce to the emergence of a fair judicial system and the rule of law have been distributed.

The Federal Supreme Court and UNDP had co-operated to hold workshops in this context on 13th and 20th October 2018.

A ceremony to mark the opening of Rule of Law Centre in Sittwe was held at Rakhine State Advocate General office on 12th December 2018.

12

Cultural Development

Regarding the proposal for enlisting Mrauk-U's cultural heritage area as world heritage

Drafting Nomination Dossier, Properties Management Plan and Cultural Map, field operation for drafting maps of civil communication lines and service area, drafting Topographic Map 1: 5000 and map drawing have all been accomplished under co-operation between ICH-DOA Mrauk-U Team and GIS Team.

During the period under review, inspection, examination, recording, photographing, photographic recording of cultural heritage buildings, pagodas, stupas and antique properties with a life span of more than 100 years have been undertaken jointly by GIS Team and Southeast University Team from China. Erection and maintenance of information signboards was done by the maintenance team.

Seminar on disaster prevention scheme was convened with technicians from World Bank on 21st October 2018. Similarly, seminar for preparing proposal for enlistment as World Heritage was convened with technicians from UNESCO, China and Italy on 27th and 28th December 2018.

Talk shows designed to acquaint local people with knowledge on maintenance of cultural heritage were hold in 21st and 22nd December 2018.

Border Issues and Bilateral Relationship with Bangladesh

Myanmar and Bangladesh Border Guard Regiment Level Meeting

Myanmar and Bangladesh Border Guard Regiment Level Meeting was held on 18th November 2018.

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(TO BE CONTINUED)

Korea Day 2019 celebrated in Yangon

Sponsored by Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and Myanmar Tourism Federation, and supervised by Myanmar-Korea Tourism Working group, the first Korea Day 2019 was observed at Sapphire Ballroom of Lotte Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

The first Korea Day 2019 was held with the aim of promoting Myanmar tourism industry, raising awareness of the tourism industry that is concerned with all people, promoting Myanmar-Korea friendship and encouraging bilateral investment of the two nations.

In the event, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko said the purpose of holding the Korea Day 2019 is that the event is believed to inspire the motive of Korean people to visit Myanmar after noticing more about Myanmar. He also expressed hope of promoting Myanmar-Korea bilateral economic cooperation and investment.

Government and the private are in cooperation, trying to develop the Myanmar tourism industry in acceleration. As the programmes featured at the Korea Day 2019 event are effective advertisements, they are believed to be assistances in attracting more Korean tourists into Myanmar, the Union Minister said.

The warmer friendship between the peoples of two nations will be established in exchanging traditional cultural dances and music of cultural heritage rich Myanmar and Korea, he added.

Afterwards, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Mr. Lee Sang-Hwa and General Secretary of the ASEAN Korea Centre Mr. Lee Hyuk delivered speeches, and then Chairman of Myanmar-Korea Tourism Working group U Thet Lwin Toe expressed thanks.

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko attends the Korea Day 2019 Ceremony in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

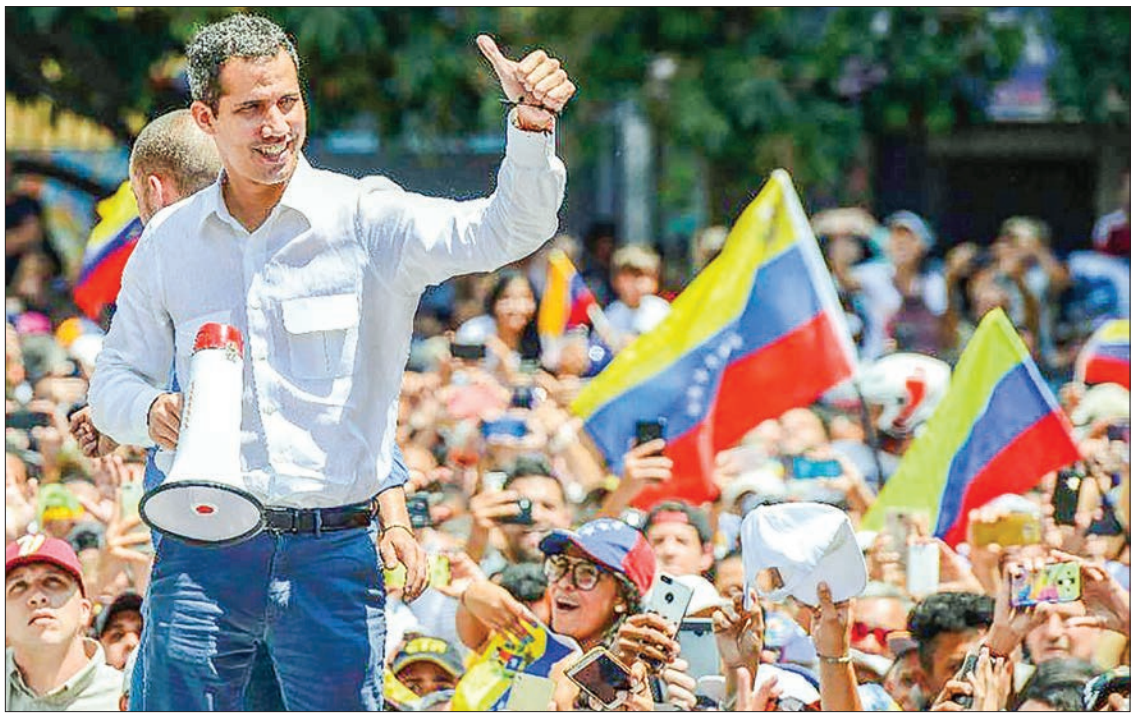
Then, the Union Minister and officials opened the event, banging the two nations' traditional musical instruments, Myanmar Drum and Korea Drum, and followed by Korea K-POP dance by Project K, Myanmar-Korea cultural dances, entertainment by special invitee Korean singer Ms. Hwang SeoIn from RAU Entertainment, and K-POP by Rose Quartz from JBJ Entertainment.

Then, talks titled "Korea-Myanmar Joint Tourism Promotion Activities" and "CBT in Myanmar" were conducted.

Myanmar-Korea joint organizations, organizations related to Korea, tourism companies, domestic and international airlines, hotels, tourism related companies, banks, communications businesses and transport businesses participated at the event with 40 booths. — MNA / *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)*

World News

Guaido calls for march on Caracas as Venezuela blackout drags on



Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido told supporters that he will tour the country and then lead a march on Caracas as he battles with President Nicolas Maduro for power. **PHOTO: AFP**

CARACAS (Venezuela)— Venezuela's opposition leader Juan Guaido on Saturday called for a nationwide march on Caracas to crank up the pressure on embattled President Nicolas Maduro, as the country endured its third night largely without power.The massive blackout crippling the oil-rich but economically troubled South American nation has fueled the political standoff between Guaido, who is recognized as Venezuela's leader by more than 50 countries, and Maduro, who is clinging to power.

No national data was available about the impact of the power outage, but an NGO said at least 15 patients with advanced kidney disease died after they stopped receiving dialysis treatments in darkened hospitals. As night fell Saturday, the power across much of the country —which first went off Thursday —was still not on. Businesses remained shut, hospitals struggled to operate, and public transport barely functioned.

The 35-year-old Guaido, the head of Venezuela's National Assembly, earlier told thousands of supporters that he would soon embark on a nationwide listening tour before leading a march on the capital. "Once we've finished the tour, the organization in every state, we'll announce the date when all together, we'll come to Caracas," Guaido said, a megaphone in his hand as he stood on the roof of a pickup truck. Security forces had prevented the opposition from setting up a stage at their original protest site, arresting three people.

"Miraflores, Miraflores!" chanted Guaido's supporters in response—a reference to the presidential palace currently occupied by Maduro. Guaido, who proclaimed himself president of the country of 30 million people in January and says Maduro's May re-election was illegitimate—wants to set up new polls. He threatened to authorize an outside military intervention "when the time comes," pointing to the constitution, which authorizes "the use of a Venezuelan military mission abroad, or foreigners inside the country." "All the options are on the table," he said, borrowing a phrase from US President Donald Trump.

'We will never surrender'

Maduro also rallied his supporters. Wearing red, they protested against "imperialism" at a march that marked four years since the United States branded Venezuela a "threat" to its security and imposed sanctions."Today, more than ever, we're anti-imperialists. We will never surrender!" Maduro wrote on Twitter. He said almost 70 per cent of power had been restored by mid-day, when a "cyberattack" was reported at a major power plant."That disturbed and undid everything we had achieved," he said.Both the pro-Guaido and the pro-Maduro rallies ended without major incident.

'A lot of distress'

It is one of the worst and longest blackouts in recent memory in Venezuela, which is already suffering from shortages of food and medicine due to the overarching economic crisis.

Problems have been exacerbated by hyperinflation that the International Monetary Fund says will reach 10 million percent this year.

An estimated 2.7 million people have left the country since 2015.—AFP ■

Democracy, DPRK style: North Korea holds election

With a total absence of electoral competition, analysts say the vote is held largely as a political rite to enable North Korean authorities to claim a mandate from the people. **PHOTO: AFP**

PYONGYANG (North Korea)—North Koreans went to the polls Sunday for an election in which there could be only one winner.Leader Kim Jong Un's ruling Workers' Party has an iron grip on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as the isolated, nuclear-armed country is officially known.But every five years it holds an election for the rubber stamp legislature, known as the Supreme People's Assembly. And in keeping with one of Pyongyang's most enduring slogans—"Single-minded unity"—there is only one approved name on each of the red ballot papers.

With portraits of the leader's father Kim Jong Il and grandfather Kim Il Sung looking down on every ballot box, voters lined up to drop their slips inside. There is a pencil in the panelled voting booths for anyone who might wish to register dissent by crossing out a candidate's name. But no one does. Turnout last time was 99.97 percent, according to the official KCNA news agency—only those who were abroad or "working in oceans" did not take part. And the vote was 100 percent in favour of the named candidates, a result unmatched anywhere else in the world."Our society is one in which the people are gathered around the respected Supreme Leader with a single mind," election official Ko Kyong Hak told AFP as voters queued at the 3.26 Pyongyang Cable Factory.

Participation in the election was a citizen's obligation, he said, "and there are no people who reject a candidate". An editorial in the Rodong Sinmun, the mouthpiece of the ruling party, reinforced the message. Voters "should cast approval ballots with their loyalty to the party and the leader, absolute support to the DPRK government and the will to share their destiny with socialism to the last", it said.

Ritual exercise

With a total absence of electoral competition, analysts say the election is held largely as a political rite to enable the authorities to claim a mandate from the people. It was the result of "established institutional inertia and a need to legitimise the government by simulating democratic procedure", said Andrei Lankov of Korea Risk Group.

Soviet-style Communist states had a long tradition of holding general elections, he said, even if the ruling party ignored its own rules about holding regular congresses—something the North skipped for more than 30 years."North Korea is just emulating all other Communist states," he said."The early Communists sincerely believed that they were producing a democracy the world had never seen. So they needed elections and it became a very important part of self-legitimisation."The last significant government of a major country to dispense with elections altogether was Nazi Germany, he pointed out. The North is divided into constituencies for the vote—there were 686 at the last election in 2014, when Kim stood in Mount Paektu, a dormant volcano on the border with China revered as the spiritual birthplace of the Korean people. He received a 100 percent turnout and 100 percent in favour according to KCNA.

Some of the seats are allocated to two minor parties, the Korean Social Democratic Party and the Chondoist Chongdu Party, which has its roots in a 20th century Korean religious movement.They are both in a formal alliance with the ruling party and analysts and diplomats say they exist largely on paper, with only small central offices maintained for propaganda purposes.Even so, participation in the poll, like other obligatory rituals in the North, does reinforce loyalty to the government and social unity, Lankov said, "because humans love symbolism".

Red neckerchiefs

It is a marked contrast to the vibrant multi-party democracy on the other side of the Demilitarized Zone dividing the peninsula, where president Park Geun-hye was ousted in 2017 after mass street protests over a corruption scandal.—AFP ■

Malaysian police arrest 9 over terror links

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian police said on Sunday that nine suspects, most of who are foreigners, had been arrested in recent operations over suspicion of being involved in terrorism. Of the nine, six were Egyptian nationals, one was Tunisian and the other two were Malaysians, according to a statement by Malaysian police chief Mohamad Fuzi Harun.

The suspects were arrested between 2 and 7 February in the states of Selangor, Sarawak and the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur. They are aged between 20 to 54, and were mostly acting as facilitators in providing shelter, employment and false documents for other foreign terrorists fighters in Malaysia.

At least one had provided shelter to a high ranking al-Qaida militant who had previously been jailed by Egyptian authorities.

"Our investigations show that these foreign terrorist fighters are attempting to make Malaysia a safe haven for transit and as a logistical base," he said.

"They are entering Malaysia with fake travel documents, marriage to locals to get a spouse visa, posing as students or opening businesses here."

Fuzi added that the country's police had received intelligence from several other countries leading to the arrests of the suspects. He also said the entry of foreign terrorists into Malaysia should be taken seriously, especially after the defeat of Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.—Xinhua ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO. (910N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO. (910N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-03-2019 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

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TORRES STRAIT VOY. NO. (909S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TORRES STRAIT VOY. NO. (909S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-03-2019 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

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Dated 11 March 2019

Hammerhead shark refuge found in Galapagos

QUITO (Ecuador)—A new breeding ground for endangered hammerhead sharks has been found in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador's government said.This natural refuge off the island of Santa Cruz is home to about 20 of the sharks, the environment ministry said.

It is the second such refuge detected in the archipelago. The first, found in 2017, was shown to host around 30 hammerheads.

At the new one, researchers attached tracing devices to five of the sharks as part of efforts to monitor and protect the ecosystem they live in, said Eduardo Espinoza, who led the expedition in which the refuge was found. Hammerheads grow slowly and are not particularly fertile reproducers. This and the danger posed by commercial fishing has placed them in danger of extinction, according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Ecuador in 2016 established a vast marine reserve to try to protect the sharks. The islands are home to more than 2,900 marine species.

The Pacific islands 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) west of the coast of Ecuador have one of the world's most fragile ecosystems, with flora and fauna that live nowhere else.

Know for their beloved giant turtles, the Galapagos inspired Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. —AFP ■

State-run newspapers to increase in basic price

The News and Periodicals Enterprise has announced that the basic price for *the Myanma Alinn*, *Kyemon* and *The Global New Light of Myanmar* dailies will increase from K50 to K100 starting 1 April 2019.

The fully state-run dailies, *Myanma Alinn* and *Kyemon*, are regularly published with 32 pages, and increases to 40-48 pages on days with certain sections, while the joint-venture English daily, GNLM, publishes an 8-page supplement on Sundays, expanding up to 24 pages.

The *NPE* announced that basic price was increased to meet rising production costs and prevent losses that must be absorbed by the national budget. —***NPE***

World's biggest sovereign fund to dump oil and gas stocks: Norway

OSLO (Norway)—Norway's sovereign wealth fund, the world's biggest and which is fuelled by petrodollars, will divest its oil and gas holdings to reduce its exposure to the oil sector, the Norwegian government announced on Friday. While the decision is based solely on financial considerations and not on the environment or climate change, a divestment by an investor worth more than $1 trillion will undoubtedly be seen as a major blow to polluting fossil fuels.The government of Norway, the biggest hydrocarbon producer in western Europe, said it would exclude companies classified as exploration and production companies from the fund.—AFP ■

Announcement on Restoration of Companies which failed to Re-register

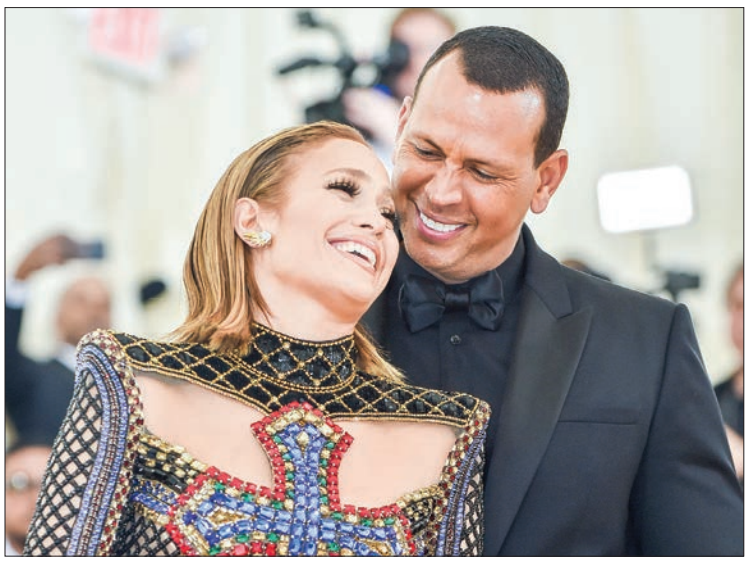
Directorate of Investment and Company Administration had announced that all companies and other entities were required to re-register on the Myanmar Companies Online (MyCO) registry system in accordance with section 421(d) of Myanmar Companies Law 2017 within the period of 6 months from 1st August 2018 to 31st January 2019 and re-registration process had concluded accordingly. Any company or entity which failed to re-register will be struck off from the registry.

In accordance with the paragraph 4(d) of Myanmar Companies Regulations 2018, any company or entity which failed to re-register for any reason need to come to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration Head Office in Yangon in person for re-registration with payment for prescribed fees **no later than 30th March 2019**.

The company need to pay the fee prescribed by notification (64/2018) and applications for late re-registration will **NOT** be accepted after 30th March 2019 for any reason.

Registrar
Directorate of Investment and Company Administration

It's official! Jennifer Lopez, A-Rod are engaged



Jennifer Lopez and Alex Rodriguez—seen here at the 2018 Met Gala on 7 May 2018 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York—have announced their engagement. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEW YORK (United States)—Singing superstar Jennifer Lopez and retired baseball great Alex Rodriguez have been one of the most glam celebrity couples in recent years. Fans, get ready: a J-Rod wedding is on the cards.

Lopez and Rodriguez confirmed on Instagram late Saturday that they are engaged.

Both posted a picture of their hands at sunset, with Lopez's enormous diamond ring.

While the multi-hyphenate singer-actress-dancer-producer only captioned the pic with heart emojis, Rodriguez went a bit farther, writing in lower-case letters: "she said yes."

Lopez, 49, and Rodriguez, 43, have been a couple for about two years.

Lopez, currently the executive producer and judge on NBC reality dance competition show "World of Dance," is set to go on tour later this year across North America. She wrapped up a Vegas residency in 2018.

She has been married three times: to Ojani Noa, back-up dancer Cris Judd, and singer Marc Anthony, with whom she has 11-year-old twins. She also had a high-profile relationship with actor Ben Affleck.Rodriguez retired from Major League Baseball in 2016, after a lengthy career, mostly with the New York Yankees. He won one World Series title with the Yankees and was an All-Star 14 times.

His achievements were tarnished by his admission that he used performance-enhancing drugs. He was suspended for the entire 2014 season.Rodriguez currently works as an on-air baseball analyst. He has been married once. He and ex-wife Cynthia Scurtis have two daughters.—AFP ■

IN Picture

Enlighten Festival held in Canberra, Australia

A family visits the Enlighten Festival in Canberra, Australia, on 8 March 2019. Canberra's annual Enlighten Festival will run from March 1 to 17 this year. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

British cellist gives voice to composers' muses

WASHINGTON (United States)—Music is riddled with stories of tempestuous affairs and unrequited love. In a concert series, virtuoso British cellist Steven Isserlis is exploring the influence of love on music by contrasting three familiar pieces by male composers with lesser known ones by their traditionally underrepresented female muses."Women were not encouraged to compose. It was difficult," the influential soloist said in an interview ahead of a performance at the Kennedy Center in Washington."They had to battle against the odds," added Isserlis, pointing to the contributions of Amy Beach and Lili and Nadia Boulanger. "There are so many women composers now. Things have definitely improved."

Isserlis's program—whose next stop is Thursday in Kempen, Germany after five performances in the US accompanied by Canadian pianist Connie Shih—opens with his own arrangement of Clara Schumann's "Three Romances." It's wistful music composed as her husband Robert Schumann grew increasingly ill, eventually committing himself to an insane asylum in 1854. Schumann's "Three Fantasiestucke" become profoundly meditative in the warm tone and rich bass of the 1726 Stradivarius that Isserlis plays on gut strings.

Perhaps no love story is as tragic as that of Vitezslava Kapralova and Bohuslav Martinu, who vowed to elope to America, only for Kapralova to marry someone else and die two months later of tuberculosis, in June 1940. She was just 25, but already a promising composer and conductor.Her only surviving "Ritournelle," passionate and energetic despite being her last known composition, mirrors her teacher Martinu's modernist innovations.

The piano and cello are almost locked in a duel in Martinu's first Cello Sonata, composed as Kapralova was nearing death, after the Nazis occupied their homeland of Czechoslovakia and shortly before the Paris occupation. French femme fatale Augusta Holmes captured the imagination of many of her contemporaries, chief among them Cesar Franck, 25 years her senior. Isserlis played an evocative arrangement of parts of her cantata "La vision de la reine"—published in 1895, the same year she became the first woman to premiere an opera in Paris. Its religious overtones echo those of Franck's beloved sonata.

'Not rocket science'

Despite featuring seldom-heard works by women, Isserlis insisted "it's not a feminist recital." "I wouldn't play a piece just because it was by a woman or because it was by somebody from a certain racial background... It's condescending if one does that," he said. "You have to love the music. It's got to be good music."

Jenny Bilfield, president and CEO of concert organizer Washington Performing Arts, advocates a straight-forward approach to inclusion. "Let's not overthink this... Study history, discover music that's been overlooked and bring it forward to the present day," she said. "It's not rocket science."

'Rewrite history?'

Although male-composed works predominate in the classical music canon, it's not for lack of quantity or quality of pieces by women."A lot of these women in their own times were famous and were well-known and were played," said violinist Laura Colgate."We actually have to go back and rewrite history." —AFP ■

British cellist Steven Isserlis rehearses at the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington. **PHOTO: AFP**

How a vintage film format brought 'Apollo 11' back to life

WASHINGTON (United States)—New documentary "Apollo 11," which tells the story of man's first steps on the Moon, contains footage so striking that it seems practically a crime that it remained hidden for nearly five decades.

The film—which premiered at Sundance in January but only hit US theaters this weekend—injects new life into the most famous space mission of all time, which transfixed the world from 16-24 July, 1969.It blends images that are well known with long lost gems found in a National Archives warehouse and digitized for the first time.

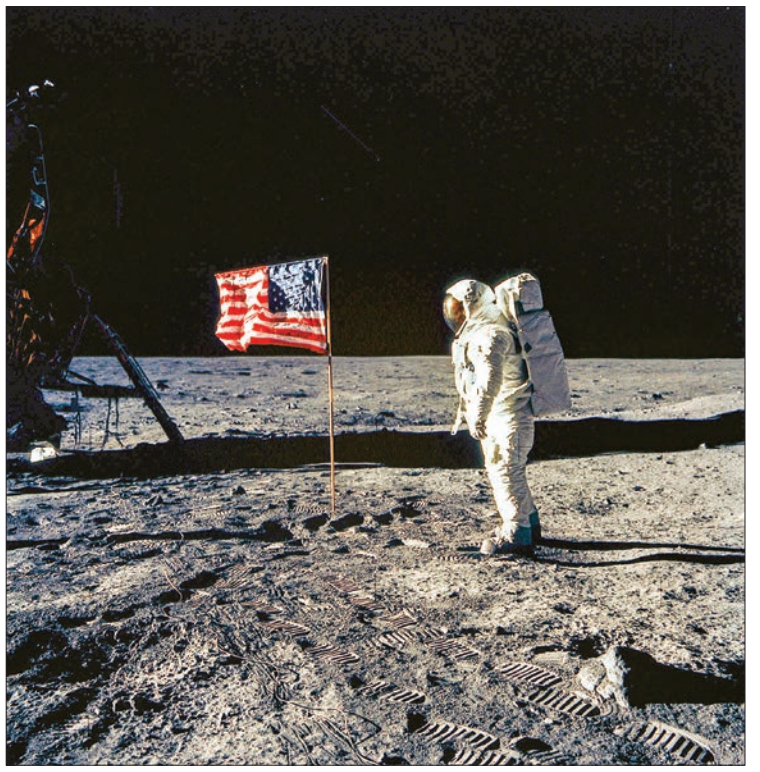
"A good 50 per cent of the film is images that have never been seen before but really, 100 per cent of it has really never truly been seen before—the quality of it all," director Todd Douglas Miller told AFP in a recent interview.

The visuals are mesmerizing: seen in color in a theater, the tracks of the giant NASA crawler-transporter—used to carry the massive Saturn V rocket that launched the crew into space — fill the entire screen. The captivating shots were a few of the many found on 177 65mm reels uncovered by Dan Rooney, supervisory archivist of the National Archives film section, They were found poorly labeled, without any real indication of their contents except for a generic "Apollo 11," at a storage facility in the Maryland suburbs where the temperature was below freezing."We knew these large format holdings existed, but it took a lot of research to really understand what was there," said Rooney, who worked with Miller to bring the reels to the silver screen.

"The real discovery part was in the research that led us to a lot of new information about the content and the quality of the material."All told, the Archives provided the film crew with 279 reels of 16, 35, 65 and 70 mm film. The 65mm and 70mm were considered the luxury format of their time, used in cinema in the 1950s and 1960s.Only a part of the trove was used for the 1972 film "Moonwalk One."NASA probably didn't use the reels "because of the difficulty of working with these large formats, and they probably lacked the equipment and the expertise," said Rooney.

Is there any more footage?

NASA used the large formats for filming ground operations at the Kennedy Space Center, and on the ship used to retrieve astronauts Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins at the end of their historic mission.As the camera pans from the top to the bottom of the rocket, viewers get a sense of its sheer enormity, as the astronauts silently pull on their suits.Also captured is the space mania among the general public of the time, as thousands took to Cocoa Beach to watch the launch, binoculars in hand.In the firing room and at mission control in Houston, rows and rows of male engineers are seen in white shirts and dark ties, as opposed to the somewhat more gender balanced teams at NASA and SpaceX today.In contrast to the large format images, many shot in smaller formats by the astronauts aboard the Apollo capsule and on the Moon were already on YouTube. — AFP ■



US astronaut Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin stands on the moon on 20 July 1969 during the Apollo 11 mission. **PHOTO: AFP**

Chinese researchers bring stable performance to promising next-generation batteries

BEIJING—A Chinese research team has developed a new calcium-ion based energy storage device, which is proved to have high capacity and long cycling life at room temperature. Calcium-ion batteries (CIBs) have long attracted attention as a replacement for lithium-ion batteries (LIBs). They have a larger capacity than LIBs, as a calcium-ion can provide twice the number of electrons than a lithium-ion.

In addition, calcium is about 2,500 times as abundant as lithium in nature, making the calcium-ion energy storage technology a promising candidate for next-generation batteries due to its high performance and low cost.

However, calcium-ion batteries have been unsuccessful to attain a satisfactory performance in previous studies due to the lack of an appropriate combination of electrode materials and electrolytes.—Xinhua ■

Robo-journalism gains traction in shifting media landscape

WASHINGTON (United States)—A text-generating "bot" nicknamed Tobi produced nearly 40,000 news stories about the results of the November 2018 elections in Switzerland for the media giant Tamedia—in just five minutes. These kinds of artificial intelligence programs—available for nearly a decade—are becoming more widespread as news organizations turn to them to produce stories, personalize news delivery and in some cases sift through data to find important news. Tobi wrote on vote results for each of Switzerland's 2,222 municipalities, in both French and German, for the country's largest media group, according to a paper presented last month at the Computation + Journalism conference in Miami. A similar automated program called Heliograf has enabled The Washington Post daily to cover some 500 election races, along with local sports and business, since 2014."We've seen a greater acceptance of the potential for artificial intelligence, or robo-journalism, in newsrooms around the world," said Damian Radcliffe, a University of Oregon professor who follows consumer trends and business models for journalism.

"These systems can offer speed and accuracy and potentially support the realities of smaller newsrooms and the time pressures of journalists." News organizations say the bots are not intended to displace human reporters or editors but rather to help free them from the most monotonous tasks, such as sports results and earnings reports.Jeremy Gilbert, director of strategic initiatives at The Washington Post, said Heliograf was developed as a tool to help the newspaper's editorial team."The Post has an incredible team of reporters and editors and we didn't want to replace them," Gilbert told AFP.

Artificial intelligence is gaining ground in newsrooms with computer-generated articles and programs to help sift through large data sets. **PHOTO: AFP**

'Is this something we can automate?'

Gilbert said the bot can deliver and update stories more quickly as they develop, allowing reporters to concentrate on other tasks, and that reaction has been generally positive. "The surprise was that a lot of people came up and said, 'I do this story every week; is this something we can automate?"" Gilbert said. "These weren't stories that anyone wanted to do." Similar conversations are going on in newsrooms around the world. The Norwegian news agency NTB automated sports reports to get match results delivered within 30 seconds.

The Los Angeles Times developed a "quakebot" that quickly distributes news articles on temblors in the region and also uses an automated system as part of its Homicide Report. The Associated Press has been automating quarterly earnings reports for some 3,000 listed companies, allowing the news agency to expand from what had been just a few hundred, and this year announced plans with its partner Automated Insights to deliver computer-generated previews of college basketball games. Rival news agency Reuters last year announced the launch of Lynx Insight, which uses automated data analysis to identify trends and anomalies and to suggest stories reporters should write. Bloomberg's computerized system called Cyborg "dissects a company's earnings the moment they appear" and produces within seconds a "mini-wrap with all the numbers and a lot of context," editor-in-chief John Micklethwait wrote last year, noting that one-fourth of the agency's content "has some degree of automation."France's Le Monde and its partner Syllabs deployed a computer program that generated 150,000 web pages covering 36,000 municipalities in the 2015 elections. One advantage of using algorithmically generated stories is that they can also be "personalized," or delivered to the relevant localities, which can be useful for elections and sports coverage.

Investigative robo-reporter?

While news professionals acknowledge the limits of computer programs, they also note that automated systems can sometimes accomplish things humans can't. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution used a data journalism team to uncover 450 cases of doctors who were brought before medical regulators or courts for sexual misconduct, finding that nearly half remained licensed to practice medicine. — AFP ■

ONE Championship: Myanmar's Tial Thang wins catchweight title

TIAL Thang, a new fighter representing Myanmar, took the catchweight title in the 68-kg class at the ONE Championship bout titled 'ONE: Reign of Valor' after defeating Cambodia's Rin Saroth at theThuwunna Indoor Stadium in Yangon on Friday night.

Tial Thang, also known as The Dragon Leg, is a protégé of Myanmar's two-division ONE World Champion Aung La N Sang. The bout he won was his first in the ONE Championship.

Although the Cambodian fighter had an advantage over him in terms of height and build, Tial Thang showed he was equal to the fight with continuous punches and catches.

Tial Thang managed to dominate his opponent using the body-lock, and frequent strong punches.

He initially continued to strike at the start of Round Two, effectively countering and, at times, beating Saroth to the punch.

A four-time Chin State Wrestling Champion, 25-year-old Tial Thang used his wrestling and martial arts skills to down his opponent in the third round.

Tial Thang pinned Saroth against the fence, applying top pressure, and connected with an assortment of ground strikes.

Both fighters were sweaty and exhausted in the last round,which was dominated by Tial Thang.

There was no knock out till the last minute of the final round, and referees decided to award the title to the Myanmar fighter based on the total score.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■

Myanmar's Tial Thang (right) lands a punch on his opponent, Cambodia's Rin Saroth,during the ONE Championship bout at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on Friday. Tial Thang claimed the catchweight title in the 68-kg class. **PHOTO : ONE CHAMPIONSHIP**

New Myanmar U-15 women's football team to be announced soon

A camp has been organized to induct players into the Myanmar U-15 women's football team, which will compete in the AFF U-15 Championship 2019, scheduled to take place at the IPE Stadium in Chonburi, Thailand, from 10 to 22 March, according to a source with the Myanmar Football Federation.

Team Myanmar will have 30 players, and the final selection process will begin from 11 March, said the source.

A total of 57 talented girls from different states and regions were picked during the preliminary selections, held from 6-8 March on the artificial turf of the Bahan sports ground in Yangon.

The selection of players was supervised by Myanmar Golden Era footballer U Aye Maung Gyi, national women's team head coach U Win Thu Moe, U-16 women's team head coach Daw San San Thein, goal coach Daw May Khin Yamin, and members of the football federation.

Of the 57 girls, 24 are from No.1 Basic Education High School in Lanmadaw, 12 are from Mandalay Sports and Physical Science schools, 3 from Taunggyi Sports and Physical Science schools, 3 from Yangon Sports and Physical Science schools, and 11 from Loikaw Sports and Physical Science schools.

The final list of 30 players will be announced soon, and a training camp will be held for them, according to a statement released by the football federation.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■

A young girl jumps and heads the ball, showing off her football skills,during the preliminary selections for the national U-15 team in Yangon. **PHOTO : MFF**

Bowe beats Japanese speedskaters to set 1,000m world record

American speedskater Brittany Bowe set a women's 1,000-meter world record on Saturday in Salt Lake City, Utah. **PHOTO: AFP**

WASHINGTON (United States) —American speedskater Brittany Bowe set a women's 1,00-meter world record of 1min 11.610secs on Saturday at a World Cup race in Salt Lake City.

When the day began, the world record was 1:12.09 and belonged to Japan's Nao Kodaira from a 2017 effort at the same Utah Olympic Oval. Japan's Miho Takagi broke the world record with a time of 1:11.713 to take the lead in the competition.

But the mark was short-lived as Bowe followed with her record skate on home ice, shattering her prior personal best of 1:12.180 from 2015 on the same 2002 Olympic Oval.Kodaira finished third, completing the podium in 1:11.776. Bowe is completing her first full season at the top level since suffering a concussion in a 2016 training accident. Other world records fell Saturday as well.Dutchman Kjeld Nuis won the men's 1,000m title in 1:06.183, breaking the decade-old world record of 1:06.42 set by American Shani Davis on the same oval.Czech Martina Sablikova broke her own world record by winning the 3,000 in 3:52.027, eclipsing her prior mark of 3:53.31 from last week in Calgary.Russia's Pavel Kulizhnikov set the men's 500m world record of 33.61 seconds, eclipsing his old mark of 33.98 on the same oval in 2015.—AFP ■