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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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President U Win Myint inspects Nant Myitkha Bridge Project, youth training school in Myitkyina

PRESIDENT U Win Myint who was in Myitkyina, Kachin State went to inspect the construction of the Nant Myitkha Bridge on Myitkyina-Waingmaw road yesterday morning. The President was accompanied by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr. Myint Htwe, U Han Zaw and Nai Thet Lwin, State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung, state ministers, Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and officials.

Department of Bridge Deputy Director General U Khin Maung Swe explained about the bridge project in the briefing hall of the bridge construction project.

The President made remarks about completing the project on time, ensuring that standards and norms were met, preventing the wastage of state funds and instructed the state government to manage the vehicles crossing the bridge.

Next the President inspected the construction status of the bridge including the construction of a retaining wall underneath the bridge to prevent erosion by river water.

The Nant Myitkha Bridge is a reinforced concrete steel frame type bridge and is on the Mandalay-Lashio-Bhamo-Myitkyina road. The maximum permitted load was 75 tons per vehicle. The bridge is a four lane bridge and at the moment a two lane portion was already completed.



President U Win Myint inspects the completion of the two-lane Nant Myitkha Bridge on Myitkyina-Waingmaw road in Myitkyina. **PHOTO: MNA**

Afterwards the President visited the Myitkyina Town Border Areas National Races Youth Development Training School and met with the students.

At the meeting the Ministry of Border Affairs, Education and Training Department Deputy Director General U Tin Maung Myint explained about the school, courses conducted and youths trained.

In response to the explanation presented, the President commented that the country was a union and that a union constituted ethnic nationals. The Ministry of Border Affairs was working towards education development, creating job opportunities and human resources development of ethnic nationals in the union and that the sons and daughters of the union need to follow the teaching and guidance of the teachers.

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National MSMEs Products Trade Fair & Contest held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE national Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Products Trade Fair and Contest was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday attracting MSME winners in nine regional and state level competitions.

At the contest, national level awards will be given to the winners.

In his opening address, Vice President U Myint Swe, Chairman of the MSMEs Development Working Committee, pledged to grant the MSME logo of the working committee to the winners of regional and state competitions.

He urged the winning MSMEs to produce and supply the best products and services after accepting the suggestions of the customers.

He called for cooperation among the Union Government, the Nay Pyi Taw Council, regional and state governments and the private sector to provide technology support to MSMEs across the country, to attract investment, to produce skilled labourers and to find new markets for the MSMEs.

"MSMEs make up 99 percent of Myanmar's businesses. Therefore, only when MSMEs are developed, can the country's economy be developed," said Vice President U Myint Swe.

Since February 2018, National MSMEs Products Trade Fair & Contest were held in different states and regions. The first one in Mandalay, the second in Magway, the third in Pathein, the fourth in Taunggyi, the fifth in Monywa, the sixth in Bago, the seventh in Yangon, the eighth in Mawlamyine and the ninth in Myeik totaling nine.

In the regional and state MSMEs competitions, a total of 39 prizes including nine first prizes, 11 second prizes, and 19 third prizes were awarded to micro business, and a total of 43 prizes including nine first prizes, 14 second prizes and 20 third prizes were awarded to small business.

A total of 40 prizes including nine first prizes, 13 second prize and 18 third prizes are awarded by the committee to the medium-sized business.

MSME exhibitions and contests were held in regions and states in accordance with the second point of the National Economic Policy which says "To support Micro, Small and Medium-sized enterprises for job creation and economic growth".



Vice President U Myint Swe, center, cuts ceremonial ribbon to open National-level MSMEs Products Trade Fair and Contest in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

In accordance with this policy, the exhibitions and contests were held in to supporting market expansion for MSMEs, promoting import substitution various sectors and promoting linkages between manufacturing sectors and trade sectors, improving MSMEs competitiveness, technology and knowledge of economics, in cooperation with local business and international business, increasing import substitution products and promoting innovative products, and to promote MSMEs.

The Vice President said the Union Government had been-providing loans to MSMEs in need of capital by collaborating with domestic private banks. The loans include K30 billion from the National SME loan programme, K7.393 billion from the Credit Guarantee Insurance (CGI) system, JP¥20 billion from the JICA Two Step Loan under the Japan Official Development Assistance, K250 billion from Myanmar Economic Bank loan, K200 billion from Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank, and Euro 15.30 million from the KfW, the German state-owned development bank.



Vice President U Myint Swe inspects products displayed at the National-level MSMEs Products Trade Fair and Contest in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Vice President extended his gratitude to the organizations who have contributed to the development of Myanmar's MSME sector and other socio-economic projects. Friedrich Naumann Foundation, GIZ, PUM, RBF, JICA, JMA, KBank, Entrepreneurship Development Network Asia (Myanmar) Co. Ltd, JROOT, JIAT, KIAT, IBK, ILO, CESO, and UNIDO would all receive honorary certificates at the ceremony.

He also thanked the Union Ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council, the main sponsor of the event – Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK), donors, NGOs, domestic and foreign organizations and associations, departments, MSMEs, and everyone in attendance.

Next, Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho accepted the monetary donations from IBK and Good Brothers Co. Ltd and handed over honorary certificates in return. Union Ministers Dr. Pe Myint, U Thein Swe and Dr. Myo Thein Gyi also presented honorary certificates to the organizations who have contributed to the development of Myanmar's MSMEs. The Vice President then observed the exhibitions and booths at the event.

The National Level MSME Products Trade Fair and Contest will continue till 24 March. The event has opened 271 booths displaying household and artisanal products, food products, industrial production products, cotton fibre and textile products, service products, and booths from the Ministry of Industry. There was also a panel discussion under the title 'Myanmar's products towards the world', and an introduction programme to MSMEs, knowledge sharing, and business matching with City Mart, Gandamar Whole Sale, and other organizations will be held in the later days. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)





Furnitures and products displayed at the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Products Trade Fair and Contest held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

President U Win Myint visits Youth Development Training School

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What the teachers taught would be important for the future of the sons and daughters of the union and the teachings were seen to be aimed at providing education, vocational training and strengthening union spirit. Sons and daughters should propagate the union spirit to their neighborhoods, their region and their ethnic people. The education level was also seen to have improved and the development of a country depends on the investment in education. He was glad to see that libraries were established in the youth development schools. Sons and daughters were to make good use of their time by studying and reading in the libraries. Among you would be the future leaders of the country. You all need to have educational and moral strength to serve the country and all of you must have union spirit for life and strive towards peaceful development of the union, said the President.

After the meeting, the President provided cash assistance to the students and the school personnel and then inspected the living quarters and dining hall of the students and the library and took a commemorative group photo with the teachers and the students.

Later the President inspected the development status of Myitkyina Town by motorcade and took a commemorative group photo with the Union Ministers, Kachin State Chief Minister, state ministers and officials at the Citapu Manaw Field. Finally, the President and party left Myitkyina by Tatmadaw airplane and arrived back in Nay Pyi Taw in the afternoon. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



President U Win Myint inspects the living quarters at the youth training school in Myitkyina. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister Dr. Than Myint receives Japan Myanmar Association Chairman

UNION MINISTER Dr. Than Myint in his capacity as Myanmar Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Central Working Committee Chairman received Japan Myanmar Association Chairman Mr. Hideo Watanabe at the minister's meeting hall yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting matter relating to close cooperation between Myanmar SEZ Central Working Committee, Thilawa SEZ Management Committee and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) under the management and guidance of Myanmar SEZ Central Committee for further development of Thilawa SEZ; Small and Medium Enterprise development; increasing bilateral trade; cooperating and coordinating on resolving trade barriers were discussed. — MNA

(Translated by TTN)



Union Minister Dr. Than Myint holds talks with Japan Myanmar Association Chairman Mr. Hideo Watanabe yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister inspects preparation for 2018 academy awards ceremony

UNION MINISTER for Information Dr. Pe Myint went to One Entertainment Park, Thuwunna, Thingangyun Township, Yangon yesterday evening to inspect preparation made for 2018 Myanmar Motion Picture Academy Awards ceremony that will be held today.

First Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint, Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun and officials inspected preparations made to welcome and accommodate guests and the stage on which awards will be presented, observed the performing of dress rehearsals and arrangements made for media personnel. Myanmar Motion Picture Organisation Chairman U Zin Wine and officials explained about preparations and arrangements made and Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint gave remarks where necessary.

The 2018 Myanmar Motion Picture Academy Awards ceremony will be held on 4 p.m. 23 March. Myanmar Radio and Television and Myanmar Radio will make a live broadcast program starting from 3:30 p.m. — MNA *(Translated by Zaw Min)*



Union Minister for Dr. Pe Myint inspects the preparation of stages for the 2018 Academy Award Ceremony at the One Entertainment Park, Thuwunna, Thingangyun Township, Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

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VP U Henry Van Thio attends National Cultural Central Committee 3rd Coord meeting

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, Chairman of the Myanmar National Cultural Central Committee attended the third work coordination meeting held yesterday morning at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture in Nay Pyi Taw.



Vice President U Henry Van Thio delivers the address at the National Cultural Central Committee meeting at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Tangible and intangible heritages are the pride of Myanmar

In his speech at the meeting the Vice President said several million years old primates and fossil remains were discovered in Myanmar. According to archeological evidence, Myanmar had also went through the stone-age, bronze-age and iron-ages. In the early history, there were ancient Pyu, Mon and Rakhine cities where civilization had flourished. The first kingdom of Myanmar was established in Bagan and from there on there were Inwa, Taungoo, Nyaungyan and Konbaung dynasties. Throughout those eras there were many arts and architectural creations created by the people that remained as cultural heritage. Similarly there were many religious beliefs, traditions and festivals of ethnic nationals all over Myanmar that remained as intangible cultural heritage. These tangible and intangible heritages were a matter of pride and honor for the country and the people. The country's cultural heritages of Beikthano, Hanlin and Sri Khsetra, the three ancient Pyu cities had become world heritage sites on 22 June 2014.

In the same way Maha Lawka Marazein Kuthotaw Pagoda stone inscription, Myazedi (Yazakumara) inscription, inscription on the Bayintnaung Bell in Bagan Shwezigon Pagoda had become world heritages. Ananda Sandra stone inscription in Shitthaung (Shite-thaung) pagoda, Mrauk U was also listed in the Asia-Pacific cultural heritage list in 2018 and a process was already underway to include it in the 2020 UNESCO world cultural heritage list. A Nomination Dossier (Complete) for Bagan cultural region was submitted to the world heritage committee in a timely manner on 24 January 2018.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) had read the nomination dossier and a technical expert group had conducted assessment works in the Bagan cultural region from 14 to 25 September 2018. Myanmar had also responded to the questions and matters raised by the technical expert group.

An Interim Report for "World Heritage List, 2019 Bagan (Myanmar)" and replies to Additional Information Request were sent to ICOMOS and a decision will be made at the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 30 June to 10 July 2019.

> The law was drawn up not only to protect and preserve cultural heritage regions but also to create livelihood opportunities for people in the region.

To preserve cultural heritages is the responsibility of Myanmar nationals

Preparations were also being made in all relevant sectors towards submitting a Nomination Dossier for Mrauk U cultural region to the world heritage committee. These works were an attempt for Myanmar national cultural heritages to become world heritage sites. There are many Myanmar national cultural heritages all over Myanmar and lost cultural heritages were required to be recovered, researched, maintained and protected. It was clearly enacted in the Constitution that it was the duty and responsibility of all Myanmar nationals to preserve and maintain Myanmar cultural heritages.

Preservation, protection and maintenance of cultural heritages was conducted and led by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture. In doing this ancient artifacts and buildings were protected and maintained. Scientific research and mappings were conducted to protect ancient artifacts and buildings from natural disasters. Laws were enacted to protect and preserve ancient artifacts and buildings and a new law on protection and preservation of cultural heritage regions was drawn up and enacted on 28 February 2019. The law was drawn up not only to protect and preserve cultural heritage regions but also to create livelihood opportunities for people in the region.

Committee members were conducting research, maintenance and uncovering of intangible cultural heritages and in addition to doing these works, coordination between departments must be made. Only then would the work of protecting and maintaining national cultural heritages progress and develop. All were therefore urged to openly come up with suggestions and discussions, said the Vice President.

Next, Central Committee Vice Chairman Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko explained about protection and maintenance of ancient artifacts, buildings, regions, tangible and intangible cultural heritages, cultural heritage regions and nearby regions.

Afterwards Deputy Minister U Kyi Min explained about protection and maintenance works of cultural heritage regions according to enacted laws and cooperation with local and international organizations.

Meeting attendees, Deputy Minister U Tin Myint and U Hla Maw Oo also joined in with sector wise explanations and discussions and Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko and Director General U Kyaw Lwin Oo made additional discussions.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio also made additional discussions on cooperation between relevant ministerial departments, local and foreign experts, UNECSO and international organizations; to conduct works on research and maintenance of Myanmar cultural heritages according to guidelines set by the National Cultural Central Committee; to prevent national cultural heritages from being tarnished through unruly acts and urged continued cooperation to implement suggestions made at the meeting and fulfill requirements.

The following senior officials attended the meeting:

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko, Deputy Ministers U Tin Myint, U Kyi Min and U Hla Maw Oo, Permanent Secretaries, Directors-General, Yangon and Mandalay National University of Arts and Culture rectors, experts, representatives from Myanmar Historical Commission, Myanmar Artists and Sculptures Asiayone (Central), Myanmar Thabin Asiayone (Central) and Association of Myanmar Architects and officials. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

UEC delegation to observe election in Thailand

Under the invitation of Thai election commission, a Union Election Commission (UEC) study group led by UEC Chairman U Hla Thein left Yangon for Bangkok by air yesterday morning to observe the Thai 2019 General Election.

The UEC Chairman and party were seen off by officials from UEC Office and Yangon Region election sub-commission.

The UEC Chairman was accompanied by commission member U Than Htay and the visit will be until 26 March it is learnt. — MNA

AA attacks Tatmadaw column, kills one civilian in separate incidents

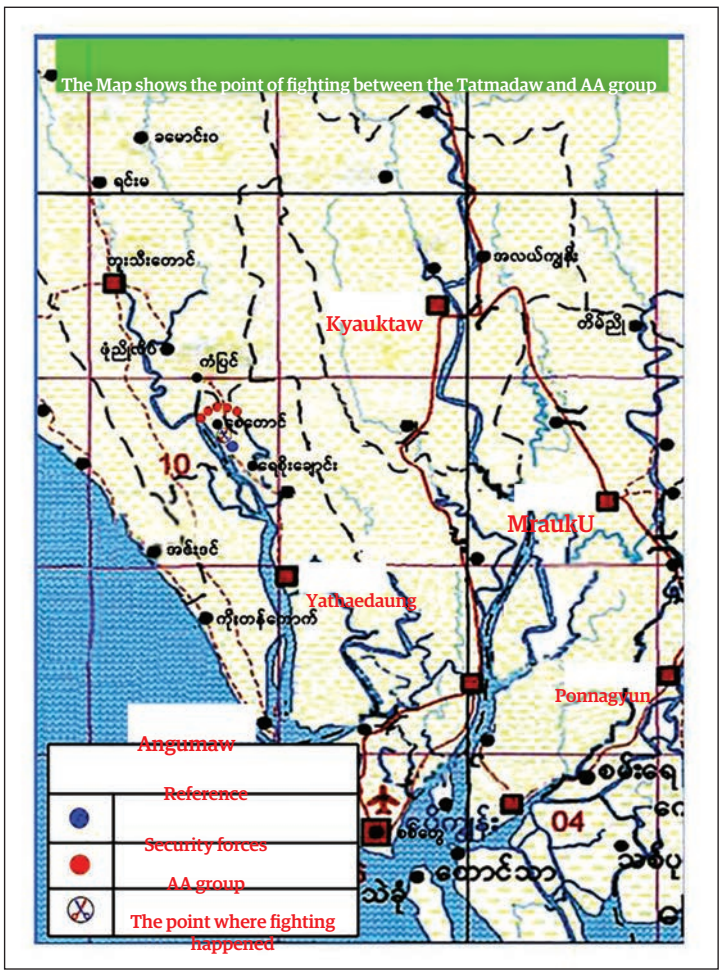
ON THE evening of 21 March, a Tatmadaw column conducting regional stability and security operations in Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State, was attacked by the AA group who were equipped with small and heavy arms. The fighting left two from the Tatmadaw side injured.

The Tatmadaw column was attacked by the AA group in a location between Yaygaungchaung Village and Setaung Village in Yathedaung Township around 9:30 p.m. on 21 March, About 150 AA personnel launched attacks from five positions north of Setaung Village. The Tatmadaw column fought back and was reported to be continuing appropriate regional security operation.

Earlier, on the evening of 20 March, two masked men from AA came to the house of U Maung Tin in Sannyin Village, Myebon Township, Rakhine State, and shot him in his sleep, killing him on the spot.

Groups of AA personnel have been taking cover in wards and villages and have been shooting and planting landmines against Tatmadaw security columns. As unnecessary civilian casualties could be caused, people in towns, wards and villages of Rakhine State are urged not to accept any AA personnel and are requested to report to relevant administrative organisations of the presence of AA personnel in towns, wards and villages, according to news released by Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Office. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



MYANMAR GAZETTE

Heads of service organizations appointed

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each of their names on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

	Name	Appointment
(1)	U Myint Than Deputy Director-General General Administration Department (Head Office) Ministry of Office of the Union Government	Director-General General Administration Department Ministry of Office of the Union Government
(2)	U Ba Myint General Manager (Inspection) Myanma Railways Ministry of Transport and Communications	Managing Director Myanma Railways Ministry of Transport and Communications
(3)	Dr. Zaw Win Deputy Director-General Department of Alternative Education Ministry of Education	Director-General Department of Alternative Education Ministry of Education
(4)	Dr. Sai Kyaw Naing Oo Deputy Director-General Monitoring and Evaluation Department (Research) Ministry of Education	Director-General Monitoring and Evaluation Department (Research) Ministry of Education

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Tech conference warms up Pyidaungsu font to the public

A TECH conference on commencing the use of the Pyidaungsu font and keyboard was held at the Minister of Transport and Communications in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. Deputy Minister U Thar Oo, who is also Secretary of the e-Government Steering Committee, attended.

During the conference, U Sai Saw Lin Tun explained the how the ISO 10646 Pyidaungsu font and its keyboard can be used uniformly in writing office letters, websites, applications, and databases. U Sai Saw Lin Tun is secretary of the e-Government Implementation Working Committee and Acting Director-General of the Information Technology and Cyber Security Department.

Next, Dr. Tun Thura Thet of the Standard Designation Subcommittee explained the technological aspects and measures to resolve complications that may arise in practical application, and then demonstrated the use of the Pyidaungsu font and keyboard. Attendees then asked how to use the font, issues they faced while using it, and other questions.

The Pyidaungsu font uses Burmese orthography, and can also be used to type in ethnic languages and translate between one language and the next. Government organizations and departments will begin using Pyidaungsu font on 1 April.

The tech conference was attended by the permanent secretary of the MoTC, heads of departments, government organizations, Chief Information Officers from Union Ministeries and regions and states governments, officials from Myanmar Computer Federation and experts. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Dr. Tun Thura Thet, member of the Standard Designation Subcommittee, gives an explanation of the Pyiduangsu font at a tech conference in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

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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.

Myanmar sees constant flow of tourists through Tachilek border gate

BETWEEN 15-21 March, Myanmar welcomed 22,872 tourists, who entered the country through the Tachilek border gate for overnight and day trips, according to the Tachilek branch of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

A total of 20,588 tourists from Thailand and 300 tourists from other countries entered Tachilek for a day trip. A total of 213 tourists, mostly from Thailand, made overnight trips to Tachilek and Mongphyat townships. A total of 1,771 international tourists, including those who enjoy visa-free entry, also visited Myanmar during the period.



Tourists sightseeing with three wheeled motorcycle in Tachilek. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

There has been a continuous stream of international tourists visiting Myanmar to explore its natural landscapes, visit tourist attractions, and observe cultural and social lifestyles.

Between 1 April, 2018 and 21 March, 2019, over 1 billion tourists made day trips to Myanmar, according to data from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. A total of 13,040 tourists headed to Mongphyat and 35,474 headed to Kengtung after crossing the Tachilek border gate on visa-free entry, as per records.— GNLM

(Translated by La Wonn)

Report traces how Myanmar women are being trafficked as brides to China

A REPORT that documents how women from Kachin and northern Shan states of Myanmar are being trafficked to China to be brides was released by the Human Rights Watch on 21 March at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Yangon.

The event was attended by representatives from Human Rights Watch, anti-human trafficking organizations, and local and international media.

"Over a period of three years, we interviewed 37 Myanmar women who were trafficked to serve as brides to Chinese men. Among them, 22 18-year-old women lived in China for almost one year, and 12 of the 22 remained there for 3 years. Some women lived in China for almost nine years," said Heather Barr, co-director, women's rights, Human Rights Watch.

According to the report, of the 37 victims, 11 knew their traffickers, four didn't know them from the start, and six were trafficked by their relatives. The victims were sold as brides to Chinese men for US$ 3,000-30,000, based on their age and appearance, the report stated.

According to the report, it is hard to get an exact figure for the number of Myanmar women trafficked and forcibly married to Chinese men. Referring to data from the Social Welfare Department, the Myanmar Human Rights Commission has said 226 women from Myanmar were trafficked to China. In 2018, 181 Myanmar women trafficking survivors received relief from the Social Welfare Department.

According to the report, a skewed sex ratio in China has led to a situation where Chinese men are finding it hard to find wives, with 25 per cent of Chinese men aged above 30 remaining bachelors. Therefore, traffickers are forcing Myanmar women into marriage with Chinese men, the report stated. — Myint Maung Soe

(Translated by La Wonn)

Fire guts three homes in Hlaingbwe Township; 2 injured

A FIRE destroyed three houses and one stall on the evening of 21 March in Shwegun village, Hlaingbwe Township, Kayin State. Two men were injured in the blaze, which caused losses to the tune of K8.32 million, said police.

The fire started at the home of U Tin Lin Kyaw while he was filling petrol in a plastic bucket. The plastic reacted with the fuel, and afire quickly broke out and spread to nearby houses. The blaze engulfed a 30' room, a 20'x15' stall, and a 60'x20' two-storeyed brick house.

The fire was brought under control by 4:15 p.m., and extinguished completely around 4:50 p.m.

U Tin Lin Kyaw and his son were injured in the fire. They were shifted from the Hlaingbwe township hospital to the Hpa-an People's Hospital.

The Shwegun Police have filed a case against U Tin Lin Kyaw. —Min Thu (Hpa-an)

(Translated by La Wonn)



Local people putting out the fire. **PHOTO: MIN THU (HPA-AN)**

Myanmar-Malaysia trade down 33% in January

MYANMAR'S bilateral trade with Malaysia this January saw a decline in value by US$31.7 million or 33 per cent from last January, according to a monthly trade report of the Ministry of Commerce.

In January alone, Myanmar exported domestic products worth $16.05 million to Malaysia, while its imports from the Southeast Asian nation were $48.12 million, totalling US$64.17 million.

During the month, the bilateral trade saw a decline in value from both export and import sectors. The current export figures decreased by 50 per cent in comparison with last January, when the bilateral export totalled $32.04 million. Also, the current bilateral import value decreased by $15.7 million or 24.6 per cent, against last January, when Myanmar import's from the ASEAN member state exceeded $60 million.

The bilateral trade of $600 million were recorded during the 2018 mini-budget period (April- September), up by over $66 million as against the corresponding period last fiscal year, according to ministry.

Trade between the two countries was over $1 billion in the last 2017-2018 FY, $980 million in the 2016-2017 FY, $750 million in the 2015-2016 FY, over $1 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, over $940 million in the 2013-2014 FY, $458 million in the 2012-2013 FY, and $455 million in the 2011-2012 FY.

Top export/import items between Myanmar and Malaysia include marine products, clothing, forest products, agricultural commodities, oil, consumer goods, plastic ware, chemicals, stone and glass, footwear, minerals, metals, construction appliances, wire, medical products, electronic devices and semi-finished goods.

Between October and January this 2018-2019 FY, the Myanmar Investment Commission approved two projects from Malaysia with an investment of $1.179 million. Malaysian investments in Myanmar in the mini-budget period totalled $7.34 million. Its investments in Myanmar in the previous 2017-2018 FY were $21.8 million.—Shwe Khine ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Individual trade at Myanmar-India borders tops K2.5 bln as of 8 March

TRADE using individual trading cards (ITCs) from Myanmar-India border points exceeded K2.5 billion in the current 2018-2019 Fiscal Year, registering a trade surplus of over K1 billion, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

Individual trade between Myanmar and India via border gates, as of 8 February, stood at K2.304 billion, registering a trade surplus of K1.8 billion, according to official statistics of the Ministry of Commerce.

In border trade, the two countries deliver commodities chiefly through Tamu and Reed border trade stations. The Ministry of Commerce opened the Tamu border trade station in November 2012 and Reed border gate in April 2013. From 1 October through 8 March this FY, border merchants using individual trading cards (ITCs) exported domestic products valued at K2.217 billion only through Tamu border trade station. During the period, imports from India via the two borders exceeded K320 million, consisting of K148 million from the Tamu gate and K173 million from the Reed gate.

During a week between 2 and 8 March, Myanmar-India individual border trade were K2.53 billion in total.

Marketable products at Myanmar-India border include areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves and other fruits and vegetables, fishery and forest products, human hair, medicines, oil cakes, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials. As of 8 March, individual border trade between Myanmar and neighbouring countries reached K26.8 billion, with K4.2 billion in exports and K22.5 billion in imports.—Shwe Khine ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

FDI inflows up over $600 mln in five months

By Nyein Nyein

FOREIGN direct investment in Myanmar in the first five months of the present 2018-2019 fiscal year exceeded US$1.9 billion, an increase of over $600 million compared with the same period in the previous FY, said U Aung Naing Oo, the secretary of the Myanmar Investment Commission.

Between 1 October, 2018 and 15 March, 2019, the MIC approved a total of 125 new investment projects worth $1.332 billion. During the period, the total value of FDI reached $1.84 billion, including $508 million in investment promotion by existing projects. In addition, fresh FDI of $103 million flowed into the Thilawa Special Economic Zone Project during the period, according to the MIC's statistical report.

The country received a total foreign investment of $1.943 billion from 129 projects in the current fiscal year. During the corresponding period in the previous fiscal, Myanmar pulled in $1.315 billion in foreign investment from 80 projects, including the Thilawa SEZ project.

Compared with the previous FY, the number of investment projects have increased by 49 in the current fiscal.

U Aung Naing Oo said the MIC approved 80 projects, including the Thilawa SEZ project, with a total investment value of $1.315 billion, between 1 October, 2017 and 15 March, 2018. There has been an increase in both the value of investments as well as the number of projects this year, he added. The Myanmar Investment Commission is targeting $5.8 billion in foreign direct investment in the current financial year. ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Telenor holds 6th Sustainable Business Briefing

TELENOR Myanmar disclosed yesterday an update on its ongoing and new sustainability initiatives which focuses key sustainability areas contributing to sustainable and responsible growth in Myanmar.

Key initiatives include Mobile Connectivity, Impact on Economy, Supply Chain Integrity, improving Safety, Operations in Ethnic Areas, Tackling Hate Speech and Empowering Society.

"At Telenor, we focus on responsible business practices across all of our markets. We work systematically to address risks and to maximize the positive impact of our business. Doing business the right way is important for market like Myanmar and we have made sure that all of our services are presented to the public in a safe and sustainable way," said Sharad Mahrotra, CEO of Telenor Myanmar, at the 6th annual sustainability briefing in Yangon.



CEO of Telenor Myanmar Sharad Mehrotra delivers the speech at the 6th annual sustainability briefing at Park Royal hotel in Yangon on 22 March. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

"Today, Myanmar is no longer a greenfield market but the growth of the market needs guidance from proper rules and regulations. We all needs to work and listen closely to business practices around Myanmar because transparency and responsibility is not just the right way to do business but the only way. I believe that our approach in sustainable business is improving year after year", said Sharad Mahrotra. CEO of Telenor Myanmar. Telenor youth Forum is an example of Telenor's effort to reduce inequalities where bright young minds across the world gathers to solve and tackle challenges surrounding inequalities.

Telenor also recently extended global partnership with UNICEF for another three years to reducing inequalities among children.—GNLM

Daiwa PI invests in Royal Golden Owls Co., Ltd. (rgo47) in Myanmar

DAIWA PI Partners Co. Ltd. (President: Hideki Araki, Headquarter: Gran Tokyo Nort Tower 1-9-1, Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo/"DPI"), a subsidiary of Daiwa Securities Group Inc., invested in Royal Golden Owls Co., Ltd. (CEO: Daw Win Nander Thyke, Headquarter of Myanmar Business: Bogyoke Aung San Road 375, 6th Floor, Penthouse, IMA Building, Pabedan Township, Yangon, Myanmar /"RGO"). This deal is DPI's fourth private equity investment in Myanmar.

RGO, through its online e-commerce marketplace "rgo47", sells a variety of products with its main focus on fashion and apparel products in Myanmar. Myanmar e-commerce market is still at very early stage of development as the telecommunication sector has been just opened widely and the infrastructure for payment system and logistics are still in the course of developing. On the other hand, Myanmar's smart phone penetration ratio of 80%*1 which is higher than neighboring countries, and estimated strong growth of middle-income class would support the activation of consumption through e-commerce marketplace platform.

RGO has its own network, covering 230 cities in Myanmar, with exclusively engaging partners who are taking care of delivering the products, payment collection and marketing activities of rgo47. This network and platform enable RGO to supply its products to a wide range of regions. RGO will continue to expand more of its product base to improve customer's choices and improve standard of living. The funds raised through this financing round will be utilized for further expansion of e-commerce marketplace business. —GNLM

Seize peace with burning ambition

THE National Reconciliation and Peace Centre held a meeting with eight ethnic armed organizations who have not yet signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement on 21 March in Nay Pyi Taw. This was the first meeting between the NRPC and the NCA non-signatories, and hence, an important milestone in our country's peace process, and a historic step forward.

To establish a democratic federal Union, it is vital that all EAOs first endorse the NCA. With this in mind, the door to peace has been held open for all EAOs since the beginning of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong.

> The government and the Tatmadaw have always kept the door to peace open so EAOs can join the NCA and the peace process, and everyone will heartily welcome all NCA non-signatories taking this opportunity to do so.

In support of this process, the Tatmadaw extended their own announcement on 'ceasefire and eternal peace' last year, suspending all military operations in some areas from 21 December, 2018 to 30 April, 2019. The gesture was intended to allow EAOs to conduct peace talks and negotiations with the NRPC. The Tatmadaw said their negotiation team would also participate, if necessary.

It is wonderful to see that all this led to the momentous face-to-face meeting between the NRPC and the eight NCA non-signatories. Continued armed conflicts are a testament to the fact that using weapons to resolve issues has never worked. The root causes of our issues are political, and until they can be resolved with solutions that are equally political in nature, the grim cycle of conflict witnessed in the last 70 years will continue.

The 21st Century Panglong has convened thrice during the civilian government's administration, and has adopted 51 fundamental federal principles. However, there are still EAOs who have not signed the NCA. If all the non-signatory EAOs participate, then the goal of peace that the public has been earnestly wishing for will come within our reach.

The government and the Tatmadaw have always kept the door to peace open so EAOs can join the NCA and the peace process, and everyone will heartily welcome all NCA non-signatories taking this opportunity to do so. We are now seeing a new landscape emerging before us, where we are able to hold honest and transparent discussions on an equal footing. We urge everyone involved to cultivate mutual respect and trust towards each other as they discuss solutions for establishing lasting peace.

We believe that if the NRPC and the representatives of the 8 EAOs hold regular political roundtables, then we will see positive results soon. By pursuing political dialogue, we will be able to reduce ongoing conflicts and alleviate the worries and suffering of our ethnic brothers and sisters.

All we need to do to establish peace is to have a genuine, burning ambition to achieve it. We believe that the government, the Tatmadaw, the NRPC, and the NCA non-signatories will succeed in holding meaningful discussions to create a nation founded on peace.

■■■

The Role of SOM-ED in "Bohol Trafficking in Person Work Plan (2017-2020)"

Professor Chaw Chaw Sein



Vice President U Henry Van Thio visits booth at Anti-Human Trafficking Day ceremony in 2018. **PHOTO: MNA**

TRANSNATIONAL organized crime such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, illegal migration, environmental crimes, money laundering etc. are threat to national, regional and international security. A country alone cannot tackle these security challenges. As a regional organization, ASEAN has been tackling these security challenges under the framework of ASEAN Security Community. Since becoming a member of ASEAN in 1997, Myanmar has been actively participating in the ASEAN activities in line with its norms and values. This article will highlight how Myanmar's education sector contributes in anti trafficking in person in line with ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Person especially Women and Children (ACTIP) and Bohol Trafficking in Person Work Plan (2017-2020). The "Bohol TIP Work Plan" has been developed by SOMTC (Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime) Philippines in November 2016 through the collaborative efforts of relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies working towards combating trafficking in person. The plan is envisioned to drive the work of ASEAN on trafficking in persons from 2017-2020. Several ASEAN bodies have been involved and they are ASEAN Senior Law Officials Meeting (ASLOM), Senior Official Meetings on Social Welfare Development (SOMSWD), Senior Official Meetings on Education Development (SOM-ED), ASEAN Senior Officials Meting on Health Development (SOM-HD), ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (DGICM),ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Rights of Women and Children (ACWA).

Myanmar is responsible to take chair of SOM-ED for the year 2019 and has been participating in the educational activities of the ASEAN. The SOMTC Philippines hosted the ASEAN Cross-sectoral meeting on the implementation of Bohol TIP Work Plan (2017-2020) from 5-6 March 2019 in Bohol.The aim of the meeting is to share the good practices in implementing the Bohol TIP Work Plan. Two-day meeting was held with nine plenary sessions. Two Myanmar delegations from SOM-ED were invited to participate the meeting. Among the plenary sessions, session four provides all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies to share their good practices and initiatives to combat trafficking in persons such as prevention of trafficking in persons, protection of victims, law enforcement and prosecution of crimes of trafficking in persons, and regional and international cooperation and coordination. Myanmar delegations of SOM-ED shared our country's experience in combating TIP by highlighting three main points: 1) situation of TIP and implementation in Myanmar, 2) role of SOM-ED in preventing trafficking and 3) future needs to be implemented.

Myanmar has taken a number of initiatives in combating as a national cause since 1997 and carried out prevention and suppression under the existing laws. In 2004, Myanmar became a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols and promulgated Anti TIP Law in 2005. According to Third Five-Year National Plan of Action to Combat TIP (2017-2021), several forms of human trafficking were found such as forced marriage (60.1%), forced prostitution (17.2%), forced labour (20.9%), child trafficking (0.8%) and debt bondage (1%). In the cross-border trafficking incidents, it was found that 63.7% were trafficked to China for forced marriage. In order to tackle the seissues, Myanmar has signed bilateral agreement with neighbouring countries like China and Thailand. Myanmar is also a member of Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Meeting in Trafficking (COMMIT).

It was an opportunity for Myanmar delegations to share some salient points of education sector such as Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030) and National Education Strategic Plan (2016-2021) at Bohol TIP meeting in 2019. These two plansdescribes about preventing and punishing human trafficking, preventing school drop out and combating use of child labour, giving awareness and education programmes, providing vocational education and training programmes for poor population, eliminating abuse discrimination and exploitation faced by young people including girls in all educational environments. The role of SOM-ED in Bohol TIP Work Plan is to cooperate with SOMTC and other sectoral bodies in the area of prevention such as(1) to provide information awareness campaign regarding victim's rights using social media,(2)to conduct survey on how each ASEAN Member States integrate TIP in school curricula and at which level and (3) to conduct regional training programmes for school heads and teachers on the identification of victims and those at risk of trafficking in persons, where appropriate with the initiative of SOMTC. To be in line with Bohol TIP Work Plan (2017-2020), SOME-ED has conducted public awareness and educational talks on human trafficking in collaboration with SOMTC, Ministry of Home Affairs and MRTV, Ministry of Information. In 2018, the SOM-ED also held seminars and conducted essays, poems, articles, arts and poster competition in 35 Universities and15 Education colleges in both urban and remote areas. Knowing that public awareness on TIP by using the social media is much more effective, education talk shows are broadcast in cooperation with MRTV. SOM-ED supported and participated in Anti TIP Day of Myanmar, which is held every year in Nay Pyi Taw. In order to be more effective in giving public awareness and to meet the Bohol TIP Work Plan, all Myanmar Universities and Colleges that already have set up their own websites should activate not only for information on education but also awareness on human trafficking.

Moreover, according to Bohol TIP Work Plan,it is necessary for SOM-ED to conduct survey on how ASEAN member states integrate TIP in school curricula and at what level. Here, let me share one effective example of the pilot project implemented by Asia Foundation in Myanmar. The Foundation,in partnership with Myanmar Library Association has implemented a pilot project to raise awareness about human trafficking. Myanmar libraries are chosen for a pilot project because they are serving as both community centers and information hubs. Thirty-nine librarians are trained from ten townships across the country with a comprehensive curriculum on "Human Trafficking and Risky Migration" that build life skills to reduce vulnerability to trafficking, violence and exploitation.The training module and the manual guide include Myanmar folk tales like "ရွှေနှင်ညှာကလိလို့ ဝံတယ်" " ဆိုင်း ငါး ပဒုန်လုံး " which makes easy and clear understanding about trafficking. In this context, SOM-ED needs to take a leading role in drafting the awareness of TIP in the school curriculum together with Myanmar National Curriculum Committee. It is also necessary to discuss at which level is best suited to give awareness and these plans should be implemented before 2020. Besides school curricula, special attention should also be paid to the monasteries where monastic education takes place. Many poor children, young nuns and monks are learning in many monasteries and awareness on TIP should also be conducted.

Last, but not least, according to Bohol TIP Work Plan, it is to conduct regional training programmes for school heads and teachers on the identification of victims and those at risk of trafficking in persons, where appropriate with the initiative of SOMTC. Although local trainings and workshops were conducted with the initiative of SOMTC, it is yet to implement the regional training programmes in which school heads and teachers are involved. Myanmar will host SOMTC and related meetings in June 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw. In this context, it is prerequisite for Myanmar to prepare with outcomes of the Bohol TIP Work Plan. With this aim in the mind, this article highlights to encourage SOM-ED to be prepared, support and work together with SOMTC to combat TIP effectively in line with ACTIP and the Bohol TIP work plan (2017-2020).

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■■■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 11/2019

2nd Waning of Tabaung, 1380 ME
22nd March, 2019

Appointment of Taninthayi Region Chief Minister

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 261 (c) and article 264 (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Section 82 (a) of the Union Government Law, and Section 56 (a) of the Region or State Government Law, U Myint Maung, Regional Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation of the Taninthayi Region Government, appointed with approval from the Taninthayi Region Hluttaw, has been appointed as the Chief Minister of the Taninthayi Region Government.

Sd/ Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

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Macron accuses EU summit of falling short on climate goals

BRUSSELS—European Union leaders failed to do enough Friday to pursue a pledge to achieve zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 under the Paris climate agreement, French President Emmanuel Macron said.

The leaders stressed the need for the EU to submit an "ambitious long-term strategy by 2020 striving for climate neutrality" in line with the 2015 Paris deal, which calls for zero net emissions by mid-century.

But Macron pointed out the summit conclusions did not explicitly mention the 2050 target.

Macron accused his EU counterparts of not only failing to follow through on their pledges under the Paris agreement but also ignoring the demands of thousands of students who have marched in European streets.

"I believe today's (summit) conclusions regarding the fight against climate change are clearly insufficient," Macron told a news conference at the end of a two-day summit in Brussels.

"We cannot be satisfied with conclusions that do not dare recall that we must achieve carbon neutrality by 2050," Macron said.

He added France will "do its part" to achieve the goal as part of upcoming energy legislation.

"We are not responding clearly today to the commitments taken in 2015, to the scientific challenges outlined by the best experts, or to the legitimate impatience of our young people who are demonstrating every week in our capitals and elsewhere," Macron said.

The summit conclusions said the EU "reiterates its commitment to the Paris Agreement and recognises the need to step up the global efforts to tackle climate change in light of the latest available science."

The 195-nation UN pact sealed in Paris calls for capping the rise in Earth's temperature at "well under" two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and 1.5C if possible.

The summit also pointed to a major recent report by the UN climate body that concluded in October that Earth's rise in temperature must be capped even lower -- at 1.5C -- to avoid the danger of runaway warming.

In announcing its bid to strive for climate neutrality, or zero carbon emissions, the leaders also said they were "taking into account member states' specificities and the competitiveness of European industry."

This appeared to refer Poland's concerns about protecting an economy heavily reliant on coal and Germany's concerns to keep its economy competitiveness.



French President Emmanuel Macron accused his EU counterparts of not only failing to follow through on their pledges under the Paris climate agreement but also ignoring the demands of thousands of students who have marched in European streets AFP. **PHOTO: AFP**

The leaders stressed the need to reap the "significant opportunities" to create more jobs, become more competitive and develop new technologies in the transition to a green economy.

But they added the transition must be fair and socially balanced. —AFP

Giant floating KAWS sculpture arrives in Hong Kong harbour

HONG KONG — A massive inflatable floating sculpture reminiscent of Mickey Mouse was towed into Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour on Friday (Mar 22), as a crowd of curious locals looked on.

The 37-metre (121-foot) piece called KAWS:HOLIDAY - about the length of three double-decker buses - is the work of American artist KAWS, who is known for his whimsical characters which have Xs for eyes.

Tugboats towed the macabre grey figure - a character named COMPANION, floating on its back - into the harbour and stationed it off Hong Kong's busy Central district.

Part of an art festival in the city, it will remain there until the end of the month.

KAWS, whose real name is Brian Donnelly, said he hopes his work will help people to relax.

"Hong Kong's such a busy city ... I thought it would be a good juxtaposition to have a work like this just floating in Victoria Harbour," he told reporters.

"I just thought about ... for myself, what's a really relaxing position, and that's really when you just zone out and look at the sky and think about nothing else."

Locals and visitors, some wearing t-shirts designed by KAWS, took photos and looked on excitedly as the sculpture was brought to its display site.

The figure has been compared to a huge floating yellow duck that was displayed in the Hong Kong harbour in 2013.

That work - smaller than the KAWS piece - by Dutch artist Florentijn Hofman was hugely popular, inspiring special duck dishes in restaurants and even copies in several Chinese cities.

"The yellow duck is more attractive, more lively," said Fung Foon-yung, 67.

"I don't know what this one looks like, it's just lying there," she added, saying it reminded her of a corpse. — AFP



'KAWS:HOLIDAY', an inflatable sculpture by US artist and designer Brian Donnelly, known professionally as KAWS, is on display in Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour. **PHOTO: AFP**

Princess Kako wishes for sister's happiness on graduation



The princess, the younger daughter of Prince Fumihito and Princess Kiko, appeared in front of the press in a black gown, cap, and white high heels ahead of the graduation ceremony. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

TOKYO—Princess Kako, the 24-year-old granddaughter of Emperor Akihito, expressed her wish for her sister's happiness in a written answer to the media on the occasion of her graduation from International Christian University in Tokyo on Friday.

The princess commented on the postponement of the marriage between her sister Princess Mako, 27, and Kei Komuro following reports that Komuro's family is involved in a financial dispute. "I would like my sister's wishes to be met, as I believe the important detail is how they feel about each other," she said.

On her own marriage prospects, the princess wrote, "I wish to get married in time, at a point that isn't too late. My ideal partner would be someone with whom I can be relaxed."

The princess, the younger daughter of Prince Fumihito and Princess Kiko, appeared in front of the press in a black gown, cap, and white high heels ahead of the graduation ceremony.

"I feel grateful that I could lead a wonderful school life," she said. In the written answers to questions from the media, the princess said she will devote herself to performing her official duties from now on and not enter graduate school. "It is not about what I want to do, but about addressing the official duties that have been asked of me," she said. "I do have dreams, but I would like to keep them to myself."

Asked about the abdication of Emperor Akihito, 85, on April 30 and the ascension to the Chrysanthemum Throne of Crown Prince Naruhito, 59, on May 1, the princess said she would be as supportive as possible as she performs her royal duties.—Kyodo News

Japan's Okinawa files fresh lawsuit to halt central gov't's contentious US base move

TOKYO — The Okinawa prefectural government on Friday filed another lawsuit against the central government to retract approval given for landfill work for the relocation of a controversial U.S. base within Japan's southernmost prefecture.

The landfill work, which is vehemently opposed by the Okinawa government and the people, is part of the central government's plans to relocate the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station from Ginowan, to the pristine coastal area of Henoko, also in Okinawa.

The lawsuit was filed with the Naha branch of the Fukuoka High Court and seeks for the cancellation of the land ministry's reversal in October of Okinawa retracting a permit given for the central government to proceed with the controversial land reclamation work.

Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki, a staunch opponent to the base move, in talks with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Tuesday, insisted that the landfill work be suspended.

He maintained that more time was needed to negotiate the sensitive situation following the majority of local citizens in Okinawa, in a national referendum held recently, voting against the relocation plan.

Despite the contrary stance of the Okinawa prefectural government and citizens in Japan's southernmost prefecture, the central government said it will forge ahead with the land reclamation work regardless, but that it was "open" to more dialogue on the situation.

Okinawa hosts the bulk of U.S. military facilities in Japan, yet the tiny sub-tropical island accounts for just a small fraction of Japan's total landmass.

Anti-U.S. sentiment has been rising on the island, with locals insisting that the central government pay heed to the results of the referendum and move the base out of Okinawa and Japan altogether.—Xinhua ■



This file photo taken on April 24, 2010 shows planes and helicopters stationed at the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma base in Ginowan, Okinawa prefecture, Japan. **PHOTO : AFP**

2 million sign petition calling for Brexit to be scrapped



A demonstrator holds a placard outside the Houses of Parliament in London, Britain, March 11, 2019. **PHOTO : XINHUA**

LONDON — A national petition to the British Parliament calling for Brexit to be cancelled received more than 2 million signatures by Thursday night.

The petition has called on Prime Minister Theresa May's government to cancel Britain's departure from the European Union (EU) and to revoke Article 50 process. The Article 50 had set Britain's departure date at March 29, but the EU agreed on Thursday to offer a Brexit extension until May 22 if Britain's House of Commons approves the withdrawal agreement next week. If not, the extension will last till April 12, said President of the European Council Donald Tusk.

"The government repeatedly claims exiting the EU is the will of the people," said petition organiser Margaret Anne Georgiadou. "We need to put a stop to this claim by proving the strength of public support now for remaining in the EU." Under parliamentary rules, public petitions almost guarantee a debate in the House of Commons if no less than 100,000 people sign on it.

However, leader of the House of Commons Andrea Leadsom said the petition would only be meaningful if it reached 17.4 million, the number of people who voted Leave during the 2016 referendum. According to the Parliamentary Petitions Committee, a cross-party group appointed to examine petitions to parliament, the petition had the highest-ever number of signatures and crashed their website several times during the day.

Petitions do not carry any legal weight in the Houses of Parliament, but are seen as a way of influencing political thinking.—*Xinhua* ■

Iraq announces reasons behind ferry sinking in Mosul

BAGHDAD — Iraq's High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR) on Friday announced the reasons behind the sinking of a ferry that killed 93 people in Tigris River in the city of Mosul, capital of Iraq's northern province of Nineveh.

IHCHR attributed the sinking to the fact that the crossing on the river is old, which was established in 1979, and the old ferry is made of iron plates, Ali al-Baiyati, member of IHCHR, said in a statement.

The capacity of the ferry was 75 people, but there were around 200 people when the incident occurred, according to the ticketing report, al-Baiyati said.

"The ferry is moving with ropes or wires bound to the other side of the river bank," al-Baiyati added.

He also said that IHCHR will file a complaint against the governor of Nineveh province, Nawfal al-Akoub, as he is the head of the provincial government who is responsible for the safety of the people.

The incident took place on Thursday afternoon when a ferryboat carrying dozens of people capsized while crossing from the bank of the river to a small tourist island called Um al Rabeein in northern Mosul, some 400 km north of the capital Baghdad.

A civil defense source said that the ferryboat owned by a tourism office was overloaded with more than 100 people, while the ferryboat is originally designed to carry some 30 people.

An Interior Ministry source said that some 93 people, mostly women and children, drowned in the river and their bodies were recovered, while 55 others were rescued, including 19 children.

The search operation is expected to continue in the coming days.

Meanwhile, a statement by the Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council, said Mosul investigation court has decided to arrest nine workers responsible for the ferry. "The court also issued an arrest warrant for the owner of the ferry and the owner of the island," the statement added. —Xinhua ■

EU leaders offer two options for short Brexit delay

LONDON—European leaders and Prime Minister Theresa May agreed Thursday on a short delay to Britain's divorce from the European Union in the hope of ensuring an orderly Brexit.

Britain had faced a sharp cliff-edge deadline of March 29 to leave, but May's EU colleagues said the split could wait until May 22 if British lawmakers approve a withdrawal accord next week.

But if the House of Commons rejects the deal — as it has done twice before — Brexit will take place on 12 April, unless Britain has decided by then to take part in this year's European Parliamentary elections.

"12 April is the key date in terms of the UK deciding whether to hold European parliament elections," EU Council president and summit host Donald Tusk said, announcing the arrangement. Britain would need time to legislate to take part in the 23 to 26 May election, and May has insisted it will not try, preferring in her words "to honour" voters' decision to end London's 46-year-old membership.

"I believe strongly that it would be wrong to ask people in the UK to participate in these elections three years after voting to leave the European Union," May said, confirming the agreement.

'Responsibility lies with the British'

Tusk said that if the vote is not organised then a further "extension will automatically become impossible" and that even with an election, all 27 remaining EU member states would unanimously have to approve it.

"29 March is over. As of tonight, 12 April is the new 29 March," an EU official said.

"On 12 April we have to know where things stand ... if we don't have a response by then we will have a no deal Brexit," Luxembourg's Prime Minister Xavier Bettel warned.

And French President Emmanuel Macron, who had taken a harder public line than some of his colleagues declared: "The responsibility now lies with the British, and I think that's the big achievement of the day."

Despite a extraordinary joint warning from Britain's business and trade union leaders that the economic disruptions of a no deal Brexit would present a "national emergency", May had refused to rule out walking away.

Even as she was meeting the EU 27 in Brussels for the European Council summit, an online petition hosted by the UK parliament and calling for Brexit to be abandoned topped two million signatures. It still remains far from clear that May will be able to get the withdrawal agreement she signed last November past the House of Commons, and she turned up the heat on her own MPs after the Brexit talks.

"What the decision today underlines is the importance of the House of Commons passing a Brexit deal next week," she insisted. "Tomorrow morning I am returning to the UK and working hard on building support to get the deal through... I hope we can all agree we are now at the moment of decision."

May had requested a short delay until 30 June to allow time for the ratification of her deal if it approved, but European leaders decided they did not want Brexit concerns to linger into the election campaign.

Deep divisions

Despite winning the extension, there is a chance the decision might be taken out of May's hands.



It still remains far from clear that British Prime Minister Theresa May will be able to get the withdrawal agreement she signed last November past the House of Commons. **PHOTO: AFP**

She had intended to hold a third vote on her deal this week, but the Speaker of the House of Commons blocked it, citing 400-year-old precedent that says the same proposition cannot be put to MPs again and again.

May is hoping that the EU summit's approval of fresh guarantees about the agreement will overcome the speaker's objections, but even if the deal goes forward rebel MPs may seize control of the process.

May's deal remains hugely unpopular among MPs on all sides of the Brexit debate, with some arguing it keeps Britain too closely to the EU, and others saying it would not keep it close enough.

British voters are also sharply divided. Many pro-Europeans support a lengthy delay to Brexit, believing it would increase pressure at home for a general election or for a second referendum that might reverse the decision.

But there is huge anger among those who want to leave the EU and do not understand why it is taking so long, while eight of May's senior ministers last week voted against any delay.—AFP ■

N Korea pulls out of inter-Korean liaison office

SEOUL — North Korea pulled its staff out of an inter-Korean liaison office Friday, Seoul said, weeks after leader Kim Jong Un's summit with US President Donald Trump ended without agreement.

The office in the Northern city of Kaesong was opened in September as the two Koreas knitted closer ties, but the South's vice unification minister Chun Hae-sung told reporters Pyongyang had "notified the South they are pulling out of the liaison office".

The decision had been taken "in accordance with an order from an upper command", he said, adding: "They said they didn't care whether we stayed at the liaison office or not."

The South's President Moon Jae-in was instrumental in brokering talks between the nuclear-armed, sanctions-hit North and Washington, Seoul's key security ally.

Moon has long backed engagement with the North to bring it to the negotiating table, and has been pushing the carrot of inter-Korean development projects, among them the restarting of an industrial zone also in Kaesong and lucrative cross-border tourist visits by Southerners to the North's picturesque Mount Kumgang.



The four-storey joint liaison building includes separate Northern and Southern offices and a conference room. **PHOTO: AFP**

But the sanctions currently in place effectively block their resumption, while a preliminary study for a plan to renovate the North's decrepit rail system was repeatedly delayed.

Questions were even raised over whether supplies provided to set up the liaison office were a sanctions violation.

The failure by Kim and Trump to reach agreement in Hanoi last month on walking back Pyongyang's nuclear programme in exchange for relaxation of the measures against it has raised questions over the future of the wider process.

In Vietnam both sides expressed willingness to talk further, but it has since emerged that Washington presented Kim with a wider definition of what it regards as denuclearisation.

A senior Pyongyang diplomat told reporters last week that the North was considering suspending nuclear talks with the US. Analysts said Friday's decision could be a sign Pyongyang felt Seoul was unable to exert sufficient influence on Washington.—AFP ■

Syria says Trump position on Golan ignores international law

DAMASCUS — The Syrian government on Friday (Mar 22) condemned US President Donald Trump's pledge to recognise Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights, saying it flies in the face of international law.

Trump on Thursday called the Golan - a strategic area seized from Syria in 1967 and annexed in a move never recognised by the international community - "of critical strategic and security importance to the State of Israel and Regional Stability!" The Syrian government denounced his comments, saying they flagrantly disregarded international law. "The American position towards Syria's occupied Golan Heights clearly reflects the United States' contempt for international legitimacy and its flagrant violation of international law," a foreign ministry source told the official SANA news agency. The source said Trump's comments showed the extent of his administration's bias towards Israel.—AFP ■

China's new Silk Road gets bumpy as Xi visits Italy

ROME — Chinese President Xi Jinping kicked off a whistle-stop European tour in Rome on Friday amid growing Western unease over Italy joining the ever-expanding Asian giant's new Silk Road project.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte is to sign a memorandum of understanding with Xi on Saturday for Italy to join the $1 trillion Belt and Road Initiative, the first G7 member to do so, despite apparent divisions within the ruling coalition.

Italy on Friday rolled out the red carpet for Xi, who met his Italian counterpart Sergio Mattarella amid great pomp, and was due to head to parliament in the afternoon.

Around 1,000 extra police have been deployed around Rome for the state visit before Xi heads to Palermo, where his singer wife Peng Liyuan reportedly wants to see the Teatro Massimo opera house.

In what some perceived as a snub, Italy's far-right Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini said he would not attend Saturday's state dinner for Xi at Mattarella's Quirinal Palace.

Salvini has said Italy would be "no-one's colony" and urged caution about using telecom giant Huawei's next generation 5G mobile technology, while coalition partner Luigi Di Maio is keener for Chinese partnerships.

The United States has warned European allies that Huawei could use its 5G technology as a "backdoor" for spying, while China has lashed out at "immoral" attacks.

NATO member Italy's plan to join China's ambitious maritime, rail and road venture, which critics warn mainly benefits Chinese firms, has raised eyebrows among Western allies and within Italy. "Today we say 'Italy first' in trade relations, while remaining US allies, in NATO and in the EU," Deputy Prime Minister Di Maio of the anti-establishment Five Star Movement said on the sidelines of a China-Italy business forum on Friday.



Mr Xi descended from his Air China Boeing 747 with first lady Peng Liyuan at Rome's Fiumicino airport before being whisked off to their hotel on 21 March, 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

Allies' concerns about 5G could be allayed by strengthening the Italian government's so-called 'golden powers' to keep control of strategic industries and infrastructure, Di Maio said.

'Trojan horse'

Debt-ridden Italy is technically in recession and keen to have more business with China.

White House official Garrett Marquis last week tweeted that there was "no need" for Italy to endorse "China's infrastructure vanity project".

Xi's visit comes a week after the European Union released a 10-point plan outlining a shift to more assertive relations with Beijing, warning that China was a "rival" to the bloc as well as its biggest trading partner.

France on Thursday announced that President Emmanuel Macron will hold trade and climate talks on Tuesday with Xi, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker. As he arrived for the EU summit in Brussels, Macron welcomed what he called Europe's "awakening" to the challenge posed by China.—AFP ■

US conservative economic group sues Commerce Department over auto tariffs report

WASHINGTON — A US conservative economic group on Thursday sued the US Department of Commerce for not publishing an investigation report based on which the administration might impose import tariffs on cars and car parts.

The Cause of Action Institute (CoA), an independent nonprofit watchdog organization, said in a press release that it filed a lawsuit against the department for "failing to respond to" two requests made by the group seeking a copy of the Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross's final report to President Donald Trump regarding the investigation into whether foreign imports of motor vehicles and automotive parts threaten to impair US national security.

The Commerce Department submitted the report, which is based on Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, to Trump on 17 February. The president, who has long threatened the auto tariffs, has 90 days following the submission to decide whether to implement the punitive duties.

"The public should not have to take the government's word that the report supports tariffs when the administration withholds the document it claims supports its position," said James Valvo, counsel and senior policy advisor at CoA.

"The tariffs will harm American consumers and businesses, and the public has a right to see the information contained in the report," he added.

Speaking at the Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima, the state of Ohio, on Wednesday, Trump touted what he called "a big, fat beautiful tariff" his administration imposed on steel and aluminum imports worldwide.

European Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom told an event at Georgetown University in Washington early this month that the European Union (EU) "was seriously offended" by the tariffs the United States imposed on the bloc's steel and aluminum products, urging the US government to scrap tariffs on European industrial goods.

After receiving the Section 232 investigation report, Trump said that the EU is "very tough to make a deal with," adding that the auto tariffs will be put into effect "if we don't make a deal." The Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM), a US industry group, argued in a report released Monday that placing tariffs on approximately 265 US billion dollars' worth of imports will hurt the US economy by raising commodity prices and yielding an average loss of gross domestic product of 29 billion dollars per year for 10 years.

"Tariffs on steel, aluminum, and Chinese imports, as well as the potential for additional tariffs, are driving up the cost of production, delaying capital investments, and impeding job creation for our more than 1,000 member companies," said AEM President Dennis Slater. — Xinhua ■

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CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (034 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (034 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/A.I.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V AREZOO VOY. NO. (SCY1057)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V AREZOO VOY. NO. (SCY1057) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S LAND AND SEA SHIPPING LINE
Phone No: 2301185

Invitation for Request for Quotation (RFQ)

Ministry of Transport and Communications (MoTC) now invites eligible firm to submit the proposal for **"Drive Test, Quality of Service and Benchmarking Test System for Mobile Networks"** as part of the Telecom Sector Reform Project supported by the World Bank's Loan. The deadline for submission of RFQ is April 22nd, 2019 by 10:30 AM (Myanmar Standard Time).

Attention:
Director General
Posts and Telecommunications Department.
Ministry of Transport and Communications
Office Building Number 2
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Telephone: +95 67 3407225
Facsimile number: +95 67 3407216
Electronic mail address: dg.ptd@mptmail.net.mm

The detail information and requirements can be seen in the Request for Quotation (RFQ) and it can be downloaded at PTD Website:https://www.ptd.gov.mm.

Tender Committee
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Japan to tighten controls on ivory market amid int'l criticism

TOKYO — Japan will tighten controls on its internationally maligned ivory market in July, requiring dealers to prove via carbon dating that specimens were legally obtained, the Environment Ministry said Friday.

"By shutting down the movement of ivory of unknown origin, the domestic market is moving closer to an effective closure," Environment Minister Yoshiaki Harada said at a press conference.

In 1990, international ivory trading was banned in principle under the Washington Convention, officially known as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

However, in Japan ivory that remains in its original form and that was obtained prior to the convention taking effect is permitted to be traded after it is registered with the Japan Wildlife Research Center.

Individuals who wish to trade ivory in Japan will now have to report how it was acquired, while providing third-party testimony on its provenance. Carbon dating to show the age of the ivory will become an absolute prerequisite from July 1, making ivory obtained from recent poaching impossible to register and sell, the ministry said.

While the United States, China and other countries have taken steps to close markets, Japan has previously argued its domestic trading has no impact on poaching.

Japan's conservation law was amended in 2017 to mandate that ivory dealers register with the government, but the WWF said the measure did not resolve pressing issues involving ivory.

The conservation group said more than 2.4 tons of ivory was unlawfully exported from Japan to China and elsewhere between 2011 and 2016.—Kyodo News ■



Ivory products are seen on sale at a market in Tokyo in this supplied photo taken in August 2017. Japan is fueling the internationally outlawed ivory trade by failing to curb "rampant" illegal exports to China and inadequately monitoring its own legal but poorly regulated domestic sales, a wildlife trade watchdog said on Dec. 20. **PHOTO : KYODO NEWS**

Remote Cape with 'world's cleanest air' offers smog respite

CAPE GRIM (AUSTRALIA) — As much of Asia wheezes, coughs and sniffles its way through another smog season, one isolated and windswept corner of Australia is serving as the global standard for clean air.

With panoramic views of swaying tussock grass and the vast crystalline expanse of the Southern Ocean, Tasmania's beautiful Cape Grim peninsula is an unlikely reference point for the scientific world.

But since 1976, this wild and blustery spot has been home to the Cape Grim Baseline Air Pollution Station -- a small Australian government facility with the seemingly eccentric task of bottling air.

"Our job is essentially to find air as clean as you're likely to find anywhere in the world and measure just how polluted it is," Sam Cleland, the officer in charge of the station, told AFP.

Looking out from his office atop the high sea cliffs, the nearest landmass to the west is Argentina, and there is nothing to the south except Antarctica.

The facility's isolated location makes it perfect for collecting what many have dubbed the cleanest air in the world -- what air would be like without choking exhaust fumes or industrial smoke.

When the wind blows from the southwest, Cleland and his team capture a sample using finely tuned instruments. Their kit is so sensitive that delivery trucks chugging down the dirt track from the nearest town — an hour away — are all logged, in case they potentially skew the readings.



Mr Sam Cleland, the officer in charge of the Cape Grim Baseline Air Pollution Station, looking at the station's equipment in Cape Grim, Tasmania. **PHOTO : AFP**

Clean air economy

While the world's most polluted cities struggle to attract talent or manage chronic illnesses, residents around Cape Grim have made a virtue of their relatively pristine environment.

Local beef is marketed with links to scientific papers on air quality, the number of wind farms has increased, and tourism is a growing sector.

Mike Buckby, a "rain farmer" from the Cape Grim Water Company, has taken things to another level, harvesting water falling "from Earth's purest skies."

"Most waters of the world are spring waters," he explains as he looks out over a system of tarps, sluices and reservoirs set back from the coast.

"The rain that comes off the Great Southern Ocean, that's what we depend on," Buckby said, adding that his remarkably sweet-tasting water is little more than H2O and trace amounts of sodium picked up from the sea.

"It will have a little bit of sodium but it's very neutral and it's very soft," he said. "In normal spring water, you'll have high magnesium, you'll have some naturally occurring nitrates, phosphorus, potassium."

Buckby says the monitoring station and the clean air it measures have helped local produce stand out in a competitive market.—AFP ■

Many sharks closer to extinction than feared: Red List

PARIS — Human appetites are pushing makos and other iconic sharks to the brink of extinction, scientists warned in a new assessment of the apex predator's conservation status.

Seventeen of 58 species evaluated were classified as facing extinction, the Shark Specialist Group of the International Union for the Conservation (IUCN) said late Thursday in an update of the Red List of threatened animals and plants.

"Our results are alarming," said Nicholas Dulvy, who chairs the grouping of 174 experts from 55 countries.

"The sharks that are especially slow-growing, sought-after and unprotected from overfishing tend to be the most threatened."

That category includes the shortfin mako, whose cruising speed of 40 km/h (25 mph) -- punctuated by bursts of more than 70 km/h -- makes it the fastest of all sharks.

Along with its longfin cousin, the two makos are highly prized for their flesh and fins, considered a delicacy in Chinese and other Asian culinary traditions.

"Today, one of the biggest shark fisheries on the high seas is the mako," Dulvy told AFP. "It is also one of the least protected."—AFP ■

China probes factory blast as death toll rises to 47

YANCHENG — Chinese President Xi Jinping ordered local governments Friday to prevent any more industrial disasters after a chemical plant blast left 47 people dead, injured hundreds and flattened an industrial park in the latest such catastrophe to hit the country.

Thursday's explosion in the eastern city of Yancheng, Jiangsu province was one of the worst industrial disasters to hit China, with Xi acknowledging that the country has seen a rash of major accidents in recent years.

Xi -- who is on a state visit to Italy -- urged "all-out efforts" to rescue those trapped and to identify the cause of the accident "as early as possible", according to the official news agency Xinhua.

The State Council, China's cabinet, has established a team to investigate the explosion, state media said.

The explosion toppled several buildings in the industrial park and caused a huge fire that raged through the night, while rescuers scrambled to find survivors in the wreckage of the plant owned by a company with a chequered past.—AFP ■

A decade on, smartphone-like software finally heads to space

WASHINGTON — Once a traditional satellite is launched into space, its physical hardware and computer software stay mostly immutable for the rest of its existence as it orbits the Earth, even as the technology it serves on the ground continues to change.

Just as some aerospace start-ups are developing technologies to repair, modify or refuel satellites to prolong their lives, some satellite manufacturers are looking at a complementary solution -- hoping to install smartphone-like software with more computing power and capable of receiving updates within minutes instead of days or weeks.

US aerospace company Lockheed Martin presented its new "SmartSat" technology to journalists Wednesday near Washington.

"SmartSat" software will hitch a ride aboard mini satellites called cubesats that they plan to launch within the next six months.

"Today's satellites that exist currently are durable, they're capable, they're precise, but once we launch them, they generally don't change much," Lockheed Martin's Maria Demaree explained. "We want the satellites of the future to operate more like smartphones."

Instead of computer programs with a single processor, like satellites have today, with "SmartSat," Lockheed Martin says they'll be bringing multi-core processing to space.

"That lets satellites process more data in orbit so they can beam down just the most critical and relevant information -- saving bandwidth costs and reducing the burden on ground station analysts, and ultimately opening the door for tomorrow's data centers in space," the company said in a statement.

For example, according to the company, this technology could allow a commercial operator to more easily reprogram a communications satellite to switch to serving Eastern Europe instead of Western Europe, if necessary.

The US military might also be interested, though Lockheed has not yet confirmed whether they are a "SmartSat" client.



Provided by AFPRelaxNewsUS aerospace company Lockheed Martin presented its new "SmartSat" technology to journalists Wednesday near Washington. **PHOTO:AFP**

Why haven't aerospace organizations implemented such revolutionary technologybefore now?

Extreme conditions in space make everything more complicated.

"The hardware is very susceptible to locking up or just completely burning out," said "SmartSat" program manager Adam Johnson. "So the hardware is now catching up to the capabilities that we see on the ground, such that it's more radiation-tolerant." —AFP ■

Physicist Marcelo Gleiser: 'Science does not kill God'

WASHINGTON — The annual Templeton Prize, which recognizes outstanding contributions to "affirming life's spiritual dimension," was awarded Tuesday to Brazilian Marcelo Gleiser -- a theoretical physicist dedicated to demonstrating science and religion are not enemies.

A physics and astronomy professor whose specializations include cosmology, 60-year-old Gleiser was born in Rio de Janeiro, and has been in the United States since 1986.

An agnostic, he doesn't believe in God -- but refuses to write off the possibility of God's existence completely.

"Atheism is inconsistent with the scientific method," Gleiser told AFP Monday from Dartmouth College, the New Hampshire university where he has taught since 1991.

"Atheism is a belief in non-belief. So you categorically deny something you have no evidence against."

"I'll keep an open mind because I understand that human knowledge is limited," he added.

The prize is funded by the John Templeton Foundation -- a philanthropic organization named after the American Presbyterian who made his fortune on Wall Street, and who set on "seeking proofs of divine agency in every branch of science", as The Economist put it.

Gleiser joins Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama and dissident Soviet author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn as recipients of the prize, first awarded in 1973. At £1.1 million ($1.5 million), the prize money well surpasses that of the Nobels.



Theoretical physicist Marcelo Gleiser has been awarded the Templeton Prize Dartmouth College. **PHOTO: AFP**

The physicist focuses on making complex subjects accessible. He has written on climate change, Einstein, hurricanes, black holes, the human conscience -- tracing the links between the sciences and the humanities, including philosophy.

The author of five English-language books and hundreds of blog and press articles in the US and Brazil, Gleiser has also explored in depth how science and religion both try to respond to questions on the origins of life and the universe.

"The first thing you see in the Bible is a story of creation," he said. Whatever your religion, "everybody wants to know how the world came to be."

This fundamental curiosity unites science and religion, though each provides very different answers: science has a methodology, where hypotheses are eliminated.

"Science can give answers to certain questions, up to a point," Gleiser pointed out.

"This has been known for a very long time in philosophy, it's called the problem of the first cause: we get stuck," the physicist, a father of five, said.

"We should have the humility to accept that there's mystery around us."

Scientific arrogance

So, what does he think of people who believe that the Earth was created in seven days?

"They position science as the enemy ... because they have a very antiquated way of thinking about science and religion in which all scientists try to kill God," he said.—AFP ■

New technique may overcome infertility in childhood cancer survivors

PITTSBURGH — Men diagnosed with cancer have the option of freezing their sperm ahead of chemotherapy, which can render them infertile.

But sperm freezing is not an option for prepubescent boys, some 30 percent of whom will become sterile as a result of toxic cancer treatments.

It's a problem that scientists have been working on for years: the idea being to harvest and cryopreserve immature testicular tissue before chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatments, and then graft it back during adolescence so that it will produce fertile sperm at puberty.

Three experiments conducted on monkeys since the 2000s have successfully demonstrated that sperm production, or spermatogenesis, was possible via such auto grafting.

But none had resulted in conception and the birth of a baby, until now. A team led by researchers at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine announced Thursday they had achieved the milestone, using sperm gathered from a male rhesus macaque to generate embryos that were transferred to recipient females.

In April 2018, one of the females gave birth to a healthy baby named Grady — a portmanteau of "graft-derived" and "baby."

The study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, was published in the journal Science.

The experiment represents a successful proof of concept for the technique and brings it one step closer to reality for human boys affected by cancer. For girls, further research will be required on ovarian tissue grafting.

In Pittsburgh, 206 boys and 41 girls treated for cancer have had their tissue frozen since 2011 in the hope that the technique will one day become available, said the study's senior author, Kyle Orwig, a professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. "I believe we will have this technology in the clinic in the next two to five years," he continued, adding that discussions were already underway with regulators.—AFP ■



Researchers announced they had impregnated a female rhesus macaque – whose baby, Grady, is seen here at two weeks of age – using a technique that could help childhood survivors of cancer eventually overcome infertility. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar trounce Timor Leste 7-0 in AFC U-23 Qualifiers

MYANMAR beat Timor Leste with a terrific 7-0 score during the AFC U-23 Championship 2020 Qualifier match at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

The Myanmar men's team used key players for the match, and lined up with goalkeeper San Satt Naing, with Captain Win Moe Kyaw, Ye Yint Aung, Ye Min Thu, Hein Phyo Win playing defence, Lwin Moe Aung, Zay Yar Naing, Myat Kaung Khant, Hein Htet Aung in the midfield, and Htet Phyo Wai and Wai Naing Tun in the forward position.

Myanmar were in a good attacking position yesterday, and showcased great dribbling skills and long passes.

Myanmar resorted to power play right from the kick-off, with Hein Htet Aung scoring two consecutive goals at 4 and 5 minutes.

More goals followed to strengthen Myanmar's position, with Myat Kaung Khant scoring the third goal at 24 minutes and Win Naing Tun netting the fourth at 45 minutes.

At the end of the first half, Myanmar was leading with a score of 4-0.

The match heated up in the beginning of the the second half as Myanmar resorted to continuous attacks.

Team Myanmar did not lose steam, with Zeya Naing scoring the fifth goal at 52 minutes and Ye Min Thu bagging the sixth goal at 62 minutes, stumping the Timor Leste keeper.

Again, taking advantage of weaknesses in Timor Leste's defence, Win Naing Tun scored the final goal at 64 minutes.

Speaking about Myanmar's overwhelming win, head coach Velizar Popov said: "I was pleased with the result, but some misunderstandings were still seen in my team. We'll play better in the next matches."



Myanmar (red) and Timor Leste (red) fight for the ball during yesterday's AFC U-23 Championship qualifier at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon. **PHOTO : MFF**

"I was shocked by the big loss. This is football and anything can happen. My boys made too many mistakes during the match," said Timor Leste's head coach Norio Tsukitate.

In the earlier qualifier yesterday, Japan best Macau 8-0.

Myanmar will play against Macau next, and Timor Leste will take on Japan on 24 March.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Football: Musashi Suzuki to start against Colombia in Japan debut

TOKYO—Forward Musashi Suzuki is set to make his senior Japan debut after being named in the starting 11 for Friday's international friendly against Colombia. Japan manager Hajime Moriyasu has picked the Consadole Sapporo striker to start the match at Nissan Stadium as a lone target man in front of the favored attacking trio of Ritsu Doan, Shoya Nakajima and Takumi Minamino.

The Jamaican-born Suzuki, whose father is from the Caribbean nation and mother from Japan, has previously been picked for under-23 and under-21 national duties. The 25-year-old forward, who stands 1.85 meters, has made an impressive start to the J-League season, racking up three goals and two assists in four games for first-division Consadole. Suzuki, who grew up in Ota, Gunma Prefecture, joined Consadole at the start of the year from relegated V-Varen Nagasaki. He netted 11 goals in 29 league games for Nagasaki last year.

Following the match against Colombia, Japan will meet Bolivia in another friendly on Tuesday at Noevir Stadium in Kobe. The matches are a warmup for the Copa America starting from June in Brazil. The Samurai Blue will be participating in the South American continental tournament as an invited nation for the second time. Asian champions Qatar will also contest the June 14 to July 7 tournament as invitees. —KYODO NEWS ■



Musashi Suzuki. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

MIC team claims Myanmar Futsal League Championship title



Team MIC, the Myanmar Futsal League 2018 winners celebrate after receiving the championship trophy. **PHOTO : MFL**

THE Myanmar Futsal League 2018, organized by the Myanmar Football Federation, concluded successfully with the MIC team winning the championship on Wednesday.

The tourney kicked-off in August, and the final match took place between the Myanmar Imperial College (MIC) and Victoria University Club (VUC) teams at the Thuwunna Indoor Stadium in Yangon. Although the VUC beat MIC 2-1 in the finals, they lost the championship title to MIC due to a difference of one goal in the overall score.

While both teams had chalked up 63 points, the MIC had beaten VUC 3-1 in the previous round.

An awards ceremony was held after the decisive match on Wednesday, where the MIC team received K10 million as prize money.

The second placed team was given K7.5 million and the third placed team received K6million. Awards for the Best Player, Best Goalkeeper, and the cleanest football club were also presented at the ceremony.

The Myanmar Football Federation organizes the championship every year to promote futsal among youth. The championship also serves as a platform to help outstanding players enter the national team. The MFF U-19 Futsal Team and 11 private futsal teams from Yangon competed in the championship, which followed the two-round format.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■