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Union Minister U Soe Win inspects the border control facilities in Myawady yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Union P&F Minister inspects border control facilities in Myawady

U SOE WIN, the Union Minister for Planning and Finance, inspected the customs, immigration, and quarantine procedures (CIQ) yesterday at the border control facilities near Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge 2 in Myawady Town, Kay-in State.

First, the Union Minister heard reports from the Customs Department, the Department of Immigration and Population, the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Food and Drug

Administration, the Department of Medical Services, and the Myanmar Police Force, and then gave his suggestions.

Thereafter, the Union Minister inspected the Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge 2 and 1. The border trade center at Bridge 2 will inspect cargo, travelers,

food, drugs, animals, plants, and fishery products, and will check travelers for illnesses or infections. The Union Minister met with state-level department heads in the evening at the government guest house in Mawlamyine, Mon State. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

MSMEs receive awards on last day of national trade fair, contest

THE awarding ceremony of the National MSMEs Products Trade Fair and Contest was held at Myanmar International Convention Centre II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. Union Industry Minister U Khin Maung Cho, who is also Vice Chair of the MSMEs Development Working Committee, presented awards at the ceremony.

Firstly, the Union Minister delivered the opening speech and Daw Aye Aye Win, Director-General of the Directorate of Industrial Supervision & Inspection, explained the selection criteria.

The award ceremony commenced with the Union Minister conferring awards on first place winners, Deputy Education Minister U Win Maw Tun conferring awards on second place winners, and Permanent Secretary U Ko Ko Lwin of the Ministry of Industry conferring awards on third place winners.

Next, the Union Minister, Deputy Minister, Permanent Secretary, directors-general, officials, panel judges, and award recipients posed for a documentary photo together.

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Rakhine State Chief Minister, local people hold talks over development in Gwa Township

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu on Saturday visited the villages in Gwa Township in Rakhine State, and met with local residents.

The Chief Minister accompanied by the state ministers U Aung Kyaw Zan, U Win Myint and Dr. Chan Tha, Hluttaw representatives and districts and townships' departmental officials visited the villages of Doetan, Kwyaychaing and Kutoe, and met with the residents living in and near the villages.

At the meeting, Chief Minister U Nyi Pu said the purpose of the meetings with the villagers was to fulfill the needs of the local people. He also highlighted

possible requirements in education, health, social and economic sectors, pledging to conduct the short-term and long term plans after giving priorities to the needs of the villages.

In implementing the regions' developmental works, the Rakhine State Government was drawing plans, and carrying out the tasks related to the respective sectors, said the chief minister, adding that the tasks would be carried out in accordance with the priority list.

Infrastructures such as road, bridge and electrification were given as top priorities for development in the state.

The Chief Minister then



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu meets with local people in Gwa Township, Rakhine State.

PHOTO : MYO THURA TUN

called for open and fruitful discussions for the current and long-term needs, promising that the suggestions of the villagers would be coordinated with members of the state cabinet and relevant officials.

Afterwards, local residents

discussed matters relating to requirements in education, health, transport, electricity, the rule of law, agriculture, land and dam maintenance. The Chief Minister also presented cash, donated by Rakhine State government, K 1.5 million for the construction

of three temporary-bridges on Yeysankwin-Kyaintali road and K 800,000 for a set of computer and printer for Basic Education Middle School in Kwyaychaing Village to the respective officials. —Myo Thura Tun (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Officials welcome the delegation led by Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, Mrs. Christine Schraner Burgener, yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy arrives in Nay Pyi Taw

Mrs. Christine Schraner Burgener, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General on Myanmar, landed in Nay Pyi Taw at 8 pm yesterday. She was

welcomed by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Deputy Information Minister coordinates textbook printing, inspects private printing houses in Yangon

U Aung Hla Tun, Deputy Minister for Information and Chairperson of the Textbook Printing Subcommittee, held a meeting with private printing house officials yesterday concerning the progress of printing textbooks. The meeting was held at the meeting hall of the Printing and Publishing Department (PPD) on Theinbyu Road in Yangon.

During the meeting, the Deputy Minister said the meeting will coordinate the printing and publishing of school textbooks for the entire nation in time for the 2019-2020 Academi Year. He said the work at the Mandalay printing houses was almost complete when inspected them last week.

He said it is important for quality textbooks to be ready for students when schools open. He said he wanted to know the progress both state-owned and private printing houses have achieved so far.

Next, Director-General U Aung Myo Myint and Deputy Director-General U Ko Ko Naing of the PPD explained the progress made so far in printing the school textbooks for 2019-2020 Academi Year. Officials from the private printing houses also explained the progress they have made so far and the other attendees then discussed other general matters.

The Deputy Minister then instructed everyone to be vigi-

lant of the natural disaster and fire hazards concerning printing houses, ensure textbook quality improves, and to complete printing and publishing them before the designated deadline.

Afterwards, the Deputy Minister and entourage inspected Royal printing house, Hnit Thit Oo printing house, and Soe printing house in Dagon Myothit (East)'s industrial zone, 7 Day printing house in Dagon Myothit (South), MPPA Binding, Star Empire printing house, and Intelligent Print Solutions Co. Ltd, and the paper and district book logistics warehouse in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan). —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun inspects the school tax books for the 2019-2020 Academic Year at a private printing service in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Myanmar Academy Award winners praised with gifts in dinner reception

WINNERS of the 2018 Myanmar Academy Awards were honoured with a dinner reception at Inya Lake Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun, MoI officials, the Patron of Myanmar Motion Picture Organisation and its executive members, members of the awards selection and evaluation panel, the winners of the 2018 Myanmar Academy Awards, affiliated organizations that helped bring about the academy awards event, and invited guests at-

tended the reception.

The Deputy Minister first delivered a speech, MMPO Chairperson U Zin Wyne spoke words of gratitude, and Chairperson and Patron U Kyi Soe Tun of the award evaluation panel greeted the new generation of academy award winners.

MMPO officials then handed over honorary certificates to the supporting affiliated organizations.

Next, the award winners were each gifted a gold brooch by Bella Man Care Be the power, K1 million by U Sai Myo Win,

Chairman of Excellent Fortune Development Group Co. Ltd, a gold pendant (approx. 0.576 oz) by Dr. Aung Kyaw Win, Chairman of Shwe Nan Taw Gems and Jewellery, K500,000 by U Zaw Min (Mingalar), Chairman of Mingalar Cinemas, K300,000 by JCGV Cinemas, and K300,000 from Mega Ace Cineplex.

Afterwards, Academy Kyaw Kyaw Bo spoke words of gratitude on behalf of the 2018 Myanmar Academy Award winners. —Min Thit

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun delivers the speech at the dinner reception for the winners of the 2018 Myanmar Academy Award in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**



Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho presents the National MSMEs award to the first place winner. **PHOTO: MNA**

MSMEs receive awards on last day of national trade fair, contest

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Myanmar Economic Bank has offered loans at lower rates to acknowledge the 14 winners of the National MSMEs Contest. The three-day-event 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. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Myanmar's first premium cinema opens in Yangon

THE first Premium Cinema in Myanmar was opened by JCGV at Level-1 of Junction Square Shopping Centre in Yangon yesterday. The Premium Cinema



Officials open the first premium cinema of Myanmar at Level-1 of Junction Square shopping center in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

promises high-definition video and audio experiences that meet international standard. The cinema will play domestic and foreign films, four times a day, from 10am to 6:30pm and will play one extra time slot on Fridays and weekends.

The cinema boasts 32 motorized recliner luxury leather seats and have call buttons installed for special services.

"JCGV continuously upgrades its facilities and services, including ticket purchase experiences, for its customers," said JCGV CEO Daw Mi Mi Khine.

She said a New Concept Cinema will also be opened at Junction City within this year, in addition to two new cinemas in both Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw.

Director-General U Ye Nang of the Information and Public Relations Department delivered the opening speech and Daw Mi Mi Khine explained the reasons for opening the Premium Cinema.

Next, the IPRD Director-General, JCGV CEO, CFO Ryu Seong Soo, and officials cut ribbons to formally open the cinema, took a documentary photograph together, and experienced a sample screening in the cinema first-hand.

The Ministry of Information is planning to help open more cinemas in other states and regions. Myanmar currently has 126 cinemas nationwide. —Min Thit

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

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Mandalay Region observes World Tuberculosis Day

MANDALAY Region commemorated the World Tuberculosis Day - 2019 yesterday with an event at the Kanaung Hall in Pyigyitagun Township of Mandalay Region. The motto of the event was 'Let's join hands to eliminate TB'.

Dr. Zaw Myint Maung, the Chief Minister of Mandalay Region, Dr. Than Than Myint, the head of Mandalay Region's Public Health Department, and regional Hluttaw representative

U Zaw Maung Maung opened the event by cutting ribbons. Then, Dr. Zaw Myint Maung made the opening remarks. Thereafter, Dr. Than Than Myint read a message from the Union Minister for Health and Sports. Later, the officials took a look at displays at the event.

According to the World Health Organization, there are 10.4 million new TB cases and 1.8 million deaths caused by the

disease every year. Myanmar is among the 30 countries which have a high incidence of tuberculosis, TB/HIV coinfection, and multi-drug resistance TB.

"It is the duty of every individual to eliminate TB. The disease can be eradicated if the public participate in anti-TB efforts and the response to such efforts is good," said. The World Tuberculosis Day was observed across the globe on March 24,

with the aim of raising awareness about the distressing health and economic consequences of tuberculosis, and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic. The Global TB Strategy has an ambitious target of eradicating TB across the globe by reducing TB deaths by 95 per cent and new cases by 90 per cent between 2015 and 2035, according to the WHO. — IPRD (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Viewpoint in Kawthoung draws visitors



The viewpoint in Kawthoung attracts many local people and tourists to enjoy the scenic view of neighboring Thailand across the Pak Chan River. **PHOTO : KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)**

LOCAL visitors and tourists are thronging to the viewpoint in Kawthoung Town, which offers a scenic view of neighboring Thailand across the Pak Chan River.

The viewpoint is becoming a popular spot among tourists

for clicking photographs. It is usually crowded with picnic goers and fitness enthusiasts.

The viewpoint was built under the supervision of the Township Development Affairs Committee.

The point has beautiful dec-

orations along with Kawthoung art boards. Some revenue from the Thailand-Myanmar border pass fee collected in the 2017-2018 financial year was used in the upkeep of flowering plants at the viewpoint.

Local residents also con-

tributed in the beautification effort. The viewpoint is popular among holidaymakers and locals as a place to relax. People can also be seen exercising here in the mornings and evenings.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung) (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Two sections on Mandalay-Myitkyina railroad to be upgraded

TWO 33-mile tracks on the Mandalay-Myitkyina railroad, which have received complaints of being rickety, will be revamped with a US\$100-million loan from South Korea, according to the Myanma Railways (MR).

The two sections that will be upgraded are Goetaung-Maezar and Mawhan-Kadu. Rail accidents have often been reported from the two sections, which have been identified as the worst on the route. A feasibility study for upgrading the

railroads has been submitted, and an inspection will take place soon, according to the MR.

"The two rail sections have been worrisome for passengers. As they are located uphill, trains on the sections are usually delayed. Negotiations have been conducted to revamp the rail sections with the loan from South Korea.

The upgrade's feasibility has been analysed, and MR will reveal further details in the coming months," said U Maung

Maung Thwin, General Manager, MR.

The MR has been upgrading sections of the Yangon-Mandalay, Mandalay-Myitkyina, Yangon-Bago-Mawlamyine railways, with funds from the government and international loans. The Mandalay-Myitkyina railroad will be revamped with government funds, while the Goetaung-Maezar and Mawhan-Kadu tracks will be upgraded with the loan from South Korea.

"The upgrade of the Man-

dalay-Myitkyina railroad is slated to be complete in the 2021-2022 fiscal year," said U Maung Maung Thwin.

At present, the 30-mile Shwebo-Ywarhtaung and the 48-mile Maezar-Nantsiaung rail sections are being upgraded with government funds. Depending on the budget allocation, upgrade work will continue on the Mandalay-Myitkyina railway, according to the MR.—Ko Min (Indaw) (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Domestic investments worth over K795 bln pull into the country in current FY

Between 1 October, 2018 and 15 March, 2019 of current fiscal year, domestic investments made by Myanmar citizens has reached K795.68 billion and US\$275.69 million including expansion of capital by existing enterprises, according to Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC)'s recent press release.

There are 76 local enterprises permitted to invest in various sector during five-and-half-month period, with estimated

capital of over K589.27 billion and \$216.54 million.

In the past five and half months, investments flow into real estate, manufacturing, hotels and tourism, construction, industrial estate energy, mining, livestock and fisheries, agriculture and other service sectors, according to figures of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

At the recent meeting of MIC, seven domestic enterprises

with estimated capitals of K13.9 billion and US\$4.45 million were got endorsements and permits by MIC and Yangon, Magway and Kachin investment committees. They will be executing manufacturing, livestock and fisheries, minerals and other service sectors, creating over 600 jobs.

According to the Myanmar Investment Law, the Regions and States Investment Committees are allowed to grant permis-

sions to local and foreign proposals, where the initial investment does not exceed K6 billion, or \$5 million with an aim to facilitate the verification process of investment projects.

Some projects are no longer need Myanmar Investment Commission approval while some businesses that are strategic to the government require MIC permit. Also, those businesses that have large capital investments exceeding \$5 mil-

lion and possible impact on the environment and local community need to pass DICA proposal assessment team.

Having introduced a fast-track way to set up a business in Myanmar, investors can apply to the MIC or the State and Regional investment committee for an Endorsement of an investment proposal depending on business types. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Prices of red pigeon peas increase in export market

Price of red pigeon pea has increased in export market this week, according to wholesalers in Yangon.

There was a slight increase in the price of red pigeon pea last week. In Yangon market, red pigeon pea (RC 2017) is mainly exported to the foreign market. An increase in red pigeon pea price is linked to a decline in export volume. It gets a higher price in export market.

Reducing red pigeon pea growing areas result in the low arrival of stocks at the market and an increase in price. The price of a ton of pigeon pea has hit K750,000 this week, up over K35,000 per ton than that of last

week. When compared with last week, a basket of red pigeon peas is sold for K27,000 in Monywa market, up by K1,000 per basket while a basket of pigeon peas is worth at K27,300, up by 1,200 per basket in Pakokku market. In Pyay market, the current prices of the crop is K26,500, up by K500 per basket, against last week.

The export of pigeon peas still relies mainly on the Indian market because of low domestic consumption. The country also exports pigeon peas to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and United Arab Emirates by shipping.—Myanmar Digital News

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)



Myanmar pulses are kept on display for sale in a wholesale market in Yangon. PHOTO MIN HTET AUNG

Public sector exports of manufactured goods decline by over \$50 mln

Public sector exports of manufactured goods in the current fiscal year 2018-2019 stood at US\$1.528 billion, a decline in value by \$51.9 million from the corresponding period last year when the sector earned \$1.580 billion, the Ministry of Commerce reported.

Between October and mid-March, Myanmar earned \$4.16 billion from the export of manufactured goods, with the private sector raking in \$2.632 billion. While there was a decline in the value of public sector exports of manufactured goods, private sector exports rose over \$1.184 billion compared with the same period last year.

In the current fiscal year, the public sector also exported animal products worth \$0.238

million, minerals worth \$32.016 million, forest products worth \$4.319 million, and other miscellaneous products worth \$189.9 million.

According to the ministry's annual data, the country exported manufactured goods worth \$4.632 billion during the 2018 mini-budget period between April and September.

Myanmar's export of manufactured goods was pegged at \$6.946 billion in the 2017-2018 FY, \$5.477 billion in the 2016-2017 FY, \$5.733 billion in the 2015-2016 FY, \$6.524 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, \$4.637 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, \$4.492 billion in the 2012-2013 FY, and \$4.083 billion in the 2011-2012 FY. —Swe Nyein

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Myanmar's import value continues to fall in current fiscal year

The value of imports between 1 October, 2018 and 15 March, 2019 during the current fiscal year stood at US\$8.14 billion, which declined by \$511 million from the corresponding period in the last FY, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Over the past five and half months, import values in the private sector were \$502 million less than in the last FY, while the public sector witnessed a small increase.

Capital goods, such as auto parts, vehicles, machines, steel and airplane parts are import-

ed into the country, with estimated import values of \$2.6 billion. This figure was down by \$332.9 million compared to the same period in the last FY.

During that period, Myanmar imported \$1.52 billion worth of consumer products, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and palm oil. Both the private and the public sectors saw a decrease of \$108.4 million in import values of consumer products, compared with the corresponding period last year.

Intermediate goods make up most of the imports, with petroleum products and plastic

raw materials being the main import items. The import of raw materials was valued at \$3 billion, which is down by \$203.8 million from the same period in the last FY.

The value of imports of consumer, capital and intermediate goods fell slightly in the current fiscal year, against the last FY.

During the same period, \$1 billion in raw materials for the Cut-Make-Pack (CMP) garment sector were also imported. — Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Disease fears mount for Africa cyclone survivors

BEIRA, (Mozambique) — Disease is threatening to aggravate the already dire conditions facing millions of survivors following the powerful tropical cyclone which ravaged southern Africa 10 days ago, officials warned on Sunday.

Cyclone Idai smashed into Mozambique's coast unleashing hurricane-force wind and rain that flooded swathes of the poor country before battering eastern Zimbabwe — killing 705 people across the two nations.

"It is inevitable that cases of cholera and malaria will arise. In many areas we are already fighting with malaria cases," said Lands Minister Celso Correia at a briefing in Beira, 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) northeast of the capital Maputo.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' deputy head Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, also at the briefing, warned that disease outbreaks in inaccessible areas could be "really problematic".

The World Food Programme said Friday that the humanitarian disaster unfolding in Mozambique was on a par with the situation in Yemen and Syria which are both in the grip of civil wars.

Aid workers from across the world are continuing to arrive in the region to bring help to hundreds of thousands of affected people across an area of roughly 3,000 square kilometres (around 1,160 square miles).

'We suffered a lot'

Survivors are struggling in



People gather to receive food given to the displaced people in a hall where they are living at the Samora Machel High School in Beira, Mozambique, on 23 March, 2019. The Samora Machel High School is one of the places used as a living space for people from Buzi, Mozambique that has been displaced by the floods caused by Cyclone Idai. Cyclone Idai has affected many people living in the Beira and surrounding areas of Mozambique. Thousands of people have been displaced. **PHOTO: AFP**

desperate conditions with some still trapped on rooftops and those rescued in urgent need of food and medical supplies.

"The government is already setting up a cholera treatment centre to mitigate cholera. We should not be frightened when cholera issues arise," added Correia, describing efforts to control the emerging humanitarian crisis.

"It is normal. It's almost inevitable. Malaria, we know how it arises. We have lots of wetlands and we're going to have malaria

that is sure to come up (there)."

Wilfried Delivai, a 19-year-old resident of Beira which was caught in the eye of the storm, said he felt "sorry for our town, our city, because we suffered a lot to build it".

"Houses are completely destroyed, and some people don't have money to rebuild their businesses — and many businesses are going to fail," he told AFP.

'People don't know what to do'

More than two million people have been affected in Mozam-

bique, Zimbabwe and Malawi where the storm started as a tropical depression causing flooding which killed 60 and displaced nearly a million people. Hundreds are still missing in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

In its daily update, OCHA said 74,600 women impacted by the cyclone are pregnant and around 60 percent of them are due to give birth within the next six months. At least 7,460 of them are at risk of life threatening complications.

The International Commit-

tee of the Red Cross said it had recorded some cases of cholera so far but the UN was unable to confirm the reports.

Stampa described efforts to re-open the main access road to Beira as a "big victory".

"We will be able to bring more help to families living in this affected area," he said.

Those living in affected areas of Mozambique began to trickle back to church over the weekend.

The Ponta Gea Catholic Cathedral in Beira was miraculously undamaged by the storm while the church next door was levelled.

"The people don't know what to do because they lost their houses, they have no food, they don't know where to sleep — this brings sadness and anxiety," said Father Pedro, who conducted a mass in darkness late on Saturday.

Much of the area hit by the cyclone remains disconnected from electricity supplies, complicating rescue efforts at night-fall.

As many as 109,000 people are living in shelters across central Mozambique, many of them located in and around Beira.

Those shelters also "run the risk of infectious disease such as diarrhoeal disease and measles", James McQuen Patterson, UNICEF's health and nutrition chief told AFP.

"Further, as many families have lost everything, some sleeping in the open, the risk of pneumonia, particularly among children increases considerably," he said.—AFP ■

Companies still reluctant to relocate from Tokyo despite tax breaks



Photo taken on 17 October, 2018, from a Kyodo News helicopter, shows the Tokyo metropolitan government building.

PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TOKYO — The Japanese government's five-year program to promote the relocation of company headquarters from central Tokyo to regional areas has made limited progress, a Kyodo News survey found Sunday.

In a survey of 1,768 municipalities conducted since November, 76 percent said they had seen little or no benefit such as increased jobs.

Under its five-year program from April 2015, the government provides tax advantages when companies based in Tokyo's 23 wards transfer their headquarters to areas other than Tokyo and three neighboring prefectures, or if those based outside Tokyo expand their head offices or move to other regions.

The government has been promoting corporate office relocations to increase local jobs and revitalize regional economies, but businesses prefer to keep their offices in Tokyo where their clients are also concentrated.

The number of cases in which tax breaks were given under the program stood at 287 as of February, far short of the government's target of 7,500 by March 2020. Only 9 percent of the municipalities said they had benefited from the central government program, according to the survey. Companies tended to set up new offices in major cities rather than in smaller cities or rural areas, it showed.—Kyodo News ■

Chinese diplomat calls for Chicago's Chinese community to promote co-op between US Midwest, China

CHICAGO — Chinese Consul-General in Chicago Zhao Jian called for the local Chinese community to make greater contribution to the cooperation and exchanges between China and the US Midwestern states.

Zhao made the remarks at a reception held by the Chinese American Association of Greater Chicago (CAAGC) on Saturday.

"I can deeply feel the strong will from the American Midwest in conducting an all-around cooperation with China, and I have also witnessed the diligent efforts made by the local Chinese community to enhance economic, financial and cultural exchanges between the two countries," said Zhao.

The past four decades of Chi-

na-U.S. relations have proven that cooperation is the best choice for the two countries, noted Zhao.

"We are looking forward to seeing the Chinese community continue to carry forward the traditional Chinese culture, support the modernization drive of motherland and commit to the people-to-people exchanges between the two countries," added Zhao. Zheng Zheng, Chairwoman of the Chinese American Association of Greater Chicago (CAAGC), said that as sound development of China-U.S. ties is the common aspiration of overseas Chinese, the CAAGC will work together with the Chinese Consulate General in Chicago to facilitate bilateral exchanges in various fields. —Xinhua ■

Sri Lanka opens work on \$3.85 bln refinery near strategic port

HAMBANTOTA (Sri Lanka) — Sri Lanka began construction Sunday of a nearly \$4 billion oil refinery it hopes will revive foreign interest in its shipping facilities after Beijing's takeover of a nearby port spooked international investors.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said Hambantota, a district in Sri Lanka's south which lies on one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, would become a global investment hub with the addition of the oil refinery and storage complex.

The \$3.85 billion project is the single largest foreign investment in Sri Lanka's history. It is jointly funded by Oman and Singapore-registered Silver Park International, a company owned by an Indian business family.

The oil facility is near the port of Hambantota, which was controversially leased to a Chinese state-owned firm in 2017 for 99 years after Sri Lanka failed to service a loan from Beijing.

The circumstances surrounding China's acquisition of the port generated concern in neighbouring India and beyond over Beijing's expanding presence in the Indian Ocean.

But the government pointed to this new line of cash pouring into the region as proof foreign investors were not deterred by that experience.

"The interest shown by the Oman government, the interest shown by many other investors



File photo shows workers stand in front of a new oil storage tank in Sri Lanka. **PHOTO: AFP**

from other parts of the world shows that Hambantota will become a truly international investment zone," Wickremesinghe said Sunday.

Wickremesinghe also said he hoped to strike a deal within three months with Indian airport authorities to revive a \$210 million airport in Hambantota dubbed the "world's emptiest" international terminal for its lack of flights.

The oil storage tanks are expected to be completed within two years while the refinery is due to be up and running by 2023.

Once fully operational the refinery — the second in Sri Lanka — is to export nine million tonnes of petroleum products annually.

The Indian Ocean island nation does not have oil of its own.

It refines imported crude, but the existing refinery is unable to meet demand.

The Hambantota port was built by former president Mahinda Rajapakse, but like many of his ambitious infrastructure projects it ended up a white elephant.

Unable to service the loan, the Wickremesinghe government in 2017 leased the Chinese-built port to a Beijing company for \$1.12 billion.

This stoked controversy, with Beijing rejecting suggestions it ensnared Sri Lanka in a "debt trap" to acquire the port.

Several major foreign-backed projects were put on hold last year amid a constitutional crisis after President Maithripala Sirisena's aborted bid to remove Wickremesinghe. —AFP ■

Malaysia threatens EU fighter jet boycott over palm oil

KUALA LUMPUR (Malaysia) — Malaysia may retaliate against an EU plan to curb palm oil use by purchasing new fighter jets from China instead of European arms companies, its leader said Sunday.

The Southeast Asian country is the world's second largest palm oil producer after neighbouring Indonesia, and recently threatened to challenge the bloc's plan to phase out its use in biofuels at the World Trade Organization.

Both Malaysia and Indonesia have been at loggerheads with EU lawmakers over the crop's cultivation, which has caused rampant deforestation and destruction of wildlife.

In his strongest statement yet on the proposed curbs, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said his country could look elsewhere to upgrade its ageing air force fleet of Russian Mig-29 fighters — in effect abandoning plans to purchase France's Rafale jet or the Eurofighter Typhoon.

"If they keep on taking ac-

tion against us, we will think of buying airplanes from China or any other country," he was quoted as saying by the official Bernama news agency.

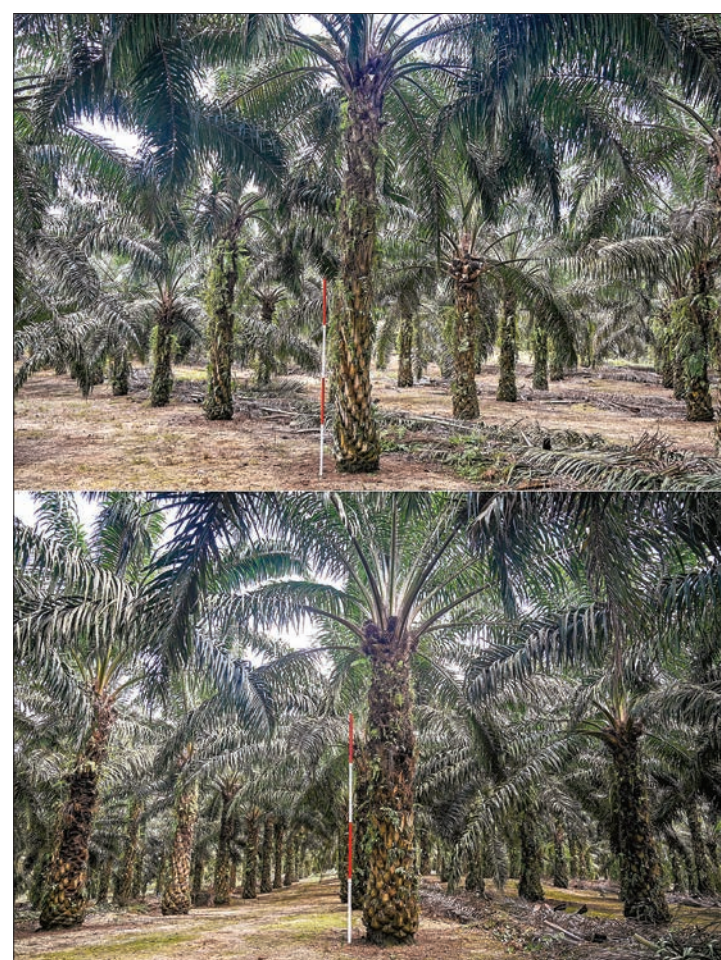
But the premier said he was not "declaring war" on the EU as his country needed goods from the bloc, many members of which are among Malaysia's top trading partners.

Mahathir's remarks come ahead of a five-day international defence exhibition starting Monday on the resort island of Langkawi, where representatives of global weapons manufacturers have gathered.

Any EU palm oil curbs could seriously hurt farmers who represent an important voter base in both Malaysia and Indonesia.

Both countries are struggling to spur demand in palm oil, which is used in everything from soap to chocolate.

French lawmakers recently voted to remove palm oil from the country's biofuel scheme starting from next year. —AFP ■



This combination picture created on 20 February 2019 show conventional plam oil trees in Malaysia. **PHOTO: AFP**

Global construction chemicals, advanced materials market to expand: Deloitte

NEW YORK — Global market size of construction chemicals and advanced materials (CAMs) would increase to 87 billion U.S. dollars by 2023, up from 57 billion dollars in 2016 thanks to higher demand from smart cities and green buildings, according to a report recently issued by international consulting firm Deloitte.

The growth translates into a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of more than 6 percent. The highest contribution to the incremental growth from 2016 to 2023 will likely come from the Asia and Pacific region, spe-

cifically China, India, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia, said the report.

Innovative CAMs, such as pollution-absorbing bricks, light-generating cement, photovoltaic paints and self-healing concrete, are changing not only the way buildings are constructed and retrofitted, but are also expected to help address new challenges of durability in a changing climate.

Construction CAMs have a significant growth opportunity in the coming years, especially as demand from smart cities and green building construc-

tion continues to rise, said the report.

Still, construction CAMs now account for only a tiny fraction of the overall construction industry, added the report.

Construction CAMs companies are advised to acquire industry players to fill service gap, collaborate with their customers with an eye on sustainability and circular economy, enhance product portfolios via innovation and restructuring as well as adopt digital technologies to deal with shortage of skilled labor. —Xinhua ■

Recording our intangible cultural heritage with Govt's support

INTANGIBLE cultural heritage (ICH) comprises all non-material manifestations of culture and represents the range of 'living heritage' of humanity. It is the most important indicator of cultural diversity.

Myanmar is rich when it comes to both tangible as well as intangible cultural heritage. The art and architecture created by people throughout the country's history have remained a part of our cultural heritage. Similarly, many religious beliefs, traditions, and

festivals of ethnic nationals across Myanmar have been passed down as intangible cultural heritage.

Our tangible and intangible heritage have been a matter of pride and honor for the country and the people. Beikthano, Hanlin, and Sri Khsetra, the three ancient Pyu cities, were named world heritage sites on 22 June, 2014.

The Constitution clearly states that it is the duty and responsibility of all Myanmar nationals to preserve and maintain Myanmar's cultural heritage.

Such heritage is fragile and needs protection.

Efforts for the preservation, protection, and maintenance of our cultural heritage have been conducted and led by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.

Laws have been enacted to protect and preserve ancient artifacts and buildings, and a new law on protection and preservation of tangible and intangible culture was

enacted this year on 28 February.

The new law has been drafted to not only protect and preserve cultural heritage sites, but also create livelihood opportunities for people in the region.

The ministry has been looking into and recording the legends, languages, performing arts, social customs, traditions, knowledge of nature and the universe, and traditional handicrafts of all regions, and it has rediscovered and worked to preserve 312 categories within a two-year period.

The ministry has been collecting information about the country's ancient heritage. It has been rewarding people presenting ancient items or helping identify ancient sites.

Meanwhile, it is important that we coordinate and work together in local groups to methodically record all ICHs across the states and regions, making the best use of technical support provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.

We need to take part in the work of uncovering and preserving our intangible cultural heritage, which involves sharing information and meeting twice a year.

Collecting and maintaining a complete record of ICHs within our boundaries will ease and hasten the implementation of the work to preserve and develop Myanmar's intangible cultural heritage.



Yangon-Mandalay highway paved with concrete to reduce dangers to vehicles

By Khayan Soe Myint

YANGON-MANDALAY highway is 336 miles and 3 furlongs from Yangon to No.3 Intersection to Mandalay Saga-Inn Circle with 30 feet wide traffic islands; the highway has 25-wide roads on either side with two lanes.

The Characteristics of Highways

Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw section was opened to the public on March 5, 2009 and Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay was again opened on 29 October, 2010 and 23 March, 2011 respectively, letting the travelers go directly with a hitch. Yangon-Mandalay highway was called a fast road and the drivers have to act according to the speed limits recommended by road engineers and authorities concerned. To meet the characteristics of the fast road, vehicles are allowed to go in accordance with speed limits without interference with passers-by, animals, motorcycles and other vehicles.

Warning signboards

All kinds of vehicles should drive 60 miles per hour, not more than that speed. That is why warning signposts which indicate 80-100 kilometers per hour should be installed on both sides of the roads. The signposts indicating "those who drive over limits may face death" should also be estab-

lished in suitable places. Signposts "reduce speed because of detours in front" should be installed; arrows showing cross-roads and junctions must be put on the way to these locations.

Five basic reasons of traffic accidents

Fatalities resulting from the accidents on Yangon-Mandalay are being sadly heard. There are five basic reasons why vehicular accidents happened. Among them, only one reason may lead to fatalities.

1. Good steering systems
2. Failures in relation to braking systems
3. Wheels and tires are not in a proper condition
4. Drunk driving and
5. Falling asleep during driving and driving over speed limits

Cement roads

In addition, it is due to cement roads, some people say. In connection with that problem, news articles were written in the Mirror and Myanma Alinn Dailies by the title of "Human, Vehicles or Roads". But up until now, vehicular accidents and those of overturned cars keep on going, killing a lot of passengers including monks.

Maintenance of Yangon-Mandalay Highway

The task has been carried out in two parts: Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw section of 133 miles and



Yangon-Mandalay Highway Supervision Director U Toe Toe.

two furlongs are covered with asphalt concrete with a change of raised median to depressed median. Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay section has been paved with asphalt concrete for 43 miles and 6 furlongs, fixing of 27798 reflector bulbs and guard rails are installed with 69 miles and 4 furlongs and 1459 warning signposts were installed along the road.

In addition, financial year of 2018-2019 K. 52.6 million from Union Central Fund were used for Yangon Region Section; K.346.848 million for maintenance of Bago Region Section; K.103.01 million were allocated for the maintenance of Nay Pyi Taw section; K.332.1 million for

maintenance cost for Mandalay Section, totaling maintenance cost of K. 538.558 million during the financial year of 2018-2019. From the Union Central Fund of K.5649.154 million for Water-gates, road shoulders, drainage systems, payments of asphalt concrete and maintenance of traffic islands were allocated. After getting information and data, I continued to ask Director U Toe Toe of Supervisory Committee for maintenance of the Highway, he explained to me that in order to become an international Expressway it must be fully access-controlled.

Fully access control means: 1) Fast (No Traffic lights, Junctions, Houses and Shops ex-

- isted)
2) Comfortable (Payments must be flexible) , (Signposts should be fully installed), (Coach Stations, toilets and street lamps must be fully provided)
3) Safety

Inner shoulders and outer shoulders and guard rails must be included in order to prevent passers-by, cows and other animals from crossing over, as well as for motorcycles, slow-moving vehicles and trolleys are not allowed.

The standard of the Highway has not come up to those of International Expressway, at least not compatible with above-mentioned three facts. Originally intended to serve as an Expressway, the public are allowed to use half-completed highway, thus not reaching up to the standard of an international Expressway. To upgrade a modernized 4-lane expressway, safety equipment is being installed, U Toe Toe continued.

Former Yangon-Mandalay highway has a solid 6-inch base layer and 12-inch base layer completed. 177-mile long road was paved with asphalt concrete to serve as a riding quality.

Traffic Islands

Concerning the upgrading of the traffic islands, present installations of raised median are suitable for city streets, a highway of 45 miles per hour, raised six-lane roads, according to the international standard (AASH-TO). Depressed median of traffic islands should be used for the present four-lane expressway. As the traffic islands have the raised median, it is difficult for ambulances to move about and continuous streaming during the rainy season.

Upon inspecting vehicular accidents on the Highway, they usually happen due to exceeding the speed limits, punctured tyres and falling asleep while driving among others. It is also due to traffic islands, by overtaking moving cars and hitting road curbs in the traffic islands. Now the structure or traffic islands has changed from the present design of raised median

to that of depressed median, he explained.

Drivers should pay heed to the facts

Upon enquiring to avoid traffic accidents on the highway, drivers should pay heed to the facts. The director U Toe Toe explained that the drivers using the highway should abide by the prescribed rules and regulations such as cars of one's own driving 100 kilometers per hour, trucks at 60 km and passenger buses at not more than 90km per hour. Bus stations and toilets must be provided for drivers to take a rest every hour at Bawnatgyi Station, Minirest Camp, Pyu Station, Nay Pyi Taw Station, Thegon Station and Saga-inn Station. Most drivers do not know the speed of the cars they drive per second. For example, if a driver going at 100kilometers per hour should know at a speed of 90 feet per second; 110 kilometers at the speed of 100 feet; 120 km at the speed of 110 feet per second; 130 kilometers at the speed of 120 feet per second; 140 kilometers at the speed of 126 feet per second; 150 kilometers at the speed of 135 feet per second; 160 km at the speed of 144 feet per second, U Toe Toe continued.

Ten facts are described to reduce the speed limits :

- 1) Reduce the speed while avoiding the moving cars
- 2) Reduce the speed before getting to a bend
- 3) Reduce the speed while a man crossing the road
- 4) Reduce the speed when seeing a child
- 5) Reduce the speed when seeing animals
- 6) Reduce the speed away from a distance while seeing a small animal
- 7) Reduce the speed when blurring
- 8) Reduce the speed when snows fall
- 9) Reduce the speed when it rains
- 10) Reduce the speed when crossing the pools.

Translated by Arakan Sein



Objectives for the 74th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day of 2019

1. Give priority to implementing the Three Main Causes being national policy, protecting the constitution and protecting the lives and property of the people.
2. Strive continuously for stability, peace, unity, and socio-economic development, which are the historic needs of the State, as the firm position of the Tatmadaw.
3. In working for establishing a Union based on a democratic federal system, the Tatmadaw to work with firm resolve for achieving eternal peace which is an essential requirement, according to the Six Principles of Peace which is based on the Three Main Causes.
4. To build a highly skilled and powerful Tatmadaw capable of effectively protecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the State.

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Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 24th March, 2019)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 25th March, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Northern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight increase of day temperatures in Bago and Yangon Regions.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25th March, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25th March, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25th March, 2019: Generally fair weather.

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US on edge for Russia probe findings on Trump



This combination of file pictures shows (l-r) US President Donald Trump, US Attorney General William Barr and Special Counsel Robert Mueller. **PHOTO: AFP**

WASHINGTON (United States)—The US public and Washington's deeply divided political class on Sunday faced another day of anxiously waiting to learn if the key findings of the Russian meddling probe will implicate President Donald Trump in serious wrongdoing. Special Counsel Robert Mueller submitted the confidential final report on his 22-month investigation Friday and Attorney General Bill Barr has been studying the document, which he must summarize for Congress.

The Justice Department had told legislators that Barr would not be sending an outline of its "principal conclusions"—expected over the weekend—on Saturday, according to US media.

That left the American public still in the dark over what the Mueller investigation uncovered about the president's ties to Russia and alleged acts of obstruction of justice.

Chronic tweeter Trump, who was spending the weekend at his Palm Beach, Florida Mar-a-Lago residence, remained uncommonly silent after spending two years repeatedly labeling Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation an illegal witch hunt.

After the president spent the morning golfing, White House spokesman Hogan Gidley confirmed that they still had not seen

the report or been briefed on its findings. Asked how the president felt, Gidley replied: "He's good."

Meanwhile, Democrats in Congress, many of whom are hoping for evidence to support a presidential impeachment, pressed hard to ensure the report's full contents are made public, and not just a summary prepared by the Trump-appointed Barr.

Neal Katyal, the former Justice Department official who drafted the rules for special counsels, said Barr had no excuse for keeping Mueller's report secret.

No new indictments

"Absolutely nothing in the law or the regulations prevents the report from becoming public," Katyal said in a Washington Post opinion piece.

The secret report was handed to Barr on Friday with the announcement that no new indictments were forthcoming.

That produced sighs of relief from the White House, where members of Trump's family—Don Jr. and son-in-law Jared Kushner in particular—had been feared possible targets of the probe.

For Trump himself, Mueller was prevented by longstanding Justice Department policy from indicting the president.

But his report could still outline criminal behavior by Trump

that could be the basis for an impeachment effort.

Mueller, a 74-year-old veteran criminal prosecutor and former FBI chief, investigated whether members of Trump's campaign colluded with Russians to skew the 2016 election.

In addition, he studied whether actions by Trump, including the May 2017 firing of FBI director James Comey, amounted to criminal obstruction of justice.

At the end of the probe, he was required to produce to Barr a confidential report that explained why he decided to indict or not indict subjects of the probe.

Barr must summarize the report for Congress.

He said in a letter to congressional leaders Friday that he is "committed to as much transparency as possible."

However, the special counsel regulations "give Barr lots of discretion about what to disclose," said Andrew Coan, a University of Arizona law professor. "The selective release of exculpatory material is a possibility worth watching for," Coan warned.

34 already charged

Analysts cautioned about reaching any conclusions, saying nothing is yet known about the form or length of the report.

"The president should wait

before popping the champagne corks over this and tweeting in triumph," Benjamin Wittes, a prominent Washington legal analyst, wrote on the Lawfare website.

Mueller indicted 34 individuals during the probe, among them six Trump associates, including his former national security advisor Mike Flynn, his former personal lawyer Michael Cohen, and campaign chairman Paul Manafort. Five of the six have pleaded guilty to the charges against them.

Court filings in those cases painted a broad picture of a cohesive Russian effort via hacking and social media manipulation to swing the election in Trump's favor against Democrat Hillary Clinton. The investigation has revealed scores of contacts between the campaign and Russians, with members of the team readily talking to the Russians about obtaining dirt on Clinton.

Hours before Barr's announcement, Trump repeated his accusation that the entire investigation was a hoax and questioned Mueller's credentials for investigating him.

But Mueller, who was director of the FBI for 12 years, has the respect and support of Democrats and Republicans alike as a straight-shooting, disciplined and fair investigator.—AFP ■

Britain's May reportedly on the brink amid Brexit crisis

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Prime Minister Theresa May is making a last-ditch bid this weekend to win support among British MPs for her EU divorce deal ahead of another pivotal week in the Brexit process—but faced reports her leadership is under imminent threat. After securing a short delay to Britain's departure from the European Union beyond March, May appealed directly to lawmakers to contact her "over the coming days as parliament prepares to take a momentous decision". "I hope we can all agree that we are now at the moment of decision," May wrote to MPs on Friday, as she softened her tone after lambasting them earlier this week for their intransigence over her plan.

"You have a difficult job to do and it was not my intention to make it any more difficult. People on all sides of the debate hold passionate views and I respect those differences." Next week could see MPs vote for a third time on her unpopular withdrawal agreement—though May said in her letter this would only happen if there were signs of "sufficient support". The House of Commons has already overwhelmingly rejected the pact twice since it was struck with the EU last year and the Democratic Unionist Party, her parliamentary allies, indicated Friday they remain opposed.

The government is set to publish on Monday its plans for the House of Commons next week. However, following a particularly chaotic week even for May's crisis-hit government, speculation was rife late Saturday that Conservative colleagues were poised to force her to stand down. The Sunday Times reported she was "at the mercy of a full-blown cabinet coup", with plans afoot for her defacto deputy David Lidington to take over in a caretaker capacity. The newspaper said it had spoken to 11 senior ministers who "confirmed that they wanted the prime minister to make way for someone else" and planned to confront her at a cabinet meeting on Monday.

The Mail on Sunday said May could be ousted "within days" and Environment Secretary Michael Gove, a prominent Brexiteer, could take over as interim leader.—AFP ■

What has Guaido achieved as Venezuela's US-backed 'interim leader'?

CARACAS (Venezuela)—Two months have now passed since Juan Guaido asserted himself as Venezuela's interim president. Domestically, he has been unable to shake President Nicolas Maduro from power. But internationally, with US backing, he's making some headway.

Guaido, the 35-year-old head of the opposition-run parliament, is riding on a wave of popular

support as he tours the country on what he calls "Operation Freedom." But there is no sign yet of him making good on his vow to "very soon" march up to the presidential Miraflores Palace in Caracas and take over.

On Saturday, he was set to address a crowd in the northeastern city of Barcelona, after saying a day earlier that "we are calling for the phase of maximum public

pressure" on the regime to go. Maduro, 56, has repeated that he is going nowhere. He retains the loyalty of military chiefs and police with his hands on the levers of power: the state-run oil company PDVSA, the courts, his own parallel legislature and state media. The president's supporters held their own counter-demonstration Saturday in the capital.

On Thursday, his security

forces arrested Guaido's chief of staff, Roberto Marrero, on "terrorism" accusations, triggering an outcry from the European Union, the United States and other Latin American nations.

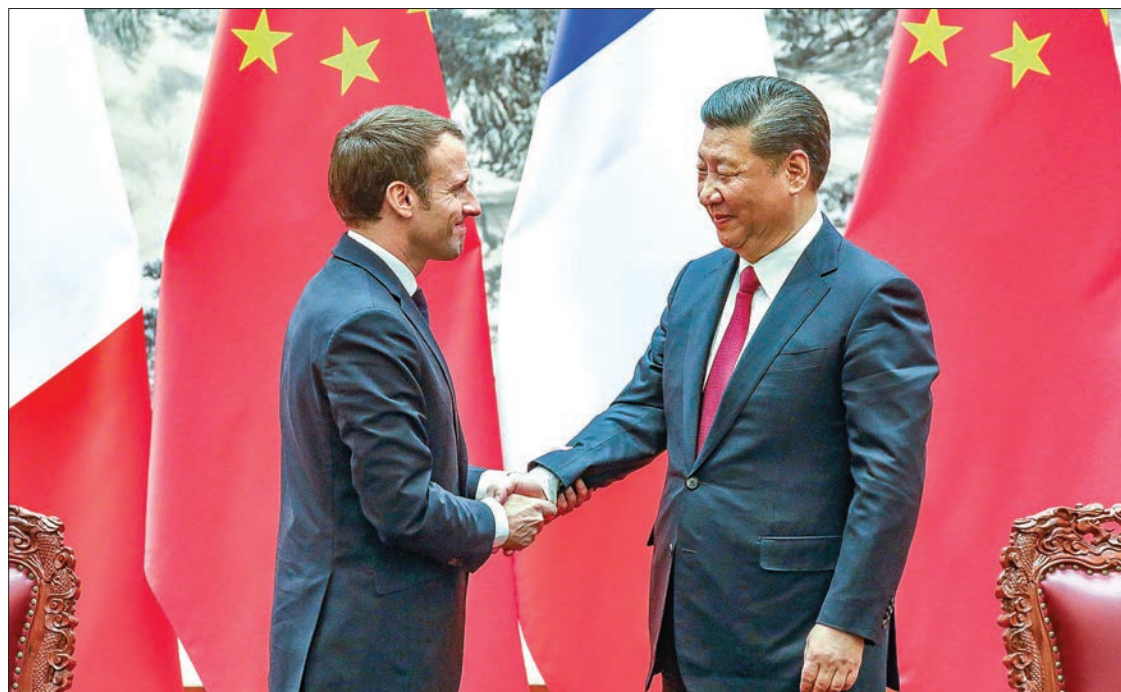
But Maduro has been careful to leave Guaido himself alone, heeding US warnings of "a significant response" were the opposition figurehead to be arrested.—AFP ■

Macron looks to galvanise EU on China as Xi visits France

PARIS (France)—Chinese President Xi Jinping heads to the French Riviera on Sunday for the final leg of his European tour; as France's Emmanuel Macron looks to forge a united European front to contend with China's global ambitions.

Xi's trip will begin in the Mediterranean city of Nice and a stop in the nearby principality of Monaco before face-to-face talks with Macron. On Monday, the two leaders head to Paris for the official state visit, marking 55 years since Charles de Gaulle broke ranks with the West to establish diplomatic relations with the Communist nation. A series of cooperation deals on nuclear power, aerospace and clean energy initiatives, some involving lucrative contracts, are expected to be signed. But Xi's visit poses a particular challenge for Macron, who wants to deepen EU ties with China while also pushing back against Beijing's growing clout.

Europe's distrust of Huawei, which is poised to become the dominant player in next-generation telecom networks worldwide,



French President Emmanuel Macron (l) and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands during a press conference in Beijing on 9 January 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

is emblematic of the increasingly rocky relationship. "We have a lot to do together in terms of climate action, in terms of multilateralism, but we also have to defend our own interests," Macron said in Brussels on Thursday.

He has lauded the EU's "awakening" to the challenges posed by China, which the bloc

now labels a "rival" despite becoming Europe's biggest trading partner. "The reality is that the world has changed significantly—China is not the country it once was, and we are dealing with a very major partner," a Macron aide said ahead of Xi's visit.

On Tuesday, Macron and Xi will be joined by German Chancellor

Angela Merkel and EU Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker to explore "points of convergence" ahead of an EU-China summit in Brussels next month.

Two-way Silk Road?

Xi arrives in France from Italy, which has angered its EU partners by formally joining Chi-

na's "new Silk Road" initiative for a string of maritime, rail and road connections aiming at expanding Chinese trade.

Macron is expected to press his call for increased "reciprocity" regarding market access to China, in particular Beijing's demands that foreign companies hand over vital technological know-how in order to invest in the country. "If we're going to talk about a new Silk Road, then it must be one that goes in both directions," Finance Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian told BFM television on Friday. Telecom giant Huawei is another fraught issue at the centre of a dispute over the rollout of crucial 5G mobile network infrastructure.

The US is pressuring European allies to not use the Huawei technology, saying it creates a security risk by potentially letting Beijing snoop on sensitive communications. Yet so far France has not ruled out using Huawei gear—and Monaco has already signed a deal with the Chinese giant to roll out a 5G network as soon as this year. —AFP ■

One Billion Dollars! Yunnan Investment Group Hit a New Record for Foreign Bond Issuance Scale

Recently, Yunnan Investment Holding Group Co., Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as "Yunnan Investment Group") successfully issued \$600-million foreign bonds and \$400-million domestic non-public directional debt financing instruments on the same day, raising more than \$1 billion in total. It hit a new record for foreign bond issuance scale among companies of Yunnan Province, and the bonds issued have become the investment-grade bonds whose final issuance price has the largest guidance one-off narrowing range compared to the initial price in the Asian market recently.

As reported by relevant responsible person of Yunnan Investment Group, the foreign bond issue was originally scheduled to be \$300 million, with the initial bond interest rate of 6.75%. "On the date of book pricing, issuance of the bond was popular among global investors and attracted subscription by many sovereign funds and large, high-quality international institutions, achieving over \$3.5-billion subscription book peak value and realizing oversubscription of 11.67 times." The responsible person also pointed out that the final price has been greatly narrowed to 6.25% by 50 basis points subject to the strong subscription booking, and the offering limit has been adjusted to \$600 million, which has fully reflected the firm confidence of global investors in the economic development prospect of Yunnan Province, as well as the extensive influence and market recognition of Yunnan Investment Group as a state-owned capital investment and operation group in Yunnan Province.

During preliminary market promotion, a delegation led by leaders of Yunnan Investment Group met dozens of international investment institutions, made a comprehensive introduction to the development strategy of "fusing the financialization and informatization together into the industrial chain" of Yunnan Investment Group, by taking itself as a case delivered positive messages on sound, stable and sustainable development of Yunnan state-owned companies to both the domestic and foreign capital market, and displayed the good



image of Yunnan companies, which has been highly recognized by foreign investors and has laid a solid foundation for final successful pricing and issuance.

According to relevant information, in 2018, Yunnan Investment Group had achieved the total assets of RMB 304.278 billion Yuan, operating revenue of RMB 109.292 billion Yuan and total profit of RMB 1.239 billion Yuan. Yunnan Investment Group had extraordinary performance in various main indicators in 2018, with the total assets, liabilities, net assets, operating revenue and profits increasing by 18.3%, 17.5%, 19.9%, 22.1% and 5.63% respectively, asset-liability ratio decreasing to 67.37% by 0.45%, and the mixed ownership reform rate of its subordinate holding companies increasing to over 70% (seeing an increase by 5%). Stable and sustainable development of various indicators has received more solid support.

Yunnan Investment Group is a comprehensive investment holding company with the largest asset scale currently in Yunnan Province. It has employed totally 18,000 employees. Yunnan Investment Group has been listed in the 185th place during the evaluation of "Top 500 Companies in China 2018". At present, Yunnan Investment Group is engaged in fields in respect of finance, information, big healthcare, energy, railway,

poverty reduction, cultural tourism and modern agriculture and forestry.

As the largest shareholder of Fudian Bank, the second largest shareholder of Hongta Securities and the fourth largest shareholder of BOCI Securities, as well as the vice president company of the National Investment Committee of China Investment Association, president company of Yunnan Investment Association and president company of Yunnan Equity Investment Fund Association, Yunnan Investment Group has received AAA credit rating domestically and BBB+ credit rating internationally – the best credit level among state-owned companies of Yunnan Province.

In the future, Yunnan Investment Group is positioned as a provincial state-owned capital investment and operation companies in Yunnan Province, which integrates and establishes state-owned financial capital management platform and state-owned equity operation platform. Meanwhile, by taking the equity and capital as a bond, it will innovate the capital management and control mode, focus on incubating and cultivating energy investment groups, digital economic industrial groups, big healthcare groups and overseas investment groups related to the "Belt and Road" Initiative, accelerate the marketization, capitalization and international process, and realize high-quality reform and transformation development.

As the largest comprehensive investment companies and industrial investment & financing platform in Yunnan Province, Yunnan Investment Group proactively integrates into the "Belt and Road" Initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping, and actively expands the international opening and cooperation platform of the "Belt and Road" Initiative. Up to now, it has participated in investment and construction of several significant international projects such as Angkor International Airport and Airport Economic Development Zone in Cambodia and Sino-Lao Railway, and actively docking the construction of Muse Special Economic Zone and other projects in Myanmar.

Italy, China sign new 'Silk Road' protocol

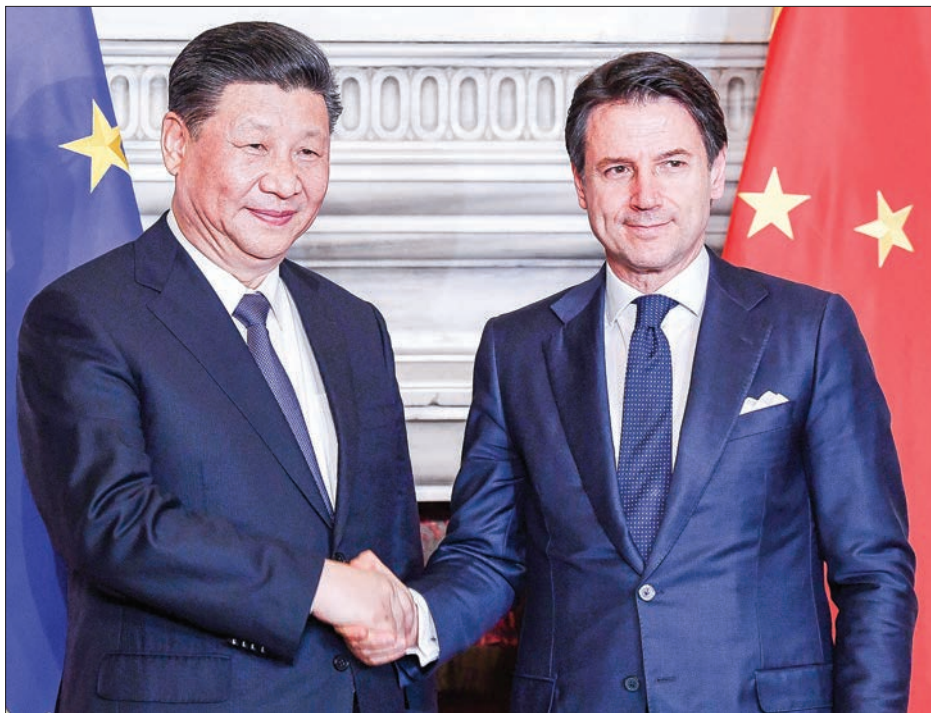
ROME (Italy)—Italy on Saturday signed a “non-binding” protocol with China to take part in Beijing’s new “Silk Road” of transport and trade links stretching from Asia to Europe.

In doing so, Italy became the first G7 country to sign up for the massive project, which has sparked unease in the US and the European Union as China aspires to a greater world role.

Visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping and Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte both attended a ceremony for the signing of 29 memoranda of understanding, which Italian media said were worth 5.0 to 7.0 billion euros (\$5.6 to 8.0 billion).

Also signing the accords were the chairman of China’s chairman National Development Commission He Lifeng, and Italian deputy prime minister Luigi Di Maio, who also holds the economic development portfolio.

After a brief meeting with Conte, Xi and his wife Peng Liyan flew to Palermo, Sicily for a pri-



China's President Xi Jinping and Italy's Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte shake hands during a signing ceremony of partnership agreements following their meeting at Villa Madama in Rome on 23 March 2019 as part of Xi Jinping's two-day visit to Italy. **PHOTO: AFP**

vate visit to the Palazzo dei Normanni.

Italian financial daily *Il Sole 24 Ore* said the value of the Chinese investments could rise to 20 billion euros but would for now be limited to the strategic ports of Genoa and Trieste.

Italy has rolled out the red carpet for Xi, who Friday sought to allay Western unease over his transformational in-

frastructure initiative by stressing the \$1 trillion project's mutual benefits.

Italian firms to benefit include the Ansaldo group, which wins a contract for making turbines, and the Danieli group, which lands a 1.1 billion-euro deal to build an iron and steel plant in Azerbaijan.

The accords also foresee the opening up of the Chinese market for Ital-

ian oranges as well as a partnership for Chinese tourism giant Ctrip, notably with Rome's airports.

Cultural tie-ups including town twinnings are also on the agenda, and Beijing is pushing to have several Serie A football matches played in China—although that would currently contravene regulations of the game's governing body FIFA.—AFP ■

Indonesia's capital inaugurates 1st mass rapid transit system

JAKARTA—Indonesian President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo on Sunday inaugurated the country's first mass rapid transit system, which is expected to considerably ease traffic congestion in the booming capital Jakarta.

“Today, a new civilization was born (in Indonesia) by the operation of Phase 1 of MRT Jakarta,” Jokowi told a crowd near Bundaran Hotel Indonesia MRT Station before declaring the commuter railway officially open. The 15.7-kilometer Phase 1 of the North-South Line is expected to allow city residents to travel faster between South Jakarta and Central Jakarta while easing choked traffic.

More than 10 million people live in Jakarta itself, while the greater metropolitan area is home to three times that number. With an average of nearly 15,500 residents per square kilometer, Jakarta is also one of the region's most crowded cities. Currently, it takes two to three hours by bus in each direction at rush hour to travel that 15.7-km stretch, which the MRT will cut to just 30 minutes, and in air-conditioned cars.

“I'm so happy I could cry,” 53-year-old office worker Faelani told Kyodo News when joining the crowd for the inauguration ceremony. “I never imagined that we would have an MRT until many more years,” he said,

adding that he used to only hear or read about such rail systems in Singapore, Malaysia and Japan. “Finally, we have one.”

At the opening ceremony, Japanese Ambassador to Indonesia Masafumi Ishii noted the proximity of his embassy to Bundaran Hotel Indonesia MRT Station. “I want to go for lunch in Blok M by taking the MRT to Blok M Station,” he said, referring to an area in South Jakarta popularly known as Little Tokyo.

During a press conference, Ishii said that through Vice President Jusuf Kalla, the Indonesian government has expressed its desire to continue working with Japan to build up to 200 km of MRT routes over the next 10 years.

On Sunday, Jokowi also announced the start of construction of the 8-km Phase 2 of the North-South Line from Bundaran Hotel Indonesia Station to Kota in West Jakarta. The president also instructed Jakarta Gov. Anies Baswedan to push for the early start of the 32-km East-West Line, for which a feasibility study is now being conducted. He also exhorted the public to develop good habits when using the new mode of transport. “When you are getting on the train, queue! Queue! Don't enter the train when the door is closing or you will get sandwiched,” he added.—Kyodo News ■

Tsunami-hit railway in northeast Japan starts commercial operation

MORIOKA (Japan)—A railway line stretching more than 160 kilometers along the Pacific Coast of northeastern Japan resumed regular services Sunday for the first time

since sustaining heavy damage caused by the tsunami following the massive earthquake that struck the region in 2011.

The service between Miyako and Kamaishi sta-

tions in Iwate Prefecture officially reopened Saturday with a single train journey. The operator Sanriku Railway Co. gained control of the section of track from East Japan Railway Co.

and opened the whole of the 163-km Rias Line that also includes two sections along the prefecture's coast that had already resumed operations.—Kyodo News ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ZEALAND ALMERE

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ZEALAND ALMERE V (19021) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-3 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 GLOBAL MARS SHIPPING CO LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TRUONG MIN OCEAN

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TRUONG MIN OCEAN VOY. NO. (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of T.M.T-1 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES (SINGAPORE) PTE, LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V HAI DUONG 36

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V HAI DUONG 36 VOY. NO. (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-7 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES (SINGAPORE) PTE, LTD

Phone No: 2301928

Pro-junta party takes lead in Thai election, results to come Mon

BANGKOK — Thailand's pro-military Palang Pracharath Party that nominated junta chief Prayut Chan-o-cha for prime minister took the lead late Sunday in the country's general election with around 90 percent of votes counted, according to the country's election authority.

The National Election Commission announced in a press conference several hours after polls closed that an announcement of the unofficial results would be delayed until Monday afternoon.

The opposition Pheu Thai Party, which was ousted from power in the country's 2014 coup, was leading in the count for most of the evening until being overtaken around 9:30 pm.

With 92 percent of votes counted, the Palang Pracharath Party had received around 7.5 million votes, while Pheu Thai was



A woman casts a ballot at a polling station in Udon Thani, Thailand, on 24 March 2019.

PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

close behind with around 7 million votes, according to unofficial results.

The Future Forward Party of businessman-turned-politician Thanathorn Joengrungrangkit was in third place with 5.2 million votes, and the Democrat Party came

fourth with 3.2 million.

Pheu Thai, which is linked to ousted former premier Thaksin Shinawatra, was earlier forecast to win the most seats in the election but fall short of a majority. Ballot counting started immediately after polling stations around the

country closed at 5 pm in the Southeast Asian country's first election since the military seized power in the 2014 coup. Up for grabs are all 500 seats in the lower house of parliament, of which 350 seats are directly elected, with the remaining 150 seats to be allocated

on a proportional party-list basis. Whichever party is announced the winner will need coalition partners to form a government.

Late in the evening, former Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva announced his resignation as leader of the Democrat Party.

"I am sorry for all Democrat supporters that we cannot achieve our goal and this election. I would resign from the party from now," he said.

Jarungvit Phumma, secretary general of the Election Commission, told a press conference earlier in the day that voting was generally peaceful, with high enthusiasm seen among people coming out to vote. He added that a number of complaints had been filed with the commission, with most related to alleged vote-buying.

Around 80 political parties are contesting the

election, including many newly formed parties.

Speaking to reporters after casting his ballot near his home in Bangkok in the morning, Prayut said he was encouraged by the voter enthusiasm and hoped for a high turnout.

"I hope everybody will exercise their right to vote because everyone wants democracy, so we have to use the right method, which is a transparent election," he said. In Bangkok, Thanyaporn Munkong, 58, said she supports the party with good policies that elevate people's livelihoods. As stability and peace are priorities for her, she said she hoped to see Prayut remain in power. Suchada, a 28-year-old bank employee, said she has been waiting for the election for a long time as she wanted to see a new government setting the direction of the country.—Kyodo News ■

Strong 6.1-magnitude quake jolts eastern Indonesia

JAKARTA (Indonesia)—A 6.1-magnitude earthquake hit off the coast of North Maluku province in eastern Indonesia Sunday, US seismologists said, but no tsunami warning was issued.

The quake was 150 kilometres (92 miles) northwest of the coastal town of Ternate at a depth of 37 kilometres, according to the US Geological Sur-

vey. The quake was felt in Ternate but residents were unconcerned, a local said. "I was watching TV when the earthquake suddenly happened, the jolt was quite strong but thankfully it was quick so there was no panic," Ternate resident Budi Nurgianto told AFP.

Officials are still assessing the quake's impact but there were no immedi-

ate reports of casualties.

"We are still checking to see if there's any damage," said Rahmat Triyono, head of Indonesian weather agency BKM's earthquake and tsunami division.

Indonesia experiences frequent seismic and volcanic activity due to its position on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", where tectonic plates collide.

Last September, a 7.5-magnitude quake and a subsequent tsunami in Palu on Sulawesi island killed more than 2,200, with a thousand more declared missing.

On boxing day 26 December, 2004, a 9.1-magnitude earthquake struck Aceh province, causing a tsunami and killing more than 170,000 in Indonesia.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. (911S/913W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO. (911S/913W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY. NO. (1007 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY. NO. (1007 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/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 OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS
(S'PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI AMPLÉ VOY. NO. (0163-476N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI AMPLÉ VOY. NO. (0163-476N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING
LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TAY SON 3

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TAY SON 3 VOY. NO. (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-03-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of WILMAR 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 BAY LINE SHIPPING PTE,
LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

KBZ BFM, Smile Asia conduct provide free cleft lip and palette operations in Taunggyi



U Aung Ko Win, Chairman of KBZ Bank, Mr. Mike Denoma, Chief Executive Officer of KBZ Bank and Daw Nang Lang Kham, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of KBZ Bank together with patients and their companions at the Women and Children Hospital. **PHOTO: KBZ**

WITH the support of Ministry of Health and Sports, Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation (BFM), the social initiative arm of KBZ Group of Companies (KBZ Group), and Singapore-based philanthropic group Smile Asia, is carrying out free cleft lip and palette operations in Taunggyi from 24 to 30 March.

The sixth medical mission launched yesterday at the Women and Children Hospital in Taunggyi and will provide a better quality of life for children from different regions and states of Myanmar.

During the past five medical missions, free cleft lip and palette operations were provided to 499 children with 100%

success rate.

For this sixth medical mission, the Smile Asia Medical Team comprising professional surgeons and volunteers from America, Germany, China, Singapore, Denmark, France, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Myanmar and the Philippines, together with surgeons and medical professionals from Myanmar, are performing medical assessments and surgeries of cleft lip and palette operations.

KBZ BFM is also providing two-way travelling expenses from patients' hometowns to Taunggyi and back, accommodation, meals and treatment costs for them and their companions.

There is also a vehicle provided for patients and their companions who wish to travel within Taunggyi during the duration of the operations. KBZ Bank staff, members of KBZ BFM and volunteers are supporting to ensure the success of the project.

During the opening ceremony, Dr. Lynn Htut, Chief Minister of Shan State, gave an opening speech and Mr. David Liang, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Singapore in Myanmar shared his remarks.

U Aung Ko Win, Chairman of KBZ Bank also engaged and encouraged patients who are undergoing medical assessments at the Women and Children Hospital.—GNLM

Offbeat art fest puts abandoned California town back on map

BOMBAY BEACH (United States)—By any stretch of the imagination, Bombay Beach is an oddity, starting with its exotic name, its location by a dying lake and the post-apocalyptic landscape that greets visitors. The desert town, once a thriving resort set along the Salton Sea, is among the poorest communities in California, its 250 or so residents seemingly forgotten by the rest of the world. Most of the homes have been abandoned for

decades, their yards filled with beat-up trailers and rusted cars.

But the tiny hamlet is experiencing a rebirth of sorts as a group of artists and well-heeled sponsors have taken up residence, buying up dirt-cheap property and organizing an annual three-day festival called the Bombay Beach Biennale. Launched in 2016, the festival, which is being held this weekend, is the brainchild of three Los Angeles-based friends —

Tao Ruspoli, a filmmaker and artist, Stefan Ashkenazy, an art collector and hotelier, and Lily Johnson White, a philanthropist and member of the Johnson & Johnson family. Ruspoli said he learned about the town about a decade ago after he stumbled on a book about the Salton Sea—the largest lake in California, created in 1905 by an engineering error and now shrinking—and was enthralled after a first visit.—AFP ■

Filmmaking icon Tim Burton soars to new heights with 'Dumbo'

LOS ANGELES (United States)—He has never liked the Big Top, mainly due to the caged animals and freaky clowns, but for legendary director Tim Burton there is no denying the romance of running away to join the circus. And even more so if the adventure involves a flying elephant, says the 61-year-old Californian, who is hitting red carpets with his 26th feature, a remake of the 1941 Disney classic "Dumbo." "The thing I liked about 'Dumbo' was just the idea—the image of a flying elephant and a misfit—and all that sort of stuff is very appealing to me," he told AFP.

The visionary behind a slew of hits spanning four decades, from Gothic animation to screwball comedy, Burton recalls being something of a misfit himself—the other kids at school called him "weirdo." But like "Dumbo," Burton's Achilles heel was his superpower. The outsider persona gave him space to grow into one of Hollywood's most sought-after creatives when he might just have been part of the crowd. The theme of alienation or disability as a source of strength runs through much of his oeuvre, and his most recognizable characters, from Beetlejuice and Batman at the start of his career through Edward Scissorhands, Ed Wood and Sweeny Todd, have been outsiders. "You can have a misfit perceived as something and they use that as a positive thing," says Burton, pointing



Tim Burton, pictured at the Hollywood premier of "Dumbo," has been preoccupied with alienation of the outsider for much of his career. **PHOTO: AFP**

to Dumbo's big, floppy ears—a source of shame that becomes an advantage. The live action update follows the 1941 animated Disney fable in some aspects—as in the original, Burton's pachyderm protagonist is mute—but the human characters get a bigger role.

And while Jon Favreau's 2017 "Beauty and the Beast" hewed close to the 1991 animated version—notwithstanding some extraneous backstory—"Dumbo" is a very different creature from its wartime progenitor. "I felt liberated that I didn't have to follow too much, because it's not really a story, it's a very simple fable," Burton told AFP. Among the new stuff, the movie manages to retain some of the elements which gave the original its charm, such as the heartbreaking scene in which Dumbo visits his caged mother.

From 'Batman' to 'Dumbo'

In this telling of "Dumbo," which hits US theaters on 29 March, the elephant calf is born in the circus of ringmaster Max Medici (Danny DeVito) and placed in the custody of Holt Farrier (Colin Farrell), a World War I veteran and widower who has lost an arm in battle. Farrier does not get along with his kids, who discover what Dumbo can do when he holds a feather in his trunk. Filmed at Pinewood Studios, the iconic home of "James Bond" and "Star Wars" near London, the production's main hurdle was that its protagonist—a CGI animal added in post-production—was never on set.

Burton, a cult filmmaker of Gothic sensibilities whose mainstream plaudits have included a Golden Globe and two Oscar nominations, says he didn't see the final cut until just weeks ago.

"We had a stuffed animal. We had a guy, Ed, who learned lots of elephant moves so he was very valuable because he made it more interactive," said Burton. The filmmaker was never a fan of the circus as a child but says he enjoys the fantasy of an itinerant life as a traveling show runaway.—AFP ■

Tyrannosaurus rex found in Canada is world's biggest

MONTREAL (Canada)—The towering Tyrannosaurus rex discovered in western Canada in 1991 is the world's biggest, a team of paleontologists said Friday, following a decades-long process of reconstructing its skeleton.

Nicknamed Scotty for a celebratory bottle of scotch consumed the night it was discovered, the T. rex was 13 meters (yards) long and probably weighed more than 8,800 kilos (19,400 pounds), making it bigger than all other carnivorous dinosaurs, the team from the University of Alberta said.

"This is the rex of rexes,"

said Scott Persons, lead author of the study and postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Biological Sciences.

"There is considerable size variability among Tyrannosaurus. Some individuals were lankier than others and some were more robust. Scotty exemplifies the robust," Persons said.

While the giant carnivore's skeleton was discovered in 1991, paleontologists spent more than a decade just removing the hard sandstone that covered its bones.

Only now have they been able to study it and realize its uniqueness, which is not limited



Nicknamed Scotty for a celebratory bottle of scotch consumed the night it was discovered, the T. rex was 13 meters (yards) long and probably weighed more than 8,800 kilos (19,400 pounds). **PHOTO: AFP**

to its size.

"Scotty is the oldest T. rex known," having lived into its 30s, Persons said.

"By Tyrannosaurus stand-

ards, it had an unusually long life. And it was a violent one," Persons said. "Riddled across the skeleton are pathologies—spots where scarred bone records

large injuries."

An exhibit featuring the dinosaur's bones is to open in May at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.—AFP ■



A van buried by ash from Guatemala's Fuego volcano in the village of San Miguel Los Lotes, which was wiped off the map in the eruption which killed 202 people and left 229 missing. **PHOTO: AFP**

Some remains of Guatemala volcano victims unidentified: official

GUATEMALA CITY (Guatemala)—Guatemalan investigators have been unable to identify about 110 pieces of remains from victims of a volcanic eruption that killed 202 people and left 229 missing last June, a forensic official said Saturday.

After months of testing, which included sending some samples abroad, about 110 remains cannot be identified, said the head of the National Forensic Sciences Office, Fanel Garcia.

"The analysis process has concluded and 202 people were identified and their remains handed to family for burial," he said.

As for the rest of the remains, some could be dupli-

cates from people already identified, Garcia said.

"We have all of them and we are holding on to them, awaiting a time to carry out a collective burial," he said of the unidentified remains.

The 3 June eruption of gas, ash and glowing boulders from Fuego, 3,763 meters high (12,246 feet), wiped the village of San Miguel Los Lotes from the map. That was the worst of at least five eruptions by Fuego last year.

Located 35 kilometers (22 miles) from Guatemala City, it remains volatile and on Friday rained ash on nearby communities before quietening Saturday, the Institute of Seismology said.—AFP ■

Transgender men have functional ovaries after a year of testosterone injections

WASHINGTON (United States)—The ovaries of transgender men appear to remain functional even after a year of receiving hormonal treatment with testosterone, according to a small Israeli study presented Saturday in the United States.

Transgender men are born female but self-identify as male. Not all of them undergo gender reassignment surgery but lots of them take hormones to make their bodies more masculine. Doctors from Tel Aviv-Sourasky Medical Center studied 52

transgender men aged between 17 and 40 for a year after they began receiving injections of testosterone. They had access to the complete results for 32 of them, which is a small sample but studies of this kind are rare.

"Our research shows for the first time that after one year of testosterone treatment, ovary function is preserved to a degree that may allow reproduction," said the study's lead investigator, Yona Greenman. "This information is important for transgender men and their partners who de-

sire to have their own children," Greenman said.

The level of the Anti-Mullerian Hormone (AMH) dropped off after 12 months of treatment but remained in the normal range for fertility, said the researchers, who will present their findings at the annual conference of the Endocrine Society in New Orleans this weekend.

The level of this hormone is an indicator of the so-called ovarian reserve and is used by doctors to assess the remaining egg supply.—AFP ■

Russian neutral buoyancy pool for space training to resume work in May-June

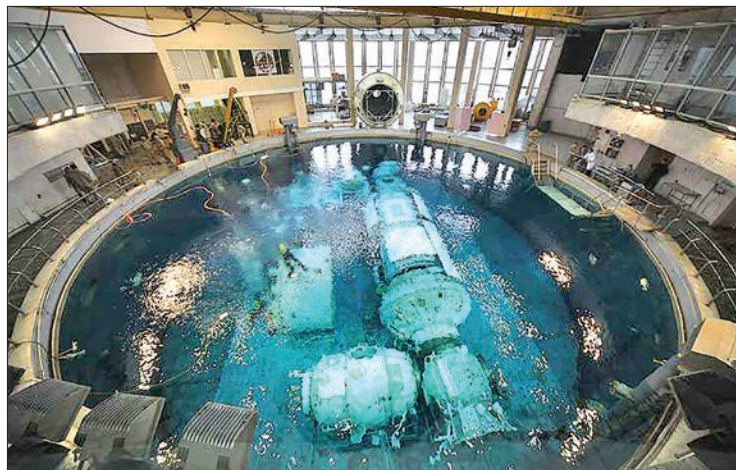
MOSCOW—The Hydro Lab of Russia's Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in the Star City near Moscow, which includes a neutral buoyancy pool for weightless environment training of cos-

monauts, will resume its operations in late May or early June after a lengthy reconstruction, the center's head Pavel Vlasov told TASS on Sunday.

"It will start functioning in

late May or early June. By that time, we will complete procedures needed to put it back into operation. Once they are over, we will be able to use it again," Vlasov said, adding that cosmonauts will start practicing there some time later.

The Hydro Lab was created in early 1980s to provide weightless environment training to cosmonauts. It includes a 12-meter-deep neutral buoyancy pool, in which about 5,000 dives have been performed by cosmonauts wearing Orlan spacesuits. At first, it was equipped with mockups of Russia's Salyut and Mir space station segments. Now it features modules of the International Space Station (ISS). —Tass ■



The facility was closed for reconstruction in 2014. **PHOTO: TASS**



Young Myanmar striker Win Naing Tun (Red) vies for the header ahead of the Macau keeper at the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifier at the Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay yesterday. **PHOTO: MFF**

AFC U-23 Qualifiers: Myanmar beat Macau 4-0

MYANMAR claimed its second victory in the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers yesterday, beating Macau by a big 4-0 margin at the Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay.

Myanmar lined up with key players, including keeper San Satt Naing, Captain Win Moe Kyaw, midfielder Lwin Moe Aung, and strikers Win Naing Tun and Htet Phyto Wai.

Myanmar launched swift attacks from the start, making the opening goal at 2 minutes. The opening goal was scored by Ye Min Thu, with a brilliant header

from a corner kick.

The win made Myanmar hungry for more goals, with frequent attacks, long ball passes, and good dribbling.

Due to rough play by Macau, Myanmar got a penalty at the 19th minute, and striker Win Naing Tun converted the penalty, putting Myanmar ahead by 2 goals.

The first half ended 2-0 in favour of Myanmar as Macau did not convert their goal chances.

Macau upped their game in the second half with consistent play. But, Myanmar again took the lead with a third goal scored

at the 71th minute by Win Naing Tun. He dribbled past two defenders and kicked the ball directly into the net.

Myanmar kept up their speedy play, with Lwin Moe Aung scoring the fourth goal at the 85 minute mark. At the final whistle, the score was 4-0 in favour of Myanmar. In an earlier match yesterday, Japan drubbed Timor Leste 6-0.

After the win against Macau, Myanmar will now meet Japan on Tuesday to decide the leader in the Group I table of the qualifiers. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Myanmar to play FIFA friendly against Indonesia today



Team Myanmar singing the national anthem at an earlier FIFA friendly against Chinese Taipei on 19 March at the Mandalay Thiri Stadium, Mandalay. **PHOTO: MFF**

THE Myanmar men's national football team will play a FIFA international friendly match against Indonesia at 6 p.m. today at the Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay.

Team Myanmar see the Indonesian team as good competitors and have prepared their best for the match, the Myanmar Football Federation stated.

A pre-match press conference was held in Mandalay yes-

terday, and coaches and players of both teams spoke about the upcoming match.

"I have observed the weaknesses and strengths of the opponents as far as possible. Though Indonesia has a lower FIFA ranking than Myanmar, their game is actually very good. Getting a win is important for us, but it also important to give new and young players a chance to play," said

Myanmar head coach Myo Min Tun.

Hlaing Bo Bo, the captain of the Myanmar team, said the team will do their best in the match against Indonesia. "Whenever we meet with Indonesia, the match turns out to be absolutely entertaining for both teams' fans," he said.

Simon McMenemy, the head coach of the Indonesian team, said the match against Myanmar will be worth watching. "As our team is also gearing up for the qualification for the FIFA World Cup, we have prepared well, and I know, it will be a real hard match with Myanmar," he said.

Tickets for the Myanmar-Indonesia match are available at the gate of the Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay. They are priced at K3,000 for the grand stand and K2,000 for the ordinary stand, according to a statement released by the MFF. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Casey clings to one-shot PGA lead over No. 1 Johnson

MIAMI (United States)—Defending champion Paul Casey clung to a one-stroke lead over top-ranked Dustin Johnson despite a closing bogey in Saturday's third round of the US PGA Tour Valspar Championship. The 41-year-old Englishman missed a 14-foot par putt at the par-4 18th and settled for a bogey and a three-under par 68. Casey stood on nine-under 204 after 54 holes at the Innisbrook Resort Copperhead course in Palm Harbor, Florida. "It feels really good," Casey said. "I was patient for the most part and aggressive when I had opportunities."

Johnson, a winner at last month's WGC Mexico Championship, was next on 205 after a 67 with fellow American Jason Kokrak third on 206 after a hole-in-one on his way to matching the week's low round on 66.

Casey relishes the challenge of playing alongside the world number one in Sunday's last group. "Playing with Dustin is going to be very exciting," Casey said. "Any time I've got a chance to go up against world number one I'm excited about that."

"I do what I do because I want to play against the best in the world. And obviously he's the prominent one in the group of guys near the lead. 'Who is the favorite tomorrow? Probably Dustin. So I actually feel very kind of little pressure... it's pretty simple. If I go out tomorrow and beat him I actually might win. Plain and

simple. Great scenario."

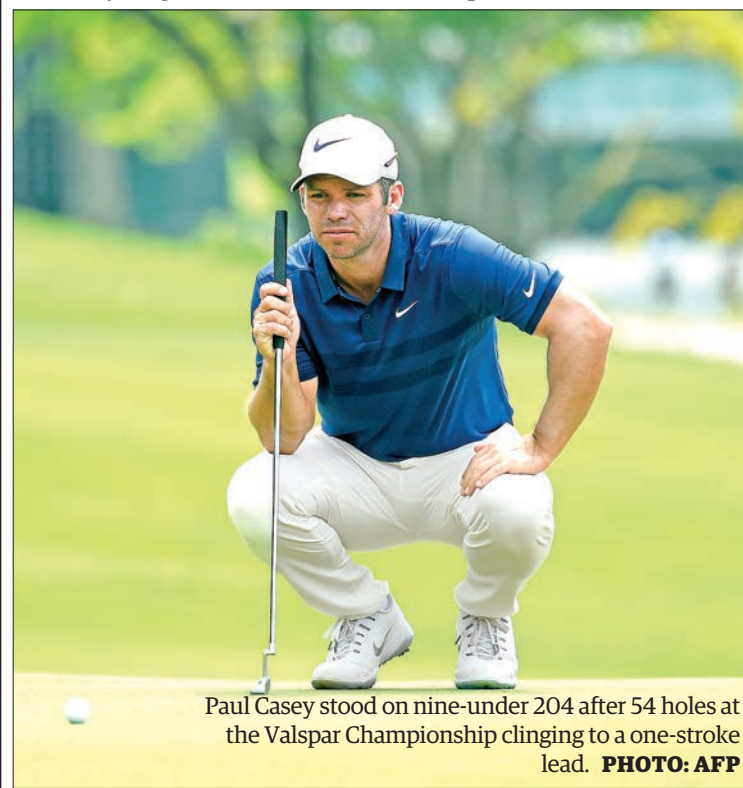
Casey has struggled to defend titles and turn 54-hole leads into victories but he stands a chance of doing both on Sunday.

He has won only once in five tries, and never broken 70, when leading a US PGA event after 54 holes. The win came at the 2009 Houston Open with a bogey on the first playoff hole to beat American J.B. Holmes. Casey, who edged Tiger Woods and Patrick Reed by a stroke for the 2018 Valspar crown, has never defended a professional title.

But the British star has taken back-to-back titles multiple times as an amateur. He won the 1999 and 2000 English Amateurs and three consecutive Pacific-12 Conference trophies while studying at Arizona State University.

"My mindset now is I've won it, I have nothing to lose," Casey said. "I'm feeling a good position, like I don't have really any pressure. Now I've got one of those trophies. Yeah, I want another one, but it's not as much urgency." Casey opened birdie-bogey, added a six-foot birdie putt at the par-4 sixth and made back-to-back birdie putts from three feet at the par-5 11th and eight feet at the par-4 12th.

Casey made a 10-foot birdie putt at the par-5 14th, but at 18, Casey found a greenside bunker and blasted out before rolling his par putt just off the right edge of the cup.—AFP ■



Paul Casey stood on nine-under 204 after 54 holes at the Valspar Championship clinging to a one-stroke lead. **PHOTO: AFP**