

NATIONAL

Tatmadaw destroys landmines planted by AA on Maungtaw-Angumaw Road

PAGE-4

NATIONAL

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services receives Ambassador of Japan

PAGE-3

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Saturday, 20 April 2019

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi receives Seychelles Vice President



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Seychelles Vice President Mr. Vincent Meriton at the President Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

PHOTO: MNA

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received

Mr. Vincent Meriton, Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles at the President Office in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 April 2019 at 10:20 am dur-

ing his private visit to Myanmar.

Present at the meeting were U Min Thu, Union Minister for the Office of the Un-

ion Government, U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation and Senior Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

Legal Advisory Team formed to give advices to Court of Inquiry

The Tatmadaw True News Team issued a press release on 18 April.

The press release stated that as it needs to conduct further scrutiny over incidents related to terror attacks committed in Buthidaung-Maungtaw region of Rakhine State on 25 August 2017 due to the advice of the Office of the Judge Advocate General, the Court of Inquiry was set up in conformity with Defence Services Rules to start the inquiries on 18 March 2019. On 2 April 2019, the Court of Inquiry invited that evidences and facts related to the incidents can be sent to the Court of Inquiry in person or through email and post in accordance with the prescribed ways, said the team in the press release.

In order to effectively carry out inquiries by the Court of Inquiry for collecting necessary evidential facts, legal matters and procedures, the Legal Advisory Team, in accordance with the directive of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), was formed with Maj-Gen Thaung Naing, Deputy Judge Advocate General, chairman of the team, and four members: Lt-Col Myint Thein, Assistant Judge Advocate General, Major Myint San, Deputy Assistant Judge Advocate General, Captain Kyaw Kyaw Lin, Deputy Assistant Judge Advocate General (Captain) and Captain Daw Thazin Swe, Judge Advocate.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

Union Minister for SWRR receives UN Resident, Humanitarian Coordinator

PAGE-4



SPECIAL ARTICLE

Reforms of MONREC: Striving for managing natural resources as well as natural environment and ecosystems for benefit of both current and future generations

PAGE-9,10

NATIONAL

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee holds meeting

PAGE-7



Central committee, work committees meet for holding Hluttaw meetings



Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat delivers the speech at the coordination meeting 2/2019 organized by Central Committee on Holding Hluttaw Meetings in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE central committee and work committees on holding Hluttaw meetings organized coordination meeting 2/2019 at the Zabuthiri Hall of Hluttaw Building, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, Speaker of Pyidaungsu and Pyithu Hluttaws U T Khun Myat said the Second Hluttaw twelfth regular session meetings would be held starting from 29 April 2019.

The meetings would discuss the Union Supplementary Budget bill for 2018-2019 financial

year, the matters on amending the 2008 Constitution and other Hluttaw-related works.

He called for cooperation and coordination between the central committee and work committees in preparation for holding the Hluttaw meetings successfully.

Afterwards, Union Ministers and officials of the work committees reported on arrangements for the Hluttaw meetings.

The meeting came to an end

with concluding remarks by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat.

The meeting was attended by Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat, Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung, Union Ministers, secretaries of work committees and officials from the Hluttaws. — MNA

(Translated by TTN)



Religious objects to be fixed atop Eternal Peace Pagoda are conveyed by Members of the Sangha and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Eternal Peace Pagoda's Buddha Images, religious objects conveyed to Kyaiktiyo Pagoda

RELIGIOUS objects to be fixed atop the Eternal Peace Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw and Buddha Images which will be housed at the pagoda were brought from the Shwedagon Pagoda to the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda in Kyaikto yesterday.

Members of the Sangha and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and members of the Yangon Region cabinet carried the religious objects and Buddha images around the

Shwedagon Pagoda clock-wise before conveying them to Kyaikto.

The religious objects and Buddha images were welcomed at the entrance to Mon State by local authorities and conveyed to the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda.

At the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda, Shweparami Tawya Sayadaw Ashin Sandadika delivered a sermon on eternal peace yesterday. — Han Lin Naing

(Translated by GNLM)

Ceremonies held to open Myawady Town entrance signboard, Martyr's Park gateway

News – Maung Sein Lwin
AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than attended the ceremonies to inaugurate the Myawady Town entrance signboard and Martyr's Park gateway held at Myawady yesterday morning.

First Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker accompanied by Kayin State Minister for Planning, Finance and Development Affairs U Than Naing, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Sein Bo, State Hluttaw representatives U Aik Kyan Kham and U Thant Zin Aung, district administrator, township administrator and departmental officials attended the inauguration ceremony of the Myawady Town entry signboard "Welcome to Myawady" held near Nabayathukha Pagoda on Asia Road in Myawady Township. The ceremony started with an entertainment programme of songs and ethnic national dances like Kayin traditional don dances.

Next township Development Affairs Committee Executive Officer Assistant Director U Saw Robert Htoo explained details about the town entry signboard and township Development Af-



Amyoth Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than sprinkles scented water on the signboard of the Martyr's Park gateway in Myawady. **PHOTO: MIN HTAT**

fairs Committee member U Sein Thauang explained about the reasons for constructing the signboard. This was followed by local elder U Soe Min Lwin delivering words of thanks on constructing the signboard in a short time frame. The Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and party then opened the entry signboard by cutting the ceremonial ribbon, sprinkled

scented water onto the signboard and took a commemorative group photo. The town entry signboard was constructed in little more than a month at a total cost of over K 22 million consisting of union funds and donation from seven people.

Afterwards Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and party went to attend

the opening ceremony of the Martyr's Park gateway at the Martyr's Park, Bogyoke Road, Ward 1, Myawady Town. At this opening ceremony Thone Yaung Chal (Tricolor) dance troupe and Nyein Chan Silone (Peace and Unity) dance troupe provided entertainment with dances.

After the entertainments, details about the gateway were

explained by township development Affairs committee engineer U Thein Naing after which a town elder said words of thanks.

Following this Kayin State Minister for Planning, Finance and Development Affairs U Than Naing presented cash awards to the band, pom pom and dance troupes that provided entertainment.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Kayin State Minister for Planning, Finance and Development Affairs U Than Naing, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Sein Bo, state Hluttaw representatives and departmental officials then opened the gateway by cutting the ceremonial ribbon and sprinkled scented water onto the gateway.

After the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and party had taken a commemorative group photo with the local people, they inspected the Martyr's Park and provided necessary advice to the officials.

The park gateway was constructed at a total cost of K 25 million from fiscal year 2018-2019 capital fund and the construction was completed within 60 days.

(Translated by Zaw Min)

“ Today at this time, we are witnessing the transformation of an era and a system in accordance with democratic principles. This is just the beginning of the democratic transition. To make this transition process smooth and successful, it is very important for our peoples, government employees and civil servants to change their dogmatic mindset and habits. Those government institutions which are lagging behind in the transformation process will need to be put under tight management controls. The country's weak judiciary system would need to be strengthened. More efforts need to be exerted to stamp out corruption. More efforts need to be exerted to prevent human rights violations. More efforts need to be exerted to crack down illegal drug trade. We need to manage public funds properly so that there is no wastage. Measures need to be taken to return confiscated farmland to farmers and to give compensation to farmers for losses they have suffered in accordance with the law. We also need to improve the socio-economic life of farmers, improve the lives of workers and ensure that students gain access to higher education.

(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)

“ Let me solemnly thank all our friends at home and abroad, who have helped us and are still helping us; organizations, business entrepreneurs, people from academia and professionals, and especially our people who have supported and assisted us with understanding and empathy. Those who have helped us once, we should never forget. Those who have helped us again and again are our real friends; they bring fulfillment to our lives.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1st April 2018)

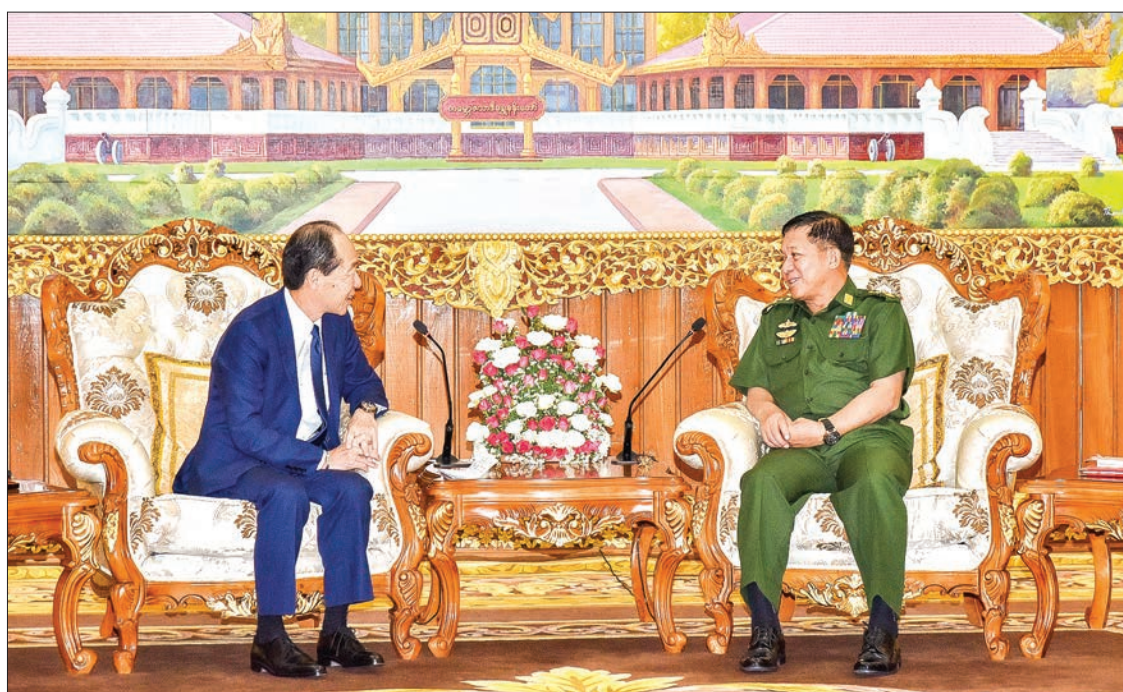
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services receives Japanese Ambassador

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar Mr. Ichiro Maruyama at the Bayintnaung guest house in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting matters relating to Japan's stance in the international arena on the government and the Tatmadaw resolving events in Rakhine State Buth-

idaung and Maungtau region, status of forming and works conducted by Court of Inquiry on incidents related to events in Rakhine State and the Tatmadaw's work on achieving internal peace were discussed and views exchanged according to news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with Japanese Ambassador Mr. Ichiro Maruyama at Bayintnaung guest house, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

MSWRR to implement suggestions of natural disaster management advisory group



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye attends the coordination meeting on suggestions of disaster management advisory group yesterday.

PHOTO: MNA

A coordination meeting on follow up works for suggestions made by disaster management advisory group about natural disasters caused by climate change was held at Ministry

of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement meeting hall yesterday morning.

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye led the discussion in the coordination meeting

with Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, directors general from departments and officials.

According to the discussion, of the suggestions made by the advisory group, the ministry will distribute water in water scarce areas, identify areas where water requirements need to be fulfilled and distribute information.

The discussion also identified works to be coordinated between other relevant ministries and state/region governments; submitting matters to National Disaster Management Committee for the committee to work on; state/region offices of Disaster Management Department to conduct field visit on works to be conducted by the ministry, draw up and implement work programs. — MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Legal Advisory Team formed to give advices to Court of Inquiry

FROM PAGE-1

Duties of the Legal Advisory Team are to give advice for witnesses who should be enquired, to give advice for evidential facts and documents which should be taken, to give advice for Scene of Incident where should be inspected, to

give necessary advice for examination of witnesses in order not to lose sequence of evidence and to give necessary advice for other legal matters.

The press release also stated that the Judge Advocate General formed and assigned the Legal Advisory Team on 18 April 2019. — MNA ■

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Tatmadaw destroys landmines planted by AA on Maungtaw-Angumaw Road

ON the afternoon of 18 April, Tatmadaw security columns discovered four remote controlled mines planted by AA group on the Maungtaw-Angumaw Road near Angumaw Village, Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State. The mines were destroyed with controlled explosions to prevent from harming the people it is learnt.

In the incident, Tatmadaw security columns conducting security operations around Angumaw Village found the four remote controlled mines at about 3:40 p.m. on the Maungtaw-Angumaw Road about 500 meters northwest of the village. As it was difficult and dangerous to defuse the mines, it was destroyed

systematically in a controlled explosion.

AA group had been planting mines on public roads to scare and harm the people as well as to attack security forces. As of January 2019 to date, mines were planted on Yangon-Sittway Union Road as well as on other roads in Rakhine State for 12 times and Tatmadaw security columns had defused or destroyed 39 mines. Security personnel will continue to do the necessary for regional security and for removal/destruction of mines according to news released by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Office. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Seychelles Vice President, wife, party leave Nay Pyi Taw



Seychelles Vice President Mr. Vincent Meriton and wife are seen off by Union Minister U Kyaw Tin and officials at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

A Seychelles delegation led by Seychelles Vice President Mr. Vincent Meriton and wife Mrs. Daniella Hoareau who were on a private visit to Myanmar left Nay Pyi Taw by Bangkok

Airways yesterday evening. The Seychelles delegation led by the Vice President and wife were seen off at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Union Minister for Interna-

tional Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and wife, high ranking officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and officials. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Union Minister for SWRR receives UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (SWRR) Dr. Win Myat Aye received United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Knut Ostby at Maykhalar Hall in minister's office yesterday morning.

At the meeting, status of soon to be approved national level strategy on closing IDP

camps in Kachin, Kayin, Shan and Rakhine states; status of drawing up and implementing region wise work programs once the strategy was approved; coordination between Union level and state government to provide effective humanitarian assistance in Rakhine State; status to date of ASEAN countries' participation in the

process of receiving returnees; humanitarian and development assistants and rehabilitation works for conflict displaced persons in Kachin State and Shan State north and status of cooperation between relevant civil society organizations and non-government organizations were discussed. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye holds talks with United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Knut Ostby in minister's office yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Foreign investors to be invited to invest in low-cost housing projects for over 15 years

By Aye Yamone

YANGON regional government will invite foreign investors, who will invest for more than 15 years in low-cost housing project in Yangon Region, said U Phyo Min Thein, the Chief Minister of Yangon Region.

With an aim to solve the living difficulties of the local people in Yangon Region, the low-cost housing projects are being implemented in Yangon. The authorities are also planning to sell the low-cost housing apartment buildings in installment system, for which the banks will cooperate with the government.

“If the investors make investment in building the low-cost apartment buildings, we will try our utmost to sell the flats at an affordable price. The price can be low because the government will not charge any rent for the plots of land. However, we need to attract the investors who will invest for a long term. Provided that they do not make long-term investment in the housing projects of the regional government,



An aerial view of Yangon City with high-rise buildings. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

the needy purchasers will be required to pay in a short-term installment, which will make those earning not much difficult to buy the flats. Therefore, we would like to invite the investors who can invest for above 15 years,” said U Phyo Min Thein, the Chief Minister of Yangon Region at the license handing over ceremony held on 6 April at Pan Pacific Hotel.

If the foreign investors will invest in the low-cost housing projects, the local entrepreneurs will cooperate with their foreign counterparts to provide the shelter for the homeless people. Currently, they are making negotiation with the Ministry of Construction to be able to solve the squatter problem.

The housing sector is one of the sectors of reform for the

next decade for bringing about the development of Yangon City. So, if we cannot construct around 100,000 flats per year, there will emerge dramatic problems, which will hinder the development of the living standard of the people as well as affect the law enforcement, said Chief Minister.

“Chief minister has urged us to construct 100,000 apartments. Our association has already re-

plied to the chief minister that we can construct only about 10,000 apartments in the four districts of Yangon Region. We will submit the detailed proposal to the Chief Minister and the Hluttaw very soon, said U Kyaw Win, the chairman of Myanmar Licensed Contractors Association (MLCA).

The Urban and Housing Development Department under the Ministry of Construction has already constructed the low-cost apartment buildings in Shwe Pauk Kan, Shwelinban, Kanaung and Yuzana. The department has planned to construct more low-cost apartments in other areas.

Yangon regional government has planned to sell the flats from Inwa housing & Kaung San Thar housing from Dagon Myothit (South), Yuzana housing part-1&2 and Kanaung housing from Dagon Myothit (Seikkan), Shwelinban housing & Htee Hlaing housing from Hlaingthaya Township, Shops-cum-apartments from Shwepyitha Township and Shwepaukkan housing from North Okkalapa Township.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Trade with Viet Nam declines 18% in February

MYANMAR'S trade with Viet Nam, an ASEAN member state, stood at US\$53.9 million in February, this year, decreasing by \$12 million or 18 per cent, from that of last February, the Ministry of Commerce's latest monthly trade report.

The current bilateral trade includes \$19.7 million in exports and \$34.2 million in imports. When compared with last February, the current export value rose by \$6.7

million, however, the current import value declined by \$18 million.

In February, 2018, trade between Myanmar and Viet Nam were \$65.9 million in total, with exports worth \$12.9 million and imports worth \$52.9 million.

According to the ministry, Myanmar-Viet Nam trade in the first five months of the current 2018-2019 Fiscal Year covered \$85.1 million in exports and \$230.2 million in imports, totalling \$315

million.

Regularly, Myanmar imports car spare parts, computer parts, construction materials, steel, plastics, pharmaceuticals and other chemical products from Viet Nam. Its exports to the Southeast Asian country include mineral, agricultural, forest and marine products.

Bilateral trade was \$143.380 million in FY2011-12. The figure increased to nearly \$156 million in

FY2012-13. In 2013-14 FY, the trade with Viet Nam exceeded \$280 million. It continued to increase to over \$300 million in FY2014-15 and FY2015-16. The trade between the two countries hit a record high of \$494.036 million in 2016-17 FY. The bilateral trade went up to \$714 million in the 2017-2018 FY. During the 2018 mini-budget period (April-September), Myanmar-Viet Nam trade hit \$426 million.

The government of Myanmar

are making continuous efforts to boost the country's exports and foreign direct investment, seeking new international markets for domestic products.

The Myanmar Investment Commission has approved one new investment project with the capital of \$10.5 million as of February this FY.—Shwe Khine

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Regional trade exceeds \$4.8 bln in five months (Oct-Feb): MOC reports

THE value of Myanmar's regional trade with ASEAN countries through its sea route and border gates was estimated at US\$4.8 billion in first five months (Oct-Feb) of the current fiscal year 2018-2019, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The ministry reported that imports in regional trade surpassed exports, with exports worth over \$1.65 billion and imports valued at \$3.15 billion.

Since April, Thailand topped ASEAN countries having the largest trade with Myanmar, valued at \$2.16 billion, followed

by Singapore in second place with \$1.47 billion. Indonesia was listed third, with a trade value of \$431.24 million, while Myanmar's trade with Malaysia reached \$347.9 million, ranking in fourth place. Viet Nam stood fifth with an estimated value of \$315.34 million.

Meanwhile, bilateral trade with the Philippines was \$75.67 million, and bilateral trade with Cambodia reached \$5.2 million, as Laos trade with Myanmar was registered only \$1 million while Brunei's trade with Myanmar were less than \$1 million.

The country's main export items include agricultural and fishery products, as well as minerals, while imports included food and beverages, electronic tools, motor vehicles, and consumer goods. Apart from its main trade partner China, Myanmar's external trade was carried out mostly with its regional partners. Trade with countries in the European Union, however, remained uncompetitive, compared with regional trade partners. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Tornado hits Sagaing Region, destroys 470 houses

A tornado hit several parts of Sagaing Region on 18 April, destroying 470 houses in Ayadaw, Salingyi, and Wetlet townships.

“The twister struck around 6 p.m. and lasted about 3 minutes. No animals or humans were injured,” said MP U Wana from the Ayadaw Township constituency.

“The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettle-

ment has allocated K10 million to each township for damages. Officials from the Sagaing Region Government and the General Administration Department have inspected the tornado-hit areas and provided the necessary aids,” said Dr. Zaw Win, the Director of the Sagaing Region Disaster Management Department.

Over 190 houses have been

damaged in Ayadaw Township, according to data collected by 10 p.m. on 18 April. Such strong winds have never been witnessed in the township. A total of 161 volunteers, including policemen, worked together and made the necessary repairs in the township on the morning of 19 April.

Between 16 February and mid-April, gale-force winds dam-

aged over 800 houses. As on 18 April, the number of houses damaged by winds has reached about 1,200.

One person was killed, and two were injured in earlier incidents. Total K30 million will be provided for the current disaster. Kanbalu and Kyunhla have been most affected by earlier tornado.—Myo Win Tun (Monywa)
(Translated by La Wonn)

Antique cameras exhibition on 23-25 April in Mandalay

ANTIQUÉ cameras collection, including 100-year-old cameras, will be exhibited in Mandalay City Hall on 26th Street in Mandalay from 23 to 25 April, according to organizers.

Old photographs and roughly 200 antique cameras, including cameras produced since 1908 and a camera of Hanthawaddy U Win Tin, the late prominent journalist and politician, will be showcased during the three-day event.

Kyaw Thet Min, a private collector, said he had collected old-fashioned cameras since 2004 with the aim of showcasing them in a small museum.

The key objective of holding this kind of exhibition was to display the antique cameras for public observation in a single place.

The first antique cameras exhibition was held in Yangon in October, last year, when the organiser displayed 150 antique cameras, including cameras used circa 1900. The event organizer starts collecting the cameras 15 to 16 years ago. Now, he has over 500 cameras of over 40 different types.—Myanmar Digital News

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)



Antique cameras exhibition to be held in Mandalay from 23 to 25 April.
PHOTO: MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS

Broom industry sees a boom in Mahlaing

BROOM industry is booming in Yeyin Village, Minuhle Village-tract, Mahlaing Township, Meiktila District, Mandalay Region, according to local traditional broom-makers.

U Aung Soe, one of the village's broom-makers, said: “Based on quality, a short broom made of palm leaves is currently sold for K400 and K600 while the price of a long sweep is worth at K1,900. Local-made sweeps are sent mostly to Taungtha, Pakokku, Myingyan and other townships.”

Most of households in the village generate their family income through the broom industry and traditional natural brooms made from the village have the best quality, he added.

Daw Kyi Win from Yeyin Village said: “There are two major kinds of brooms, including short handle and long handle brooms. Five people are required to make a broom. A worker can make over 100 brooms per day. Due to an increase in demand for brooms, workers earn more income based on their skills.”



A woman making palm leave brooms at her house. **PHOTO: MAUNG THEIN**

She went on to say that raw materials for brooms are bought from Pyinmana, Tougoo and

Bogale townships.—Maung Thein ■ (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Price of mung bean continues to increase in post-Thingyan period

PRICES of mung bean are increasing in the domestic market in post-Thingyan period, according to figures from the Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre.

In the market, a ton of SQ mung bean is currently sold for over K920,000 while a ton of FAQ mung bean is valued at over K790,000, wholesalers

in Yangon said.

The figures indicated that a ton of SQ mung bean rose by K27,000 in post-Thingyan period. One ton of SQ mung bean was valued at K885,000-K894,000 in the first week of this month. The prices of SQ mung bean stood at K775,000 per ton on 1 March. In early February, the prices

of a ton of SQ mung bean was priced at K720,000 only.

In addition, the market also saw an increase in price of FAQ mung bean by K37,000 per ton. The prices of FAQ mung bean was K740,000-K754,000 per ton in earlier this month. The prices of a ton of FAQ mung bean reached K650,000 on 1 March. The prices of the same was

K570,000 per ton on 1 February.

According to Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association, Myanmar is allowed to export 150,000 tons of mung beans to neighbouring India for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year.—Swe Nyein

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

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We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

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

Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee holds meeting

PYIDAUNGSSU Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee held a meeting at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D, second floor meeting hall, yesterday morning to discuss the second amendment to the Settlement of the Labour Dispute Law on which the two Hluttaws were in disagreement and the Tax Management Bill.

The meeting was attended by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Bill Committee and Joint Public Accounts Committee Chairman U Tun Aung @ U Tun Tun Hein, Joint

Bill Committee deputy chairman, secretary, joint secretary and committee members, Joint Public Accounts Committee deputy chairmen and committee members, Amyotha Hluttaw Local and Overseas Workers Affairs Committee members, officials from Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Union Attorney General Office, Union Civil Service Board and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Joint Bill Committee Chairman U Tun Tun Hein addresses the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee meeting at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Patients to be offered free eye surgery in Htelone hospital in Hlaingbwe township

THE residents who suffered from eye problems will be provided free eye surgery by Dr U Aye Tun, eye specialist under the led by Rakhine Sayadaw and BoneK-yaw Sayadaw from 26 to 28 April at Htelone hospital in Hlaingbwe township, Kayin State.

The patients can give the

name lists to the village administrators, Rural Healthcare Centres and Htelone hospital. The patients can also be taken free medical check-up and eye surgery services according to Htelone Hospital. – Khin San Myint (IPRD)

(Translated by La Wonn)

Aid reaches gale force winds victims in Mawlu, Sagaing Region

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement provided the cash and commodities to 59 households of natural disaster victims yesterday.

U Moe Swe, ward administrator of Mawluumin Zayar ward provided the cash and kinds of commodities to 59 families from No.6 ward in Mawlu town who had been hit by the strong

wind on 15 April. The 59 families were individually provided with K75,000, K50,000, K30,000 and K20,000 depending on their losses.

At the ceremony, the township administrators, ward administrators, and 100 houses group elders attended the ceremony. — Ni Toe (Translated by La Wonn)

Coord meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw for star rating hotels in Myanmar



Union Minister U Ohn Maung addresses a coordination meeting on star rating hotels in Myanmar. **PHOTO: MNA**

WITH an aim to raise the level of hotels in Myanmar and the service quality a coordination meeting on star rating hotels in Myanmar was held at Ministry of Hotels and Tourism yesterday morning.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung and officials, officials from related ministries, representatives from Myanmar Travel Association, Myanmar Hotelier Association, Myanmar market development association and foreign investment hotels association, foreign experts consisting of Dr. Drimitrios Koutoulas from World Travel Organiza-

tion and Prof. Dr. Ng Yen Yen from Malaysia.

At the meeting Union Minister U Ohn Maung explained about the status of works conducted to increase number of international tourists entering Myanmar, previous star rating of hotels in Myanmar and arrangements to obtain thoughts, ideas and cooperation from international experts and private entities on a more complete star rating of hotels.

Next Dr. Drimitrios Koutoulas and Prof. Dr. Ng Yen Yen discussed about international hotel rating systems and appropriate rating criteria for Myanmar.

Meeting attendees also

join in and providing suggestions and explanations.

A group to star rating hotels in Myanmar will be chaired by Myanmar Hotelier Association with members made up of Myanmar Travel Association, foreign investment hotels association and Myanmar market development association.

The group together with foreign experts will preliminarily visits hotels in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw, Bagan, Mandalay, Inle, Ngapali and Kawthoung to draw up appropriate norms for star rating and will submit to the ministry for approval. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

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Cote d'Ivoire a wake-up call for world's top rice exporter

THE destruction of a shipment of rice at Cote d'Ivoire has been a wake-up call for Myanmar to look into the process through which it exports rice.

A review has found that a Singaporean company bought the rice from three Myanmar companies — 13,500 metric tons from the Shwe-Wah-Yaung Company, 500 tons from the Ayeya Hinthia Company, and 8,000 from MEC — to sell it in Guinea, Africa.

A vessel, MV-Ocean Prince, arrived in Yangon to transport the shipment of rice at the end of August last year. Due to the rainy season, it took about two and half months to load the rice. The vessel left Yangon with 22,000 tons of rice on 15 October, 2018. It then proceeded to India, where it was loaded with 14,000 tons of rice. It left India in November last year and arrived in Guinea at the end of December.

Myanmar, as a country entering a strong market, has faced intense competition. There is strong competition in the African market, but it must remain fair.

After 4,000 tons of rice were unloaded in Guinea, a quality control company complained that the rice bags weighed only 45 kilos instead of 50 kilos. Despite meeting the required standards, the rice was rejected at Togo and Cote d'Ivoire due to media reports in Guinea.

The Singaporean company sought permission for bringing the rice consignment back to Myanmar, and the Ministry of Commerce issued repair and return permits to the company, and made arrangements to inspect the rice when it arrived.

However, the vessel did not return. Problems arose when the vessel unloaded rice at Cote d'Ivoire so it could be docked for repairs before returning to Myanmar.

Rice from Myanmar is exported under the FOB system, and the exporter is not liable for the quality of rice being transported on a ship, according to the system.

However, the authorities will scrutinize the case thoroughly, and determine the real reasons behind the problem soon. They will find out who bears responsibility in the case, which can affect Myanmar's rice exports to a certain extent.

Sadly, this problem arose one year after Myanmar regained its former position as the world's top rice exporter. Meanwhile, the EU has imposed a safeguard duty on Myanmar rice in an attempt to protect growers in member countries.

Myanmar, as a country entering a strong market, has faced intense competition. There is strong competition in the African market, but it must remain fair.

Cooperation is required between the concerned ministries, organizations, traders, and rice millers to retain our top rice exporter crown.

■■■

Reforms of MONREC: Striving for managing natural resources as well as natural environment and ecosystems for benefit of both current and future generations

"Currently, 5.83 percent of Myanmar's land area is designated as a nature conservation area which totals up to 10 million acres. We are also decreasing our Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) gradually along with expanding our forest conservation efforts."

Union Minister for MONREC U Ohn Win

By Maw Si
PHOTO: KHANT MAW OO

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation strives for managing the natural resources including its forests and minerals as well as natural environment and ecosystems to the best of their capacities for the benefit of both current and future generations.

The interview with the Union Minister of MONREC U Ohn Win and other officials from the Ministry focuses the achievements and progress in third year of the incumbent administration.

Union Minister for MONREC U Ohn Win

Q: What are the direct and indirect ways the public enjoy benefits from the forests?

A: We recently passed two laws – Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law on May 21st 2018 and the updated Forestry Law on September 20th 2018 – regarding protecting the forests and the biodiversity within it. In the 10 year project to restore My-

anmar's lush green forest, 30,892 acres of plantations were planted in the financial year 2018-2019. We also expanded the protected areas for environmental conservation. Currently, 5.83 percent of Myanmar's land area is designated as a nature conservation area which totals up to 10 million acres. We are also decreasing our Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) gradually along with expanding our forest conservation efforts. The grass root forestry communities have started to form this year with membership upwards of 15,973 from 827 groups covering up to 90,000 acres.

The forestry is increasing its efforts on cracking down illegal logging. During the third year of the current administration, more than 44,830 tons of wood were seized along with 3,377 vehicles and equipment and 5,192 traffickers arrested. Last year, we were operating 12 elephant camps for tourism and have expanded to an additional 8.

Q: What about efforts to reform regarding environmental conservation?



Union Minister U Ohn Win plants the tree together with officials as part of the opening ceremony of the Office of the Yangon Region (South District) under the Department of Environmental Conservation.

A: We are trying to apply an intergraded approach for better environmental governance. The Union Government has approved programs on combating climate change, creating a healthier, cleaner environment with emphasis on conservation and biodiversity. The

focus is to build a sustainable environment that can be enjoyed by the current and forthcoming generations by reducing carbon emissions and implementing "greener" laws and policies.

Q: Any changes for the mining sector?

A: A new mining law was passed with the Union's approval on 13th February 2018 with another with revisions passed on 29th September 2018. We are now accepting application for new work permits stating July 2018. The regional and state governments are mandated to pay tax for the National Fund for small and medium scale projects.

In order to limit harm to the environment from mining activities, the ministry is working towards inspecting projects. Between Oct 2018 and March 2019, the ministry have inspected up to 354 concessions on their compliance to mine waste disposal, reforestation and other environmental laws.

The ministry is not only focus on minerals, but also sustainable environmental efforts taken in the pearl farming sector. The Myanmar Pearl Enterprise (MPE)'s pearl farm and international in-

vestment's national strategy revolves around combating forest degradation as part of the country's efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change. There are 53 reserved forests and protected areas and forested land areas covering up till 1 million acres. Over 25.31% of the land areas of the country are covered by forests totaling of 42 million acres. The Forestry Department has 5.83% of Myanmar's land areas as designated nature protected areas for conservation spanning over 9.7 million acres.

Q: What are some challenges of trying to expand forested areas and nature protected areas?

A: The biggest challenges have been squatters who want to get the Form 7 for farming. They simply do not think of the environment and are aiming to work for only their benefits so these kinds of problems are quite tricky to deal with for the Forestry Department.

Q: Can you tell us more about the percentage of forest area in Myanmar?

A: Forest area (% of land area) in Myanmar was covered at 42.92 % in 2015, according to the FAO calculation and we aim to increase the areas of forest coverage. In the 2018-2019 financial year, we extended 22,000 acres of land for plantations in which valuable varieties of trees such as teak, pyinkado (*Xylia xylocarpa*), pine, and paduak are planted. The department is trying to find the balance to sustain the industry while minimizing damage to the environment. We have sold seedlings and wood to state and regional governments in need for rehabilitation after natural disasters. Within the past three years, Kayin and Mon regional governments were allowed to buy up till 1,500 tons of logs and 1000 logs of teak.

The department has also sold to small and medium enterprises and communities on wood work several varieties of wood (not teak).

Director General, Forestry Department Dr. Nyi Nyi Kyaw
Q: Can you talk to us about the national strategy on forest conservation?

A: The incumbent govern-



Union Minister U Ohn Win inspecting the white lies mining project 2 in Baw Hseng, Kalaw Township.



Union Minister U Ohn Win inspects the lead refining plant in Baw Hseng, Kalaw Township on 3 February 2019.



Union Minister U Ohn Win inspects the inside of the antimony mines project in Hopone Township in southern Shan State.

SEE PAGE-10

Reforms of MONREC: Striving for managing natural resources ...



Participants pose for the documentary photo at the Regional Level Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA) Dissemination Workshop in Yangon on 12 October 2018.

FROM PAGE-9

Q: What about the community forests? How are local people involved?

A: With the help of local organizations and the public, the current administration was able to set up 320,000 acres of community forests and 610,000 acres of forest area. Results are great and very encouraging.

Q: Are there any existing and/or planned laws or policies regarding biodiversity?

A: We have submitted suggestions to the Attorney General's office regarding this. There are 5 year and 3 year projects that have been drawn. We have the Myanmar Elephant Conservation Action Plan (MECAP) for elephant conservation for the next 10 years. A remarkable achievement that deserves to be mentioned would be the first elephant museum in the Natural History Museum in the Yangon Zoo opened on March 3rd. The museum will hopefully help the people of Myanmar to understand the importance of both wild and domesticated elephants in Myanmar's economy, culture and tradition. Regarding research efforts, the Forestry Department have published up till 80 research papers with 25

international research journals throughout the 3rd year of the current administration.

Q: Any international cooperation efforts?

A: The department discovered 3 new species of ginger, 3 new species of orchid, 18 other plant species and 1 fish species. We are also researching on using pot tubes for cost efficient and effective farming developments. The research currently is entering its practical phase with the first seedlings to go in the ground this monsoon.

Q: How do you deal with illegal logging?

A: A lot of the busts can be credited to the cooperation between local residents and the authorities. We seized 128,000 tons of illegal logging with 20,000 arrested. The department is working with international organizations to implement a national mapping system project 2015-2023. FAO is also working with us so we can calculate CO2 percentage in the air accurately. The department is working with JICA on Managing Natural Resources currently being implemented in Inle Lake. The project is expected to last from June 2018- Dec 2022. A five-year project to replant mangrove forests is being undertaken State

coastlines with the help of the Danish government. The project started in June 2018 and will end in 2023.

Director General, Environmental Conservation Department U Hla Maung Thein

Q: What are the main functions of the department?

A: The Environmental Conservation Department works together with different departments for environment conservation and efforts on responding to climate change on a national level. There are currently 46 district sub-committees and 152 township level sub-committees under the central committee.

Q: Can you explain to us about the capacity building efforts and EIA inspections?

A: We are currently working with UNDP for our long-term capability building plan for our staff.

In the 2018-2019 financial year, we inspected 1251 projects to make sure they comply to our environmental laws and the international standards they claim to uphold. Our main focuses have been on the mining sector, oil and gas industry for their EIA compliance with the final draft on environmental guidelines for such businesses expected to be released soon. There are also in-

spections on wastewater management as well as air-quality management.

Q: What about cooperation with the international organizations?

A: The Green City Initiative is being implemented with US dollars 850,000 in funding from the Green Climate Fund and dollars 280,000 from others. There are also 3 projects regarding climate change with up till dollars 12 million funding. The World Bank is also helping set up a central environmental protection training center with 300,000 dollars.

Director General, Mining Department U Khin Latt Gyi

Q: What are some changes in the Mining Department in the 3rd year of the current administration?

A: We had the new mining law passed 13 February 2018 with bi-law in which medium scale and large scale mining concessions given out by the Union Government and small scale mining concessions given out by the state and regional administrations. We halted granting licenses temporarily in 2018 but we have resumed review and are now accepting applications.

Q: What are some achievements during the past year?

A: There were a total of kyats 845,371 million earned from mineral production, kyats 40,426 million Kyats earned from the jade mining, kyats 9,107 million from other gems and kyats 132,606 million from pearl farming. From April 2018 to March 2019, a combined mineral, jade, gem and pearl production earned up till kyats 1,027,774 million.

Myanmar Gems Enterprise, Director General U Aung Nyunt Thein

Q: Can you tell us about the 2018 annual gem emporiums?

A: We had two gem emporiums: one in June, 2018 sold in Euros and one in November, 2018 sold in Myanmar Kyat. Gem traders sold Euro 333.28 million worth of jade and gems in June and up till kyats 42,635 million worth of jade and gems in November.

Q: What are some policies for the future of Myanmar's gem industry?

A: We've had different aspects considered when writing the draft such as production, tax laws, valuation, the market, im-

plications on human resources and workers and environmental impact. There were also online public consultancy that took place with related committee, government and international organizations to get as much feedback as possible.

Q: Can you tell us a little more about the Gems Law?

A: Myanmar's Gemstone Law was passed recently and we are working towards drawing up the policies guided by the new law. Under the new law, there have been a total of 68 permits granted in the Katni Gems Area for artisan mining. Regarding granting permits in places like Mogok, Pa Kant and Mawlu Mawyan Gem Areas, we are trying to restrict the areas that artisan mining can take place by fencing and/or distinguishing the areas. Small scale and artisan mining are being supervised by Regional or State governments in consultation with the Union ministry.

Q: What about exploration?

A: The department participates in geological mapping using geophysics and geochemistry and other geological tools we can utilize. This includes working with labs here and abroad for assays.

U Khin Maung Win, Expert in Environmental Conservation

Q: Can you give us some comments on Myanmar's progress on environmental conservation?

A: The trajectory of Myanmar is positive. Global warming is a challenge for the world, including Myanmar. Organizations in Myanmar need to cooperate locally and internationally to combat this using laws, policies, public organizations and businesses. People needs to be educated on the climate and managing the environment – it is a combined effort after all. The government knows more than the general public of the health hazards posed due to global warming. I believe the government need to encourage the public to be aware of the hazards they can and can't see and work towards sustaining Earth for the future generations to enjoy. It is not the responsibility of the government alone -the whole country needs to contribute and work together to leave the Earth and its beauty we enjoyed.

Translated by Myat Thu



Participants pose for the photo at the ceremony to mark International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer 2018 on 16 September 2018.

Malian government resigns as anger mounts over massacre

BAMAKO (Mali) — Mali's prime minister resigned along with his entire government on Thursday following criticism over their handling of an upsurge of violence in the centre of the country and a massacre last month that left 160 people dead.

A statement from President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's office said he had accepted Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga's resignation and that of his government two weeks after mass protests erupted over the rising tide of violence.

Lawmakers from both ruling and opposition parties had submitted a motion of no confidence against the government on Wednesday, blaming Maiga and his administration for failing to clamp down on the unrest.

"A prime minister will be named very soon and a new government will be put in place after consultations with all political forces" from both the ruling and opposition sides, the statement from Keita's office said.

The president had on Tuesday said in a televised address that he had "heard the anger", without explicitly naming the prime minister.

The government had come under mounting pressure over its handling of violence in the restive Mopti region and espe-

cially a massacre on 23 March in which 160 people were killed in the village of Ogossagou near the border with Burkina Faso.

Members of the Dogon ethnic group -- a hunting and farming community with a long history of tensions with the nomadic Fulani people over access to land -- were blamed for the mass killing.

An AFP reporter at the time said many homes in the village had been burned down and the ground was littered with corpses.

The Fulani have also been accused of supporting a jihadist preacher, Amadou Koufa, who rose to prominence in central Mali four years ago.

So-called self-defence groups emerged in the Dogon community with the declared role of providing protection against the insurgents.

But the militia, called the Dan Nan Ambassagou, also used its powers to attack the Fulani, and was ordered to be dissolved after the village massacre.

Islamist threat

Tens of thousands of people took to the streets of Bamako on April 5 to protest against the upsurge of violence, accusing the government of not doing enough to stop it.



Malian Prime Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga's government was accused of not doing enough to stop an upsurge of violence in the centre of the country. **PHOTO: AFP**

The protest was called by Muslim religious leaders, organisations representing the Fulani community, opposition parties and civil society groups.

Mali has been struggling to restore stability since Islamist extremists linked to Al-Qaeda took control of the country's vast desert north in early 2012.

While the jihadists were largely driven out in a French-led military operation that began in January 2013, huge areas are still in the grip of lawlessness, despite a 2015 peace agreement with some armed groups that sought to definitively stamp out the Islamist threat.

Since then, militants have shifted from the north towards the more densely populated centre of the country, where they have sharpened ancient rivalries and ethnic conflicts that date back years.

Jihadist attacks have also spread to Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger, forcing tens of thousands of people from their homes.

March's attack was the deadliest in Mali since the 2013 French-led military intervention.

In the aftermath of the massacre, Keita visited the village and vowed to beef up security and enforce justice. — AFP ■

Journalist shot dead in N.Ireland in 'terrorist incident'

LONDON (United Kingdom) — A journalist was shot dead during riots in Northern Ireland in what police Friday were treating as a terrorist incident following the latest upsurge in violence to shake the troubled region.

"Lyra McKee was murdered during orchestrated violence in Creggan last night," Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton said in a statement.

McKee had earlier posted an image that appeared to be from the riots in the Creggan housing estate in the city of Londonderry, also known as Derry, accompanied by the words "Derry tonight. Absolute madness."

Images of the unrest posted on social media showed a car and van ablaze and hooded individuals throwing petrol bombs and fireworks at police vehicles.

"A single gunman fired shots in a residential area of the city and as a result wounded Ms McKee," said Hamilton, adding that police believed the gunman was a "violent dissident republican."

"We are treating this as a terrorist incident and we have launched a murder enquiry," he added.

Journalist Matthew Hughes earlier identified the dead woman as one of his friends.

"I just received the heart-breaking news that my friend @LyraMcKee was murdered tonight in a terrorist incident in Derry," he wrote on Twitter.

McKee had written for The Atlantic magazine and BuzzFeed News and was named by Forbes Magazine in 2016 as one of their "30 under 30" outstanding figures in media, according to her literary agent Janklow & Nesbit.

Leona O'Neill, a reporter with the Belfast Telegraph, said she had been next to McKee when she was shot.

"I was standing beside this young woman when she fell beside a police Land Rover tonight in Creggan #Derry. I called an ambulance for her but police put her in the back of their vehicle and rushed her to hospital where she died. Just 29 years old. Sick to my stomach tonight," she tweeted. — AFP ■

Protesters mass outside Sudan army complex

KHARTOUM (Sudan) — Thousands of protesters massed outside Sudan's army complex in Khartoum on Friday, piling pressure on the country's new military rulers to swiftly transfer power to a civilian administration, witnesses said.

The army on 11 April ousted

Sudan's longtime leader Omar al-Bashir after a months-long protest movement.

A military council which took power has so far resisted calls from protesters to quickly bring in a civilian administration.

On Thursday, exactly four months since protests started,

roads leading to the sit-in area were packed with crowds flocking to the army headquarters.

Activists mobilised demonstrators through social media to keep up the pressure for replacing the military council, now led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan. "Power to civilians, power

to civilians," protesters chanted through Thursday night.

"I won't leave until Burhan transfers power to a civilian government," said Wali Aldeen, who has camped outside the complex since the day Bashir was ousted.

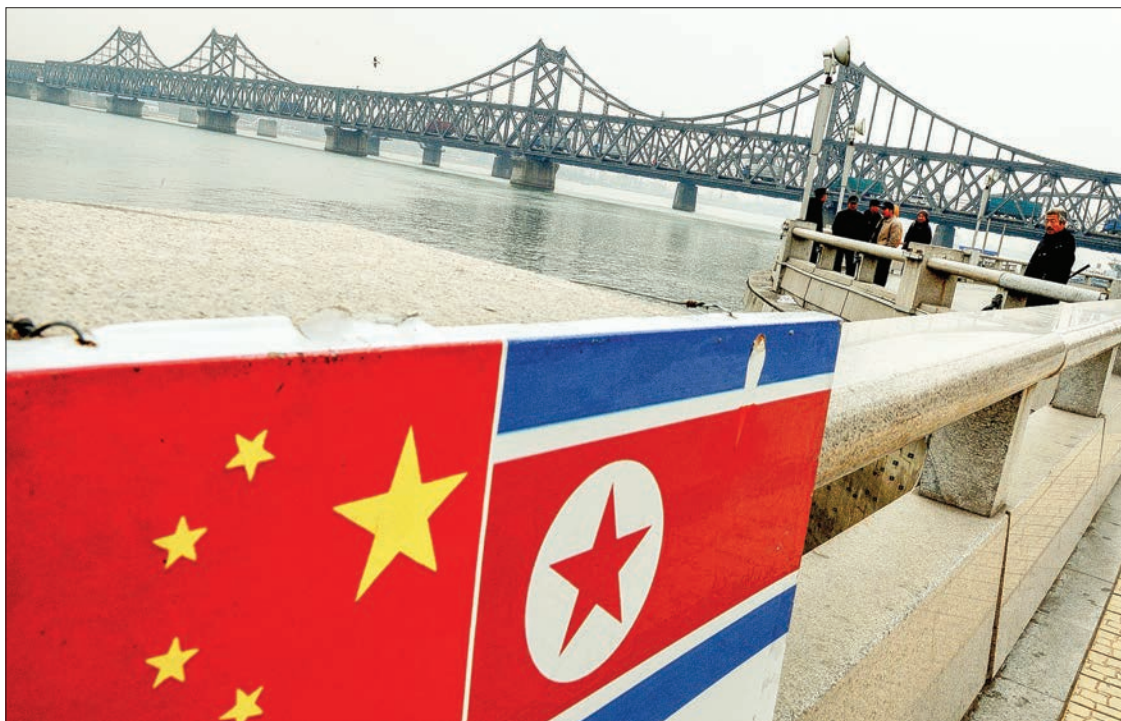
Activists have called for large crowds to gather after the weekly Muslim prayers, as on previous Fridays.

Protests first broke out on December 19 in response to the tripling of bread prices, swiftly turning into nationwide rallies against Bashir's three-decade rule. After his ouster, protesters demonstrated against General Awad Ibn Ouf who took over as the first head of the military council, insisting he was a close aide of Bashir and a top regime figure.

Ibn Ouf stepped down in less than 24 hours and was replaced by Burhan, who so far has appeased protesters by lifting a night-time curfew and vowing to "uproot" the Bashir regime. — AFP ■



Sudanese protesters keep up a nighttime vigil outside the army complex in the capital Khartoum. **PHOTO: AFP**



China said its 'neighbour North Korea' will be sending a delegation to a summit for its Belt and Road Initiative **PHOTO: AFP**

China invites North Korea to Belt and Road summit

BEIJING (China) — China said Friday leaders from 37 nations and North Korean representatives will attend a summit for its Belt and Road Initiative next week as it hit back at criticism of the massive trade infrastructure project.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's pet project is a \$1 trillion programme that includes maritime, rail and road projects in Asia, Africa and Europe.

The Belt and Road Initiative has divided Europe, and Washington has called it a "vanity project", but a growing number of nations are signing up despite warnings about debt and opaque deals that favour Chinese firms.

Italy became the first G7 member to join the scheme this month and will be among the 37 nations represented at the leader

level at the April 25-27 summit in Beijing, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi said at a press briefing.

Most other nations on the list have traditionally warm ties with Beijing, including most of Southeast Asia and eastern European countries that were former members of the Soviet bloc.

The United States has said it will not be sending a high-level delegation. Wang said that "China's neighbour North Korea" will be sending a delegation.

"This is very normal because it is an economic cooperation initiative... but (no countries) have the right to prevent others from participating," he said.

He did not say whether leader Kim Jong Un, who will meet President Vladimir Putin in Russia this month, would participate.

There has been growing con-

cern over China's Belt and Road ambitions, with many western leaders calling the projects "debt traps". Last year, Sri Lanka had to give a 99-year lease to China on a deep sea port after it was unable to repay loans for the \$1.4 billion project.

But Wang hit back at criticism, saying that those who are unable to do something well should not prevent others from doing it.

"This sort of mentality is unconstructive and not helpful to others," Wang said.

While some see the project as a geopolitical powerplay, Beijing has insisted that the Belt and Road is open to everybody.

"I want to emphasise that this sort of partnership is not a geopolitical tool, but a platform for cooperation," he added. —AFP ■

'World's smallest baby boy' set to go home in Japan

TOKYO (Japan) — The world's smallest baby boy, who was born in October in Japan weighing as much as an apple, is now ready for the outside world, his doctor said Friday.

Ryusuke Sekiya was delivered via emergency Caesarean section, after 24 weeks and five days of pregnancy as his mother Toshiko experienced hypertension.

At 258 grams (9.1 ounces) he was even lighter than the previous record holder, another Japanese boy who weighed just 268 grams when he was born last year. That baby was discharged from a Tokyo hospital in February. When Ryusuke was born on October 1, 2018, he measured 22 centimetres (8.66 inches) tall, and medical staff kept him in a neonatal intensive care unit.

They used tubes to feed him, sometimes taking cotton swabs

to apply his mother's milk to his mouth.

Nearly seven months later, the boy has grown 13 times in weight, now weighing over three kilograms. He will be released from Nagano Children's Hospital in central Japan over the weekend.

"When he was born, he was so small, and it seemed as if he would break with a touch. I was so worried," his mother Toshiko told reporters.

"Now he drinks milk. We can give him a bath. I am happy that I can see him growing," she said.

The smallest surviving girl was born in Germany in 2015 weighing 252 grams, according to a registry put together by the University of Iowa of the world's tiniest surviving babies.

The survival rate for tiny babies is substantially lower for boys than for girls. —AFP ■



Ryusuke Sekiya will be released from Nagano Children's Hospital in central Japan over the weekend. **PHOTO: AFP**

Bangladesh girl burned to death on teacher's order: police

DHAKA (Bangladesh) — A schoolgirl was burned to death in Bangladesh on the orders of her head teacher after she reported him for sexually harassing her, police said Friday.

The death of 19-year-old Nusrat Jahan Rafi last week sparked protests across the South Asian nation, with the prime minister promising to prosecute all those involved.

Rafi was lured to the rooftop of the Islamic seminary she attended where her attackers asked her to withdraw the sexual harassment complaint she

had filed with police.

When she refused, she was doused in kerosene and set on fire. Police said Friday that one of the 17 people arrested in connection with her death had accused the school's principal of ordering the attack.

The teacher "told them to put pressure on Rafi to withdraw the case or kill her if she refused", senior police superintendent Mohammad Iqbal, who is leading the investigation, told AFP.

Rafi had gone to police in late March to report the sexual harassment, and a leaked vid-

eo shows the local police station chief registering her complaint but dismissing it as "not a big deal".

Iqbal said at least five of those under arrest, including three of Rafi's classmates, had tied her up with a scarf before setting her on fire.

"The plan was to pass the incident off as a suicide. But it fell through after Rafi managed to come downstairs while on fire because the scarf burnt and freed her hands and feet," he said.

Rafi suffered burns to 80 per cent of her body and died in hos-

pital on 10 April.

But she recorded a video before her death, repeating her allegations against the principal.

"The teacher touched me, I will fight this crime till my last breath," she said. She also identified some of her attackers.

The case has caused outrage in Bangladesh, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina vowing that "none of the culprits will be spared legal action."

Rights groups say the number of rape and sexual assault cases has increased in Bangladesh because authorities have

failed to prosecute attackers.

"The horrifying murder of a brave woman who sought justice shows how badly the Bangladesh government has failed victims of sexual assault," Meenakshi Ganguly, South Asia director at Human Rights Watch, said in a statement.

"Nusrat Jahan Rafi's death highlights the need for the Bangladesh government to take survivors of sexual assault seriously and ensure that they can safely seek a legal remedy and be protected from retaliation," she added. —AFP ■

Extinction Rebellion: the green movement with global ambitions

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Activists climb atop buses, glue themselves to buildings and block traffic as Extinction Rebellion expands its campaign of civil disobedience.

The climate change pressure group has become a household name in Britain this week amid protests that have brought key parts of the capital to a standstill and seen hundreds arrested.

The organisation, formed by academics in Britain last year alongside off-shoots in dozens of other countries, vows an unrelenting tide of protest until governments act more forcefully over climate change. It wants Britain to declare a climate and ecological emergency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2025, halt biodiversity loss and be led by “citizens’ assemblies on climate and ecological justice”.

Modelled on peaceful protest movements led by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., it espouses non-violent “direct action” to achieve its goals.

Protesters aim to get arrested to draw maximum attention to the cause.

“I believe that breaking the law is necessary because it shows the population that something is wrong here,” Stuart Basden, one of the group’s organisers, told AFP.

“I want to demon-



These climate change activists feel it is necessary to break the law to force the government to act. **PHOTO: AFP**

strate my view that the government as it stands is criminally negligent... by allowing the system to continue.”

The 36-year-old former web developer spent a week in jail in 2017 for his protest activities and is now training climate activists on how to “mentally prepare” for prison if it comes to that. He said the movement now paralysing parts of central London had attracted people from far and wide in Britain, with hundreds quitting their jobs or university courses to join in. “We didn’t have to convince people, we just gave them the information,” Basden said. “They want to be involved. They realise how serious the situation is,” he told AFP. Manda Brookman, 53, is one such Extinction Re-

billion convert along with her 22-year-old daughter Ruby. They were among those blocking Waterloo Bridge this week, helping to place trees in pots along its length in the shadow of Britain’s parliament.

“I am ready to be arrested for the great of our children,” she said.

They were joined by 68-year-old farmer Oliver Paines, who was earlier this month among a dozen activists to stage a naked protest in the House of Commons in one of Extinction Rebellion’s most eye-catching events to date.

‘Next stages’

Launched last autumn with a series of traffic-blocking protests in London, Extinction Rebellion has quickly become one of the

world’s fastest-growing environmental movements.

It is now present in 49 countries, and attracted high-profile supporters from US intellectual Noam Chomsky and actress Emma Thompson to young Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg.

On its British website, the group says it receives “small donations” from individuals and “larger sums” from organisations like the Berlin-based Guerilla Foundation, which donated 18,000 euros (\$20,000) for its launch. “We have to create a system that actually is accountable, that works for the interests of the people and that listens to them,” environmental lawyer Farhana Yamin told an Extinction Rebellion press conference in February. —AFP ■

Kakapow! Rare world’s fattest parrot has record breeding season

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — The world’s fattest parrot, the critically endangered kakapo, has enjoyed a record breaking breeding season, New Zealand scientists said Thursday, with climate change possibly aiding the species’ unique mating spree.

Less than 50 years after the flightless nocturnal bird was thought to have been extinct, at least 75 chicks are expected to survive this year, Andrew Digby, a science advisor to New Zealand’s kakapo recovery, operation told AFP.

Digby oversees a breeding programme so precisely monitored that scientists can state the last of 249 eggs laid will hatch on Friday.

It will significantly boost the population which has grown to 147 adults

since a small number of the plump green, yellow and black birds was discovered in 1970.

Digby described the kakapo as an “unusual” parrot as the females control the breeding process and only mate every two to four years when New Zealand’s native rimu trees are full of fruit.

“We don’t quite know what the trigger is but one of the things we are looking at is that the rimu berry is really high in vitamin D, a super food basically, which is associated with fertility and health,” he said.

The rimu trees have produced a bumper crop this year with Digby saying one theory was that climate change and temperature fluctuations could be behind the berry bonanza. — AFP ■

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUZURAN VOY. NO. (035 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ALS SUZURAN VOY. NO. (035 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-04-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.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 INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (035 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (035 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-04-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/A.I.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V RHL AQUA VOY. NO. (914W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V RHL AQUA VOY. NO. (914W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-04-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/T.M.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 MCC TRANSPORT (S’PORE)
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V ELENA K

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ELENA K VOY. NO. (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-04-2019 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 FIVE OCEAN CORPORATION
PTE, LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

With Kim-Putin summit, Moscow eyes role in N. Korea

MOSCOW (Russia)—With Russia's Vladimir Putin set for his first talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un this month, Moscow is eyeing a major role in yet another global flashpoint.

The situation on the Korean peninsula seemed to be stabilising after a historic meeting between Kim and US President Donald Trump last year, at which they both backed de-nuclearisation. But a second round of talks ended in failure and Pyongyang this week said it was testing weapons again.

Now Putin, who has long expressed his readiness to meet with Kim, is gearing up to play a bigger role in nuclear negotiations with Moscow's Cold War-era ally, with which it shares a short border. Russia's main interest in the summit is to remind other players "that it exists and that it has economic and political potential" in the region, Andrei Lankov of Seoul's Kookmin University told AFP.

"Russia needs some sort of control over the situation on the Korean peninsula. Recent events have pushed out almost everyone apart from North Korea and the US, and of course nobody likes that," he said.

Russia has been inviting Kim for talks since last year but he was unwilling to spend time and resources on the trip because Moscow was not a major play-



This combination of files pictures made on 18 April 2019, shows portraits of Russian President Vladimir Putin (L) taken on 31 December 2014 in Moscow, and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un taken on 27 February 2019 in Hanoi. **PHOTO: AFP**

er, Lankov said. But now Kim is looking for all the allies he can get "because (the second round of US talks) were a failure, and he was not able to achieve the things he was counting on."

Moscow has relatively good relations with the reclusive regime, though these have deteriorated from Soviet-era highs.

Putin has expressed tacit support for Pyongyang, saying last year that "it seems counterproductive if we demand

everything from the North Korean side and in response they are given nothing". The US has accused Moscow, which provides some food aid to North Korea, of helping Pyongyang evade some international sanctions—a charge Moscow denies.

No breakthroughs expected-

The Kremlin however lacks the regional clout of Beijing, Pyongyang's sole major ally and biggest trading partner. China,

intent on keeping Pyongyang within its sphere of influence, has played diplomatic wingman to North Korea—even loaning Kim an Air China jet to travel to his landmark first meeting with Trump in Singapore last year. Russia's role in any global negotiations will likely be as part of a group with China and North Korea itself, Konstantin Asmolv, a Korea specialist at the Moscow-based Institute of the Far East, told AFP.

Russia's foreign policy focus remains on former Soviet states and the Middle East, particularly its backing for the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, Asmolv said. Lankov, meanwhile, said it was futile to hope for any practical breakthroughs at the Putin-Kim summit. "There will be declarations, promises, they will sign yet another declaration of intent to increase trade 10 times in five years, but after two years they will forget about it," he said.

The Kim-Putin summit is set take place before the end of April, the Kremlin announced Thursday, without specifying a date or a location. International media reported that the summit was set for Russia's far-eastern city of Vladivostok, which lies not far from its short land border with North Korea. There is also a chance that the talks will not take place at all: Kim pulled out of 2015 celebrations in Moscow for the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II at the last minute.

The last meeting between a Russian and North Korean head of state came in 2011, when Kim's father Kim Jong Il travelled by train to Siberia for tightly guarded talks with then president Dmitry Medvedev at a military base.

Medvedev said he was "full of positive feelings" after Kim Jong Il said his state was prepared to renounce nuclear testing. —AFP ■



Employees carry paintings saved from the fire that devastated the Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral in Paris towards a vehicle before moving them to a secured location on April 19, 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

Notre-Dame paintings removed amid lead pollution fears

PARIS (France) —French art experts headed into the stricken Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris to remove all the remaining paintings on Friday despite warnings from an environmental group that the site could be a toxic health threat.

Officials from the culture ministry were allowed into the 850-year-old landmark to begin retrieving the artworks after fire service officials declared the scorched structure safe enough to go inside. Firefighters and engineering experts have been working on the fragile landmark since a devastating blaze on Monday night, erecting scaffolding and other wooden supports to stop any of the stonework collapsing.

"The paintings inside the cathedral have been saved from the flames and can now be taken down and transported to safe areas," France's Culture Minister

Franck Riester told reporters at the scene on Friday. "All of the paintings will be removed today," Riester added, saying that he was feeling "very positive" given how most of the priceless canvases, many of them dating from the 17th or 18th century, had been saved. As firefighters inspected the top of the fragile southern facade, art experts began carrying out paintings from the cathedral in protective white film and loading them into trucks. The artworks were taken to the Louvre museum, a centre of restoration, where experts will repair relatively minor damage caused by smoke or water before storing the paintings until they can be returned.

Lead pollution?

But as the latest phase of salvage work took place, a French

charity warned about the possible health impact from the fire.

The Robin des Bois (Robin Hood) organisation said that around 300 tonnes of lead from the roof and steeple had melted in Monday night's fire, which according to officials had reached 800 degrees Celsius (1,470F) at its peak.

"The cathedral has been reduced to the state of toxic waste," the association said in a statement, calling on French authorities to detoxify the tonnes of rubble, ash and waste water produced by firefighters.

"Before launching a competition for the design of a new steeple, we should launch a competition to decontaminate what at the moment, alas, can be considered an industrial wasteland," it added. —AFP ■

Scientists unearth 220 million-year-old dinosaur fossils in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES (Argentina) — A site containing the 220-million-year-old fossilised remains of nearly a dozen dinosaurs has been discovered in western Argentina, researchers said Wednesday.

“There are almost ten different individuals, it’s a mass of bones, there’s practically no sediment,” said Argentinian

paleontologist Ricardo Martinez. “It’s very impressive.”

According to Martinez, of the University of San Juan, the fossils are approximately 220 million years old, belonging to “an era of which we know little”.

“This discovery is doubly important because there are at least seven or eight individuals of dicynodonts, the ancestors of

mammals, the size of an ox,” he said. He said there were also remains of archosaurs, reptiles that could be the ancestors of great crocodiles “that we do not know about yet”.

The find was discovered in September last year in San Juan province, about 1,100 kilometres (680 miles) west of Buenos Aires.

The site is between one and two metres (yards) in diameter and about the same depth, leading scientists to speculate it was a former drinking hole at a time of great drought, and the creatures died of weakness at the spot.

Argentina has been a rich source of fossils from the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous eras over the years — most, of creatures not found in the northern hemisphere.—AFP ■



The fossilised dinosaur remains discovered in western Argentina are believed to be 220 million years old. **PHOTO: AFP**

Researchers discover ancient giant ‘lion’ in Kenya

PARIS (France)— A giant lion with enormous fangs that roamed the Kenyan savannah more than 20 million years ago was one of the largest ever meat-eating mammals, researchers said Thursday.

A team unearthed the lower jaw, teeth and other bones of a new species, *Simbakubwa kutokaafrika* — Swahili for “big African lion”.

They calculated it would have weighed up to 1,500 kilograms and could have preyed upon the elephant-like creatures that lived there at the time.

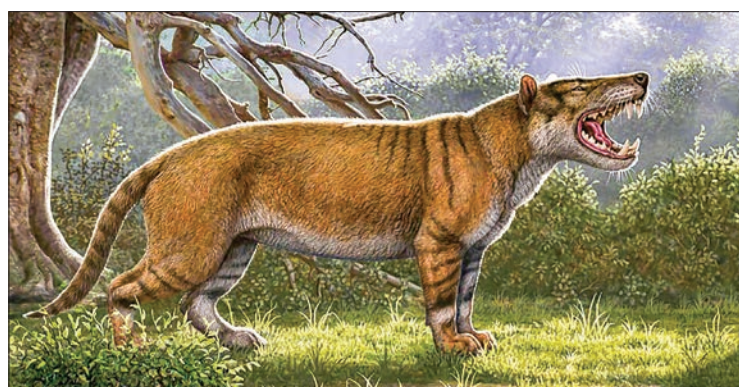
“Based on its massive teeth, *Simbakubwa* was a specialised hyper-carnivore that was significantly larger than the modern lion and possibly larger than a polar bear,” said Matthew Borths, from Duke University, who co-led

the research with Ohio University. An artist’s impression of the creature shows a giant big-cat-like hunter with stripey fur and enormous fangs.

The team behind the study, published in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, said *Simbakubwa* lived in what is modern-day Kenya around 23 million

years ago, a key period in the evolution of carnivorous mammals.

They said the discovery could shed light on how super-sized predators and prey evolved over millions of years around the end of the Paleogene epoch — the period where mammals grew from tiny rodents into many diverse species.—AFP ■



The lion would have weighed up to 1,500 kilograms and could have preyed upon the elephant-like creatures. **PHOTO: AFP**



China is aiming to achieve space superpower status. **PHOTO: AFP**

China to launch asteroid probe, calls for partners

BEIJING (China) — China plans to launch an ambitious asteroid exploration mission and has invited collaborators to put their experiments on the probes, space agency officials said Thursday.

The 10-year mission will involve a probe sent to a near-Earth asteroid to collect samples, said Liu Jizhong, head of China’s Exploration and Space Engineering Centre.

After the sample collection from the 2016 HO3 asteroid, the probe will return to Earth orbit where it will split into two.

A capsule carrying the samples will return to Earth’s surface, while a separate module will approach and orbit the comet 133P.

No timeline has been set for the mission.

A similar call was made for the lunar probe Chang’e-6, whose launch date will depend on the success of its predecessor, Chang’e-5, which will launch by the end of this year.

France’s National Centre for Space Studies said last month that Chang’e-6 would carry French experiments.

Originally scheduled to

collect moon samples in the second half of 2017, it was delayed after its planned carrier, the powerful Long March 5 Y2 rocket, failed during a separate launch in July 2017.

Two more moon missions have been planned, the Chinese space agency announced this year, with the ultimate goal of building a joint lunar research base.

China has ambitions of achieving space superpower status and took a major step towards that goal when it became the first nation to land a probe on the far side of the moon on 3 January.

At Thursday’s event, data collected from Chang’e-4 was handed to representatives from the Netherlands, Sweden and Germany, who had installed instruments on the craft.

China now spends more on its civil and military space programmes than do Russia and Japan, and is second only to the United States. Although opaque, its 2017 budget was estimated at \$8.4 billion by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.—AFP ■

Yale scientists restore cellular functions in dead pig’s brain

WASHINGTON — Scientists from Yale University restored circulation and cellular activity in a pig’s brain four hours after its death.

The study published on Wednesday in the journal *Nature* showed that some basic cellular functions were observed in the brain of a postmortem pig obtained from a meatpacking plant and circulated with a

chemical solution.

The researchers said that the brain showed no recognizable global electrical signals associated with normal brain function like perception, awareness, or consciousness, so “this is not a living brain, but it is a cellularly active brain,” according to the paper’s co-first author Zvonimir Vrselja, a neuroscientist at Yale.

Cellular death within the brain is usually considered to be an irreversible process. Cut off from oxygen and a blood supply, the brain’s electrical activity and signs of awareness disappear within seconds, while energy stores are depleted within minutes.

But Yale researchers found the small tissue samples could show signs of cellular viability

four hours after death as they connected the vasculature of the brain to circulate a uniquely formulated solution they used to preserve brain tissue.

They found that certain neuronal, glial, and vascular cell functionality was restored.

It is unclear whether this approach can be applied to a recently deceased human brain, since the solution used lacks

many of the components found in human blood like the immune system and other blood cells.

The findings have no immediate clinical application, but they may one day lead to ways to help salvage brain function in stroke patients, or test the efficacy of novel therapies targeting cellular recovery after injury, according to the study.—Xinhua ■

Hong Kong-Myanmar U-15 football match postponed due to heavy rain



A Myanmar youth player (white) and a Hong Kong youth player (red) vie for the ball during the U-15 football match yesterday, which has been rescheduled for today. **PHOTO: MFF**

DUE to heavy rain, the match between the U-15 football teams of Hong Kong and Myanmar was postponed yesterday, and will now take place today (20 April) at 1 p.m., according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

The Hong Kong and Myanmar teams played for 41 minutes at the match yesterday, with Myanmar leading the game by 3-0.

After 41 minutes, the game was temporarily suspended for half an hour due to heavy rain. As the downpour persisted, the

game was postponed by a day.

The game will resume at 1 p.m. (Myanmar Standard Time) today, with the same players and score as yesterday's match. The match will start from the 41st minute.

In view of this, the previously arranged match between the U-15 football teams of Myanmar and Malaysia, which was scheduled to take place at 1 p.m. on 20 April, has been postponed to 1 p.m. on 21 April.

On 22 April, the Myanmar

U-15 will play against the Singapore U-15.

During yesterday's match, Myanmar's goals were scored by Htet Myat Lwin at the 15th minute, Min Thu at the 19th minute, and Kyaw Min Khant at the 32nd minute.

Meanwhile, the match between Singapore and Malaysia yesterday was also postponed due to heavy rain. Before the match got suspended, Malaysia was leading the game with a 1-0 score. — Kyaw Zin Tun■

Durant fired up as Warriors rout Clippers

LOS ANGELES (United States) — Kevin Durant scored 38 points as the Golden State Warriors made sure they didn't blow another big lead by routing the Los Angeles Clippers 132-105 in game three of their playoff series on Thursday.

The Warriors ensured there was no repeat of game two, where they squandered a 31-point lead in the second half, allowing the Clippers to engineer the biggest comeback in NBA playoff history.

Golden State compiled another huge lead at almost the identical part of Thursday's game by taking a 88-57 lead with 7:10 left in the third quarter.

Durant made sure the outcome was different this time. He finished 14-for-23 from the floor and was just five points shy of his playoff career high despite playing only 29 minutes.

"He was aggressive from the start at both ends," said Golden State coach Steve Kerr. "He attacked."

He showed everybody who Kevin Durant is."

After taking just 24 shots and totaling 44 points in the first two games of the series, Durant came out blazing in game three, hitting his first six shots.

"The coach made some subtle changes. Other than that everybody stuck to the game plan," said Durant. Now down

2-1, the Clippers also will host game four in the best-of-seven set on Sunday. Stephen Curry, who battled foul trouble most of the night, supported Durant with 21 points for the Warriors. Lou Williams, who led the greatest comeback in playoff history with 36 points in game two, was held to just 16 points.

Also, Ben Simmons dominated on the inside and Tobias Harris fired away from the perimeter as the Philadelphia 76ers defeated the Brooklyn Nets 131-115 to take a 2-1 lead in their opening round playoff series.

Simmons scored a NBA career postseason high 31 points and Harris tallied 29 and 16 rebounds for the Sixers.

Philadelphia won despite missing all-star Joel Embiid, who took part in the warm-up but was unable to play because of a sore knee. Greg Monroe started in his place and finished with 13 rebounds and nine points.

Simmons shot 11 of 13 from the field and added nine assists while Harris was a perfect six-for-six from beyond the arc.

JJ Redick was five of nine from three-point range and had 26 points. D'Angelo Russell and Caris LeVert each scored 26 points for the Nets, who have dropped the last two games after surprising the No. 3 seed in the opener in Philadelphia.—AFP■

Juve look to bury Champions League misery with another Serie A crown

MILAN (Italy) — Juventus turn the page on yet another Champions League disappointment as they focus on sealing an eighth consecutive Serie A title at home on Saturday.

Massimiliano Allegri's side host Fiorentina needing just one more point to lift the Scudetto for a 35th time, days after a shock 2-1 defeat (3-2 on aggregate) to Ajax.

The Turin giants have won the Scudetto more than any other team in Italy with AC Milan and Inter Milan trailing second best with 18 each.

Five-time Ballon d'Or winner Cristiano Ronaldo will have to settle for a Serie A title in his first season in Italy after missing out on a sixth Champions League title.

The 34-year-old was incon-

solable after the defeat to Ajax and has remained silent on social media since, with his spectacular hat-trick in the last 16 against Atletico Madrid, and two diving headers over two quarter-final games against Ajax not enough.

"He told me he doesn't perform miracles," his mother Dolores Aveiro told the Portuguese press. "He was sad. He would have liked to get to the final but it will be for the next time."

Juventus can equal the record for the earliest the title has been won with five games to spare achieved by Torino in 1948, Fiorentina in 1956 and Inter Milan in 2007.

Juventus have won their last seven home Serie A matches against Fiorentina, but coach Vincenzo Montella will be looking

for a surprise on his return to the Tuscany hotseat.

Fiorentina have gone eight games without a win and have slipped to tenth, 13 points off the Europa League places.

"I expect a fierce Juve after their elimination from the Champions League, like all the great teams they are used to turning the page and starting again quickly," said Montella.

"We will, however, go without fear, also taking into account that next Thursday we will have another important match with the Coppa Italia semi-final against Atalanta."

Second-placed Napoli host Champions League hopefuls Atalanta on Monday after crashing out of the Europa League 3-0 on aggregate to Arsenal, with no Ital-

ian team now left in European football this season.

"We suffered a bit in the second half of the season but we

want to finish the season well," said Ancelotti, as Napoli are seven points ahead of third-placed Inter Milan. —AFP■



"Turning the page": Cristiano Ronaldo and Juventus can win the Serie A title after their Champions League exit. **PHOTO: AFP**