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President, First Lady travel to Viet Nam ahead of UN Vesak Day



President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho are welcomed by Vietnamese Ambassador to Myanmar Mrs. Luan Thuy Duong as they arrive at Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi, Viet Nam yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

PRESIDENT U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho departed by special flight to Hanoi, Viet Nam, from Nay Pyi Taw yesterday as part of an official working visit and to attend the 16th UN Vesak Day celebrations.

The President, First Lady and delegation were seen off at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung, Commander of the Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Myint Maw, Chargé d'affaires Le Gia Thinh of the Vietnamese Embassy, and

other officials.

The President and First Lady's delegation includes the Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture, Thura U Aung Ko, the Union Minister for International Cooperation, U Kyaw Tin, the Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance, U Sett Aung, and high-level officials from the President's Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The President, First Lady and delegation arrived in Hanoi at 3:10 pm local standard time.

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State Counsellor concludes tour of Magway, returns to Nay Pyi Taw



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi strikes a bell during a ceremony in Dipinkara Monastery in Natmauk Town, Magway Region. **PHOTO: THET AUNG**

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Natmauk yesterday and attended the consecration ceremony of a pagoda built by her ancestors. She also attended the handing-over ceremony of two newly built wards at Natmauk Hospital and toured the ancient town of Beikthano.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is also the Chairperson of the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races, attended the consecration ceremony of the Thitsa Aung, Myitta Aung, Pyinnya Aung pagoda inside the compound of Dipinkara Monastery in Natmauk yesterday.

Prior to the beginning of the ceremony the State Counsellor paid homage to the pagodas and donated offertories to Dipinkara Monastery patron Sayadaw State Ovadacariya Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Bhaddanta Sanda Bivamsa.

The State Counsellor also made cash donations for Dipinkara Monastery.

Next the State Counsellor poured water onto the Bodhi tree which was brought from Bodhi Gaya, India by Prime Minister U Nu and planted in the monastery compound on 25 September 1954 to honor the independent architect Bogyoke Aung San.

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Second Pyithu Hluttaw 12th regular session holds fifth-day meeting

THE fifth-day meeting of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 12th regular session was held at Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday morning. At the meeting questions raised by six Hluttaw representatives were answered by Deputy Minister for Defence Rear Admiral Myint Nwe and Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw. Two motions were also tabled at the meeting and the Hluttaw decided on a bill.

Questions and answers session

In replying to a question raised by U Khin Zaw of Kawthoung constituency on the legality of military and security personnel's surveillance of Hluttaw representatives, Deputy Minister for Defence Rear Admiral Myint Nwe said surveillance of Hluttaw representatives were just routine surveillance that does not violate the personnel rights of the individual and was not in the same manner or aim of conducting surveillance on suspected threats to the State, State leaders, properties and the public.



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat. PHOTO: MNA

A question raised by Dr. U Myint Thein of Nyaunglebin constituency was also answered by Deputy Minister for Defence Rear Admiral Myint Nwe.

Daw Aye Mya Mya Myo of Kyauktan constituency raised a question on the benefit to the State by Yangon City Development Committee operating a shrimp farm in Kyauktan Township. Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw answered that

Aung Chan Tha salt water fish and shrimp farm had earned an income totaling K 205.481 million from 2000 to 2019 while Kyauktan salt water shrimp farm had earned an income totaling K 429.618 million from 2000 to 2019. The incomes were credited into YCDC income accounts and were used for township wise regional development works, said the Deputy Minister.

Similarly questions raised

Dr U Myint Thein of Nyaunglebin constituency by U Kyaw Shwe of Yanbye constituency, U Sai Maung Pwint of Tangyan constituency and U Nyunt Aung of Monywa constituency were answered by Deputy Minister Rear Admiral Myint Nwe and Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw.

Hluttaw agrees to discuss two motions

After the asterisk marked questions and answers session a motion urging the government to develop region wise marketable crops in agriculture sector by establishing model plots with agriculture experts and provide agriculture technique supports down to the farms was tabled and explained by U Tun Tun Naing of Kani constituency. The motion was supported by U Nyunt Win of Kanpetlet constituency.

Another motion urging the government to increase the construction and usage of waste to energy plant and furnace that generates 760 KW of electricity by burning 60 tons of trash and garbage was tabled by U Nyan Lin of Shwepyitha constituency

and supported by U Thant Zin Tun of Dekkhinathiri constituency. The waste to energy plant and furnace was said to be jointly constructed by Myanmar and Japan.

As the Hluttaw decided to discuss the two motions, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced for Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the motions to register their names.

Announcement on decision on a bill

Later, the Hluttaw voted to approve the bill amending the Union Civil Service Board Law for the second time returned with amendment by Amyotha Hluttaw. As both Hluttaw had approved the bill, an announcement was made that Pyidaungsu Hluttaw was also supposed to have approved the bill.

The sixth-day meeting of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 12th regular session was scheduled to be held on 15 May. —Aye Aye Thant (MNA) ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Amyotha Hluttaw

Second Amyotha Hluttaw 12th regular session holds fifth-day meeting

THE fifth-day meeting of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 12th regular session was held yesterday morning at the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall where asterisk-marked questions raised by five Hluttaw representatives were answered by Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi and Hluttaw representatives discussed 2019 New Tree Species Protection Bill.

Asterisk marked questions and answers

In the first question of the session U Hla Oo of Sagaing Region constituency 4 asked if there was a plan to increase the monthly K 30,000 given to ethnic language teachers for teaching ethnic language in school for an hour a day Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi first clarified that they taught 20 hours per month and thus the payment to them was K 1,500 per hour. Of these teachers qualified ones were promoted to Teaching Assistant. At the moment there was no plan to



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

increase the payment amount of K 30,000 for ethnic language teachers but arrangements were being made with Ministry of Ethnic Affairs to employ more Teaching Assistants said the Union Minister.

Replying to a question raised by U Kyaw Myint Oo of Mandalay Region constituency 10 on plans to provide KG class

upgrades, adequate teaching aids, conducting sufficient trainings and providing opportunities for teacher, holding education promotion talks among teachers and parents for the success of KG+12 system, the Union Minister replied that KG Kits required for KG were provided while teaching aid materials, lab materials, libraries, sci-

ence materials and ICTs were provided for middle and high schools depending upon allocated budget. Education Colleges were being upgraded from 2 years to 4 years courses to ensure the upkeep of teachers, skills while discussions among parents, guardians, the people, Hluttaw representatives and state/region government members will be conducted said the Union Minister.

U Maung Maung Latt of Sagaing Region constituency 9 and U Bwe Khane of Chin State constituency 3 raised questions on plans to build new school buildings in Sagaing Region Tamu Town, Myoma Ward 13 Nanphalon sub basic education high school and Chin State Thantlang Township Aibu Village sub basic education high school.

The Union Minister replied that the school buildings will be constructed depending upon fund allocated for fiscal year 2019-2020.

U Min Swe Naing of Kachin

State constituency 6 on the other hand asked about changing the name of a basic education high school in Kachin State, Mohnyin Town and to build a two storey school building for the school. The Union Minister replied that the name change can be made by following set procedures while the school building will be constructed depending upon capital expenditure allocated for fiscal year 2019-2020.

Hluttaw discusses 2019 New Tree Species Protection Bill

After the asterisk-marked question session 2019 New Tree Species Protection Bill was discussed by Dr. Kyaw Than Tun (Canton) of Mandalay Region constituency 3 and U Soe Thein @ U Maung Soe of Taninthayi Region constituency 10.

The sixth-day meeting of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 12th regular session will be held on 15 May.—Aung Ye Thwin (MNA) ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

“Today, our country is still in poverty with necessities in every sector; which is why we need to carry on our struggle and work hard in all sectors. In the international arena, we are facing pressure, criticisms and misunderstandings. The challenges and difficulties our country and our people are facing today are many. Although every issue cannot be solved easily, we will have to make utmost efforts to solve these issues according to each priority sector.

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

“As I continue to state, corruption is the major obstacle for the rule of law and needs to be addressed. Addressing corruption is essential to delivering good governance. It relies on the “tone from the top” and each of you here today must consider yourselves responsible for setting the appropriate tone in a clear and forceful manner and remove opportunities for corruption. Government organizations not only need to cooperate with the Anti-Corruption Commission but also implement E-government functions with great effort. Cleaning up corruption is not a program but a culture. It is a culture that needs collective effort by the government and the public for sustainable development of the country.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the Conference on Justice Sector Coordinating for Rule of Law in Nay Pyi Taw on 7th March, 2018)

President, First Lady travel to Viet Nam ahead of UN Vesak Day

FROM PAGE-1

They were welcomed at Noi Bai International Airport by the Vietnamese Minister for Science and Technology, Mr. Chu Ngoc Anh, the Vietnamese Ambassador to Myanmar, Mrs. Luan Thuy Duong, the Vice Standing Chairman of the Viet Nam Buddhist Sangha's Executive Council, Most Venerable Thich Thanh Nhieu, Myanmar Ambassador to Viet Nam U Kyaw Soe Win, Military Attaché Brig-Gen Aung Zeya, and other officials.

Next, the President, First

Lady and delegation arrived at Sheraton Hotel where they will be temporarily staying.

They arrived at the Myanmar Ambassador's Residence in the evening and met with staff and families of the embassy and military attachment.

The President asked about the education, healthcare and processes of the embassy staff, their families and Myanmar citizens in Viet Nam and gave necessary instructions.

The President then handed over gifts for the families of the embassy staff and military attachment.



President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho meet with staff of the Myanmar Embassy in Viet Nam and the military attachment. **PHOTO: MNA**

Later in the night, the President, First Lady and delegation

attended the dinner reception hosted by the Myanmar Am-

bassador and his wife. —MNA
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Meeting held to discuss plans for the displaced in Rakhine

THE Committee for Supporting Peace and Stability in Rakhine State and the Rakhine State Government discussed issues

related with security, rule of law, stability, and construction of shelters for people displaced by the conflicts in the state,

ahead of the rainy season, at a meeting in Sittway yesterday.

The meeting was attended by U Aye Tha Aung, the

Chairman of the committee and Deputy Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw, the Deputy Chairman of the committee U Nyi Pu, committee members Deputy Minister U Tin Myint, Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint, Rakhine State Minister Col Phone Tint, Yangon Region Minister for Rakhine Ethnic Affairs U Zaw Aye Maung, U Nyi Hla Nge, Police Maj-Gen Aung Naing Thu, Rakhine State Advocate-General U Kyaw Hla Tun, Rakhine State MP U Maung Maung Ohn, Deputy Ministers U Aung Hla Tun and U Soe Aung, who were specially invited to participate in the meeting, and members of the Rakhine State Cabinet.

The Chief Minister of Rakhine State and the Deputy Chairman of the committee,

U Nyi Pu, made the opening remarks at the meeting.

The participants discussed matters related to the release of information about measures undertaken by committee member Deputy Minister U Tin Myint, who is also the secretary of the committee, plans for providing aid to people displaced by the armed conflicts in the state, and measures taken to allow local and foreign organizations to provide aid to the displaced people.

The meeting came to an end with concluding remarks by Committee Chairman U Aye Tha Aung.

Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and Deputy Minister U Tin Myint attended a press briefing after the meeting. — MNA
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)



Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung delivers remarks at the meeting between the Committee for Supporting Peace and Stability in Rakhine State and Rakhine State Government. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor concludes tour of Magway, returns to Nay Pyi Taw

FROM PAGE-1

The consecration ceremony was then held by Sanghas and Sayadaws led by Dipinkara Monastery patron Sayadaw.

Afterwards the State Counsellor and attendees took five precepts from Shwe Parami Forest Retreat Sayadaw Ashin Sandadika and listened to the recitation of parittas by the Sayadaws and Sanghas.

After the State Counsellor, Union Minister and Region Chief Minister offered offertories to the Sayadaws and Sanghas the State Counsellor and attendees listened to a sermon delivered by Dipinkara Monastery patron Sayadaw and shared merits.

The pagodas for which the consecration ceremony was conducted was built by the ancestors of Bogyoke Aung San and Bogyoke Aung San himself had acquired primary and religious education at Dipinkara Monastery for three years.

After the consecration ceremony the State Counsellor inspected Daw Khin Kyi Foundation mobile library.

From there the State Counsellor went to Natmauk People's Hospital to attend the transfer ceremony of the renovated hospital, a new emergency ward, a new outpatient department and the unveiling of a Bogyoke Aung San Statue. The hospital was a second Myanmar-China Friendship Hospital donated by the embassy of People's Republic of China (PRC) together with Myanmar-China Cooperation Center.

There the State Counsel-



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Magway Region Cabinet. **PHOTO: MNA**

lor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe, Magway Region Chief Minister Dr. Aung Moe Nyo, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Hong Liang and Myanmar-Chi-

water onto the commemorative plaque of the new ward and building, the State Counsellor toured the emergency and outpatient ward while encouraging patients undertaking treatments.

People must place emphasis on their health. With the renovation of the hospital, it was believed that public health care service will be raised.

na Cooperation Center honorary chairman cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the emergency ward and outpatient department.

Following this the State Counsellor and PRC Ambassador unveiled the statue of national leader Bogyoke Aung San.

After sprinkling scented

Later the State Counsellor attended the handing over ceremony where she delivered a speech saying the people need to have capabilities as well as being healthy. Thus people must place emphasis on their health. With the renovation of the hospital, it was believed that

public health care service will be raised. People need to avoid action that affects their health while health care personnel provide health care services with cetana (volition). She spoke of the importance of people having good health, discipline, responsible and perseverance.

After the PRC Ambassador explained about the reason for donations made, the State Counsellor presented document of honor to PRC Ambassador for renovating the hospital and building a new emergency ward and outpatient department.

Documents related to the renovation of the hospital, construction of an emergency ward, outpatient department and Bogyoke Aung San statue were then presented to Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe by the PRC Ambassador. Afterwards

Magway Region Chief Minister presented document of honors to Myanmar-China Cooperation Center that had assisted in the construction of emergency ward and outpatient department, Art Wave Co., Ltd that was responsible for the construction, China Sinopharm International Corporation for installing medical equipment in the hospital, Fujian Nanshan Group for donating the Bogyoke Aung San statue and 1976-1982 alumni of University of Medicine 1 group for donating a water tower and spoke words of thanks.

Cash donation by the State Counsellor and Ministry of Office of the Union Government was then presented to head of township health department by the Region Government secretary.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi views a life-size figure of Bogyoke Aung San at Bogyoke Museum. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presents the certificate of honour for the renovated Natmauk People's Hospital and construction of emergency ward to Chinese Ambassador Mr. Hong Liang. **PHOTO: MNA**

We are encouraging investors to consider public-private-partnership (PPP) mechanisms: State Counsellor

Video Message delivered by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor on the occasion of the Yangon Region Investment Forum 2019, Lotte Hotel, Yangon
10th of May 2019

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to address you on this occasion of the 2019 Yangon Region Investment Forum.

Now in its second year, the Yangon Investment Forum, and indeed, each of the various State and Region investment for a now being held throughout the country, have been designed to allow domestic and international investors to gain first-hand insights into the immense investment potential which Yangon, and Myanmar, have to offer.

It is our aim to showcase the many major reform initiatives now underway, as well as new services now available to those who seek to invest here.

My thanks to the organizers of this year's Forum -- the Yangon Region Government and Yangon Region Investment Committee, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, and the Myanmar Investment Commission, who have all worked tirelessly to make this event a success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With a population of almost 6 million, most of whom are working age and capable of meeting labor demands, Yangon contributes almost one quarter of Myanmar's GDP.

Yangon also boasts a total of 29 industrial zones as well as the highly successful Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

A wide range of new and exciting investment projects are set to be implemented throughout the Yangon Region, details of which were shared with over 1,600 participants at the Invest Myanmar Summit held earlier this year.

As I am sure you will agree, Yangon is the heart of enterprising Myanmar, and your investments here will be welcomed enthusiastically.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Just twelve months have passed since the inaugural Yangon Region Investment Forum was held, and yet, much has changed -- here at home, within our region, and at the global level.

Following strong growth throughout 2017 and into 2018, global economic activity has slowed down. Global growth is now forecast to reach just 2.9 percent in 2019.

Due to a broad-based decline in business confidence amidst policy uncertainty in many of the world's major economies, global conditions are expected to become even less supportive of emerging markets and developing economies such as Myanmar.

And yet East Asia and the Pacific remains amongst the world's fastest-growing developing regions.

For Myanmar, we seek to take full advantage of Asia's continued rise. Despite the multidimensional challenges that we face, I believe we have been successful in striking a careful balance between economic development and economic stability -- with the result that we have successfully maintained relatively high rates of economic growth while inflation has been tamed to a large measure.

An expansionary fiscal policy is expected to boost further growth in Myanmar in the short term, while a range of recent structural reforms are expected to support growth in the medium term.

According to data from the Asian Development



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. PHOTO: MNA

Bank, Myanmar continues to enjoy some of the highest growth rates in the region -- assisted in part by recent policy changes such as the adoption of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan, liberalization of insurance sector, liberalization of wholesale and retail trade, implementation of the Myanmar Companies Law and large investments in infrastructure projects.

As Myanmar continues along a pathway toward economic progress, a long-term vision, well defined strategies and detailed action plans which have been clearly identified in the MSDP are required to transform our country's economy. We must also ensure these development approaches remain flexible and adaptive if we are to sustain progress during these volatile times.

To complement our MSDP, and to provide further strategic guidance, we have also launched a new Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan, which seeks to attain dynamic and harmonious growth -- and to create a fair and prosperous society by promoting responsible and quality investment.

Trade and investment remain the two major drivers of Myanmar's economic development. Investment in our manufacturing sector represented 31 per cent of total investments in 2017/18 (compared to just 0.3 per cent in 2010/11). It's contribution to GDP reached 24 per cent in that same year.

As our manufacturing sector has expanded in correlation with what the IMF has termed 'impressive growth take-off and poverty reduction', the role of industrial parks has become increasingly important, opening up new opportunities for developers or investors or both.

Many successful initiatives are adopted in the Special Economic Zone to create a favorable investment environment. Once similar initiatives are successfully rolled out across the country, we expect further significant improvements in our investment climate.

It has also been noted that none of our enterprises, including industrial parks and Special Economic Zones already mentioned, will function effectively if the necessary supporting infrastructure such as power plants, water supply systems, waste water management systems, road and transport connectivity, etc... are not developed in an appropriate manner.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In order to attract investment for such infrastructure

necessities, Myanmar is developing our Project Bank which will eventually serve as a digital 'one-stop-project-information-center', where key information relating to strategic infrastructure projects planned for development are disseminated transparently that they might be implemented through transparent and competitive tender processes.

Once the development of the online database system is complete, access to key information will be available at the click of a button. This will enhance not only transparency but also predictability with respect to project identification and prioritization and will contribute towards creating a more secure investment enabling environment.

The Ministry of Planning and Finance and the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations have been leading the drive to streamline existing procedures and developing new SOPs aimed at simplifying and expediting the process of granting investment- and business-related approvals and permits.

In addition, the new Land Bank Notification is expected to come out soon and this will pave the way toward establishing a one-stop-land-information-center that will expedite the process of accessing land for our valued investors.

I am a strong believer in the power of collaboration to achieve Myanmar's development goals. While the public sector has a key role to play in establishing a strong policy, a sound legal, and regulatory framework, we must work together with the private sector to ensure that a responsible and sustainable business environment is maintained. The business community's investments, products, services and expertise are vital resources for Myanmar's economy and people.

In this regard, we are encouraging investors to consider public-private-partnership (PPP) mechanisms. The Project Bank Notification issued by the President's Office contains key information on how the government may support PPP projects, including through the offer of assistance that will make PPPs commercially viable through various blended financing mechanisms. We envisage that this will attract quality private investors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I urge you to see Myanmar as a country that has already broken free of international isolation, having turned a corner, actually many challenging corner and opened a door to a significantly better future for her people. We can offer you a people and a country eager for opportunities and willing to work for those opportunities.

I would like to encourage you to explore the investment opportunities available in the Yangon Region. Your support to Myanmar's economic development for a brighter future will be met with strong corporation on our part.

In conclusion, may I express my sincere appreciation to all for your commitment to supporting Myanmar's development. For those who are thinking of investing in Myanmar, we warmly invite you to come and invest here, in Asia's final frontier economy. For those who are already investing, please be assured that we are committed to the creation of a more favorable, facilitative, predictable and friendly business climate for your businesses not only to grow, but to prosper.

Thank you and I hope you enjoy the rest of the activities organized for today.

State Counsellor concludes tour of Magway, return ...

FROM PAGE-4

After the ceremony State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Union Ministers, Region Chief Minister and officials took commemorative group photo with Chinese Ambassador and donors who donated for construction works in the hospital.

From the hospital the State Counsellor went to Natmawk Town General Administration Department office meeting hall and met with Region Chief Minister, region ministers and officials.

At the meeting the Region Chief Minister and region ministers submitted matters relating to electrification of villages; giving priority to resolving farm land matters; distributing required quality seeds to farmers; potential of raising goats in the region; cleaning up Shwe Settaw Pagoda festival site; constructing road, bridges, drains according to priority; work processes for conducting vocational courses; maintenance and upgrading of river water lifting works; improving the Nay Pyi Taw side of the Nay

Pyi Taw-Kan Pya Road; effective and systematic usage of budgets without wastage; works to be conducted by Region government and works to be conducted by the Union government. The State Counsellor explained on how immediate works and works to be conducted in the long run will be handled and provided guidance and instructions.

After the meeting the State Counsellor visited Bogyoke Aung San Home Museum and signed the visitors' book.

Later, the State Counsellor and party left Natmawk by helicopters to ancient city Beikthano, a World Heritage site in Taungdwingyi Township where Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Kyi Min explained about the heritage site, excavation conducted and excavated ancient artifacts and objects.

The State Counsellor toured the Beikthano cultural museum, flew over and inspected the heritage site by helicopters and then flew to Nay Pyi Taw in the afternoon. — MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee holds meeting



Chairman of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee, U Tun Tun Hein, addresses the committee during a meeting on Bar Council Act, Literature and Arts Copyright bills. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Joint Bill Committee held a meeting on controversial bill amending the Bar Council Act and Literature and Arts Copyright bills sent by the President with comments at the meeting hall of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw D Building yesterday.

The meeting was attended

by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Bill Committee Chairman, U Tun Aung, also known as U Tun Tun Hein, the Joint Bill Committee's deputy chairmen, secretary, joint secretary and committee members, officials from Union Supreme Court, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry

of Education, Union Attorney General's Office, Myanmar Music Association and Myanmar Song Owner Association, artist representatives and officials from the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw office. — MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Yangon Region Government hosts Yangon Investment Forum 2019



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein takes part in the discussion at Yangon Investment Forum 2019. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Yangon Investment Forum 2019 organized by the Yangon Region Government and the Yangon Region Investment Committee, with the support of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations (MIFER), the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), the Myanmar Investors De-

velopment Association (MIDA), and PricewaterhouseCoopers Co., Ltd.

The forum was attended by Union Ministers, Member of the Myanmar Investment Commission, Chief Ministers and Ministers from States and Regions, Senior Government Officials, Head of Diplomatic Mission in Yangon, foreign and local investors, media representatives and

over 1,200 participants.

The forum was officially opened by Union Minister for Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and Chairman of the Myanmar Investment Commission. The State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi conveyed her best wishes for the success of the forum through a video message. In her message, the State Counsellor affirmed her

belief in the power of collaboration to achieve Myanmar's development goals: "While the public sector has a key role to play in establishing a strong policy, a sound legal, and regulatory framework, we must work together with the private sector to ensure that a responsible and sustainable business environment is maintained". The State Counsellor further encouraged investors to consider public-private-partnership (PPP) mechanisms.

U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and Chairman of the Myanmar Investment Commission delivered the welcoming remarks. In his speech, the Union Minister highlighted the reform made to attract investment. He released to the creation of the new Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and said "The creation of this new Ministry is a reflection of our desire to promote economic development and external investment through enhanced cooperation with the international community". The Union Minister also assured the forum that he would continue to listen closely to the business

community and to the broader community in order to better understand their needs and act accordingly - in the best interests of the people.

Subsequently, U Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of the Yangon Region Government and Chairman of the Yangon Region Investment Committee delivered his welcoming remarks. In his remarks, the Chief Minister said he expected that the Yangon Region is not only to be a major economic epi-center of Myanmar but also to be the investment hub of Asia.

U Khin Maung Aye, Chairman of Myanmar Investors Development Association (MIDA) also spoke words of welcome on the occasion. The opening ceremony was followed by discussions of representatives from the public and private sectors.

On 11 May, the participants of the forum will have the opportunity to visit Thilawa Special Economic Zone, Hlaingtharyar Industrial Zone and the MICT Park.

The Yangon Investment Forum 2019 is expected to promote further investment and to attract local and foreign companies to invest in Yangon Region. —MNA ■

Domestic fuel prices remain high despite fall in global crude prices

DOMESTIC fuel prices have remained unchanged despite the decline in global crude oil prices in the past one week, according to filling stations in Yangon.

The price of fuel has been on the rise since January. It stood at K160 per litre in early January and climbed to K240 in early May, an increase of 18 and 34 per cent in 5 months, said retailers.

According to filling stations in Yangon, the price of a litre of 95

Octane reached around K970 in the retail market on 10 May, while a litre of 92 Octane was being sold for K900. Diesel was priced at K1,000 and premium diesel at K1,010.

Fuel prices vary slightly between regions and states. A litre of 92 Octane is currently being sold for about K935 in Bago, K945 in Nay Pyi Taw, nearly K1,000 in Mandalay, K965 in Magway, K975 in Sagaing, K975 in Kayah State,

and K985 in Shan State.

Global crude oil prices increased significantly in the second week of October, 2017. The prices climbed to over US\$70 per barrel in October, 2018 from \$49 in August, 2017. In December, 2018, global crude prices dropped to \$42 to reach \$66 on 23 April. The prices then declined, reaching \$63 on 1 May and \$61 on 7 May.—Swe Nyein ■ (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)



A worker at a fuel station fills up a car with fuel.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

Trade through Tachilek exceeds target in April

THE value of trade through Tachilek, a border gate between Myanmar and Thailand, in April stood at approximately US\$4.8 million, exceeding the target of \$4.65 million for the month, according to border traders.

While exports were valued at \$1.53 million in April, imports were pegged at \$3.28 million, according to traders. Trade authorities had estimated exports of \$0.5 million and imports of \$4.15 million for the month.

The value of exports in April has increased by \$0.171 million compared with the same

period last year.

Myanmar predominantly exported onions, dried tea leaves, watermelons, tissue bananas, garlic, avocados, coffee seeds, oranges, bark, and manganese dioxide to Thailand.

Border merchants usually send products such as orange and bark to the neighboring country by using Form D, which provides tax incentives to exporters.

Trade authorities and merchants are making efforts to allow export of onions and garlic

to Thailand by using Form D in the future.

According to the Ministry of Commerce's trade report, the Myanmar-Thailand border trade through Tachilek was valued at \$41.65 million as on 26 April in the 2018-2019 Financial Year, with exports worth \$8.9 million and imports totalling \$32.75 million. While there has been an increase in the value of exports, imports through the gate have seen a decline of over \$10 million.—Shwe Khine ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Yangon Govt seeks investments in industry

By Nyein Nyein, Aye Yamone

THE Yangon Region Government has invited local and foreign investors to help develop small and medium enterprises, in addition to value-added agro industry and businesses, which will bring about technology transfer and benefit the local manufacturing industry, said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein.

Priority will be given to investments which ensure the rapid development of the economic infrastructure, services industry, industrial cities, special economic development syndicates, vocational training schools to hone labor skills, and create more job opportunities, he said.

At the Yangon Investment Forum 2019, held on 10 May at the Lotte Hotel, U Phyo Min Thein said: "Our priority is to invite projects on tourism and related fields.

Priority will be given to enterprises making investments within the country."

"With stable economic policies, Yangon Region has a number of profitable investment opportunities. The region is not only the country's economic hub, but it also attracts a major portion of international investments," he added.

According to the 2014 cen-

sus, Yangon has a population of 7.4 million, with 63 per cent of the residents employed in the labor force.

U Phyo Min Thein said the region is seeing an inflow of investments into the sectors discussed in the 2018 forum, including the development of industry, logistics, infrastructure, housing, and industrial zones. The 2019 forum covers more than 80 projects in Yangon, under the Project Bank.

According to an official investment report, over US\$22 billion in foreign direct investment has flowed into the Yangon Region since the 2011-2012 fiscal year, accounting for over 50 per cent of the total investment in Myanmar. As on March in the 2018-2019FY, investments by Myanmar citizens in the region have exceeded K8.5 billion.

Since the formation of the Yangon Region Investment Committee on 7 July, 2017, the authorities have permitted a total of 161 FDI projects, with investment capital of \$294 million.

Foreign fund inflows were seen in the industry, hotels, livestock, fisheries, and other service sectors. The committee also allowed domestic investors to run 30 projects, with investment capital of more than K65 billion. The investment projects created 96,725 jobs. ■ (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Japan's Aeon opens hypermarket in Myanmar



File photo taken July 12, 2018, in Tokyo shows Japanese retailer Aeon Co.'s logo. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

JAPANESE retail giant Aeon Co. opened a hypermarket in Myanmar on Friday, seeking to cash in on the growing retail sector in the emerging economy.

Aeon Orange Thanlyin Sakura opened in Yangon, the country's commercial capital, selling home electronics, clothing and other household products in addition to foods being already offered at its existing 14 supermarkets.

The 2,800-square-meter

store, Aeon's first hypermarket in the region, is triple the size of those supermarkets, according to an Aeon statement released Friday.

Aeon Orange Co., its local joint venture, was established in 2016 with local retailer Creation Myanmar Group of Companies and took over the 14 supermarkets in Yangon and Mandalay that had been run by Hypermart Asia Co., an affiliate of the partner.

The hypermarket houses

a roughly 200-sq-meter home appliance sales space, the largest level in the Yangon area, while providing shoppers with financing via Aeon Microfinance (Myanmar) Co.

The new store also offers local dishes, salads and desserts at a 70-sq-meter dining area. It is planning to introduce a bakery shop at the outlet, the statement said.

"There is further room to increase the number of stores in Myanmar as the country is still short of modern retail space," Masayasu Isozaki, general manager of administration at Aeon Orange, told NNA.

Aeon has been strengthening its foothold in Southeast Asia by expanding its store network, including large shopping malls and supermarkets in Cambodia.

The Japanese retail group's operating profit earned outside Japan accounted for 16.8 per cent of the total in the business year to February and it is trying to boost the ratio by stepping up business in Asia.—Kyodo News ■

Trade Mark Ads

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Creating opportunities for employment

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Chairperson of the Central Committee to Implement the Development of Border Areas and Ethnic Nationals, gave directions on generating employment opportunities in Magway Region during her meeting with local residents at the Magway City Hall on 9 May.

Since taking up office, the Union Government has prioritized job creation and has worked tirelessly to bring about socioeconomic development. Access to better employment opportunities raises the living standard of the people and reduces poverty.

The majority of Myanmar's population lives in poverty, and 70 per cent of the poor are residing in rural areas. This is why the authorities are working to help Myanmar climb from the rank of an underdeveloped country to a developing country. A nation's development is undertaken with the intent to reduce poverty, and the

Union Government has promised to employ wide-ranging strategies to eliminate poverty across the country.

Efforts were made to reduce the ratio of poverty to one-third of the population in 2005, one-fourth of the population in 2009, and just 20 per cent of the population in 2015. However, there is still a disparity between the poor in rural and urban areas. In 2015, the Union Government speeded up efforts to combat the 9 per cent poverty rate in urban areas and the 23 per cent poverty rate in rural areas.

Poverty results from a lack of economic opportunities and good employment options. It is common for people to migrate elsewhere in response to lack of rural development and poverty reduction. This leads to reduced development and increased poverty in their hometowns.

The Union Government is working to help migrant workers get work abroad legally,

and to make the process efficient and secure, as the workers work hard for the families they leave behind. The Union Government is also working to improve infrastructure and attract investments into Myanmar to develop the socioeconomic conditions of the country.

The State Counsellor has expressed sympathy for migrant workers who have to leave their homelands, and she often directs them to find work in their homes and be together with their families.

Nationwide, infrastructure has improved considerably and annual projects to achieve complete electrification are in motion. The authorities are opening the door for businesses and investors to come in and create an employment-positive environment.

We need to seize the opportunities the Union Government is working diligently towards to ensure there are ample jobs in villages and towns. We must work together to drive up businesses and investments, and implement the vision the State Counsellor has placed before all of us.

A Coffee for Peace and Biodiversity

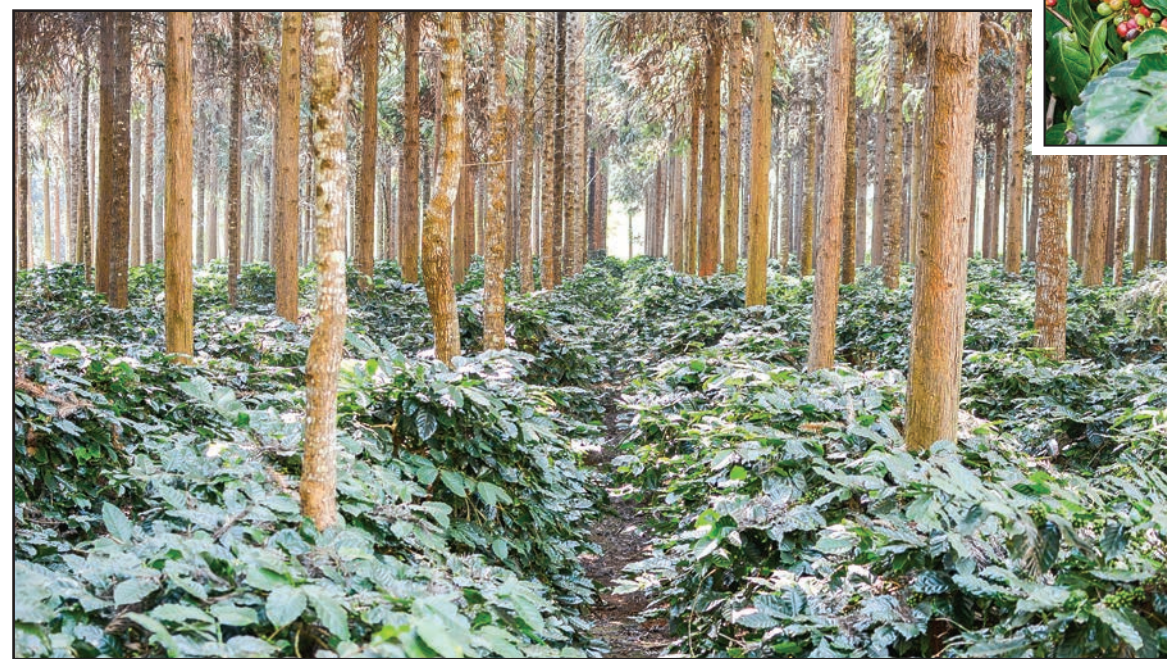
By Koung Mon

IT was a bright Spring morning in Paris.

A conference on "A Coffee for Peace and Biodiversity" was organized at the French National Assembly on Friday, 22 March 2019, launching a new line of high-quality coffee, Shan Mountain Coffee, by French coffee company Malongo under the patronage of President Mr. Richard errand of the National Assembly. Mr. Richard errand stressed on international fair practices in trade and food security; and Mr. Christian Jacob, Leader of the Republicans in the National Assembly and former Minister of the Civil Service, spoke about the importance of social progress, ecology and enhancing living conditions while preserving environment for the future.

Then, Mr. Jean-Pierre Blanc, Director-General of Café Malongo, explained how they have involved in the alternative development programme in Shan State of Myanmar. The Malongo Foundation is a well-known institution for helping growers across the southern hemisphere by bringing fair trade coffee to market, and is instrumental in sustainable development of communities from Haiti to New Caledonia to Congo. Finally, Malongo has reached coffee growing communities in southern Shan State of Myanmar! Mr. JP Blanc added that Malongo's involvement is not about charity or helping coffee producers, it is about business; still, they want to set up another kind of business where producers can live with dignity from their work, where consumers are satisfied with the quality.

Afterwards, Ms. Miwa Cato, Director of Operations for the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) programmes, explained how the UNODC has introduced coffee plantation programme in Shan State of Myanmar since 2014 to substitute opium cultivation for sustainable alternative development in the region. "In Shan State, this programme has not only provided livelihoods and increased confidence in governance, but also promoted environmental



Coffee plants are grown in the Shan State. PHOTO: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

sustainability, land tenure rights, and contributed to creating an enabling environment for peace," said Ms Miwa Kato, adding that the partnership between Malongo and the Green Gold Cooperative in Myanmar demonstrates how both public and private interests can merge to benefit small farmer communities.

Myanmar has always considered that a concerted effort is required at the national, regional and global levels to fight against the abuse of illicit drugs—production and trafficking of illicit drugs—a legacy of colonial past. In the past, the strategy had been to focus mainly on the destruction of poppy fields. However, in late 1980s, a new approach was launched aiming at social and economic development of the nationalities in the border areas. A 15-year elimination plan was launched in 1999 with the objective of stopping opium poppy cultivation and production by 2014. In the meantime, Myanmar has been cooperating with all her neighbours to harmonize its drugs abuse control endeavours.

The UNODC, a global leader in the fight against illicit drugs and international crime, aims to make the world safer from drugs, crime and corruption so that security and justice would be maintained for all, and assists its members in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism. The UNODC has been active in Myanmar

for more than thirty years, and its current Country Programmes in the country has been developed by UNODC in close consultation with the Government of Myanmar and all stake holders including development partners. A substantial and coherent programme approach was adopted based on project-based experience.

Myanmar has participated in the Global Partnership on Alternative Development Projects, which promotes sustainable livelihoods in several countries under the UNODC programmes. It is a remarkable stepping stone for the community of farmers that has made great strides in keeping themselves free from

their dependency on opium poppy cultivation.

Mr. Troels Vester, UNODC Country Manager in Myanmar, said UNODC was proud to have been part of the initiative that developed a brand new premium coffee product as a means for reducing opium production in Myanmar.

Finally, U Khun Maung Htee, Chairman of the Green Gold Cooperative, explained about the brief background of the Cooperative that is comprised of nearly 1,000 farmers across 55 villages as its members. Daw Nan Htwe, a beneficiary farmer and member of Pan Lin village's quality control committee, recounted how women play



Farmers plucking ripe coffee cherries at a plantation in Shan State. PHOTO: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

their role in the coffee growing business and how responsibilities have been shared with the Cooperative works.

The Green Gold Cooperative is working together with UNODC and Café Malongo to acquire knowledge and expertise about the coffee business, and establish sustainable plantations as a means of income substitution. The Cooperative celebrated a milestone in 2018 by exporting coffee to France as its first European market. This clearly demonstrates that the communities in the coffee plantation area of Shan State will benefit increase in income.

The emergence of Myanmar as a coffee producer is supported by UNODC's Alternative Development Programme, co-financed by two main donors, Finland and Germany, and with the additional support of Switzerland, which is giving resources directly to the Cooperative. Malongo has entered a five-year partnership with the Green Gold Cooperative and secured business opportunities under fair trade conditions including guaranteed minimum price, social and quality premiums, among others. The strategic partnership between Malongo,

the Green Gold Cooperative and the UNODC is a key to bringing peace, prosperity and sustainable development to the region.

Whether the Malongo is merely helping coffee producers or making charity, it is playing an important role in making Shan Coffee popular among European markets, especially at Malongo stores in Paris and Nice, hence contributing to the sustainable development of the people in the coffee plantation areas of Shan State, Myanmar.

As Daw Nan Htwe has rightly said on the occasion, if she kept on growing opium, she would not even imagine to visit Europe; now, with growing coffee (in place of poppy) as an alternative crop, she was able to visit Paris, the capital city of France, and to be specific, was able to speak at the French National Assembly.

Women who are participating in the programme as farmers, village level committee members and representatives in the governing bodies of the Green Gold Cooperative, are playing a crucial role. Despite some important advances, women still face challenges as farmers, community leaders, and mothers.

Challenges remain. It is the beginning of a lengthy path towards peace, progress and sustainable development. Still, it clearly demonstrates that when people change their mindset, receive support from friends around the world, and assistance from international organisations like UNODC, can transform a way of life, means of livelihood, along with new income source; thus turning a new chapter of life!

References: <https://www.unodc.org/southeastasiapacific/en/myanmar/country-programme.html>
<https://www.unodc.org/southeastasiapacific/en/myanmar/2019/03/alternative-development-coffee/story.html>



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 10th May, 2019)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 11th May, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region and Mon State, scattered in Bago and Yangon regions, Kachin and Kayin states, isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing and Ayeyawady regions, Rakhine and Kayah states. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-7) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon -Taninthayi Coasts and about (4-6) feet off and along Rakhine Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Region, Kachin, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11th May, 2019: Possibility of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (40%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11th May, 2019: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR Mandalay AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11th May, 2019: Partly cloudy.

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Rain or thundershowers are Likely to be isolated in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay regions. Weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon Region.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Wild elephants wreak havoc in Bokpyin

WITH their habitats disappearing due to the depleting natural forest cover, wild elephants have begun frequenting villages in Bokpyin Township and damaging crops, said local villagers.

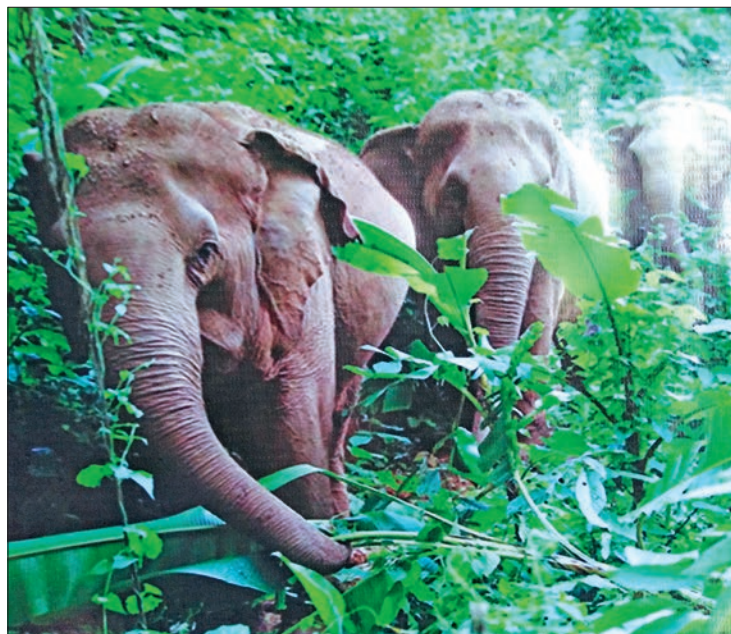
Earlier, the township, which is located in the Kawthoung District of Taninthayi Region, was covered in forests, providing a good habitat for wild animals. But the forest cover made the area difficult to access.

Now, the authorities have upgraded the road to provide better transportation. People have also extended the premises of their homes.

Additionally, the authorities have granted permits for timber extraction. The residents are also engaging in oil palm plantations on a manageable scale, thereby resulting in deforestation and loss of habitats of wild animals.

As a consequence, wild elephants have begun entering villages, looking for food. Sometimes, they forage for food in villagers' houses. So far, three villagers have been killed by wild elephants while they were heading home.

A group of around three to five wild elephants usually fre-



A herd of wild elephants raid villages in search of food in Bokpyin Township. **PHOTO: MYINT OO (MYEIK)**

quent the villages, according to local villagers.

"We are getting worried about wild elephants because they have begun entering villages these days. They are harming local villagers, and three people have lost their lives already.

We want the related departments and organizations to work with us to find suitable protection from the danger of wild elephants. We need to con-

serve the elephants as well as the forest. Now, wild elephants have lost their habitats as people have felled trees in large numbers.

So, the elephants are entering the villages. In my opinion, we should not fell so many trees and try to conserve the environment. If we fail to conserve their habitats, human-elephant conflict will become a huge issue," said Ko Zaw Chit Oo, a local villager from Bokpyin Township.

With regard to this issue, the Bokpyin Township's Forest Department held a workshop on wild elephant conservation and handling human-elephant conflict at the Bokpyin Township's General Administration Department on 4 May, in collaboration with Fauna and Flora International (FFI). There are around 2,000 wild elephants in Myanmar, and human-elephant conflict is becoming a major issue.

Such conflicts are especially common in Taikkyi Township of Yangon Region, Ayeyawady region, and Rakhine State. "According to a 2001 survey, there are 100 wild elephants in Taninthayi Region. They usually inhabit the Mawthaung, Kawthoung, and Bokpyin townships.

To reduce human-elephant conflict, the related departments need to cooperate with the local villagers and other social organizations," said Dr. Nay Myo Shwe, the FFI's Taninthayi Region project manager. Currently, the Forest Department is conducting an awareness talk on wild elephants.—Myint Oo (Myeik) ■

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Building 12 embankments in Mandalay 60% complete : DWIR

OF the 15 retaining walls planned along the Ayeyawady and Dohtawady rivers to mitigate the threat of riverbanks collapsing due to rising water levels, three have been built, while work on the remaining 12 is over 60 per cent complete, according to the Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems.

The Mandalay Region authorities began building the embankments in February, with the aim of finishing construction before July. Tenders have been issued to private companies to build some of the embankments. "We have to build the embankments while the level of water in the river is low. So, we need to finish construction before the



Embankments are being built by the Mandalay Region Government. **PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHINE**

rains. Some embankments are about 60 per cent complete. We expect to finish construction by the end of June," said U Hsaung Dine, the Deputy Director of

Mandalay Region's Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems.

The 15 embankments are being built in Madaya, Am-

arapura, Ngazun, Myingyan, Tada-U, Singu, and Patheingyi townships.

The regional government has allocated K5,000 million, while the Union government has granted K620 million for the project. "In Myitkyina, the water level in the river has increased.

In five days or so, the level of water may rise in Mandalay, too. We've pushed the project managers to finish construction in time.

The collapse of riverbanks can be attributed to human activity, in addition to natural causes," said U Toe Aung Lin, Director, DWIR, Mandalay.—Khine Satt Wai ■ (Translated by Hay Mar)

Illegal shipment of raw jade stones seized from train in Mohnyin

THE authorities seized 405 raw jade stones of different sizes, which were being transported illegally, on the Myitkyina-Mandalay train on 9 May.

Acting on a tip-off, a team

led by Sub-Inspector Zaw Lin from the Mawhan Police out post inspected the Myitkyina-Mandalay train carriage No. (GBHV-40700), en route from Mohnyin to Mandalay, and found the stones,

weighing 690 kg, packed in bags. Upon questioning, the train drivers, identified as U Thant Zin Aung and U Than Tun, said the stones may have been left by a man identified as Phoe

Kaw when the train arrived at Mohnyin station. The Mohnyin Township Police have filed a case against culprits under the Myanmar Gemstones Law.—Win Naing (Kachin) ■

MOPF Union Minister receives ADB's Country Director



Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win meets with Country Director for Asian Development Bank Mr. Newin Sinsiri in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win received a delegation led by the Country Director for Asian Development Bank Mr. Newin Sinsiri at

his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) supported projects undertaken

by public and private sectors, matters related to giving aid to Myanmar were cordially discussed.—MNA ■ *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)*

Three ministries to hold press conference in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and the Ministry of Industry will be holding a jointly press con-

ference on their undertaking in third one-year period of the government at the Office No 7, the Ministry of Information, in Nay Pyi Taw, at 1pm on 13 May.—MNA ■

Tatmadaw column captures AA member dead after landmine attack

A TATMADAW column was attacked with landmines during patrol and killed one member of AA in Rakhine State yesterday. They also seized one motorcycle, one grenade, two mobile phones, and accessories used for planting landmines, according to a military press release. Two remote-controlled improvised explosive devices were reportedly detonated while the Tatmadaw column was patrolling the Yangon-Sittway Union Highway. The attack took place at a site about 3,000 meters from Kyauktaw.

Following the attack, the security forces carried out op-

erations around the area and gunned down one AA member.

The AA has been planting landmines on roads in Rakhine State, targeting Tatmadaw columns and security forces, in an attempt to jeopardise rule of law and to cause panic among locals, according to the military press release. Since January, Tatmadaw columns have cleared 46 landmines planted by the AA. The Tatmadaw columns are continuing security operations in the area, according to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA ■

(Translated by GNLM)

Three migrants drown off Tunisian coast, dozens missing

TUNIS (Tunisia) — A boat carrying around 70 migrants from sub-Saharan Africa has sunk in the Mediterranean, leaving three people dead and dozens missing, Tunisian officials said Friday.

The bodies of three people who drowned in the accident were found Friday, a spokesman for the Tunisian defence ministry said, adding the boat left Zuwara on the northwestern Libyan coast on Thursday.

A fishing boat picked up 16 survivors, who were transferred on board one of three military vessels involved in the search and rescue operation, said the spokesman Mohamed Zekri.

A Maltese helicopter was also mobilised, he said.

According to those rescued between 60 to 70 people from sub-Saharan Africa were thought to be on board, Zekri added.

Interior ministry spokesman Sofiene Zaag said however around 75 people were believed to have been on board the boat bound for Italy when it departed Libya.

Italy's far-right Interior Minister Matteo Salvini has vowed to close the country's ports to migrants, although earlier Friday dozens who had been rescued at

sea disembarked in Sicily.

Rome's populist government has taken an increasingly hard line on migration, and Salvini, head of the anti-immigrant League party, last month signed a new directive banning charity vessels from rescuing migrants off Libya.

The Mediterranean is the "world's deadliest sea crossing" according to the United Nations refugee agency, with one person in 14 dying on the route from Libya to Europe last year.

The Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights NGO denounced in a statement what

it said were the European Union's "restrictive and inhumane policies" which it said led to the latest "human tragedy".

Libya, which has been wracked by chaos since the 2011 uprising that killed veteran dictator Moamer Kadhafi, has long been a major transit route for people desperate to reach Europe.

Over the past week, and despite a surge in violence following the launch of an assault on Tripoli by strongman Khalifa Haftar, Libyan authorities have rescued hundreds of migrants stranded at sea.—AFP ■



A child from a family of African migrants peeks out from a window at Libyan detention center, among thousands who have tried in recent years to flee to Europe via the North African country. **PHOTO: AFP**

Plaint filed against 4 for role in live-streaming Shwebo prison riot

THE police have filed a complaint against three inmates and a prison staffer for their alleged involvement in live-streaming a riot in Shwebo prison on 8 May on Facebook, according to an official with the Shwebo Correctional Department. When staff from the Correctional Department conducted a search on 9 May, the day after the deadly riots, they found a prisoner in possession of a Vivo-brand mobile phone with a sim card, said U Zaw Tun, the Assistant Director of Shwebo Prison. The prisoner was identified as Kaung Khant Ko Ko, also known as Kyal Zin Tun and

Kaung Khant Thu, he said.

During interrogation, Kaung Khant Ko Ko admitted that he had smuggled the mobile phone into the prison with the help of prison staffer Moe Kyaw Zin Aung. The department has filed a case against Kaung Khant Ko Ko along with two other inmates identified as Arkar Oo and Moe Naing, and Moe Kyaw Zin under Section 42 of the Prison Act.

Action will be taken against all four, said Police Captain Thein Swe Tint, the Head of the Shwebo Myoma Police Station.—Moe Thauk (Shwebo) ■ *(Translated by GNLM)*

Ukraine demands release of navy sailors held by Russia

BERLIN (Germany) — Ukraine on Friday demanded the release of 24 sailors and three naval vessels seized by Russia last November, in a plea to an international tribunal set to rule on the incident.

The case focuses on the fate of the captured sailors, who were manning three Ukrainian vessels off Russian annexed Crimea when Russian ships fired on and seized their boats.

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, in the German city of Hamburg, said it would announce its decision on May 25.

Moscow has said it does not recognise the court's jurisdiction.

Addressing the tribunal, Ukraine's deputy foreign minister Olena Zerkal called for the immediate release of the sailors.—AFP ■

Parent outrage as sick US teacher forced to pay for substitute

LOS ANGELES (United States) — Parents at an elementary school in San Francisco have expressed outrage after learning that a teacher suffering from cancer and on sick leave is having to pay the school district for her substitute.

The second-grade teacher at Glen Park Elementary is off sick with breast cancer for the rest of the year and has been paying nearly \$200 a day for her replacement, in accordance with state law, local news reports said.

“Parents were outraged and incredulous — like, this can’t be,” Amanda Fried, who has a daughter in kindergarten and another in third grade, told the San Francisco Chronicle. “There must be some mistake.”

A school district spokeswoman, however, told AFP that the payment was not unusual and was in line with state law.

“This is not unique to San Francisco,” Laura Dudnick said in a statement. “This is not a district-only rule.”

Dudnick explained that teachers in the district get 10



According to California state law, it is not unusual for a sick teacher to have to pay for their substitute.

PHOTO: AFP

days of sick leave a year and can carry over those sick days year after year if they don’t use them.

Once those sick days are exhausted, teachers are then eligible for 100 days of extended sick leave, during which they are

entitled to their full pay, minus the cost of a substitute.

On learning about the little-known provision in the state’s education code, horrified parents last month began raising money for the popular teacher, who

has asked that her name not be disclosed.

A GoFundMe campaign has raised nearly \$14,000 and some of the children are planning bake sales to raise more funds.

“I just feel sad that from what

I heard, she is a very good teacher and I just feel sad what’s going on (with) her,” Narciso Flores-Diaz, a parent, told NBC Bay Area on Wednesday. “Our school is pulling together to help her and to make her feel that she’s not alone.”

The GoFundMe page says that parents are supporting the 17-year veteran teacher as “she has nurtured our children and now it is time for us to take care of her.”

“Just a few days after her surgery, she took the time to write out 22 completely personalized notes to the students in the class thanking them for their support, telling them she missed them dearly and encouraging them to continue working hard,” the campaign said.

The head of the union that represents the teachers said the issue might be part of the next round of bargaining talks. “As always, we look forward to making improvements in this and other parts of the contract,” Susan Solomon, president of the United Educators of San Francisco, told the Chronicle.—AFP ■

Toy story: Asia’s richest man buys Britain’s Hamleys for \$88 mln

HONG KONG (China) — Asia’s richest man Mukesh Ambani has snapped up the storied British toy store Hamleys from its Chinese owners for \$88 million, the latest in a dizzying splurge of retail acquisitions.

Ambani’s Reliance Brands announced late Thursday that it had bought the 259-year-old toy retailer from the Hong Kong-listed Chinese fashion conglomerate C.Banner International Holdings.

“The worldwide acquisition of the iconic Hamleys brand and business places Reliance into the frontline of global retail,” Darshan Mehta, president and CEO of Reliance, said in a statement.

Ambani, worth some \$50 billion according to Forbes, initially made his fortune in oil refining and petro-chemicals but his Reliance empire has since branched into everything from telecoms to cable networks and tech firms.

In recent years he has massively expanded his retail portfolio, snapping up a string of well-known brands such as Burberry, Canali, Paul Smith, Armani, Just



The flagship Hamleys store in central London welcomes five million visitors a year. PHOTO: AFP

Cavalli and Jimmy Choo.

Ambani has said he hopes the consumer business wing of his empire will contribute as much to his conglomerate’s earnings as the core energy business by the end of 2028.

He is currently engaged in fierce competition with Amazon and Walmart in an ongoing race to dominate India’s retail market.

The purchase of the much-loved Hamleys will help bolster that fight.

Best known for its enormous flagship store in London

— itself a tourist attraction that receives five million visitors a year — Hamley’s has been expanding internationally since the mid-2000s.

Reliance already had a franchise agreement for India, running 88 stores in 29 cities but the purchase now brings him a total of 167 stores in 18 countries.

But while the brand is well-known, Hamleys has struggled. The £68 million (\$88 million) price tag is almost half what C.Banner paid previous owner, France’s Groupe Ludendo, in 2015.—AFP ■

Whistleblower says Facebook generating terror content

SAN FRANCISCO (United States) — Facebook is unwittingly auto-generating content for terror-linked groups that its artificial intelligence systems do not recognize as extremist, according to a complaint made public on Thursday.

The National Whistleblowers Center in Washington carried out a five-month study of the pages of 3,000 members who liked or connected to organizations proscribed as terrorist by the US government.

Researchers found that the Islamic State group and al-Qaeda were “openly” active on the social network. More worryingly, the Facebook’s own software was automatically creating “celebration” and “memories” videos for extremist pages that had amassed sufficient views or “likes.” The Whistleblower’s Center said it filed a complaint with the US Securities and Exchange Commission on behalf of a source that preferred to remain anonymous.

“Facebook’s efforts to stamp out terror content have been weak and ineffectual,” read an executive summary of the 48-page document shared by

the center.

“Of even greater concern, Facebook itself has been creating and promoting terror content with its auto-generate technology.”

Survey results shared in the complaint indicated that Facebook was not delivering on its claims about eliminating extremist posts or accounts.

The company told AFP it had been removing terror-linked content “at a far higher success rate than even two years go” since making heavy investments in technology.

“We don’t claim to find everything and we remain vigilant in our efforts against terrorist groups around the world,” the company said. Facebook and other social media platforms have been under fire for not doing enough to curb messages of hate and violence, while at the same time criticized for failing to offer equal time for all viewpoints, no matter how unpleasant.

Facebook in March announced bans at the social network and Instagram on praise or support for white nationalism and white separatism.—AFP ■

Influential excrement: How life in Antarctica thrives on penguin poop

WASHINGTON (United States) — For more than half a century, biologists studying Antarctica focused their research on understanding how organisms cope with the continent's severe drought and the coldest conditions on the planet.

One thing they didn't really factor in, however, was the role played by the nitrogen-rich droppings from colonies of cute penguins and seals — until now.

A new study published Thursday in the journal *Current Biology* found the influential excrement supported thriving communities of mosses and lichens, which in turn sustained vast numbers of microscopic animals like springtails and mites for more than 1,000 meters (yards) beyond the colony.

"What we see is that the poo produced by seals and penguins partly evaporates as ammonia," said co-author Stef Bokhorst from the Department of Ecological Sciences at Vrije Universiteit Am-

sterdam.

"Then, the ammonia gets picked up by the wind and is blown inland, and this makes its way into the soil and provides the nitrogen that primary producers need in order to survive in this landscape."

Braving bitter temperatures, the researchers waded through fields of animal waste — not to mention hordes of clamoring elephant seals and gentoo, chinstrap, and Adelie penguins — to examine the surrounding soils and plants using infrared gas analyzers that measured their respiration.

Samples brought back and examined in labs revealed that there were millions of tiny invertebrates per square meter because of the lack of predators in their environment — unlike in European or American grasslands, where the number may typically be between 50,000 and 100,000.

"The more animals we get, the larger the footprint there is, and we're

finding higher diversity in those sites," Bokhorst told AFP, emphasizing that species' richness was linked less with how cold or dry the region was and more to the nutrients added by the excrement.

Ultimately, the research allowed the team to map the hotspots across the Antarctic Peninsula, finding penguin colonies to be a proxy for biodiversity.

The maps can be updated in the future using satellite imagery to determine the size and location of breeding colonies, freeing future scientists from having to conduct treacherous fieldwork.

'Ideal natural laboratory'

For Bokhorst, Antarctica presented an "ideal natural laboratory" to study the relationship between nutrients and biodiversity because of the simplicity of the overall food web, in contrast to other parts of the world where ecosystems were far more complex.

"It makes it a lot easier to find driving factors,"



Braving bitter temperatures, the researchers waded through fields of animal waste — not to mention hordes of clamoring elephant seals and gentoo, chinstrap, and Adelie penguins — to examine the surrounding soils and plants. **PHOTO: AFP**

said Bokhorst.

But the study also underscored how interconnected the continent's ecosystem was — and therefore its vulnerability to human activity.

All countries working on the continent are subject to the Antarctic Treaty System, which obliges them to protect its wildlife, but Bokhorst said the study showed "if you

start poking at one end it will have an effect at the other end."

"You need to keep a good eye that you're not overfishing the oceans so you're not harming food supplies, otherwise you're going to have an impact for biodiversity," he said.

The peninsula's vibrant invertebrate communities face few predators, but the advent of

tourism means there is an increasing chance people could bring seeds or even insects with them.

These, in turn, could benefit from the soil enrichment and establish themselves, threatening the native species.

"That's a very good argument for why we should be careful with the Antarctic," said Bokhorst. —AFP ■

Minister promises clean Delhi air in three years

NEW DELHI (India) — A top Indian minister has made an ambitious promise that the government will clean New Delhi's toxic air in the next three years.

The World Health Organization ranks New Delhi as the world's most polluted capital, with the 20 million residents breathing air way above danger

limits for most of the year.

Transport and water resources minister Nitin Gadkari, plunged into a tense election campaign, vowed the megacity will be pollution free in three years because of measures the government has taken.

"Our government has done 100 per cent corruption-free, transparent, time-bound, result-ori-

ented and quality work and that is why Delhi will be free of air and water pollution in the next three years," Gadkari told an election-campaign press conference late Thursday.

"This is my promise to you," he said, speaking at the headquarters of the ruling conservative Bharatiya Janata Party.

Gadkari said the government plans to spend more than \$7 billion on infrastructure around the capital that would cut pollution by more than 30 percent. Two of the highways on the list are already open however.

Cars and trucks account for about 20 percent of the deadly PM2.5 particles in the city air that are blamed for heart and respiratory diseases. —AFP ■



The World Health Organization ranks New Delhi as the world's most polluted capital. **PHOTO: AFP**

Public Announcement on Contract Breaching by GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd. represented by its Director- Mr.Mak Siu Yung

This Public Announcement is made by the instruction of my client, Mr. Cao Duy Thinh, Managing Director, HOANG ANH GIA LAI MYANMAR CO., LTD.

Hoang Anh Gia Lai Myanmar Co., Ltd. (HAGL Myanmar) and GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd. (Globl Market Myanmar) signed and executed an Office Lease Agreement for Unit 8, Level 20, Tower 1 of Hoang Anh Gia Lai Myanmar Center Tower located at No.192, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon City, Myanmar.

However, GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd. failed to comply with terms and conditions as set out in the Office Lease Agreement and moved out from the lease premises without any notification to HAGL Myanmar. Pursuant to the Office Lease Agreement, HAGL Myanmar had issued and delivered to GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd. an official notice of default and a Termination Notice on 10th December 2018.

Termination Notice expired and GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd. had no response. Therefore, it is hereby announced that HAGL Myanmar will take back the Lease Premises after seven days (7 days) from the date of this Announcement.

GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd is requested to settle the **Overdue Amount of USD 26,602.91** (In words: US Dollars Twenty Six Thousand Six Hundred Two and Ninety-One Cents) and **MM 37,968** (In words: Myanmar Kyats Thirty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Eight) as the overdue Rent and Service Charge from 15/08/2018 to 14/11/2018 and Electricity bill from 03/09/2018 to 01/10/2018 and take back the office furniture.

HAGL Myanmar does request the GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd (Lessee) to take proper actions to respond to this Announcement cooperatively and settle the payments without delays.

HAGL Myanmar shall reserve the right to proceed with the necessary legal procedure against GL Global Market (Myanmar) Co., Ltd to collect the Overdue Amount in compliance with Myanmar laws. All right of HAGL Myanmar shall be retained as provided in the Agreement in any manner.

According to the instruction of my client,

U ZAW MIN SEIN (Advocate – Sr. No. 1903/1980)

No.561, first floor, MAC Tower, Merchant Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon.

Russia, Japan say differences remain over disputed islands

MOSCOW (Russia) — Russia and Japan's top diplomats said Friday there was a way to go before their countries could resolve a World War II-era dispute over a chain of islands, following a meeting in Moscow.

Ahead of talks, Russia's Sergei Lavrov said "significant differences" remained between Moscow and Tokyo's positions, despite several previous rounds of negotiations. "The task is not easy, it's clear it will only be solved by long, painstaking and creative work," Lavrov told journalists following his meeting with Japanese counterpart Taro Kono.

The territorial dispute centres on four islands, between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean, seized by the Soviet army in the last days of World War II.

The string of volcanic islands are called the Kurils by Russia and the Northern Territories by Japan. "Solving a problem that remains unresolved more than 70 years on from the end of the war is not easy," Kono said at a joint press conference, in remarks translated into Russian.

"It cannot be said that as a result of today's talks we were able to overcome these differences," Tokyo has refused to recognise Moscow's sovereignty over the islands, preventing the two countries from signing a peace

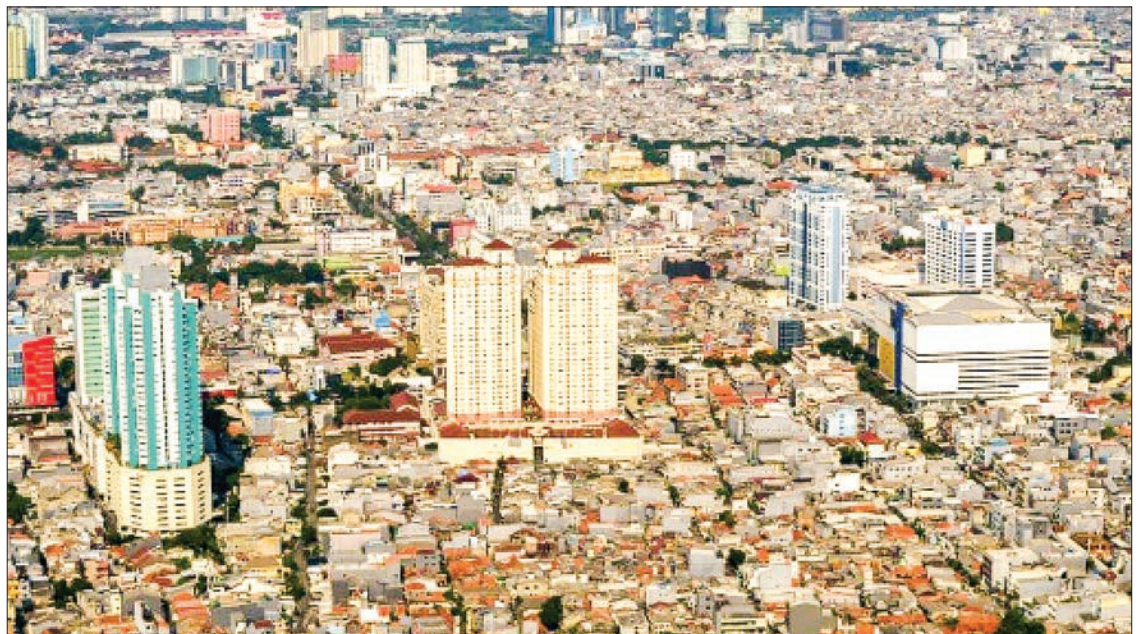
treaty formally ending hostilities.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President Vladimir Putin have made resolving the dispute a priority — meeting 25 times since 2013 in an effort to build cooperation. But both face domestic opposition to any compromise and at a meeting in Moscow in January fell short of reaching an agreement. A further meeting between the foreign and defence ministers of the countries will take place at the end of May in Tokyo, Lavrov said Friday.

Moscow has said negotiations should be based on a 1956 Soviet-Japanese declaration which calls for the signing of a peace accord before the possible handover of two of the smaller islands to Japan. But giving away even uninhabited islands would be poorly received in Russia, where World War II is hugely symbolic and post-war territorial gains are seen as non-negotiable.

Moscow in recent months has taken further steps to consolidate its hold on the islands, which are home to some 20,000 people.

In December Russia said it built four new military barracks in the Kurils, prompting an angry response from Tokyo. In February it said it had laid fibre-optic cables to provide homes and businesses there with high-speed internet access. —AFP ■



Jakarta is home to some 30 million people and is also one of the world's fastest sinking cities due to excessive groundwater extraction. **PHOTO: AFP**

Indonesia eyes moving capital from congested Jakarta

JAKARTA (Indonesia) — Indonesia is considering a plan to move its capital away from sprawling megalopolis Jakarta, officials said Monday, but any jump to a new city could still be years away.

The idea of moving Indonesia's seat of government from an urban conglomeration of nearly 30 million people with some of the world's worst traffic jams has stretched on for decades.

Low-lying Jakarta is also prone to annual flooding and is one of the world's fastest sinking cities due to excessive groundwater extraction.

On Monday, urban planning minister Bambang Brodjonegoro said the long-stalled relocation

plan won approval from President Joko Widodo who favoured moving the capital away from Indonesia's most populous Java island.

Jakarta, which suffers billions of dollars in annual congestion-and-flood linked economic losses, would remain the country's financial hub.

"(Widodo) decided on ... the option to relocate the capital," Brodjonegoro said after a cabinet meeting.

In a statement before the meeting, Widodo expressed support for the idea, but he did not give an alternate location or a timeline for any move.

"In the future, would Jakar-

ta be able to carry the double burden of being both the centre of government and its business centre?" he asked in the statement.

"If we prepare well from the very beginning, this great (relocation) idea could be realised," he added.

During his re-election campaign, Widodo pledged to spread economic growth more evenly in the nation of 260 million.

He won a second term this month, according to unofficial poll results.

Local media have reported that a possible new capital would be Palangkaraya city on the island of Borneo. —AFP ■

Four hostages freed in Burkina Faso by French special forces



The French hostages disappeared while on holiday in the remote Pendjari National Park in Benin. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARIS (France) — French special forces have freed two French hostages, an American and a South Korean in northern Burkina Faso in an overnight military raid that cost the lives of two soldiers, the French presidency said Friday.

The operation was ordered to free the French hostages, identified as Patrick Picque and Laurent Lassimouillas, who disappeared while on holiday in the remote Pendjari National Park in Benin on 1 May. The identity of the American and South Korean hostages was not immediately known, but they were both said to be women. The location of the raid confirmed that the French tourists had been kidnapped in Benin and taken over the border into Burkina Faso, where Islamist terror groups have stepped up

attacks in recent months.

President (Emmanuel Macron) "wants to congratulate the French armed forces for the liberation of the hostages, and includes everyone who worked alongside them," a statement from the presidency said.

"He bows with emotion and solemnity before the sacrifice of our two soldiers who gave their lives to save those of our citizens," the statement added. In a separate statement, Defence Minister Florence Parly thanked authorities in Benin and Burkina Faso, as well as the United States for its "precious support" in the operation. France has thousands of regular troops and special forces as part of its Barkhane force stationed in the poverty-wracked and violence-hit Sahel region of northwest Africa. —AFP ■

Pakistan turns to science, infuriating moonsighting mullahs

ISLAMABAD (Pakistan)—Imran Khan's government has drawn the ire of conservative mullahs with calls for a science-based lunar calendar to calculate the start of the holy fasting month of Ramadan in Pakistan, which faces an annual controversy over the date. The beginning of the ninth and holiest month in the Muslim calendar—as well as the Eid holidays and the mourning month of Muharram—is determined by the sighting of the new moon.

In Pakistan a cleric-led “moonsighting committee” announces when the fasting should begin, but for decades it has faced disputes over the accuracy of its decision.

“Every year on the occasion of Ramadan, Eid and Muharram a controversy starts regarding moonsighting,” Pakistan's science and technology minister, Fawad Chaudhry, explained in a video he tweeted on 5 May in

which he recounted watching the committee use “old technology”—telescopes—to make their calculations. “When modern means are available and we can determine a final date, the question is why we should not use this latest technology?” he argued.

His ministry will form a new committee of scientists, meteorologists and Pakistan's space agency to calculate the correct dates for the next five years with “100 per cent accuracy”.

However the prime minister's cabinet can reject the calendar, he added. In another tweet he warned decisions on how the country should be run “cannot be left to the maulana (clerics)”.

“The journey ahead has to be undertaken by the youth, not mullahs, and only technology can take the nation forward.” Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman, head of the moonsighting committee, warned that Chaudhry should stay in his



The sighting of the new moon in Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, signals the start of fasting. **PHOTO: AFP**

lane. “I have appealed to Prime Minister Imran Khan that only the concerned minister should talk about religious matters,” he said in a press conference in Karachi. “Every minister who does not know the sensitivity of the religion, does not understand it, they should not get the free licence to comment on religious matters.” He also pointed out that the committee already has mem-

bers from the space agency, and also works with the meteorological department.

Over the years the committee's chief foe has been Maulana Shahabuddin Popalzai, an influential cleric based in Peshawar—the capital of northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province—who announces the start of Ramadan and Eid a day earlier than the moonsighting commit-

tee. The split is considered bad for national unity and social harmony—but years of efforts to reconcile Popalzai with the central committee have been in vain.

Chaudhry's announcement has ignited an ongoing debate in Pakistan. Many social media users thanked the government for attempting to provide some clarity, but others saw the dark side. —AFP ■

Remains of Nazi victims to be buried in Berlin, decades late

BERLIN (Germany)—More than seven decades after the end of World War II, the remains of political prisoners executed by the Nazis and dissected for research will be given a proper burial in Berlin.

The microscopic remains—300 tissue samples each a hundredth of a millimetre thin and around one by one centimetre large—were uncovered by the descendants of the late Hermann Stieve, an anatomist who worked on the bodies of Third Reich opponents. “Such small tissue samples are usually not deemed worthy of burial,” Andreas Winkelmann, who had been tasked to determine the origin of the histological samples, told AFP.

“But this is a special story, because they came from people who were actively denied graves so that their relatives would not know where they are buried.”

A ceremony will be held on Monday with descendants of the Nazi victims expected to attend, before the remains are finally laid to rest at the Dorotheenstadt cemetery in central Berlin.

The site had been picked as there are many graves and memorials for the victims of Nazism there, said Johannes Tuchel, director of the German Resistance



Andreas Winkelmann, head of Brandenburg's Institute of Anatomy, was tasked with determining the samples' origin. **PHOTO: AFP**

Memorial Centre, which is organising the special event along with Berlin's university hospital Charité. Tuchel said a decision was made to bury the specimens as they are “the last remains of people who were victims of the Nazi unjust justice system”.

“They were denied a grave at that time, and so today, a burial is a matter of course.”

‘Cold-hearted’

A plaque will also be put up to explain the find.

More than 2,800 people held at Berlin-Ploetzensee prison were put to the guillotine or hanged between 1933 and 1945, and most were then sent for dissection at the Berlin Institute of

Anatomy.

Most of the 300 specimens found in Stieve's estate stemmed from women, adds the plaque, which would however not list the names of individual victims at the request of relatives.

Winkelmann, who had done extensive research into Stieve and his controversial experiments, said it was unclear how many individuals' remains were included in the batch of specimens. Some 20 specimens came with names, others only numbers.

The clues have however helped draw a firm link with the Ploetzensee victims. Crucially for the history books, the specimens each set on two by seven centime-

tre (0.8 by 2.7 inch) glass plates provided rare concrete proof that prisoners' bodies were sent for dissection.

Stieve was the director from 1935 to 1952 of the Berlin Institute of Anatomy, where he carried out his controversial research on the female reproductive system.

Some of his scientific insights derived from histological probes on the genital organs of executed women. Among those executed at Ploetzensee were 42 resistance fighters from the Berlin group Red Orchestra.

Stieve is believed to have dissected at least 13 of 18 female Red Orchestra fighters executed. He was never charged with a crime and continued his career after the war like many other scientists who collaborated with the Nazis.

Only the highest-ranking physicians under the Third Reich were prosecuted at Nuremberg in the so-called Doctors' trial for grotesque human experimentation and mass murder under the “euthanasia” programme. Winkelmann said it was particularly “objectionable” that while Stieve did not directly experiment on live victims, he was examining the physical impact of fear experienced by the women sitting on death row. —AFP ■

NASA observation shows universe's earliest galaxies brighter than expected

LOS ANGELES—NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope has revealed that some of the universe's earliest galaxies were brighter than expected, NASA said Wednesday.

According to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), the excess light is a byproduct of the galaxies releasing incredibly high amounts of ionizing radiation.

The finding offers clues to the cause of the Epoch of Reionization, a major cosmic event that transformed the universe from being mostly opaque to the brilliant star-scape seen today, said JPL in a release.

In the new study, researchers report on observations of some of the first galaxies to form in the universe, less than one billion years after the big bang. The data show that in a few specific wavelengths of infrared light, the galaxies are considerably brighter than scientists anticipated. —AFP ■

AFF U-15 Girls' Championship: Myanmar trounce Timor Leste 26-0



Myanmar's Zin Moe Pyae (No.7) vies for the ball pass against the Timor Leste defender during the Group A match of the AFF U-15 Girls' Championship 2019 at Chonburi, Thailand. **PHOTO: MFF**

MYANMAR routed Timor Leste 26-0 in the Group A match of the AFF U-15 Girls' Championship 2019 at the Institute of Physical Education Chonburi Campus Stadium in Chonburi, Thailand yesterday.

Myanmar lined up with goalkeeper May Oo Khin, Phyu Phwe, Khin Htay Kyang, Mary Oo, Aye Htet Htet Paing, Zin Moe Pyae, Htoo Theingi Naing, Su Myat Noe, Captain Than Than Soe, Phyo Phyo Wai, and Yu Ya Naing.

The Myanmar girls dominated the match right from the start, with quick attacks and long passes, which Timor's young defenders found hard to deflect.

Team Myanmar made their

first goal at 5 minutes. The goal was scored by Yu Ya Naing.

It was a one-sided match for Myanmar till the final whistle, with the team scoring more than two dozen goals. Striker Su Myat Noe emerged as the team's top scorer with seven goals, scored at 17th, 30th, 38th, 57th, 58th, 62nd, and 77th minute.

Yu Ya Naing made five goals for the team at the 5th, 27th, 40th, 44th, and 86th minute, while Captain Than Than Soe landed four goals at the 3rd, 19th, 21st, and 24th minute.

Meanwhile, Zin Moe Pyae made three goals at the 7th, 28th, and 36th minute, and Htoo Theingi Naing scored two goals at the

23rd and 34th minute. Nan Cho Hmwe scored a single goal at the 59th minute, Paing Phyo Hsu at the 65th minute, Aye Htet Htet Paing at the 67th, and Wai Hin Phyo at the 80th. Unluckily, Timor's Xenia Maria Soares Pinto scored their own goal at the 68th minute. Speaking about Myanmar's victory, head coach May Thu Tun said: "I am pleased with the win. Our team scored many goals as the opponent were not strong at the start. We will focus on the next two decisive matches and hope to advance to the next stages with the team improving with every match." Myanmar will next play against the Philippines on 12 May.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

We will do our best, says Yangon midfielder Mg Mg Lwin

SPEAKING about the derby match against Shan United scheduled today, Yangon United midfielder Mg Mg Lwin said his team has trained hard for taking the top spot as the half season champions, according to a statement from Yangon United.

Yangon United, which is leading the table, will host fourth-placed Shan United on their home turf in a decisive march of the MPT Myanmar National League 2019.

Reliable Yangon United midfielder Mg Mg Lwin said: "We need to win Saturday's match against Shan United as we want to sit on the top of the table. We have reviewed the mistakes we made in the last match and believe we can win." Looking back on last year's National League matches, Yangon United won one match at home, but its away match against Shan United ended

in a draw. "Shan United drew the last match against Southern Myanmar. Thus, the team will prepare hard to put in their best performance. And, it will be entertaining to watch two big teams play in the Myanmar National League. We will do our best to score the full three points," said Mg Mg Lwin. "We will become the half season champions if we beat Shan United. So, we are ready and eager to play. I would like to invite fans to come and enjoy our matches," he added.

Yangon United is currently placed at the top of the table with 20 points. It has had 6 wins, 2 draws, 2 losses in 10 matches played. Shan United stands at the fourth place with 18 points from 4 wins and 6 draws in 10 matches played. With just a two-point difference, both teams can hope for the title of half season champions.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Man Utd hand Phelan permanent deal, eye James as first summer signing

MANCHESTER (United Kingdom)—Manchester United confirmed Mike Phelan as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's permanent assistant manager on a three-year deal on Friday, ending speculation he could become the club's technical director. Meanwhile, reports linked the club to Wales winger Daniel James. Phelan took up the role on a temporary basis when Solskjaer was appointed caretaker-manager on December 19.

When Solskjaer signed a three-year contract as manager on March 28 after winning 14 out of his first 19 matches, Phelan did not immediately do the same as assistant manager. Reports at the time suggested he could become technical director and lead a change in direction to the club's scouting and recruitment. However, the former Hull manager, who was under contract to Australian club Central Coast Mariners as sporting director when he initially joined Solskjaer at Old Trafford, has now agreed a deal. "I think he's fantastic at his job. I'm very pleased that it's finally been agreed," said Solskjaer, whose side have suffered an alarming dip in form since his ap-

pointment was made permanent.

"When Ed [Woodward, United's executive vice-chairman] rang me, Mick was my first port of call to assist me." Phelan has a long history with United, having signed as a player in 1989, spending five years at Old Trafford, then returning to the coaching staff for a 12-year spell under Sir Alex Ferguson from 2001. Solskjaer, who played for United during that time, suggested that Phelan's experience and in-depth knowledge of the club were invaluable.

"I played here under him. He has the knowledge, the experience, the demeanour. Everyone in the club enjoys talking to him and discussing football with him. 'If you walk around Carrington, the players really respect what he can do. He's worked with the best and for me, as a young manager, it's really useful that Mick has experience in a few more eras than I have.' A 1-1 draw at already-relegated Huddersfield last weekend ended United's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League next season after a run of two wins from their last 11 games in all competitions. —AFP ■

Neymar banned for three matches for lashing out at fan

PARIS (France)—Paris Saint-Germain striker Neymar was banned for three matches Friday with a further two-match ban suspended for lashing out at a fan following the club's shock defeat in the French Cup final.

Announcing the ban, the French football federation said the sanction would go into effect from May 13 allowing the Brazilian superstar to appear for the French champions against Angers in Ligue 1 on Saturday.

But he will miss the last two games of the domestic season and the French Champions Trophy pitting PSG against their cup final conquerors winners Rennes in Shenzhen, China in August.

Neymar swung at an abusive



Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian forward Neymar banned for three matches for lashing out at fan. **PHOTO: AFP**

opposing fan while climbing the steps to receive his French Cup final losers medal following the shock defeat to Rennes on penalties last month. On a nightmare night for PSG, Rennes came back from 2-0 down to 2-2 at the end

of regulation time, forcing extra time and penalties. Meanwhile, Neymar has appealed against another ban, this time a three-match Champions League ban imposed by European football's governing body UEFA. —AFP ■