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Pyithu Hluttaw convenes 5th day meeting of 13th regular session



Pyithu Hluttaw convenes in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE 13th regular session of 2nd Pyithu Hluttaw held its 5th day meeting yesterday, with the queries and proposal of MPs and a bill submitted by a committee.

Return of confiscated lands

Daw Nan Than Than Lwin, MP of Hpa-an Constituency asked Ministry of Home Affairs to return the agriculture lands in Wa Gwum Hlaing Htate Kwin field in Lakhana village

of Hlarkaduang village-tract in Hpa-an Township.

Major General Aung Thu, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs, replied that these land areas will be utilized by the Correction Department to set up a camp with livestock and vocational training project for the welfare of inmates, and that a total of 84 farmers can apply for the ownership 91.10 acre released by the department, and it will not give up the remaining 811.99 acres.

Community services for drug abusers

U Khin Maung Myint, MP of Yaksawk Constituency, asked about the effectiveness of community services punishment for drug abusers.

Major General Aung Thu also replied that the 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law was amended in 14 February 2018.

The new law annulled the previous Article 15 and defined the drug abuse was caused by

health and social problems which should be treated with community services, instead of serious panalties.

He continued a draft law on drug abuses has been drawn up by a 28-member committee led by Deputy Police Major General.

It was proceeded to the Office of Union Attorney-General and the law will completely take effect after the bylaw has been passed by the Hluttaws.

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At least 22 tigers recorded in Myanmar: Forest Dept

Photos captured by trap cameras in a recent survey between 2016 and 2018 have shown that at least 22 tigers remained in Myanmar, according to a press statement issued yesterday by the Forest Department, under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

The survey covered 8 per cent of the tiger habitat in Myanmar. The data came as the department observed World Tiger Day yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

Speaking at an event held to mark the day, U Ohn Win, the Union Minister for MNREC, said: "We take pride in the fact that Myanmar is one of the 13 countries in the world which have a tiger population."

"We have forests which can provide a habitat to tigers, and this has kept alive our hope that tigers can breed in our forests," he added. The department's survey has showed that about 7 per cent of the Myanmar's total area, or over 12 million acres, serves as a habitat for tigers.

The Global Tiger Day or World Tiger Day was started in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit, Russia, to spread awareness about the decline in wild tiger numbers and encourage the work of tiger conservation. According to the WWF, around 3,900 wild tigers are left in the world as of today, with 70 per cent of the tiger population found in India. — MNA ■

(Translated by TTN)

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Hard to get national identity cards in Mingaladon

U Aung Hlaing Win, MP of Mingaladon Constituency, asked about measures to issue national identity cards for the residents in some wards of Pyinmabin village tract in his constituency as they lack residential documents.

U Thein Swe, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population, replied his staff will address this issue in line with the existing laws.

Township restructure, family registration and national identity cards in Kengtung

U Stephan, MP of Kengtung Constituency, asked about the restructure of Monghkat Township by regaining its some villages from Mongla Township, and issuing family registration and national identity cards for the residents in these villages.

U Thein Swe, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population also replied that Shan



U Stephan, MP of Kengtung Constituency. PHOTO: MNA

State Government will discuss with the officials from Mongla Special Region (4) about these four villages which are located under its territory and being restricted for security reasons.

Removal of landfill

Dr Sein Mya Aye, MP of Dala Constituency, asked about the removal of landfill beside Dala-Twantay motorway.

U Nyi Tun, member of Nay Pyi Taw Council, said the rubbish pile will be removed to a 20-acre land that will be purchased by the budget of Yangon City Development Committee for 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Degree for cancellation of



Union Minister U Thein Swe. PHOTO: MNA

land grant

Dr May Win Myint, MP of Mayangone Township, asked about the restoration of playground after cancelling a land grant issued to a political party.

U Nyi Tun, member of Nay Pyi Taw Council, said the action will be taken by the approval of Yangon Government.

Water supply project of Ye Laung Creek

U Nyunt Win, MP of Kanpetlet Constituency, asked about budget allocation required for Ye Laung Creek water supply project.

U Nyi Tun, member of Nay Pyi Taw Council, replied a five-

mile PVC pipeline with 4 inch-diameter from this creek will be constructed with the Chin State budget in 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Assistance to overseas workers

U Maung Myint, MP of Minkin Township, urged the government to provide assistance to Myanmar migrant workers abroad for labour rights, and the emergence of labour intensive industry in the country.

In his request, U Maung Myint said more than two million Myanmar migrants are assumed to be working illegally in Thailand. Certificates of identity are very important for them. He also suggested the agreements in foreign direct investment need to include the establishment of dormitories for the Myanmar workers. It will also help prevention of squatters in Hlaingtharyar Township, Yangon.

The MP also called for the government to take measures on protecting an estimated five million of migrate workers abroad and arrangements for local job opportunities for them.

U Thaung Aye, MP of Pyaw-

bwe Township, also presented the requirements of social security measures for an estimated five million Myanmar migrant workers, and a mechanism to be able collect the data of migrant workers, including the remittance.

The Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw announced to submit the list of MPs who want to discuss about the above-mentioned proposal.

Draft Law for Animal Health and Livestock Industry Development

The Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Society Development Committee submitted the draft law for Animal Health and Livestock Industry Development.

Daw Mar Mar Khaing, member of the bill committee, presented the findings and remarks of committee on this bill.

After the Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw has invited the list of MPs who want to discuss the bill, the fifth day meeting was concluded. —Mawsi and Hmwe Kyu Zin ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 13th regular session holds fifth-day meeting

By Lu Kyaw (MNA)

A fifth-day meeting of Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 13th regular session was held at the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday morning. At the meeting five questions were raised and answered, two bills and a motion discussed.

Question and answer session

In this session U Hla Oo of Sagaing Region constituency 4 asked if there was a plan to relocate Myanmar Economic Bank in Sagaing Region, Monywa District, Monywa Town to a bigger area or to open another branch. Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win replied that there was sufficient space in the subject bank on normal days but was crowded on a day when pensions were paid to pensioners. As there was an unused 150 x150 ft. Myanma Timber Enterprise land only 10 ft. away from the bank, discussions were being held with Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation to use that land for the bank and once that land is obtained the bank building

can be expanded onto it said the Deputy Minister.

U Pu Cin Kan Lian of Chin State constituency 3 asked if there was a plan to open a farmland management and land record department in Chin State Tiddim Township Khaikam town. Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw explained that there was no plan to do so as the town was recently upgraded from village tract level and had only one village tract in it. Furthermore the Deputy Minister explained that Tiddim Township farmland management and land record department was recently expanded with additional personnel and thus it was not necessary at the moment to open it in Khaikam.

Similarly questions raised by U Kyaw Thaung of Sagaing Region constituency 1 on unequal pension right for husband or wife of pensioners who had passed away, U Khin Maung Latt of Rakhine State constituency 2 on plan to resolve potable water shortage in Rakhine State during summer, Daw Ei Ei Pyone of Ayeyawady Region constituency 8 on resettlement of squatters



Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw. PHOTO: MNA

in Ayeyawady Region Maubin Township to lands adjacent and nearby to Aungchantha housing and action to be taken against officials who were selling agriculture lands to those squatters were answered by Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win and Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw.

Basic Education bill

After the question and answer session U Aye Bo of Yangon Region constituency 11 and U Win Myint, Magway Region constituency 8 discussed amendments and additions to clauses and sub-clauses in the Basic Ed-



U Kyaw Thaung of Sagaing Region constituency 1. PHOTO: MNA

ucation bill.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker decided for Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee to review and handle the matters discussed by the Hluttaw representatives.

Urban and Rural Development Project bill

Next U Zon Hle Htan of Chin State constituency 4, Tatmadaw representative Maj Win Lwin Oo and U Soe Thein @ U Maung Soe of Taninthayi Region constituency 10 discussed amendments and additions to clauses and sub-clauses in the Urban and Rural Development Project Bill.

Here too Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker decided for Amyotha

Hluttaw Bill Committee to review and handle the matters discussed by the Hluttaw representatives.

Motion on rural women

As a final agenda of the day a motion urging the Union Government to create a good environment for rural women through providing technology, capital and raw material for developing home-based industries in attempts to reduce the number of women who left abroad to get overseas jobs tabled by Dr Tin Tin win of Bago Region constituency 3 was discussed by Daw Ei Ei Pyone of Ayeyawady Region constituency 8, U Hla San of Magway Region constituency 1, Daw Khin Swe Lwin of Chin State constituency 9, Daw Myat Thida Tun of Mon State constituency 5 and U Pe Chit of Yangon Region constituency 9.

Discussion of Hluttaw representatives remaining to discuss the motion, discussion of union level organizations on the motion and Hluttaw's decision on the motion is learnt to be conducted in the sixth-day meeting. ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Senior General calls on Indian Air Chief Marshal, visits Myanmar Embassy



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing takes the salute as he is welcomed by Honour Guard in New Delhi, India. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

COMMANDER in Chief of Defence Services arrived at the Ministry of Defence in New Delhi, India, on 29 July morning.

They were welcomed by Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa at the South Block Lawn of the ministry with a Guard of Honour.

After taking the salute, the Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and the Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee and

Chief of the Air Staff held talks in the meeting hall of the South Block.

The Chairman of Chiefs of Staff Committee expressed his appreciation for the visit of the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation and pledged his support in fostering the capacity building of the Myanmar Tatmadaw.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also congratulated India for the successful launch of

Chandrayaan- 2 to the moon, saying the mission has proved India's advanced space technology and the high capacity of its air force.

He also expressed thanks for the support of the India army in capacity building of the Myanmar Tatmadaw.

An official of the India army presented India's security outlook and perspectives and gave a briefing about the Counter

Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School.

In the morning, the Senior General and party visited the National War Memorial at India Gate and laid wreaths before looking around the building.

On 28 July, the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation visited the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and the Air Force Station (Agra).

In that evening, they arrived at the Myanmar embassy

in New Delhi to meet families of the embassy, the military attaché's office and trainee officers.

The Senior General also presented gifts and cash awards to the families of embassy and the military attaché's office before having dinner together with them, according to the Office of the Commander in Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Ministers inspect tourism development in Thaninthayi

UNION MINISTER for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun and Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung travelled to Kawthoung, Taninthayi Region on 26 July to attend to matters relating to tourism and investment.

The Union Ministers were

accompanied by Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myint Maung and cabinet members to the construction site for Marina Bay on Thahtay Island.

In the afternoon, the Union Ministers attended the Taninthayi Regional Tourism Committee's meeting no. 2/2019 in Thahtay Island Hotel.

U Ohn Maung said the Myeik Archipelago has many beach and ocean based tourism and needs to swiftly implement sustainable tourism. He said we also need to conserve the natural environment and resources in the area. He advised construction of ecolodges that do not harm the environment.

U Thaung Tun delivered an address next where he highlighted that Myanmar is in the list of recommended countries to visit and the need for tourism to be eco-friendly. He said Marina Bay will house boats used in the travel season and garner additional income to the national economy.

The Union Minister said the pearl industry, travel sector and fishery sector all need to work in good correlation to each other. He said lessening entry visa restrictions has attracted more tourists into Myanmar. He

added that remodelling airports to contain larger aircrafts will improve tourism as well. Next, Chief Minister U Myint Maung talked about how investors have increased their attention on islands along the coast, the increase in tourists to Kawthoung, the need to separate pearl, tourism and fishery sectors into different zones, ways to block illegal foreign entry with speedboats, encouraging CBT to boost the local economy and create more employment, and how extending licenses and applying for hotel constructions can now be completed within the region.

The meeting then discussed the implementation process of the decisions made at the previous meeting, approving the committee's logo, approving the delegation roster to send to the Southern Tourism Corridor Cooperation in Can Tho, Viet Nam, and other matters. — Taninthayi Region IPRD ■

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Union Minister U Thaung Tun delivers the speech at the Taninthayi Regional Tourism Committee's meeting in Kawthoung on 26 July. **PHOTO: TANINTHAYI REGION IPRD**

Myanmar fully committed to child rights, development

Meeting on children's rights

THE National Committee for Children's Rights held meeting no. 2/2019 at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday morning.

Union Minister and Committee Chairman Dr Win Myat Aye spoke at the meeting, where he said Myanmar has been party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child since 1991 and has enacted The Child's Rights Law accordingly.

He said they have working towards amending that law since the previous government administration and have successfully passed it through the legislature on 23 July last week. He said the amended law now tasks the committee with ensuring philanthropic shelters and temporary shelters meet certain set standards.

The Union Minister said children require security in addition to progress in development. He said the Union territory and the states and regions have legal authority to carry out child development and security tasks.

The Union Minister remarked that there has been public misunderstanding and worry over the amended law,



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye delivers the speech at the National Committee for Children's Rights in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

adding that all doubts will disappear when people study the law carefully. He said the law has been published in the daily newspapers for public viewing.

The Union Minister said they now need to come up with necessary preparations to implement the new amendments of the law. He urged authorities concerned to pass on the information clearly to the general public.

Next, Deputy Minister U Soe Aung explained each sec-

tion of the amended child's right law and the director-general of the social welfare department explained the areas where increased activity is needed and plans to amend the related bylaw.

The attendees then discussed solutions to ensuring children in prisons retain their rights, increasing efforts on preventing and raising awareness on the rising incidents of child sexual abuse, and proliferating the contents of the new

law throughout the nation right up to the subnational Hluttaw levels.

Meeting on ECCD

Later in the afternoon, Dr Win Myat Aye attended meeting no. 1/2019 of the Central Management Group on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) held at his ministry's meeting hall.

The Union Minister said early childhood development lasts from infancy to 8 years

old and that is when the brain grows the most. He said the ministry on early childhood development and social welfare simultaneously for that age range.

The Union Minister said there is a significantly large population of children who cannot attend preschool and this is top priority to collaborate on. He said they have formed sub-national ECCD management groups to monitor nurseries and preschools in accordance with existing laws. He said the ministry has expanded the number of preschools from 99 in 2016 to 128 this year. The Union Minister said the government has successfully organized 642 maternity circles so far. He said preschools and day-care centers require a license to operate. He urged attendees to discuss solutions to challenges related with the matter.

Next, committee vice-chairman and Deputy Minister U Soe Aung explained the ongoing ECCD tasks of the ministry, after which, the discussion segment of the meeting commenced. The meeting came to an end after a closing speech from the Union Minister. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

High-Level Forum: Deputy Information Minister discussed ASEAN-China media relations

U AUNG HLA TUN, Deputy Minister for Information, attended the two events of High-Level Conference on ASEAN-China Media Cooperation and the ASEAN-China High Level Media Forum in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 23 and 24 July.

The opening ceremony of the High-Level Conference on ASEAN-China Media Cooperation was also held at Hotel Mulia Senayan on 23 July morning.

It was attended by ministers and deputy ministers from ASEAN countries, Vice-minister of National Radio and Television Administration Mr Fan Weiping, Ambassador of

the Chinese Mission to ASEAN Mr Huang Xilian, delegates from Chinese universities and TV stations, Deputy Secretary-General for ASCC Mr. Kung Phoak, and officials.

At the conference, the deputy minister contributed an idea in building closer ASEAN-China relations.

With the theme of "Connected for a Better Future in Digital Age", the ASEAN-China High Level Media Forum was held on 24 July morning.

At the forum, Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun took part as a panelist in the discussion of 'The Role of Media in Building a Closer ASEAN-China Community with a Shared



Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun attends the ASEAN-China High Level Media Forum in Jakarta on 24 July. **PHOTO: MNA**

Future', and talked about the important role of media in digital age, comparing with the experiences of Myanmar.

In the afternoon, the dep-

uty minister and party visited the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. They were welcomed by U Min Lwin, Head of Permanent Mission of Myanmar

to ASEAN, and officials. They looked around the library and the exhibitions at the Secretariat and its new office. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

World heritage tag may provide fillip to Bagan lacquerware, say businesses

WITH the ancient city of Bagan having been declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, traditional lacquerware businesses in the area will get the opportunity to attract the interest of international buyers, said U Maung Maung, who owns a Pyittinehaung Myanmar traditional lacquerware business.

The art of making lacquerware emerged in Myanmar in the 12th and 13th century A.D., during King Anawrahta's reign, and now, Bagan is well-known for its lacquerware. While the tangible arts of Bagan can be seen at the ancient temples, lacquerware count among the region's intangible arts, with most visitors observing the traditional art and buying lacquerware as

souvenirs, he said.

"More visitors are thronging to Bagan after it was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and Bagan's traditional lacquerware products are expected to penetrate the global market and draw foreigners' attention. With tourism business flourishing in Bagan, lacquerware artisans are hoping to develop their businesses," said U Maung Maung.

Currently, lacquerware are mostly produced the traditional way. But, local artisans have begun introducing innovations with the help of ASEAN lacquerware artisans to boost the traditional lacquerware sector. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house)

(Translated by La Wonn)



A worker making a lacquerware in Bagan. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)

Cucumber growers see losses during harvest time in Kyaukpadaung Tsp



Cucumber plantation at farm in Kyaukpadaung Township. PHOTO: KO HTAIN (NGATHAYAUK)

WITH the price of cucumber on the decline, growers from villages near the Kyatmauktaung dam in Kyaukpadaung Township of NyaungU District have reported losses this harvest season.

The villages near Kyatmauktaung usually cultivate seasonal crops as well as a variety of other crops, using underground water, in three seasons. The harvested crops are sold directly in the market and placed in the market through merchants.

"The upper, eastern, and lower villages of Kyatmauk-

taung dam cultivate vegetables and a variety of crops. Early in the harvest season, the price of one cucumber was K120. Later, the it fell to K30, and growers suffered heavy losses," said U Tin Tun Aung, a cucumber grower from Legwa village.

"Cucumber cultivation is not easy, and the prevailing price cannot even cover the cultivation cost. Therefore, growers have failed to make a profit," said U Nay Myo Tun, a cucumber grower from Montgone village. — Ko Htain (Ngathayauk)

(Translated by La Wonn)

Over 150 enterprises pull investments into manufacturing sector in Oct-Jun

MYANMAR'S manufacturing sector attracted 153 enterprises with an estimated capital of US\$988.7 million between October and June in the current financial year

The country's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packaging basis, which contribute to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

The sector has the potential to create the largest number of jobs for local residents. There are currently over 600 garment factories in Myanmar, which employ more than 300,000 workers.

The CMP industry has

emerged as a very promising one in the export sector. The value of CMP exports was just \$850 million in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, but it tripled within two years to reach \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY, as per figures provided during the Myanmar Global Investment Forum 2018, held on 12 September.

In the last mini-budget (April-September, 2018), exports of clothes made under the CMP system were valued at \$2.27 billion. The value of CMP exports crossed US\$2.56 billion in the period from 1 October to 10 May in the current fiscal year.

Japan is the largest market

for Myanmar apparel, followed by the European Union. China, Korea, Japan, and other countries have also invested in the sector.

Investors prefer countries like Myanmar, where labour is cheap.

In the current FY, the manufacturing sector is predicted to remain the top recipient of foreign direct investment.

The income from CMP exports is targeted to reach \$10 billion by 2024, according to the Myanmar Garment Entrepreneurs Association. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Commerce Ministry negotiating with China to resume pineapple exports

THE Ministry of Commerce has been negotiating with China for resuming pineapple exports, which have been banned by the neighbouring country since 15 June, 2019, according to news released online by the ministry.

When the mango season ends, the seasonal fruit pineapple is in abundant supply in the markets. Therefore, the Ministry of Commerce has held a series of negotiations with China's government to create a legal export channel for pineapples, said U Khin Maung Lwin, assistant secretary, Commerce Ministry.

"To allow legal export of fruits to China, China's food safety

inspection body is screening tissue-culture banana. We are discussing pineapple exports with them as well," he said.

At present, mangosteens, rambutans, lychees, watermelons, and muskmelons grown in Myanmar have been certified by China's food safety inspection mechanism, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine (AQSIQ), for legitimate export. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has already sent information on tissue-culture banana, lime, pineapple, avocado, and pomelo to China.

China has been clamping

down on illegal goods since the second week of October, 2018. The policy change by the neighbouring country has hurt exports of Myanmar's agro products through the Muse gate. China has imposed a 50-per-cent tax on entry of goods that are not included in the quota list, as per a government-to-government pact. However, Myanmar merchants and their Chinese counterparts are finding the tax rate exorbitant. China accounts for 95 per cent of Myanmar's fruit exports. Watermelons top the list of fruits exported to China, followed by mangoes and muskmelons. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Smart card payment to come to school bus services in August

By Nyein Nyein

STUDENTS who ride the school bus will be issued smart cards in August, said U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw, the managing director of the Yangon Region Transport Authority.

Information about the students, including their profiles and addresses, will be embedded in the card. The application forms for the cards have been prepared.

"The forms for smart cards have been distributed to parents. We will fill in the data after the forms are returned. We

are planning to issue the cards next month," said U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw.

"With the help of the smart cards, parents will be able to trace what time their children get on and get off their school bus. The application will show information on the timings when the smart cards will work," he said.

The smart cards for elementary, middle, and high schools will vary, and will be have attractive cartoon designs on them.

The smart cards will help ensure the safety of students,

according to the YRTA.

The Yangon Region government has initiated a school bus transport plan, and has purchased 200 buses, of which 102 are currently serving 12 schools, said U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw. The 102 school buses are transporting 1,946 students.

Other schools have also asked for transportation facilities for students, and they are discussing the routes.

"The number of students wanting to use school bus services is rising. We are collecting data. We will provide the services after drawing up the routes,"

said U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw.

The Yangon Region government's school bus scheme aims to create a systematic transport system, instead of allowing a market-based system, said U Phyo Min Thein, the Chief Minister of the region.

In the current academic year, school buses which meet the 12-point guideline issued by RTAD have been allowed to operate in the region. While new school buses are being imported, old school vehicles are still operational.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Mandalay likely to attract higher number of tourists this year

TOURIST arrivals in Mandalay Region in the first quarter (Q1) of this year were estimated at over 300,000, and more travellers are expected to visit the region this year than in the previous years.

Under a year-long trial (1 October, 2019 to 30 September, 2020), Italian, Spanish, Australian, Swiss, German, and Russian tourists who hold ordinary passports will be granted visas on arrival, said U San Yu, the assistant director of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism for Mandalay Region.

Starting from October, 2018, ordinary passport holders from Japan, South Korea, Macau, and Hong Kong are not required to apply for a tourist visa for visits of up to 30 days, and they can enter and leave from all international checkpoints. Also, Chinese tourists are being issued visas on arrival.

The number of tourist ar-



Tourists sitting on boats to watch sunset on Taungthaman Lake in Amarapura, Mandalay Region. **PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG**

rivals from Asian countries has been increasing, with most tourists coming in from China. Tourist arrivals from China doubled in January this year against last year, followed by arrivals from France and Thailand. A high tourist inflow helps in the growth of

related businesses such as hotels, motels, restaurants, and souvenir shops, said an official from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The hotels and tourism department has been creating new destinations and arranging more inbound tourism sites, he said.

The influx of tourists to Mandalay Region was registered at over 385,000 in 2016, over 483,780 in 2017, and over 492,000 in 2018.—Min Htet Aung/ Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

PWDs in Toungoo provided with aid

NEARLY 80 persons with disability in Toungoo were provided with aid including cattle, agricultural inputs, one sewing machine and farming equipment recently.

An event to distribute the aid to the PWDs was held on 26th July with an opening remark by General Manager of brac Myanmar International Organization Sazaduzzaman Sazad and an official of the Social Welfare Department.

In-charge of the aid programme Daw Hnin Su Wai explained the purpose of the programme, and responsible personnel presented 36 pigs, 12 goats, two cattle, two water pumps, 61 fertilizer bags, one sewing machine and farming equipment to 79 persons with disability.

Similar programmes will be conducted in other cities.—Thura (Toungoo)

(Translated by TTN)



Photo: Thura (Toungoo)

Afghan presidential candidates fear for safety after attack

KABUL—Candidates jockeying to become Afghanistan's next president lashed out at the incumbent Ashraf Ghani on Monday after deadly violence cast a shadow over the first official day of campaigning.

At least 20 people — most of them civilians — were killed and 50 others wounded Sunday when a suicide attacker and gunmen targeted the Kabul office of Ghani's running mate, Amrullah Saleh.

The violence served as a grim reminder of Afghanistan's woeful security situation and the sort of mayhem and murder that have beset previous polls.

"The government has not paid attention to the candidates' security," said Qadir Shah, the spokesman for Hanif Atmar, one of the top contenders looking to stop Ghani securing a second term at September 28 elections.

Shah told AFP that he and 12 other candidates had delayed plans to launch their campaigns, primarily over security concerns but also because they see Ghani as using his office for an unfair advantage.

Mohammad Hakim Torsan, considered a long-shot candi-



A member of Afghan security forces walk at the site of an attack in Kabul on 29 July 2019, a day after a deadly assault targeting a political campaign office. Deadly violence marred the start of Afghanistan's election season on the weekend, after President Ashraf Ghani insisted "peace is coming" to the war-torn nation. **PHOTO: AFP**

date, said his supporters worry about a repeat of the kind of violence that marred previous polls, when insurgents launched frequent attacks.

"Most of the candidates are worried about the security, but they still have to campaign. The government must provide security for us and the people,"

Torsan said.

Interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said security forces had been preparing for the elections for eight months and taken "serious measures" to protect candidates, including the provision of armoured vehicles.

No group has claimed responsibility for Sunday's attack.

Boycott threats

Saleh, who escaped without serious injury, is the former head of Afghan intelligence and an outspoken critic of the Taliban and Pakistan — a country he blames for backing the insurgents.

The Taliban, along with some Afghan stakeholders,

made a vague pledge this month to reduce civilian casualties. Security officials have said the insurgent group is now distancing itself from attacks killing ordinary Afghans.

A Taliban spokesman did not respond to a request for comment.

Afghanistan's presidential election, the fourth since the Taliban were ousted in a US-led invasion in 2001, is off to a rocky start.

The poll has been delayed twice this year as the US leads a push to forge a peace deal with the Taliban, and voters have little faith in the system following widespread fraud allegations in 2014.

Atmar, who was Ghani's former national security advisor, and 12 other candidates have even threatened to boycott the election unless the international community can help ensure it is "clean".

There are also doubts the election will happen at all, with lingering questions about whether Afghanistan should hold a key poll just as the US and Taliban are negotiating.—AFP ■

Brush fire scorches 154 acres in S California, destroying home



Firefighters put out a brush fire in Chino Hills, Los Angeles, the United States, 28 July 2019. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

LOS ANGELES, —A 154-acre (62.3-hectare) brush fire racing up from a rugged area in Chino Hills city in the US state of California has devoured a large house and spread alarmingly close to others on Sunday afternoon.

The home on Miramonte Court appeared to be destroyed. Firefighters used ladders to spray directly into the residence from the caved-in roof, according to local media reports.

The fire began near Falling Star Lane and Chino Hills Parkway. At shortly after 2 pm local time (2100 GMT), Chino Valley Fire reported it reached 50 acres (20.23 hectares).

The blaze, dubbed the "Star Fire," had reached 154 acres by 9:30 pm local time (0430 GMT Monday), with 65 percent containment. Forward progress was halted, said Massiel De Guevara, spokeswoman for the Chino Valley Fire District.

De Guevara said firefighters with the Chino Valley Fire District and Cal Fire's San Bernardino County Unit would likely be working on putting out the fire through the night. There were no neighborhood evacuations and no injuries, she said. The cause of the fire was under investigation.

Some local roads were closed, though Chino Hills Parkway had reopened by about 10:30 pm local time (0530 GMT Monday). —Xinhua ■

At least 52 dead in Brazil prison riot: official

RIO DE JANEIRO — At least 52 inmates were killed in a prison riot in northern Brazil on Monday as rival gang factions fought each other, an official said.

Sixteen of the dead were decapitated in the second major eruption of violence to rock the country's severely overpopulated and deadly prison system in as many months.

Fighting broke out in the Altamira Regional Recovery Center at around 7:00 am (1000 GMT), an official from the Parag state government's penitentiary department told AFP.

Two guards were taken hostage during the clashes that ended at around midday. They were eventually freed.

Footage broadcast by SBT Altamira purportedly showed thick black smoke rising from the prison compound and people sitting on the roof of a building.

In May, at least 55 prisoners were killed in several jails in the neighboring state

of Amazonas in violence also blamed on an apparent gang dispute.

Most of the victims were killed by asphyxiation, the state government said at the time.

The federal government dispatched reinforcements to boost security in the jails.

Brazil has the world's third largest prison population after the United States and China, with 726,712 inmates as of June 2016, according to official statistics.

The population is double the capacity of the nation's jails, which in the same year was estimated to be 368,049 inmates.

The federal government had been expected to add another 115,000 inmates by the end of 2018, Human Rights Watch said in a recent report.

Along with severe overcrowding and gang violence, riots and breakout attempts in Brazil's prisons are not uncommon.—AFP ■

More efforts needed to save tigers from extinction

MYANMAR is one of the 13 countries where tigers can be found, which is a matter of pride for the nation. About 7 per cent of Myanmar's total area, or over 12 million acres, serves as a habitat for at least 22 tigers.

The latest count was conducted with camera traps, set up in the habitats of tigers and their prey, in northern and southern Myanmar, as part of efforts to conserve the iconic species, which is now at a critical crossroads, facing numerous threats to its survival.

Myanmar still has quality forests, which serve as habitats for tigers. This has kept hopes alive for the tiger population increasing in the country.

To save the tigers, we need to adopt a zero tolerance approach towards poaching and wildlife trade – a multi-million dollar industry fuelled by the demand for meat, skin, medicines, and other tiger products.

The duty of conserving wildlife and expanding their habitat has fallen on the shoulders of the present and future generations.

Each tiger brings pride and dignity to Myanmar. There are two tiger species in the country: Indian (or Bengal) tigers, and Indo-China tigers. The Htamanthi Wildlife Sanctuary serves as a natural habitat for Indian (or Bengal) tigers.

Tigers were once widespread in Myanmar, to the point that they were considered a serious risk to rural travellers in the 1800s, even in areas close to what was then Rangoon.

Now, tigers can be spotted in the northern and upper Chindwin area and the Taninthayi mountain range in southern Myanmar.

Myanmar, which has a rich variety of habitats and ecosystems, including 14 terrestrial eco-regions supporting 233 globally threatened

species, has seen more cases involving the trade of elephant parts than other wildlife.

Within the 20-year period from 1994 to 2014, the country has lost millions of tons of hardwood due to illegal logging, as well as rare wildlife, such as elephants, bears, tigers, leopards, peacocks, and snakes, on account of poaching.

Efforts towards both conservation as well as prevention of poaching, ignited by demand from neighbouring countries, should focus on increasing our tiger population.

To save the tigers, we need to adopt a zero tolerance approach towards poaching and wildlife trade – a multi-million dollar industry fuelled by the demand for meat, skin, medicines, and other tiger products..

The number of valuable species in the country is witnessing a rapid decline. If this downward trend continues unchecked, some of our iconic national treasures – elephants, tigers, bears, pangolins, and birds – will become extinct.

Realistically, we can save tigers only through joint efforts between the government, international and local NGOs, local groups and community members.

■ ■ ■

My perspective on child rights

Prof. Dr. Aung Tun Thet

LIFE is strange. I get to unintentionally witness the results of an issue I resolved over 30 years ago.

The year is 1989. It has only been a month since I returned from Germany after completing my PhD. The university was closed as well. I just needed to show my face to the department once in the morning. I wanted to take on a lot of work but wasn't given that satisfaction.

Yet, an unexpected opportunity arose. When the State Law and Order Restoration Council was formed, Sayagyi Dr. Pe Thein was the only civilian appointed as minister. Furthermore, he was tasked with overseeing two ministries and we have been acquainted since before.

After receiving my PhD, I conducted research in varied fields, including the health sector. Thus, I would regularly present research papers at the annual gathering of the Myanmar Medical Association. Sayagyi was interested in research himself so we became fast friends. He used to be the director-general for three departments under the Ministry of Health.

Forming a new department

Now, when he became the Minister for Health, he offered me the post of director-general for the new planning and statistics department he wanted to form. It was an enviable position indeed. I was a lecturer at the University of Economics at the time and, I admit, the prospect of going three to four positions higher than I was sounded pleasing to me.

However, I worried that I may

not get the job when it came to filling out my résumé. I have ran into several issues due to my status of certain members of my family. Colonel Myo Aung, my uncle, was an active member for the National League for Democracy, while father and older brother Thakin Ba Thein Tin was spreading his voice in politics.

I told Sayagyi about all of this. He knew me quite well. His wife, Prof. Dr. Kyu Kyu Swe was working in the same department with another uncle of mine, Prof. Dr. Soe Myint, at Mandalay's University of Medicine. Sayagyi told me not to worry and submit my résumé and I soon got the position of director-general without an issue.

Since it was a new department, we had to gather a lot of people. Captain Kyi Soe and U Aung Kyaing left to pursue education abroad shortly after we opened the department. Dr. Nyo Nyo, the younger sister of former president Dr. Maung Maung, provided invaluable assistance during that time.

And so the department began to trudge along. It was based at the old building on Theinbyu Road and I myself had my office in the Minister's Building. Now that I was given a government position, I could implement the plans I envisioned during my time at the university.

Making important changes

I think the most important change we made was forming the National Health Committee. The ministry can't handle healthcare enterprises alone, it needs to coordinate with other ministries as well. And that is the hardest part.

So, we formed the committee after Dr. Pe Thein and the higherups gave approval.

The Chairman was Secretary 1, I was secretary, and the committee members were from the ministries of planning and finance, agriculture, home affairs, and the Tatmadaw medical directive group. They were energetic

of the Southeast Asia Department for WHO. At last, we succeeded in pushing forward the family planning project, a most important implementation for the long term.

The third task I did was related to child rights. The representative for World Children's Fund approached me on this matter. I studied the Convention on the

I told everyone to keep the best interest of the child in mind when reviewing the bill. Children are innocent. It is the adult's duty to protect them.

and alert.

The committee received letters not just on health but on related matters from all ministries. The first thing I did was to establish nationwide movements with CSOs and this led to the formation of the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association during Dr. Pe Thein's period. We also invited international CSOs to Myanmar.

Secondly, we tackled the rising population issue, which was left unattended for successive generations in our country. Population boom can have a negative impact on the health, social, economic and education sectors of our nation.

With that in mind, we began working on potential consequences that can arise if it was left attended. We submitted the matter to our superiors. I had received assistance from Dr. Ko Ko, Director

Rights of the Child in detail so that our nation may join it. I decided that it would serve the best interests of our country and I made the remark with sufficient evidence to my superiors.

The decision didn't come easily. I pressed my superiors on the matter whenever I could and I approached the Attorney-General as well. They were worried because it was called a 'convention'.

I travelled to Bangkok and met with legal expert Prof. Vitis. I discussed the deeper meaning of conventions and to what extent they have influence on a country. I discovered that countries announce their reservations when signing. I had found the answer to alleviate my superiors' minds and we signed the convention at the University of Nursing in 1991.

Everyone had something interesting to bring to the discussion and there were two points of inter-

A new law for children's rights

Soon, we were able to enact the new child law in 1993. I was no longer in Myanmar at that time but I was overjoyed to hear that news. I always try to see the government and the nation as separate. The nation is a priority because it is lasting while the government is relevant to the existing time period.

Now, since the previous government administration, we have tried to make amendments that child's right law. The bill was recently passed at the Hluttaw and approve after the President viewed it. I am pleased to hear successful amendments taking place to fill in the needs of the present. The steps first taken 30 years ago are now newer and faster in development.

However, there were still worries, fear and protests against the amendment. Everyone has the right to voice their own differing opinion in a democracy and discuss about it. We need to base these debates on sound evidence and logic.

Discussion on the new law

U Ko Ko (Industrial College) moderated a roundtable on that bill on Sky Net and invited me. I discussed the bill with Amyotha Hluttaw representative Daw Hla Hla Soe, my former colleague Director-General Dr. San San Aye, the Deputy Director-General of the Advocate General Office, and CSO representative U Myo Myint Tun.

Everyone had something interesting to bring to the discussion and there were two points of inter-

est I saw in our roundtable. It was about applying for birth certificate in adoption. But at a deeper level, it was about citizenship. We talked about how the 1983 Citizenship Law was still in effect.

I told everyone to keep the best interest of the child in mind when reviewing the bill. Children are innocent. It is the adult's duty to protect them.

The most talked about topic in Myanmar right now is about that child's right bill. These days, we are seeing unfortunate stories news of children circling around social media. The crimes committed against children are unbelievable. I am shocked these things are taking place in Myanmar.

This is why we need a comprehensive law. Our focus must be on their wellbeing. But we must question ourselves on whether the crime is increasing or we are able to uncover something existing faster.

Keeping the children in mind

Everyone from the government to the community has the duty to children. We must work together to resolve these issues facing us. We need to go beyond just providing sufficient food and clothing. We need to teach people the right ethics and morality and create a safe environment for our children.

I will push forward for the emergence of the child rights law. The hate and prejudice of grownups must not overwhelm and influence children. I urge everyone to put their wellbeing above all else.

(Translated by Pen Dali)

President's Office continues announcement of illegal drug arrests, seizures acting on tip-offs

THE Office of the President issued Press Release No. 28/2019 yesterday, publicly announcing the Ministry of Home Affairs' arrests and seizures in the fight against illicit drug trafficking up till 27 July.

The ministry made the arrests, acting on information, sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President as of 27 July.

The full text of the press release will be reported in the 31 July issue of The Global New Light of Myanmar.—GNLM

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 29th July, 2019)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is moderate to strong over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 30th July, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions and Kayah state, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing region and Shan state and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavyfalls in Taninthayi region, Kachin, Rakhine and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h. Wave height will be about (6–9) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Taninthayi Region, Shan, Kayin and Mon States. **FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th July, 2019:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th July, 2019: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th July, 2019: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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**

Message on World Day against Trafficking in Persons

30 July 2019

HUMAN trafficking is a heinous crime that affects every region of the world. Some 72 per cent of detected victims are women and girls, and the percentage of child victims has more than doubled from 2004 to 2016, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Most detected victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation; victims are also trafficked for

forced labour, recruitment as child soldiers and other forms of exploitation and abuse.

Traffickers and terrorist groups prey on the vulnerable, from people in poverty to those caught up in war or who face discrimination. Nadia Murad, the first trafficking victim to serve as a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador, was justly co-awarded the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize for

galvanizing international action to stop trafficking and sexual violence in conflict.

Armed conflict, displacement, climate change, natural disasters and poverty exacerbate the vulnerabilities and desperation that enable trafficking to flourish. Migrants are being targeted. Thousands of people have died at sea, in deserts and in detention centres, at the hands

of traffickers and migrant smugglers plying their monstrous, merciless trades.

But everyday indifference to abuse and exploitation around us also takes a heavy toll. Indeed, from construction to food production to consumer goods, countless businesses and enterprises benefit from the misery.

Multilateral action has generated progress, including

through the Palermo Convention and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Most countries have the necessary laws in place, and some countries recently recorded their first trafficking convictions. But more needs to be done to bring transnational trafficking networks to justice and, most of all, to ensure that victims are

identified and can access the protection and services they need.

The Sustainable Development Goals include clear targets to prevent abuse and exploitation, to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls, and to eradicate forced labour and child labour. On this World Day against Trafficking in Persons, let us reaffirm our commitment to stop criminals from ruthlessly exploiting people for profit and to help victims rebuild their lives.— *United Nations Secretary General*

■ ■ ■

Japan, US trade chiefs to hold negotiations later this week

TOKYO—Japanese economic revitalization minister Toshimitsu Motegi said Monday he will meet with US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer later this week in Washington to advance negotiations for a bilateral trade deal.

Their two-day meeting from Thursday will take place after talks were put on hold during campaigning for Japan's 21 July upper house election.

Motegi told a press conference that "there isn't much daylight left" for negotiations, with both sides believed to be aiming

for an agreement in September.

Following up on working-level talks held in Washington last week, the two are expected to discuss tariff cuts in sensitive areas such as beef and pork by Japan and automobiles and auto parts by the United States.—Kyodo News ■

Combined photo shows US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer (L) and Japanese economic revitalization minister Toshimitsu Motegi holding talks in Tokyo on 25 May, 2019. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**



Climate change blamed for deaths of 200 Arctic reindeer

OSLO— Some 200 reindeer have been found dead from starvation in the Arctic archipelago Svalbard, an unusually high number, the Norwegian Polar Institute said Monday, pointing the finger at climate change.

During their annual census of the wild reindeer population on the group of islands in the Arctic ocean, about 1,200 kilometres (746 miles) from the North Pole, three researchers from the polar institute identified around 200 deer carcasses believed to have starved to death last winter.

Ashild Onvik Pedersen, head of the census, said the

"high degree of mortality" was a consequence of climate change, which according to climate scientists, is happening twice as fast in the Arctic as the rest of the world.

"Climate change is making it rain much more. The rain falls on the snow and forms a layer of ice on the tundra, making grazing conditions very poor for animals," she told AFP.

In winter, Svalbard reindeer find vegetation in the snow using their hooves, but alternating freezing and thawing periods can create layers of impenetrable ice, depriving the reindeers of nourishment.

According to Onvik Pedersen,

a comparable death toll has only been recorded once before — after the winter of 2007-2008 — since monitoring of the reindeer population started 40 years ago.

The increased mortality is also due in part to a significant increase in the number of reindeer in the Norwegian archipelago. That is partly thanks to climate change and the warmer summers, meaning more individuals compete in the same grazing areas.

Since the 1980s, the number of reindeer has doubled in Svalbard, and now stands at around 22,000, according to the Norwegian Polar Institute.—AFP ■



This undated handout released by the Norwegian Polar Institute shows researchers Hamish Burnett (left) and Mads Forchhammer kneeling next to a reindeer cadaver in the Arctic archipelago Svalbard. Some 200 reindeer have been found dead from starvation in the Arctic archipelago Svalbard, an unusually high number, the Norwegian Polar Institute said on 29 July 2019, pointing the finger at climate change. **PHOTO: AFP**

Colossal dinosaur bone find in France thrills scientists

ANGEAC-CHARENTE, (France) — Scientists have unearthed a huge two-metre (6.5-foot) dinosaur bone in a winegrowing village in southwestern France dubbed a "national treasure" for its prehistoric gems.

The 140-million-year-old thigh bone, which weighs 400 kilogrammes (880 pounds), is the latest discovery at the vast Angeac-Charente palaeontological site near Bordeaux, where experts and volunteers have dug up thousands of bones over the past decade.

But thanks to its remarkably good condition, the femur — which scientists say probably belonged to a gigantic sauropod — could help piece together an incomplete set of bones which the latest find resembles.

"We were wondering how big it was. We kept saying, 'Oh, there's more!'" said Maxime Lasseron, the doctoral student who made the gigantic discovery.

The largest land animals ever to roam the Earth, sauropods were massive plant-eating dinosaurs with a long neck and tail, towering up to 18 metres (59 feet) tall.

"It cost me a bit of money, because I had promised to bring champagne if it was complete," said Jean-Francois Tournepiche, the operations coordinator at what he calls "one of Europe's biggest

dinosaur sites".

Tests will now compare the femur to another thigh bone discovered in 2010 to find out if they belonged to the same type of sauropod or even the same creature.

The bone's "preservation and perfect fossilisation makes it really unique", said Ronan Allain, a paleontologist at the French Museum of Natural History in Paris.

Prehistoric ecosystem

Now known for its cognac vineyards, Angeac-Charente was home to a vast ecosystem of dinosaurs, invertebrates and vegetation thanks to its humid, subtropical climate millions of years ago.

"There was a river and large coniferous trees," Allain said.

"Amphibians, crocodiles and fish lived in the swamp, and on dry land, small and large dinosaurs. It was full of life".

The discovery coincides with the 10th annual dig at the site, which stretches over 750 square metres (nearly 8,100 square feet).

But with more discoveries expected on the horizon, the site's owners have given diggers the go-ahead to excavate in another 4,000 square metres of land. "Another surprise for our 10-year anniversary," Tournepiche said. "At this rate, we'll be busy for the next 30 years!"—AFP ■

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Thai health ministry on disease watch in drought-hit areas

BANGKOK, 29 July (Xinhua) — The Thai Ministry of Public Health said on Monday that it is on high alert for a possible outbreak of communicable diseases in drought-hit areas where residents have difficult access to clean water.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health An-

utin Charnvirakul told the media in Bangkok that he has instructed state officials in the drought-hit regions in the north to promote the practice of eating only cooked food, using serving spoons and washing hands.

“In drought-hit areas where people have rare access to clean water, communicable diseases

are prevalent,” said Anutin, adding that “villagers must seek medical assistance if they find they experience gastrointestinal tract, such as diarrhea and food poisoning.”

The Department of Disease Control (DDC) director-general Suwannachai Wattanayingcharoenchai told the media on Mon-

day that DDC has instructed 12 disease prevention and control centers nationwide to be on high alert on suspicions of communicable diseases. Persons with diarrhea should frequently sip water with Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) to prevent dehydration, Suwannachai said.

The Meteorological Depart-

ment said earlier this month that Thailand is going to experience the worst drought in a decade, as average precipitation across large swaths of the country has fallen far short of the monthly average.

The drought is expected to affect 105 districts across 12 provinces. — Xinhua ■

Russia declares state of emergency in four regions over wildfires

MOSCOW, 29 July (Xinhua) — Russia has declared a state of emergency in forests in four regions of Siberia and the Far East over mass wildfires, the Russian Aerial Forest Protection Service said Monday.

The state of emergency has been declared for the entire Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk regions and parts of the Republic of Buryatia and Sakha (Yakutia) Republic, the service said in a statement.

According to the statement, by Monday forest wildfires were raging on nearly 3 million hectares in Russia, and extinguishing activities were underway in an area of 89,506 hectares.

It said over the last 24 hours, 51 forest fires were eliminated in Russia on an area of 13,422 hectares.

The service was constantly monitoring, with the help of satellites, 328 wild forest fires on an area of 2,731,541 hectares of remote areas, for which the extinguishing work has been terminated or did not begin due to difficult access, it said.

The Russian Emergencies Ministry said in a separate statement on Monday that its first deputy head Alexander Chupriyan had held a meeting on com-

bating calamities in Russia.

It said a “special fire prevention regime” had been imposed on the whole of 24 Russian regions and in part on another 23.

The regime stipulates additional fire safety requirements and provides a set of organizational and technical measures to ensure the fire safety of facilities of state importance and enterprises of the military-industrial complex, the statement said.

Wildfires rage in Russian forests every year. They affected an area of over 3 million hectares last year, according to Russian media reports.

Meanwhile, the Emergencies Ministry said that the Irkutsk region and Khabarovsk and Amur regions of the Russian Far East also suffered from floods.

As of Monday, in the Khabarovsk and Amur regions 20 settlements with a population of 1,679 people have been flooded, while another nine settlements with a population of over 2,000 people had been flooded in the Irkutsk region.

The emergency services had to evacuate over 2,000 people, including 447 children, from the flooded areas, the statement said. — Xinhua ■

Battle to rescue wildlife at India's flood-hit animal park



Forest officials and animal rescuers of Wildlife Trust of India carry a two-month-old rhino calf, rescued in floodwaters, at Kaziranga National Park in Assam on 29 July 2019. PHOTO: AFP

GUWAHATI, (India) — Wildlife officers are racing against time to rescue animals caught in floodwaters from torrential monsoon rains in India's famed Kaziranga National Park as the death toll rose to 215.

Most of the World Heritage-listed Kaziranga National Park — home to two-thirds of the world's remaining one-horned rhinos — in the northeastern Indian state of Assam was submerged by heavy rains.

While some animals were

able to survive by fleeing to higher ground so far 215 wild creatures, including 19 rhinos and 129 hog deer have died, officials said.

The floodwaters have started to ease in some areas but forestry officials and rescuers from the Wildlife Trust of India continue to find distressed animals trapped in the floodwaters.

On Wednesday, a rhino calf was pulled onto a rescue speedboat and taken to a rehabilitation centre where it was checked by a vet.

“Today we rescued a rhino calf which is about two months old... She is very weak,” the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation's senior veterinarian Panjit Basumatary told AFP.

“The flood this year has been massive and we found several distressed wild animals, especially in the fringe areas (of the park).” Basumatary said he was hopeful that most of the animals could be released back into the wild after they receive treatment at the centre. — AFP ■

Scientists discover Tyrannosauripus in east China

FUZHOU, 29 July (Xinhua) — Paleontologists from China and the United States have found a Tyrannosauripus, a giant dinosaur footprint fossil in eastern China's Jiangxi Province, marking the first discovery of Tyrannosauripus in China.

The fossil was unveiled on Monday to the public at the Yingliang Stone Nature History

Museum, located in the coastal city of Nan'an, eastern China's Fujian Province.

The track, found in Ji-angxi's Ganzhou during road construction, was identified as Tyrannosauripus by scholars including Xing Lida with the China University of Geosciences, Beijing, Niu Kecheng with Yingliang Stone Nature His-

tory Museum and Martin G. Lockley from the University of Colorado.

Tyrannosauripus is a term coined to describe fossilized footprints that may have been left by tyrannosaurid.

“With sharp claws and well-developed metatarsal pads, the footprint is different from other large theropod foot-

prints found in China, but it bears a strong resemblance to the tyrannosaurid tracks found in the United States,” said Xing, who tentatively attributed the track to tyrannosaurid.

The paleontologists inferred the trackmaker's body length from the footprint, suggesting the dinosaur could be as long as 7.5 meters, roughly

the size of the Qianzhousaurus, a type of tyrannosaurid previously found in Ganzhou.

The excavation site of the footprint is only about 33 km from where the bone fossils of Qianzhousaurus were found, which increases the possibility that the footprint was left by tyrannosaurid, said Xing. — Xinhua ■

Stamps marking 1st US-N Korea summit on sale in Pyongyang

PYONGYANG — A set of stamps commemorating the first-ever US-North Korea summit in June last year are currently on sale in the North Korean capital, although denuclearization negotiations between the two sides show little sign of moving forward.

The set of three stamps was launched on 12 June, the one-year anniversary of the historic summit in Singapore between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump, a female worker at a stamp shop in Pyongyang told Kyodo News on Sunday.

The stamps depict the first handshake between Kim and Trump, their singing of a joint agreement following the summit, and the full text of the statement.

Around Tuesday, a month after Kim and Trump met at the inter-Korean truce village of Panmunjeom on 30 June in their third encounter, stamps marking the event are scheduled to be released, the worker said.

South Korean President Moon Jae In, who accompanied Trump to Panmunjeom, will not



Stamps commemorating the first-ever US-North Korea summit in June 2018 are on sale in Pyongyang. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

be appearing in the stamps, the worker added. His absence is a further indication of Pyongyang's eagerness to continue talks with Washington without intervention from Seoul.

North Korea is believed to want the United States to provide security guarantees to Pyongyang. The two countries remain in a technical state of war, as the 1950-1953 Korean

War ended in a cease-fire.

Ensuring the continuation of the current political system led by the Kim family is a long-sought goal by Pyongyang.

On Friday, North Korea's state-run media reported that Kim oversaw the "demonstration" firing of a "new-type tactical guided weapon" on Thursday to send a warning to the South against holding a joint

military drill with the United States next month.

North Korea has long called on the United States and the South to halt joint military exercises, which Pyongyang regards as rehearsals for invasion.

In North Korea, stamps commemorating Kim's summits with Chinese President Xi Jinping have been already sold.—Kyodo News ■

Trump touts Ground Zero experience in 9/11 compensation bill signing

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Monday signed a law ensuring lifelong medical help for emergency crews sickened by toxic debris on 9/11, while claiming considerable experience of his own at New York's Ground Zero.

"Our nation owes each of you a profound debt that no words or deeds will ever repay," Trump said in the White House Rose Garden, where he was joined by some 60 first responders from the September 11, 2001 attacks.

The measure ends what had been an embarrassing situation in which Congress had

to periodically vote on extending the compensation package for victims of the hijacked airliners that crashed into New York's World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field.

The fund was running out of money, amid political wrangling, but will now be guaranteed through 2092, meaning help through the lifetimes of all those involved.

Tens of thousands people, mostly firefighters and other emergency workers who spent long days sifting through the ruins of the Twin Towers, have become sick with cancer or res-

piratory diseases.

About 2,000 have already died, Trump said, and there are estimates that the toll will eventually outstrip the nearly 3,000 people killed on the day itself. "The first responders from across the country rushed to New York and worked endless days and sleepless nights. They fought to rescue every person trapped in the rubble, and then searched for months to find the remains of the fallen," Trump said.

Trump, a native New Yorker long synonymous with the city's real estate industry, claimed that he too had taken

part in the hellish post-9/11 response at Manhattan's Ground Zero. "I was down there also. But I'm not considering myself a first responder, but I was down there. I spent a lot of time down there with you," he told the first responders at the White House.

It's not clear how much time, if any, Trump spent in Ground Zero, as the area was quickly sealed off by law enforcement.

Trump has previously claimed, without evidence, that he sent more than 200 workers to join the Ground Zero clean-up.—AFP ■

Iran, Russia to hold joint drill in Indian Ocean

TEHRAN — Iran and Russia have agreed to hold a joint naval exercise in the Indian Ocean in near future, Iran's navy commander announced Monday.

"We have agreed on a joint naval drill in the Indian Ocean

region, and we hope that it will be held by the end of the year," Hossein Khanzadi told official IRNA news agency.

The coverage of the maneuvers could be extended to the Sea of Oman, Strait of

Hormuz and Gulf, according to the Iranian navy commander.

"Coordination and planning meetings (over the drill) between Tehran and Moscow will start soon," he noted.

The announcement of the

Iran-Russia joint drill in the southern waters of the Islamic republic comes amid the recent tensions between Iran and the West over the passage of oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz. —Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cambodia arrests 3 Nigerians with more than 20 kg of illicit drugs

PHNOM PENH — Cambodian police have arrested three Nigerian men in Phnom Penh on suspicion of trafficking more than 20 kg of crystal methamphetamine, the National Police reported on Monday.

The suspects were arrested on Sunday at a guesthouse in Phnom Penh's Meanchey district after they had smuggled the drug into the Cambodian capital from Laos. "Police seized more than 20 kg of the drug, which was packed in 21 plastic bags," the National Police said on its website. "The trio are being questioned and will be sent to the court for legal action in accordance with the law." The Southeast Asian country has no death sentence for illicit drug traffickers. Under its law, anyone found guilty of trafficking more than 80 grams of illicit drug will be jailed for life. According to an Interior Ministry report last week, the authorities had arrested 8,750 drug-related suspects, including 167 foreigners in seven nationalities, in the first six months of 2019, and confiscated a total of 343 kg of illicit drugs.—Xinhua ■

Some 300 firefighters battle violent wildfire in southern France

PARIS — Some 300 firemen were battling to put out a wildfire which broke out early Monday in southeastern commune of Saint-Mandrier, local media reported.

"300 firefighters are at work and are supported by an important aerial means. Seven planes are helping us to contain the fire," Colonel Christophe Pasquini, head of SDIS Operations Group in Var told BFMV news channel.

The wildfire, whose cause is not yet identified, spread over 30 hectares of land in Var, according to regional authorities.

Pasquini said "it is still too early to know the origins of the disaster ... However, the extreme weather conditions that have affected the department in recent days could be a factor."—Xinhua ■



Thai officials walk in front of a portrait of Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn during his 67th birthday celebrations in Bangkok on 28 July 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

Iran says US rejected offer as ‘not seeking dialogue’

TEHRAN — Iran said on Monday the US had rejected an offer from Tehran for more robust nuclear inspections in exchange for lifting sanctions because Washington is “not seeking dialogue”.

Under the 2015 nuclear deal agreed to by Tehran, Iran must ratify a document, known as the additional protocol, prescribing more intrusive inspections of its

nuclear programme eight years after the deal was adopted.

“If the US is really seeking an agreement... Iran can make the additional protocol into law (in 2019) and (the US) at the same time bring a plan to the Congress and lift all illegal sanctions,” said foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi.

“But as we predicted it was

rejected by them, because we knew that they are not for talks or an agreement that would yield a proper result,” he told a news conference. According to Mousavi, the proposal was made by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif during a visit this month in New York to dismiss the idea of “Iran being against talks... (while) America is for dialogue”.—AFP ■

India’s wild tiger population jumps to almost 3,000: census

NEW DELHI — India’s wild tiger population has increased by more than 30 percent in the last four years, according to a new census released Monday, raising hopes for the survival of the endangered species.

The census found 2,967 tigers in the wild across the country, up from 2,226 four years ago in what Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed as a “historic achievement”

“We reaffirm our commitment towards protecting the tiger,” Modi said in Delhi as he released the All India Tiger Estimation Report 2018.

“Some 15 years ago, there was serious concern about the decline in the population of tigers. It was a big challenge for us but with determination, we have achieved our goals.”

The massive surveys are conducted every four years, with the latest census spanning 15 months and using 26,000 camera traps that took almost 350,000 images across known tiger habitats, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said at the census release.

Images that showed the big cats were analysed using

computer programmes to individually identify each creature. Wildlife and forestry officials also scoured 380,000 square kilometres of terrain.

In 1900, more than 100,000 tigers were estimated to roam the planet. But that fell to a record low of 3,200 globally in 2010.

That year, India and 12 other countries with tiger populations signed an agreement to double their big cat numbers by 2022.

Population numbers in the nation have risen steadily since falling to its lowest-recorded figure of 1,411 in 2006.

But they are yet to return to the figures recorded in 2002 when some 3,700 tigers were estimated to be alive in the country.

It is believed some 40,000 tigers lived in India at the time of independence from Britain in 1947.

Wildlife experts lauded the government effort and said the rise in numbers heralded a new chapter in the conservation of the big cats in India.

“The scale and magnitude of the assessment is unparalleled globally,” Global Tiger Forum secretary general Rajesh Gopal said.—AFP ■

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New British PM waits for EU to move on Brexit

LONDON — New British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is waiting for EU leaders to agree to renegotiate their Brexit deal before he meets them, his spokeswoman said Monday, as the government stepped up “no deal” planning.

“He obviously wants to meet EU leaders and negotiate but not to be sat down and told that the EU cannot possibly reopen the withdrawal agreement,” the spokeswoman said.

Johnson, who took office last week, wants to change the exit terms struck by his predecessor Theresa May but insists he will leave the European Union without any agreement at all if necessary on 31 October.

Brussels says it will not reopen the text.

In phone calls last week, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron both invited Johnson to visit, but he has yet to announce any foreign travel ahead of the G7 summit in August.

“The withdrawal agreement has been rejected by parliament a number of times now and clearly it’s not going to pass in its current form,” the spokeswoman said.

“It needs to change if there’s going to be a deal.”

May was forced to resign after failing three times to get the Brexit deal through the House of Commons, in the process delay-



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson (R) visits Vanguard-class submarine HMS Vengeance with Britain's Defence Secretary Ben Wallace (C) during a visit to Faslane Naval base (HM Naval Base Clyde), north of Glasgow in Scotland on 29 July 2019. New British Prime Minister Boris Johnson makes his first official visit to Scotland on Monday in an attempt to bolster the union in the face of warnings over a no-deal Brexit. **PHOTO: AFP**

ing Britain's EU exit twice.

Opposition among MPs is focused on the “backstop” arrangement intended to keep open the border between British Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland.

Brussels says this is vital for peace in Northern Ireland, which was once plagued by violence.

But critics say it risks keeping Britain tied to EU rules long after Brexit and erecting trade barriers between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. “The backstop has to be abolished,”

Johnson's spokeswoman said.

“He remains confident that the EU will stop claiming that the withdrawal agreement cannot be changed, but until that happens we must assume there will be a ‘no deal’ Brexit on 31 October.

“The government's central focus is preparing for that.”

A multi-million pound (dollar) advertising blitz is planned to alert businesses and ordinary people on what to do to prepare for “no deal”.

Johnson, who played a lead-

ing role in the Brexit campaign in the 2016 EU referendum, has also set up three new cabinet sub-committees to focus on the task.

A colleague from 2016, former environment minister Michael Gove, will chair a daily committee meeting on “no deal” planning.

Johnson will chair a committee on Brexit strategy twice a week, as well as another on economy and trade, which will meet regularly.—AFP ■

Sincerity still key in new round of China-US trade consultations

BEIJING — With the 12th round of trade consultations between China and the United States to be held in Shanghai soon, China resumed the purchase of US farm produce while the US administration announced the exemption of additional tariffs imposed on some Chinese industrial products. The two sides have shown sincerity in implementing the consensus reached by leaders of the two countries in Osaka and bringing the negotiations back on track.

Tariff escalations bring losses for both the Chinese and the US economy. The talk of “decoupling” the two economies has been proved to be untenable, as shown by US farmers' panic over dwindling orders from China while the overall US economic growth

decelerated due to trade frictions with other countries in the second quarter this year.

Take soybeans as an example. China is the largest importer of American soybeans, and about 90 per cent of China's soybeans need to be imported. It means that American soybean production cannot be separated from the Chinese market and China's domestic demand cannot be separated from American supply. Based on the commodity structure of bilateral trade, products like soybeans are the “greatest common divisor” between the two economies.

Soybean trade has proved again that cooperation is the only correct choice for both sides. The ups and downs of China-US economic and trade frictions show that the corner-

stone of cooperation is to seek the greatest common divisor between them.

US soybean exports to China fell by about 47.6 per cent year on year in 2018 and Chinese soybean imports fell by 14.7 per cent in the first half of this year, further proving that when the two countries properly handle their core and major interests, bilateral relations will go smoothly. Otherwise, they will be in trouble.

Since 19 July, some Chinese companies have made enquiries about purchasing new farm produce from the United States such as soybeans and cotton, and a range of farm produce has been purchased based on market conditions. Behind these developments are China's unremitting efforts to show goodwill to break the

current impasse in the trade negotiations.

The US side needs to meet China halfway. Leaders of the two countries agreed at their Osaka meeting to resume economic and trade consultations on the basis of “equality and mutual respect.” This consensus is in line with the public opinion of the two countries and is in line with global interests.

But getting a good restart won't be easy. In recent years, some people in the United States have been making “confrontational” noises, indicating that progress after the resumption of the talks will be complicated and tortuous.

It is hoped that the two sides will meet each other halfway and build up sufficient momentum for the talks to get back on track.—Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

At least 3 dead, 1 injured in shooting in Southern France

PARIS — At least three people were killed and one was injured in a shooting in Southern France on Sunday evening, local media reported.

The incident occurred near a gas station in the Ollioules commune of the Var department, where an unidentified number of gunmen opened fire and killed “two men who were certainly targeted in the attack,” Robert Beneventi, the commune's mayor, told state-run radio France Info. A tourist couple were also caught in the incident and hit by stray bullets, Beneventi said, adding that the “innocent female victim” died while her husband was seriously wounded and sent to a local hospital.—Xinhua ■

China landslide death toll jumps to 42, nine missing

BEIJING — The death toll in a landslide which buried a village in southwest China rose to 42, state broadcaster CCTV said Monday, with nine still missing days after the disaster struck.

Search and rescue operations at the site in Shuicheng county, Guizhou province — where a thick torrent of mud buried 22 houses in the landslide on Tuesday — were stopped on Sunday night, the provincial government said. The government has earmarked 30 million yuan (\$4.35 million) for search and rescue efforts in the province, Xinhua reported, as well as the relocation of victims.—AFP ■

Bangladesh struggles to contain record dengue outbreak

DHAKA (Bangladesh) — Bangladesh is in the grip of the country's worst-ever dengue fever outbreak, officials said Monday, with hospitals overflowing and social media flooded with pleas for blood donors. Eight people have died and there have been 13,637 cases of the disease so far this year, with nearly 1,100 people — diagnosed in the last 24 hours, according to official figures. “This number is the highest since we started keeping record on dengue patients nearly two decades ago,” senior health ministry official Ayesha Akter told AFP.—AFP ■

China calls for swift punishment of Hong Kong violence

BEIJING — China on Monday threw its backing behind Hong Kong's beleaguered leader and police, saying violent protesters must be swiftly punished following another weekend of running street battles in the financial hub.

What began as a mass display of opposition to an extradition bill two months ago has morphed into a wider pro-democracy movement that has thrown down the most significant challenge to Beijing's authority since the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

While China has issued increasingly shrill condemnations of the protests in the last two weeks, it has largely left the city's pro-Beijing administration to deal with the situation.

Protesters had braced for a potential backlash from Beijing after China's top policy body on Hong Kong affairs called a rare press briefing on Monday.

But the cabinet-level Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office merely reiterated its condemnation of the protests and Beijing's "strong" support for Hong Kong



Yang Guang (c) and Xu Luying (r), spokespersons for mainland China's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO) of the State Council, attend a press conference in Beijing concerning the ongoing protests in Hong Kong on 29 July 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

chief executive Carrie Lam and the city's police force, which has been accused of using excessive force against protesters.

"No civilised society or rule of law society will tolerate rampant violence," Yang Guang, spokesman for the Hong Kong

affairs office, told reporters.

Yang blamed the violence on a "few radicals" and said it "bumped into the bottom line" of the "one country, two systems" principle that governs the financial hub.

He also accused Western

politicians of making "irresponsible remarks" to "mess up Hong Kong" and contain China's development.

Another spokeswoman, Xu Luying, added: "We also believe that Hong Kong's top priority task right now is to punish violent

and unlawful acts in accordance with the law, to restore social order as soon as possible, and to maintain a good business environment."

Last week, the defence ministry pointed to a Hong Kong garrison law under which the Chinese army could be deployed if city authorities requested support to maintain "public order". When asked under which pre-conditions the military could be deployed, Yang referred to the city's basic law, without elaborating.

Jimmy Sham from the Civil Human Rights Front, one of the groups organising protests, told reporters the press conference "just wasted 40 minutes of the Hong Kong people's time", adding Lam should have been sacked for "neglecting her duty and causing extreme chaos".

In an editorial on Monday, the state-run China Daily newspaper signalled Beijing's growing concern, saying: "What is happening in Hong Kong is no longer the airing of real or imagined grievances."—AFP ■

Japan to launch rocket with cargo vessel to space station in September



The Kounotori-8 unmanned cargo transporter is shown to the press on 19 July 2019, at the Tanegashima Space Center in Kagoshima Prefecture, southwestern Japan. The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency plans to launch the cargo transporter on an H-2B rocket with supplies for the International Space Station in around September. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

TOKYO — Japan will launch a rocket to the International Space Station in September containing an unmanned cargo transporter, the country's space agency said Monday.

The HTV8, also called Kounotori8, meaning white stork in Japanese, will deliver about 5.4 tons of supplies to the astronauts aboard, including food and water, as well as batteries and devices needed for experiments, the agency said.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency said the H-2B rocket will be launched on 11 September from the Tanegashima Space Center in the country's southwestern prefecture of Kagoshima. The cylindrical cargo transporter, measuring about 10 meters long and 4.4 meters in diameter, will also carry an optical communication system that is said to be useful when exploring the moon and Mars to Japan's experiment module at the ISS named Kibo, according to the agency. Kounotori8 is equipped with some new devices to be used for the HTV-X, a spacecraft under development as its successor. —Kyodo News ■

3 dead, 15 injured after mass shooting at festival in California

LOS ANGELES — At least three people were killed and 15 injured after a gunman opened fire at an annual food festival in Gilroy, northern California, on Sunday afternoon, local police said.

The gunman, who was shot dead by police arriving at the scene, cut through a fence at the venue to avoid security and began firing at attendees, according to the police.

Witnesses reported there may be a second suspect, but it remains unknown if the person had a weapon. Police are currently investigating the reports with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other authorities.

The identities of the suspect and victims have not yet been released.

On Twitter, Gilroy police warned that the venue is "still an active crime scene" while the second suspect is still at large, while US President Donald Trump urged people to "be careful and safe."

A video posted on social media showed people fleeing in confusion with sounds thought to be gunshots heard in the background. A large number of police and emergency services were dispatched to the scene to evacuate attendees and close off the venue.—Kyodo News ■



Security measures are taken at the road into Christmas Hill Park where the Gilroy Garlic Festival held after mass shooting at the Garlic Festival in Gilroy, California on 28 July 2019. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Myanmar to take part in both men's, women's football tournaments of 30th SEA Games

BOTH Myanmar men's and women's football teams will take part in the Southeast Asian Games to be hosted by the Philippines in December.

Myanmar men's team will be camped beginning from 19 August while the Myanmar women's team is undergone training for matches before the SEA Games.

In the 2017 SEA Games, Myanmar women's team stood third while men's team fourth.

Myanmar Football Federation-MFF will take preparations for the games and will conduct friendly matches with the two national teams in preparation for the 2019 SEA Games in the Philippines.

The draw for the men's tournament will take place in 3 October, 2019. Four pots will be used for the draw with teams seeded according to their previous performance in the 2017 Southeast Asian Games. Defending champions Thailand and hosts Philippines are seeded in Pot 1.

On the men's side, foot-



Myanmar and Thai players fight for the ball in the 2017 SEA Games. **PHOTO: SOE NYUNT**

ball will feature 11 teams being divided into groups A and B with five teams in the former and six teams in the latter, according to the 30th SEA Games organizers. The group stage matches will start on 25 November and end on 5 December. The semi-finals take place

on 7 December, while the third-place playoff and the final will be held on 10 December.

On the women's side, Women's football at the 30th SEA Games features eight teams divided into two groups of four. Group stage matches will take place from 28 November to 4

December. The semi-finals take place on 6 December, while the bronze medal and gold medal matches will be held on 9 December.

The 30th SEA Games will take place from 30 November to 11 December.— Shine Htet Zaw

Jiangsu Suning move on from Bale by signing Croatian Santini

SHANGHAI — Chinese state media proclaimed Gareth Bale's move to Jiangsu Suning definitively cancelled after the club signed the big Croatian Ivan Santini instead on Monday.

The Chinese Super League limits the number of foreign players each team can have and Jiangsu reached their quota by signing the Anderlecht striker, Xinhua news agency said.

Like Real Madrid's Bale, Santini is aged 30 and an attacker, although he enjoys nothing like the profile or reputation of the pacy Welshman. With the Chinese transfer window closing on Wednesday, Jiangsu moved for Santini, saying: "He will greatly enrich the team's offensive tactics in the Chinese Super League."

It comes a day after Bale's move to China collapsed because of wrangling between Real and Jiangsu over the fee, a source told AFP. Bale, who has been in the Spanish capital since 2013, had been expected to join the CSL outfit on a three-year deal worth over US\$1 million a week.—AFP ■

Show me the money: S Korean soccer fans to sue over Ronaldo benching

SEOUL — More than 2,000 South Korean soccer fans will sue a sports agency after superstar Cristiano Ronaldo stayed on the bench when his Juventus side played a friendly in Seoul last week, a law firm said Monday.

The star Portuguese striker did not play a single second of the match against a K-league all-star team, ignoring appeals from the sell-out 65,000 crowd at the World Cup Stadium to lace up his boots.

With frustration mounting some even chanted the name of his great Argentine rival Lionel Messi.

When the game was first announced, organisers said the contract with Juventus obliged Ronaldo to play for at least 45 minutes, prompting many fans to splash out, according to Seoul law firm Myungan.

Tickets — priced from 30,000 won (US\$25) to 400,000 won (\$338) — sold out in just two and a half hours when they were released

on 3 July.

"So far, more than 2,000 fans have contacted us to pursue the suit," Myungan attorney Kim Hun-ki told AFP. "We plan to officially file the suit on their behalf sometime next week, if the agency does not offer a concrete plan to compensate the ticket holders before then." The Italian team's flight from Nanjing in China was delayed, so that they landed only five hours before the scheduled start, delaying kick-off by an hour.

Robin Zhang, CEO of The Festa, the Korean agency which arranged the game, told local broadcaster SBS in tears that she had complained to Juventus vice chairman Pavel Nedved during the match.

He responded: "I also hope Ronaldo plays. But he says he doesn't want to. I'm sorry there's nothing I can do," she told SBS, adding that she will find "ways to compensate" ticket holders.—AFP ■

Klopp says City showdown won't influence Liverpool's title bid

EDINBURGH, (United Kingdom) — Jurgen Klopp says Liverpool's Community Shield clash with Manchester City on Sunday will have no bearing on their battle for the Premier League title.

The two sides will renew the rivalry that saw them take the title race to a tense final day last season.

City eventually claimed their second successive Premier League crown by a single point as Liverpool's bid for a first title since 1990 reached a painful conclusion.

Klopp's men made amends for that angst just weeks later as they beat Tottenham in the Champions League final and the Reds are expected to fight it out with City for the major honours again in the coming campaign.

A win against Pep Guardiola's team at Wembley would be a welcome psychological boost for Liverpool. But, having seen his pre-season plans disrupted by the absence of key players such as Mohamed Salah, Sadio Mane, Roberto Firmino and keeper

Alisson due to the Copa America and African Cup of Nations, Klopp isn't putting too much stock in the result of the curtain-raiser to the English top-flight season.

"For me, it has nothing to do with the rest of the season," Klopp told reporters. "It's a game and, even if we only have eight players available, I would like to try to win it. "If we win it, good. Will it have an influence on the season? I don't think so.

"If we lose it, not good. Will it have an influence on the season? No, again, I don't think so. "We have to prove ourselves during the season, not in one game. If I have to say this would be the statement for the season, I would be really mad." Klopp admitted he was surprised the Community Shield isn't taken more seriously in England as he prepares to take part in the match for the first time.—AFP ■



Liverpool FC manager Jurgen Klopp talks to his team during a soccer practice session at Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend, Indiana, 28 July 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**