Prez, First Lady, State Counsellor have X’mas, NY Eve lunch with Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker

President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, and wife Daw Yin May and family members pose for a group photo at the Christmas, New Year Eve luncheon at the residence of Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi enjoyed a luncheon hosted by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat to mark the Christmas festival and the New Year Eve yesterday noon. It was also attended by former President U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin, Vice President U Myint Swe, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr Shwe Hlun, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaih Thant and wife Daw Nant Kyin Kyi, Chairperson of the Constitutional Tribunal U Myo Nyunt, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and wife Dr Sein Sein Thein, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Union Ministers, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, judges of Union Supreme Court, members of Constitutional Tribunal, members of Union Election Commission, chairpersons of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw committees, Deputy Ministers, members of Union Civil Service Board, see PAGE-3
Thiri Minigalar Kaba Aye Pagoda paved with natural clay on upper terrace

RENOVATION of the upper terrace at Thiri Minigalar Kaba Aye Pagoda was completed with paving of natural clay, and the inauguration ceremony was held yesterday morning.

Patron of Shwe Thanlwin Company Dr Ni Ni donated nine plates of one-yaung pure gold worth about Ks.5,500,000 for the pagoda.

The Patron of Kan Oo Zetawun Pariyatti Monastery delivered a sermon to the Union Minister and the congregation, followed by sharing merits.

The Union Minister and officials cut a ceremonial ribbon to mark the inauguration of upper terrace at the pagoda and donated day meal (Swan) to the Sangha.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister U Aung Ko donates the offertories to the Sangha at the inauguration ceremony for renovation of Thiri Minigalar Kaba Aye Pagoda in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Construction Minister opens road, bridge in Taninthayi Region

UNION Minister for Construction U Han Zaw opened an inter-village road and a new bridge in Taninthayi Region yesterday.

An inter-village road between Sone Sin and Gon Hynin Seik in Thayetchaung Township of Dawei District in Taninthayi Region was upgraded from the 14-ft wide earth road to the 30-ft wide concrete pavement type with the earth shoulder of 12-ft in a total length of 8-mile 3 furlongs to benefit 12,600 locals from 1,520 households in nine villages.

At the opening ceremony of road, the Union Minister said the government has targeted construction of road networks in 80 per cent of villages for 90 per cent of rural population by 2030 with adopting the National Strategy for Rural Roads and Access (2017-2030) to provide as many rural people as possible with all-season access.

The Union Minister also opened Pitat-Myadaung Bridge on Laka-Myaungkha-Toe Road in Palaw Township of Myeik District, Taninthayi Region in the afternoon.

At the ceremony, Union Minister U Han Zaw and Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myint Maung made speeches.

The Department of Rural Road Development in Taninthayi Region constructed concrete roads with a total length of 784.2 mile and 384 bridges/box culverts from 2017-2018 financial year to 2019-2020 financial year with the Union/Regional budgets.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister U Han Zaw and officials open the inter-village road and new bridge in Taninthayi Region yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye attends 4th Myanmar Festival of Artists with Disabilities

THE Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI) organized the 4th Myanmar Festival of Artists with Disabilities at Myanmar Convention Centre in Yangon yesterday.

It was attended by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) Chairman U Win Mra, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, the Ambassador of Finland to Myanmar Ms Riikka Laatu, Regional Social Affairs Minister U Naing Ngan Linn and U Nay Lin Soe, the Founder and Programme Director of MILI, attended the festival.

The festival was participat-ed by the artists with disabilities from Myanmar, Singapore and the Philippines.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, in his capacity as the Vice Chairman of the National Com-
President, First Lady, State Counsellor have X’mas, New Year Eve lunch with Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker

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members of Nay Pyi Taw Council and their wives, departmental heads, priests and invited guests.

At the luncheon, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Churches Council Rev Dr U Tin Maung Aye praised the God, and said prayers for the Union of Myanmar, leaders of State, and citizens. President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi sliced the Christmas cake, and the attendees sang Christmas songs before Rev U La Zet from Kachin Baptist Convention delivered sermons and said prayers. The President, First Lady and the State Counsellor then enjoyed the luncheon together with the family of Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and the attendees. — MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

President U Win Myint being welcomed by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, wife and family members at the Christmas, New Year Eve luncheon. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi being welcomed by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, wife and family members at the Christmas, New Year Eve luncheon. PHOTO: MNA

Rakhine State Chief Minister inspects houses for civil service personnel in Kyaukpyu

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and members of the Rakhine State Government inspected the housing project for the civil service personnel in Rakhine state and a site chosen for construction of the Nursing Training School in Kyaukpyu yesterday afternoon.

During the visit to the four-storey buildings which are under construction for the Mingyin Housing, Chief Minister U Nyi Pu urged the officials of the constructions to build the facilities in line with standards and to complete them timely.

Director of the Housing Development Department U Aung Tun Naing reported to the Chief Minister and members of the Rakhine State Government on constructions works.

As part of the tour of inspection, the Chief Minister and entourage also visited a site in Asoe Ward in Kyaukpyu for construction of the Nursing Training School.

Kyaukpyu Township Administrator U Soe Moe Kyaw and Chairman of Kyaukpyu Township Development Affairs Department detailed about the project.

— Phyo Wai Lin (IRPD) (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspects the staff housing project for the civil service personnel in Rakhine State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

(Extract from the opening speech given by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 3 August 2018 at Meeting No. 1/2018 of the National Tourism Development Central Committee.)

Whatever we do, we must keep in mind the good of our Union

Our country is a union. A union is a nation comprised of many ethnic nationalities. Whatever we do, we must keep in mind the good of our Union. Whatever you do, please think for the good of our Union and the peoples of our Union. Further, please work to bring the peoples of our Union closer together, more bonded, more united.
Human fossils found on side of Yangon-Mandalay Highway

HUMAN fossils have been discovered at what researchers consider to be a Bronze Age cist burial on the side of the Yangon-Mandalay Highway, according to a local.

“This is the first time that an old skeleton has been found in our village. The fossils were discovered by a team researching the Bronze Age and Iron Age which was excavating a site 1,300 feet east of milepost 330 in Padangung village-tract, Matogi Township, Myingyan District. The excavation is still on,” said locals.

Seven human fossils, pots, animal bones, bone beads, stone beads, a mussels shell, and two bronze arrowheads have been discovered at the site.

The place where the human fossils were found has been marked as an Iron Age site with a plaque. The Department of Archeology and National Museum under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture has been conducting discovery tours at sites from the Stone Age, Bronze Age, early Iron Age, late Iron Age, Pyu dynasty, Konbaung dynasty, Bagan dynasty, and Kingdom of Ava, and, preserving ancient finds, according to the department. —Township IPRD

(Translated by El Myat Mon)

Foundation laying for Yangon-Dala bridge 60% complete

THE construction of the Yangon-Dala bridge, or the Korea-Myanmar Friendship Bridge, is on and work on laying the bored pile foundation for the bridge on the Dala side is 60 per cent complete, said U Maung Maung Cho, chief engineer of Myat Noe Thu Company which is implementing the approaching bridge project.

“Of the 141 bored piles, 81 have been drilled down. Bored piling and other piling foundation processes on the side of Dala are expected to finish in March. For now, laying of the piling foundation is still under way,” he said.

Similarly, the temporary approach bridge from Yangon side is being implemented by the CCECC Company.

While construction is on, vessels are required to travel between two red and green buoys placed along the site. There are two red and yellow buoys installed on the Dala side and two green and yellow buoys on the Yangon side.

The companies carrying out Dala construction projects are following safety and security measures.

Upon completion of the Yangon-Dala bridge, local people from Dala, Twantay, Kawmu, and Kangyangon in Yangon Region will enjoy smooth transportation and faster trade. The project is also expected to improve the livelihood of local people. —Naing Lin Kyaw (Dala)

(Translated by El Myat Mon)

Police seize K1.3bln worth stimulant tablets in Monghsat

An anti-narcotic squad confiscated 1,300,000 stimulant tablets worth of K1.3 billion at a shop in Yaung Kha (Nar Yaung) Village, Monghta Village-tract of Monghsat Township, Shan State, yesterday morning.

Action on a tip-off, police searched the rental shop and the Thai citizen, identified as Kyaut Cahi, who rented the shop, is still at large. Police has filed a complaint against him under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Law, according to Myanmar Police Force. —GNLM

(Translated by Bahtoo)
Myanmar’s corn exports halve in 2019-2020FY

Myanmar shipped over 100,000 tons of corn to other countries during October-November in the current financial year compared to 200,000 tons in the year-ago period.

As China is the major purchaser of Myanmar corn, the price is positively related to demand from the neighboring country.

At present, corn prices are ranging around K340-380 per viss (one viss is approximately 1.6 kg).

It has been one year since China suspended the importation of some agro products through the border gates, thereby forcing corn traders to turn to the Thailand market.

China sometimes allows traders to directly purchase corn up to a certain limit as a substitute for opium. However, if the export volume exceeds the quota, corn is confiscated as it is considered an illegal good.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, Laos traders have proposed purchasing rice and corn produced in Shan State and re-exporting them to China.

Besides China, Myanmar also exports corn to India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Thailand. But, the volume of exports to those markets is low.

There are more than 1.9 million acres of corn plantations in Myanmar, primarily in Sagaing and Magway regions, and Chin, Kayin, Shan, and Kayah states.

As per data from the Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar exported 1.5 million tons of corn, worth US$270 million, in the 2018-2019FF; 1.4 million tons of corn, worth over $290 million, in the 2017-2018FY; 1.2 million tons of corn, worth $250 million, in the 2016-2017FY; and, 1.1 million tons of corn, worth $300 million, in the 2015-2016FY.

Trade at Muse crosses $1.2 bln as of 13 Dec

The value of Sino-Myanmar border trade through the Muse gate jumped to US$1.208 billion between 1 October and 13 December, an increase of $444 million compared to the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Exports through the Muse gate rose considerably to $820.64 million, while imports were valued at $387.9 million. Both exports and imports climbed over the past two months of the current fiscal.

Muse is an important border gate in Myanmar and handles the largest volume of trade. But at times, it has experienced a sharp drop in trade on account of China clamping down on illegal goods, resulting in a halt in trade of agricultural products.

Myanmar merchants find it difficult to export goods to China through legitimate channels as they find the tax levied by China too high. Therefore, rice confiscation and price manipulation often occur in border trade.

To resolve this, Myanmar needs to convert the government-to-government (G2G) agreement into a sustainable pact, according to trade bodies. Myanmar requires G2G or business-to-business (B2B) agreements for the trade of pulses and beans, corn, sesame, fish, and shrimp, to grab a share of the Chinese market, they said.

The government and the private sector also need to move forward through public-private partnerships (PPP), according to the Myanmar Rice Federation.

Myanmar exports rice, sugar, pulses, sesame seeds, corn, dried tea leaves, fishery products, minerals, and animal products to China, while it imports agricultural machinery, electrical appliances, iron and steel-related materials, raw industrial goods, and consumer goods from the neighboring country.

Exports shoot up by $976.57 mn in current fiscal

Myanmar’s exports between 1 October and 13 December in the current fiscal year rose sharply to US$3.81 billion from $2.84 billion registered in the corresponding period of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

The figure reflects an increase of $976.57 million compared with the year-ago period. Of the seven export groups, agriculture, fisheries, finished industrial goods, and minerals have shown an increase in exports. Meanwhile, exports of livestock, forest products, and other goods have declined.

Export values were registered at $728 million for agro products, $44 million for livestock, $212.68 million for fishery products, $722.6 million for minerals, $35.6 million for forest products, $2 billion for manufactured goods, and $70.8 million for other goods.

The country’s export sector relies more on the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. While export earnings from the CMP (cut, make, and pack) garments businesses are rising, the country’s reliance on natural resources, such as natural gas and jade, is lessening.

The Ministry of Commerce is focusing on export promotion in order to reduce the trade deficit. Since 2011, the Ministry of Commerce has adhered to its reform policy. A series of moves to liberalize and open the economy have been introduced through policy development to improve the trade environment.

— Ko Khant (Translated by EMM)
Myanmar Travel Film Investment introduced in Beijing

A ceremony to introduce Myanmar Travel Film Investment programme was held at Myanmar Embassy in Beijing, China, on December 27.

The ceremony was held by Exploring Myanmar Culture & Tourism Organization, with the assistance of Myanmar-China Culture and Tourism Promotion Association and Myanmar Embassy in Beijing. The ceremony was attended by the Ambassador of Myanmar to the People's Republic of China U Myo Thant Pe and embassy staffs, officials from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China and ASEAN-China Centre (ACC), travel businessmen from Myanmar and China, Chinese film and media businessmen, guests and media.

At the ceremony, Ambassador U Myo Thant Pe delivered an opening speech, and the chairman of Myanmar-China Culture and Tourism Promotion Association Mr. Liu Wei detailed about the topics of “Introduction to Myanmar tourism resources”, “Rules and directives for shooting the beauty of Myanmar; Myanmar Investment Law and possible investment projects.”

The ceremony came to an end after the documentary film shot by Ministry of Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar was screened. — Kyaw Swar (FDC)

(Translate by Bahtoo)

Third Myanmar falconry championship held in Mandalay

A falconer with his well-trained bird seen at the Myanmar Falconry Championship 2019 on 28 December at the Nature’s Life Equestrian Club in Mandalay. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MAN-SUB PRINTING HOUSE)

The ceremony to introduce Myanmar Travel Film Investment programme being held at the Myanmar Embassy in Beijing, China, on December 27. PHOTO: KYAW SWAR (FDC)

‘Musth’ elephant which killed 3 men captured

An elephant in musth which killed three men, including its mahout, in Indaw, Kachin State, was tranquilized and captured yesterday.

The male elephant, named “Aung Bu”, 49, was found in a forest with a female elephant and tranquilized six days after it created terror in the area. The operation, which involved three elephants, the authorities, and one veterinarian, ended yesterday evening.

The elephant had killed three persons and injured another in separate incidents.

The injured person has been taken to the Myitkyina hospital. — Win Naing (Kachin Land)

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

The musth elephant which killed three men was tranquilized and captured in Indaw yesterday. PHOTO: WIN NAING (KACHIN LAND)
WASHINGTON — A study suggests that following misleading password meters from popular online websites can harm people more than helping them out.

Password meters are frequently made available to help the users secure their personal data against the threats posed by cybercriminals. The study conducted at the University of Plymouth has assessed the effectiveness of 16 password meters that people are likely to use or encounter on a regular basis.

The research says that there is a clear level of variation in the advice offered across different websites.

The study was published in the journal Computer Fraud and Security.

The main focus was dedicated password meter websites, but the study also sought to assess those embedded in some common online services (including Dropbox and Reddit) and those found as standard on some of our devices.

And while some meters do effectively steer users towards more secure account passwords, some will not pick them up when they try to use ‘abc123’, ‘qwertyuiop’ and ‘iloveyou’ - all listed this week among the worst passwords of 2019.

The study was conducted by Steve Furnell, Professor of Information Security and Leader of the University’s Centre for Security, Communications and Network Research. Commenting on the latest research, Prof Furnell said: “Over the festive period, hundreds of millions of people will receive technology presents or use their devices to purchase them.” -AN

Researchers at Caltech develop new algorithm to make quantum computers more efficient

CALIFORNIA — Quantum computers aren’t that different from classical computers in the sense that just like their older siblings their functioning is dependent on the instructions we give them. This new milestone in computing opens endless prospects for the future but the instructions and algorithms that are necessary to run them are still in their infancy and not advanced enough to be of any substantial use. Caltech’s Bren Professor of Chemistry, Garnet K Chan is on a mission to develop new algorithms that will take quantum computing one step further.

In an interview on Caltech’s (California Institute of Technology) website, Chen talked about the new research paper he published recently; that proposes a new algorithm, which will enable quantum computers to carry out simulations in physical sciences.

This study has been co-authored by his colleagues Fernando Brandao, Bren Professor of Theoretical Physics, and Austin Minnich, professor of mechanical engineering and applied physics.

This new algorithm is an evolution of a pre-existing one that is already used in classical computing. The older algorithm — imaginary time evolution — has now been re-tailored to run on quantum computers and is rather appropriately termed as ‘quantum imaginary time evolution.’

Chen explains that Quantum computing has a vast potential in terms of its application in physical sciences. Scientists in this field are eager to find a means to simulate the ground states of molecules and materials.

“Our new paper proposes a way to calculate ground states of Hamiltonians that runs on near-term quantum computers with very few resources.” Hamiltonian depicts the energy state of a system and the most stable state of the problem exists at the ground state of the Hamiltonian. A majority of physical systems under normal conditions exist closer to the ground state. -AFP

Musk sees people-moving Las Vegas tunnel opening in 2020

LAS VEGAS — A nearly mile-long tunnel in Las Vegas meant to showcase a “traffic busting” alternative for over-crowded cities should be completed next year, innovative entrepreneur Elon Musk said on Twitter.

The people-moving tunnel is being built by The Boring Company, one of several future-oriented enterprises founded by Musk, along with the Tesla electric-car company and SpaceX, which develops launch vehicles.

The 48-year-old billionaire tweeted late Friday that “Boring Co is completing its first commercial tunnel in Vegas, going from Convention Center to Strip.”

In a second tweet he said it would be “hopefully fully operational in 2020.”

The Las Vegas convention center is a sprawling complex being further enlarged -- the 0.8-mile (1.3 kilometer) tunnel would facilitate travel within the center and to the city’s famous Strip, where many of its major hotels and casinos are located.

Las Vegas officials selected The Boring Company in March to design, build and manage twin tunnels capable of transporting passengers in small, autonomous vehicles, each holding eight to 16 passenegers.

City-to-city travel

The South Africa-born Musk, who is known for original and sometimes fanciful thinking, has long advocated a futuristic underground train system, called the Hyperloop, that would allow passenger capsules at Tesla-built chas- sis to move through low-pres- sure tubes at high speeds.

He aspires eventually to build such a system linking Washington and New York along the busy US Northeast corridor; he has also proposed projects for Chicago and Los Angeles. -AFP
Football for Schools’ program uses football as a hook to get children involved in schools to play football but more importantly to teach life skills through the sport.

Myanmar-ROK relations become stronger than ever before after the recent diplomatic relations which was established in 1975. The year 2020 will be an exciting year for both countries as both will have general elections. Myanmar and Korea have common understandings due to similarities in geography, history, culture and people. Politically, they are located among big powers and share a common interest in maintaining friendly relations among them.

So, it is an opportunity for both Korea and Myanmar to cooperate together in economic development. Along with this economic cooperation, we, Myanmar can also learn from the economic model of Korea.

The Football for Schools’ program uses football as a hook to get children involved in schools to play football but more importantly to teach life skills through the sport.

The Football for Schools’ program uses football as a hook to get children involved in schools to play football but more importantly to teach life skills through the sport. The program will also help develop life skills such as self-confidence and fostering equity and equality between girls and boys.

The WFP-FIFA partnership will raise the profile of our school feeding program, and we believe that young men and women fed in schools will be able to learn new skills, create brighter futures for themselves, and their communities.

The ‘Football for Schools’ program aims to incorporate the sport into physical education by moving across football as a compulsory subject. However, the scheme is yet to be fully implemented due to similarities in geography, history, culture and people. Politically, they are located among big powers and share a common interest in maintaining friendly relations among them.

The program is expected to host some 200 projects in both countries in the coming year.
N. Korea’s Kim holds top party meeting ahead of US deadline

SEOUL—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has convened a key meeting of top ruling party officials, state media said Sunday, ahead of a year-end deadline for Washington to shift its stance on stalled nuclear talks.

The plenary session, which opened on Saturday, follows widespread speculation that Pyongyang is preparing to test a ballistic missile.

In the meeting, which discussed a new "transparent, anti-imperialist independent stand", the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

The ruling Workers’ Party of Korea will also “discuss important matters arising...in the building of the state and national defence”, KCNA added.

Talks on denuclearising the Korean peninsula have been largely deadlocked since the second summit between Kim and US President Donald Trump collapsed in Hanoi at the start of this year.

The opening of the plenary comes a week after Kim held a meeting of top defence officials and discussed boosting military capabilities, and ahead of the leader’s New Year speech on January 1, a key political piece in the isolated country.

Pyongyang has carried out a series of static tests at its Sohae rocket facility this month, after a number of weapons launches in recent weeks — some of them described as ballistic missiles by Japan and others.

North Korea is under heavy US and United Nations sanctions over its nuclear programme, but it has been frustrated at the lack of relief after it declared a moratorium on nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) tests.—AFP

Indian Navy planning to build six nuclear attack submarines: Navy to Parliamentary panel

NEW DELHI—The Indian Navy is planning to build a fleet of 18 conventional and six nuclear attack submarines as part of its plans for its underwater fleet.

“Eighteen (Conventional) plus six SSN (nuclear-powered attack) submarines are planned but the existing strength is 15 and 1 SSN is available on lease,” the Standing Committee on Defence said in its report tabled in the winter session of Parliament.

The Indian Navy had planned to build six nuclear attack submarines along with the Arihant Class SSBNs which are nuclear-powered submarines equipped with nuclear missiles.

The nuclear attack submarines are also planned to be built indigenously in partnership with private sector industries. At present, the Navy is operating Russian-origin Kilo Class, German-origin HDW class and the latest French Scorpene-class submarines in the conventional domain while in the nuclear section, it has leased one INS Chakra (Akula class) from Russia.

The Navy also informed the committee that in the last 15 years, only two new conventional submarines have been inducted including the Scorpene-class vessels INS Kalvari and the INS Khanderi. “It was further informed that the existing 13 conventional submarines are between 17 to 31 years old,” the standing committee report said.

The Navy is also working on a plan to build six new submarines under its Project 75 India in which six more conventional submarines would be built by the Navy in partnership with Indian companies and foreign origin equipment manufacturers. The project would be undertaken under the strategic partnership policy.—ANI

Japan gears up for New Year celebrations

TOKYO—As 2019 is coming to an end, Hagoita-Ichi Festival was held in Japan to sell ‘hagoita’, a large wooden rectangular paddle made of soapberry seeds and bird feathers that used to play traditional Japanese pastime called hanetsuki. “This is called ‘hagoita’. It’s a lucky item. The shape is spreading upward and every one used to play with wing ball. This lucky meaning is to get out had luck things,” said Toshihiko Nitta. The motif of ‘hagoita’ is an actor in Japanese entertainment traditional show ‘Kabuki’. The decoration is done by the skill of traditional craft art. “Decoration of ‘hagoita’ is made by using cotton and cloth as a corrugated fiberboard mould and making them one over another. The technique called “Oshie” making it look like three-dimensional,” a Hagoita craft master Kogetsu Nishiyama These ‘hagoita’ are unique. The motifs represent Rugby World Cup held in Japan, Tokyo 2020 Olympic and movie characters.—ANI

Five missing in Indonesian flash floods

JAKARTA—Five people went missing as flash floods destroyed homes in Indonesia’s North Sumatra province on Sunday, spokesman for the National Disaster Management Agency Agus Wibowo said.

A search and rescue for the missing people who belong to one family are underway, involving personnel of military and police, a search and rescue office and the disaster management agency, the spokesman said.

“The missing family was likely swept by a strong current during the flash floods,” he told Xinhua.—Xinhua

Toll in Ursula Typhoon in Philippines climbs to 41

MANILA — The number of people killed in Typhoon Ursula that hit popular tourist areas and remote villages across central Philippines earlier in the week, has risen to 41, media reported citing the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

Previous reports indicated that 28 people were killed as a result of the typhoon. Apart from those killed, 28 people more were injured, and 12 people are reported missing, the ABS-CBN News broadcaster stated. The number of victims is the highest in Philippine Western Visayas administrative region, where 20 people were killed in the cyclone. It is followed by Eastern Visayas where the number of victims stands at 13, Mimaropa with 7 deaths and Central Visayas with one victim, the media said.

Typhoon Ursula struck the central part of the Philippines on December 24 with heavy rains and winds. The typhoon damaged about 2,000 houses and 55 schools, while power was cut in 150 cities. Almost 41,000 people were evacuated due to the disaster.—ANI
Libya parliament speaker urges rejection of UN-recognised govt

Nicostia—the speaker of Libya's parliament on Saturday urged the international community to reject the legitimacy of the war-torn country's UN-recognised government which is pursuing closer military ties with Turkey.

Libya has been beset by chaos since a NATO-backed uprising toppled and killed dictator Moamer Kadhafi in 2011, with rival administrations in the east and the west vying for power.

In a reflection of the deep political divisions, the elected parliament in the east is allied with military strongman Khalifa Haftar, who is at war with the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA) recognised by the United Nations.

"In the coming days, the Libyan parliament will take action to ensure the withdrawal of international recognition of this government," parliament speaker Aguila Saleh told AFP in an interview during a visit to Cyprus.

Saleh said he had asked Cypriot Foreign Minister Nicos Christodoulides to "convey a message to the European Union so that it withdraws its recognition of this government (the GNA).

"It is time to form a new government supported by the Libyan people and parliament." Libya's parliament has itself been weakened by the departure of several dozen anti-Haftar lawmakers for Tripoli.

Saleh's visit follows a rise in tensions between Turkey on the one hand and EU members Greece and Cyprus on the other in a conflict over offshore hydrocarbon resources that has drawn in Libya.

Turkey in November signed a deal with the GNA in Tripoli in which the two parties lay claim to much of the Mediterranean, conflicting with rival claims by Greece and Cyprus.

At the same time, Turkey is stepping up military aid to Tripoli, which is battling Haftar's forces for control of the capital.

Ukraine rivals begin prisoner exchange in controversial swap

Checkpoint Mayorske—Ukrainian authorities and Russia-backed separatists in the war-torn east of the country began a prisoner exchange on Sunday in a de-escalation effort that has stirred controversy.

The exchange came as Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky held their first face-to-face talks in Paris on December 9 and agreed measures to de-escalate Europe's only active war.

As part of the swap, Kiev was expected to hand over several riot police suspected of killing protesters during a pro-Western uprising in 2014, in a move that sparked public anger.

"At the Mayorske checkpoint the process of releasing detained persons has begun," the official Twitter account of the Ukrainian presidency said.

It was still unclear how many people were involved in the exchange. A Ukrainian source told AFP that the parties were still verifying the lists of those being exchanged.

A representative of the separatist stronghold of Donetsk, Daria Marevova, said early that separatists would get 87 prisoners, while 55 people would be handed over to Kiev.— AFP

French government, unions exchange barbs in strike deadlock

Paris—the French government and a key trade union on Sunday exchanged bitter accusations over who was to blame for France's over three-week transport strike against pension reforms, as the stalemate showed little sign of relenting.

Deputy Transport Minister Jean-Baptiste Djebbari accused the hardline CGT union of a "systematic opposition to any reform" while the union's chief Philippe Martinez charged the government with strewing "chaos" in the conflict.

The strike -- now longer than the notorious 22-day strike of winter 1965 -- has now lasted 25 days and is on course to surpass the longest transport strike in France which lasted for 28 days in 1986 and early 1987. PHOTO: AFP

The strike against government pensions reform is on course to surpass the longest transport stoppage in France which lasted for 28 days in 1986 and early 1987.

France which lasted for 28 days in 1986 and early 1987. PHOTO: AFP

The French government, unions exchange barbs in strike deadlock

Pharos—The French govern-ment and a key trade union on Sunday exchanged bitter accusa-tions over who was to blame for France's over three-week transport strike against pension reforms, as the stalemate showed little sign of relenting.

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The strike -- now longer than the notorious 22-day strike of winter 1965 -- has now lasted 25 days and is on course to surpass the longest transport strike in France which lasted for 28 days in 1986 and early 1987. PHOTO: AFP

Iranian navy chief urges U.S. forces to leave regional waters

Tehran—The Iranian navy's chief said on Sunday that U.S. navy forces should leave regional waters, Tasnim news agency reported.

"The era of American free action in the region is over, and they (the U.S. navy forces) must leave the region gradually," Hossein Khamzadi said on the side-lines of a joint naval exercise with Russia and China, which is underway in the Gulf of Oman.

"We believe regional security does not require the presence of extra-regional countries, and that regional countries themselves can ensure security together," he added.—Xinhua

Five wounded in stabbing at New York rabbi's house

New York—An intruder stabbed and wounded five people at a rabbi's house in New York during a gathering to celebrate the Jewish festival of Hanukkah late Saturday, officials and media reports said.

The victims were taken to hospitals near the New York suburb of Monsey, two in critical condition, the Ortudson Jewish Community Affairs Council (OPJAC) tweeted after receiving a call at 9.50 pm.5 patients with stab wounds, all Hasidic, were transported to local hospitals. Local police depart-ments, speaking to AFP, declined to give the number of people injured, but a suspect has been taken into custody and a vehicle safely-guarded, an NTDT spokes-man said.Governor of New York, Andrew Cuomo, said in a statement that he was "horrified" by the "despica-ble and cowardly act," and had directed the State Police hate crimes task force to investigate."We have a zero tolerance for anti-Semitism in NY and we will hold the attacker accountable to the fullest extent of the law," he tweeted.—AFP

The strike against government pensions reform is on course to surpass the longest transport stoppage in France which lasted for 28 days in 1986 and early 1987. PHOTO: AFP

The strike against government pensions reform is on course to surpass the longest transport stoppage in France which lasted for 28 days in 1986 and early 1987. PHOTO: AFP
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PACAO VOY.NO. (076 N/S)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACAO VOY. NO. (076 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-12-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SINAR BINTAN VOY.NO. (660 N/S)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BINTAN VOY.NO. (660 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-12-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MTT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

As crisis hits, Lebanese businesses fight for survival

BEIRUT—After decades of hard work, self-made Lebanese chocolatier Roger Zakhour thought he would finally be able to pass a successful business to his daughter. But then the economic crisis hit.

Instead of reaping profits this Christmas, he and his 29-year-old daughter are marking down their handmade ice cream logs.

“If it continues like this, in a few months I’ll be bankrupt,” the 61-year-old said sitting in his small shop, surrounded by colourful stacks of hand-crafted chocolates.

In protest-hit Lebanon, a free-falling economy, price hikes and a severe dollar liquidity crunch have left local businesses struggling to stave off collapse.

Zakhour started making chocolates and then ice cream in the 1990s, refining his recipes until he became a go-to for five-star hotels and well-off Lebanese.

But as the economy worsened over the autumn, high-end hotels drastically reduced their orders and walk-in customers became rare.

“Worrying service will be poor service,” Zakhour, who has just upgraded his kitchen when sales dropped off.—AFP

Sixty years on, Africa still seeks right model for growth

PARIS—As 1960 dawned, sub-Saharan Africa braced for historic change: that year, 17 of its countries were destined to gain independence from European colonial powers. But six decades on, the continent is mired in many problems. It is struggling to build an economic model that encourages enduring growth, addresses poverty and provides a future for its youth. Here are some of the key issues:

Youth ‘explosion’

Africa’s population grew from 227 million in 1960 to more than one billion in 2018. More than 60 percent are aged under 25, according to the Brookings Institution, a US think tank. “The most striking change for me is the increasing reality of disaffected youth… a younger population that is ready to explode at any moment,” Cameroon sociologist Francis Nyamnjoh told AFP. “They are hungry for political freedom, they are hungry for economic opportunities and they are hungry for social fulfilment.”

Joblessness is a major peril. Unemployed youths are an easy prey for armed groups, particularly jihadist movements in the Sahel, or may be tempted to risk clandestine emigration, often at the cost of their lives.—AFP

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Dated 30th Dec 2019

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Dated 30th Dec 2019

A free-falling economy, price hikes and a severe liquidity crunch have left African business owners like Roger Zakhour struggling to stave off collapse. PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP
China's small, medium enterprises important contributors to economy: report

BEIJING—China’s medium-sized, small and micro enterprises made important contributions to the country’s economic development during the 2014-2018 period, official data showed. At the end of 2018, the number of medium-sized, small and micro enterprises rose 115 percent from 2013 to 18.07 million, making up 99.4 percent of all enterprises according to a report on China’s fourth economic census released by the National Bureau of Statistics. Those enterprises employed around 233 million people, accounting for 79.4 percent of all employees nationwide, the report said.

Japan’s unemployment rate improves for 1st time in 4 months in Nov

TOKYO—Japan’s unemployment rate improved in November for the first time in four months, the government said in a report on Friday. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, the unemployment rate stood at 2.2 percent in the recording month, dropping 0.2 percentage point from October. Unadjusted for seasonal factors, the number of unemployed people was 1.51 million in the recording month, down by 170,000 from a year earlier and still hovering near the lowest levels since the early 1990s amid the nation’s ongoing labor crunch.

The statistics bureau also said that 630,000 people left their jobs on their own volition, a decline of 120,000 from the previous year, while those laid off stood unchanged at 350,000, the previous year, while those laid off stood unchanged at 280,000 people in the recording period. The ministry also said the number of new job seekers dropped to 350,000, down by 20,000 people, according to its latest figures. Those in employment rose by 330,000 from a year earlier to 67.62 million in November, marking the 63rd successive month of expansion, the ministry also said. —Xinhua

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE XV XETHA BIUM VOYNO. (1130E)** Consignees of cargo carried on XV XETHA BIUM VOYNO. (1130E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-12-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MTT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:30 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to claim the Day’s cargo as declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: MS REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

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**INVITATION FOR BIDS**

**Design, Supply, and Installation of 230 kV No. Expansion of Shweswary Substation and 230/66/11kV, MVDAung Yew Substation.**

**Deadline for Submission of Bids:** 13, February, 2020, 13:00 hours (local time)

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Inle Lake in Shan State south, Nyaungshwe Township is one of the well known destinations in Myanmar among international tourists. It is situated 2,900 ft. above sea level in the middle of Shan mountain ranges that rose high above it. Inle Lake, where varieties of water resources exist was surrounded by geographical scenic views and was Myanmar’s second largest fresh water lake. Indawgyi Lake in Kachin State Moeyungyi Township was Myanmar’s largest fresh water lake.

In 2003, Inle Lake became ASEAN Heritage Park and an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area. In 2015, it was recognized as UNESCO’s Biosphere Reserve area and on 10 August 2018, it became Myanmar’s fifth Wetland of International Importance Ramsar Site.

Ramsar Site

A Ramsar site is a wetland site designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. If a proposed site meet any of the nine criteria set, it is designated as a Ramsar site. Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary in Bago Region, Bago Township was designated as Myanmar’s first Ramsar site in 2004. Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary in Kachin State Moeyynin Township became a Ramsar site in 2014 and Meinmahal Kyun Wildlife Sanctuary in Ayeyawady Region Bagale Township became Myanmar’s third Ramsar site in 2017. Also in 2017, part of Gulf of Mottama was designated as Ramsar site.

Environmental challenges or problems of global warming, climate change, rising sea level, air and water pollution are threatening the natural environment and ecosystem of humans as well as living creatures and plants. Because of this, countries of the world were using various means to reduce the damage to the ecosystem and to conserve the natural environment. Bio diverse wetlands with habitat for waterfowls and migratory birds became natural environment that need to be protected and preserved.

In order to protect and preserve wetlands that support environmental protection, an international convention on wetlands was held for the first time in Ramsar, Iran on 2 February 1971. The day was designated as World Wetlands Day. 169 countries were party to the Convention on Wetlands also called the Ramsar Convention and Myanmar became one after signing it on 17 March 2005.

Ramsar Convention is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and to recognize the ecosystem, economy, culture, science and recreational values...
miles. Average water depth was 7 ft during the dry season and 12 ft during the monsoon season. During peak raining season, the depth can be up to 20 ft at the deepest point. Inle region had a fair temperature between 45 to 90 degree Fahrenheit and receives an average rainfall of 60 inches. Creeks and rivers flow into the lake from the east, west and north and the lake water flow onto Balouchaung in the south, merge with Nampaung River and then flow into Thanlwin River.

To maintain the eco system and bio diversity of Inle Lake, an area covering 131,887.77 acres (526.07 square mile) that include Inle Lake and Moeybye reservoir was designated as Inle Lake Wildlife Sanctuary in 1983. 270 bird species, 43 fish species, 34 amphibian species, 3 turtle species and 34 butterfly species are found in Inle Lake area. Out of these, 20 snails species and five fish species are unique to the region as it was not found anywhere else in the world. From November to January, more than 20,000 gulls can be seen while migratory birds were also seen during the winter time.

Five gold-covered Buddha Images of Hpaung Daw U pagoda. PHOTO: MAUNG THA (ARCHAEOLOGY)

Socio economic situation of Inle region

Increase in population, development in agriculture and travel business affected the natural environment of Inle Lake. Due to the increase of agriculture on floating man-made island on the western portion of the lake during the 60% years time span of 1955 to 2000, the lake area decline from 26.67 square mile to 17.99 square mile. At the moment the water and floating islands of Inle Lake cover an area of 14,326.18 acres (22.38 square mile) and 5,797.6 acres (9 square mile) was designated as Ramsar site.

Nyaungshwe Township had a population of 171,954 out of which 110,109 were Inntha. Shan, Taunggyi, Danu, PaO, Kayah and Rama numbering 70,000 lived in Inle Lake. People in Inle region earn a livelihood in agriculture, goldsmith, blacksmith, weaving, fishing and horticulture. Islands on which agriculture or farming was conducted include natural as well as floating man-made islands were made by gathering lake-bottom weeds and tying it on bamboo poles. The floating man-made island anchored by bamboo poles rise and fall with changes in the water level making it resistant to flooding.

People travel by boats in Inle Lake. Big boats were motorized while smaller boats were rowed uniquely by leg while the leg rower stands on his other leg. This was one of the uniqueness that can be found only in Inle. Mostly man rows in this unique way while woman tend to sit and row in the normal way. However, in boat competitions, both men and women with their legs while standing upright.

This was where locals came to buy and sell their products as well as merchant from afar came to sell products from other regions. There were also markets in the lake where both the sellers and buyers came in boats to buy and sell. These ‘boat market’ are of great interest for both local as well as foreign visitors.

The floating man-made islands of Inle Lake became Myanmar’s fifth Ramsar site while travel business affected the natural environment, local traditions and cultures as well as foreign visitors. Inle Lake region had a population of 171,954 out of which 110,109 were Inntha. Shan, Taunggyi, Danu, PaO, Kayah and Rama numbering 70,000 lived in Inle Lake. People in Inle region earn a livelihood in agriculture, goldsmith, blacksmith, weaving, fishing and horticulture. Islands on which agriculture or farming was conducted include natural as well as floating man-made islands were made by gathering lake-bottom weeds and tying it on bamboo poles. The floating man-made island anchored by bamboo poles rise and fall with changes in the water level making it resistant to flooding.

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Youth star Myat Kaung Khant joins Thai club Chainat Hornbill

MYAT KAUNG KHANT, the Myanmar U-22 men’s national football team midfielder, recently joined Thailand League-2 football club Chainat Hornbill.

The 19-year-old midfielder has also played for Yadanarbon FC and the transfer process has been okayed with Chainat Hornbill FC.

Myat Kaung Khant helped the Myanmar U-22 win a bronze medal in the men’s football competition of the 2019 SEA Games in the Philippines.

Myat Kaung Khant was a star at the Myanmar Football Academy.

In 2017, he was signed by the Yadanarbon FC. He scored his first professional goal at his first match.

During the 2017 season, Myat Kaung Khant was also selected on the Myanmar U-19 football team and scored three out of six goals for Myanmar against the Philippines team at the National Olympic Stadium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

His goals show he can only play well in the midfield, but also in the striking position.

Myat Kaung Khant has been on the Myanmar national men’s senior football team earlier. He made his debut on 10 October, 2018 against Indonesia in a friendly match. He scored his first international goal for the Myanmar national team against Bahrain in a friendly match on 16 October, 2018. The match ended with a score of 1-4. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Borussia Dortmund sign teen striking prodigy Haaland

BERLIN (Germany) — Borussia Dortmund have signed teenage goalscorer sensation Erling Braut Haaland from RB Salzburg, the German Bundesliga outfit announced on Monday.

In a statement, Dortmund revealed that the 19-year-old, who scored eight times in the group stage of this season’s Champions League, had signed a contract until 2024 but did not mention a fee.

Haaland has caught the eye of clubs around Europe after scoring 28 goals in 22 games in all competitions so far this campaign, with RB Leipzig coach Julian Nagelsmann admitting earlier this month that they were trying for the Norway striker’s signature.

“From the beginning I had the feeling I definitely wanted to switch to this club, to walk this path,” Haaland said.

In a video posted to the Dortmund website, he wished Dortmund fans a happy new year as he pored over a 2020 to-do list topped with “learn German”.

Earlier in December, the forward had been spotted by local media landing in the west German city to meet with club representatives.

“Despite many offers from the very top clubs across Europe, Erling Haaland has chosen the sporting challenge at BVB (Dortmund),” chief executive Hans-Joachim Watzke said in a statement.

“We can all look forward to an ambitious, athletic and physically strong centre forward... at 19, Erling is right at the start of what will hopefully be a great career for the club. Haaland became the third youngest player to score a Champions League hat-trick when he netted three times in a 6-2 victory over Genk in September.

Only Wayne Rooney, England’s record goalscorer, and Spain great Raul managed the feat at a younger age.

Haaland, the son of former Manchester City midfielder Alf-Inge Haaland, scored in his first five Champions League matches.

Despite his impressive form Salzburg failed to reach the last 16 following a 2-0 loss to defending champions Liverpool in their final group game this month.

Dortmund, currently fourth in the Bundesliga, are looking for a new striker with Mario Goetze and Spain international Paco Alcacer struggling for consistency this season. — AFP