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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VI, No. 258, 6th Waxing of Pyatho 1381 ME www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com Tuesday, 31 December 2019

Electricity officials discuss uninterrupted power distribution in 2020 summer



Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing delivers the speech at the coordination meeting to plan uninterrupted distribution of electricity in coming summer season yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

A COORDINATION meeting to plan uninterrupted distribution of electricity for the summer was held at Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation (YESC) yesterday. Firstly, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing said it is important for all departments to coordinate for sustainable electricity generation in the summer. He said electricity is one of the most

fundamental requirements to develop a nation and the ministry has plans to achieve 55 per cent nationwide electrification in 2020-2021, 75 per cent in 2025-2026, and a hundred per cent by 2030. The Union Minister said they have plans to increase electric generation to meet the rising demand and consumption. He said a total of 4,200MW will be needed in 2020

and the plans for generating them are complete with the distribution part necessary as well. However, there may be unexpected shortcomings in releasing natural gases and there is a need to use hydro-power for mix generation, said the Union Minister. He said the electric sub-stations are important during the summer when consumption is high and to prevent outages.

He said all proper maintenance and repairs should be made ahead of time. The Union Minister the township electric engineers who are in close contact with people should clearly explain to the public that they are working their best given the available time and resources to provide uninterrupted electricity.

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Measures taken to upgrade Ayeyawady dolphin conservation to regional level

TO PROTECT the endangered Ayeyawady dolphin at the regional-level, a dolphin survey report is being compiled and will be submitted for consideration at the Hluttaw, said U Aye Khaing, Chairman of the Mandalay Region Hluttaw Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee. The dolphins' natural habitats in Mingun, Kyaukmyaung, Htigyaing, Katha and Shwegu are designated conservation areas. The Department of Fisheries and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) are working together with local residents to protect the dolphins. However, according to a WCS report, there are only around 72 Ayeyawady Dolphins in Myanmar. The dolphin survey report aims to prevent their numbers from dropping and to increase their reproduction rate by implementing a regional-level protection programme. U Aye Khaing said protecting the dolphins is everyone's responsibility and this is why the report will receive cooperation from dolphin activists before submitting it to the Hluttaw. He said it will be sent directly to the regional Hluttaw Speaker and encouraged to be presented to the assembly for debate.

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Union Minister Dr Pe Myint meets with artists, stakeholders of movie, broadcast industries

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint held a meeting with the artists and stakeholders of movie and broadcast industries at the Sky Star Hotel in Tamway Township, Yangon, yesterday evening.

The meeting was also attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun, Yangon Region Government's Rakhine Ethnic Affairs Minister U Zaw Aye Maung, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung, the Directors-General, the patrons of Myanmar Motion Picture Organization, its chairman and officials, responsible persons for Myanmar Broadcasters Association, movie and television artists, businesspersons and invited guests.

In delivering a speech, the Union Minister said that organizations and artists of movie and broadcast industries are partners of the Ministry of Information, and that a close and friendly relationship is required for all.

The MOI is a partner of literary, journalism, music, movie and television industries which have formed relevant associations to protect and safeguard their common interest.

For example, defending art copyright needs involvement of stakeholders. Some associations are aimed for social welfares of artists in the same industry.

The MOI has to deal with literary, music and movie associations, and helps in forming organizations to improve movie industry and to protect welfares of individuals in this industry. The ministry is also supporting development of these industries and created the Film Development Centre on Shwe Taung Gya Road in Bahan Township, Yangon.

Myanmar film has a high potential to be able to penetrate into the international market. Myanmar motion picture has reached its 100th anniversary,



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint addresses during the meeting with the artists and stakeholders of movie and broadcast industries in Yangon, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

and the MOI is very active to enjoy this occasion together with the artists.

After the speech of Union Minister Dr Pe Myint, Patron of MMPO Sithu Bogalay Tint Aung, its Chairman Nyi Nyi Tun Lwin and Vice Chairman of Myanmar Broadcasters Association U Khin Maung Htay made discussions.

After the meeting, the Union Minister hosted a dinner to the attendees. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Veteran musicians get respect of Myanmar Music Association (Central)



Myanmar Music Association Chairman U Tin Oo Lay delivers the opening speech at the ceremony to veteran musicians in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT**

The Myanmar Music Association (Central) organized the 9th respect-paying ceremony to veteran musicians at the Gandamar Wholesale Grand Ballroom yesterday afternoon.

It was attended by Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Information U Myo Myint Maung and officials, patrons and members of MMA (Central) and the invited guests.

Chairman of MMA (Central) U Tin Oo Lay made an opening remark, and Sithu Dr Bogalay Tint Aung gave blessings to the audience.

the cash and kind donations were made to 80 veteran musicians with the age of 80 and above and 62 persons with the age of 75 and above, while some ailing elder musicians received the donation items at their homes.

At the 9th respect-paying ceremony of MMA (Central), families of Commander in Chief (Army, Navy, Air) donated K10 million and the Ministry of Information K500,000. Individual donors also contributed cash to the ceremony.—Ohnmar Sandi

Electricity officials discuss sustainable power distribution in 2020 summer

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Next, officials from various departments and corporations explained their relevant preparations for summer electricity generation in 2020 and Yangon Region Minister for Electricity, Industry and Infrastructure Daw Nilar Kyaw and Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win replied to the discussions.

Afterwards, the Union Minister gave his input where necessary. — MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Measures taken to upgrade Ayeyawady dolphin conservation to regional level



Ayeyawady Dolphins seen jumping out of the water. **PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MAN SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)**

FROM PAGE-1

Several reports indicate that the dolphins in Mingu and Kyaukmyaung areas have higher intelligence and are capable of assisting fishermen. Local awareness raising campaigns have managed to attract more people to help protect the dolphins and while this is admirable their injury rate has not gone down significantly, said Tabawa Sein Yang Sone's Chairman U Maung Maung Oo.

He said the report will focus on the dolphins' behaviours and habitats and their decreasing reproduction rate. He said the river resources essential for the dolphins' survival are also declining and need to be preserved as well.

So far, 4 Ayeyawady dolphins died in 2010, 3 in 2011, 4 in 2012, 5 in 2013, 3 each yearly from 2014 to 2017, 6 in 2018, and 2 in 2019. — Min Htet Aung (Man Sub-printing House)

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Equality of opportunity for all

To be a genuine democracy, it is not enough to be a "government of the people, by the people, for the people". The government must uplift the economic standard of our people to the point where there is equality of opportunity for all. Then only can we go forward towards genuine democracy.

(Extract from the speech given by General Aung San at the Jubilee Hall First Preparatory Conference held on 19 May 1947)



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu attends farmland management coordination meeting

THE Central Body of Farmland Management held its 26th coordination meeting at the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation yesterday morning.

Union Minister Dr Aung Thu, the Chairman of Central Body, delivered an opening remark at the meeting.

He also discussed considering about proposals for cultivation of alternative crops not to affect paddy growing which is exceeding 40 per cent of the domestic consumption, however, to meet local demand with an increasing population of the country and export.

The Union Minister also advised to scrutinize applications of land utilization by farmers, private firms, associations, departmental organizations and departments not to have impacts on food security and agricultural outputs of the country, while compensations are to be given without delay in accordance with the existing laws, bylaws, rules and regulations.

Director-General of Department of Agriculture Land Management and Statistics U Thet Naing Oo, the Secretary of Central Body, discussed compensations for lands utilized for



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu delivers the opening speech at the coordination meeting of Central Body of Farmland Management yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

national projects in respective States and Regions,

The Central Body of Farmland Management is scru-

tinizing applications of land utilizations for development programmes based on possible access to electricity, transporta-

tion, workforce, closeness with towns and villages, and water supply.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Supreme Court Judge inspects Maubin Prison, meets local judges



Supreme Court Judge U Myo Tint inspects Maubin prison in Ayeyawady Region. **PHOTO: MNA**

SUPREME Court Judge U Myo Tint visited Maubin prison in Ayeyawady Region on 27 December.

Firstly, Warden U Htay Win explained the situation of the prison and the Supreme Court Judge

and entourage then inspected the inmates' cells, mess and clinic. He also met with the inmates and asked whether they were receiving their due rights, humane living standards and healthcare.

Afterwards, U Myo Tint met with the District Court Judge and township judges in Maubin District Court and discussed judicial matters.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Court-Martial hearings on Gutapyin incident continue

THE Court-Martial established in accordance with the Defence Services Act and the Defence Services Rules to try the Gutapyin incident conducted the trial at the local Regiment in Buthidaung beginning on 26 November, and continued the examination of witnesses in accordance with the procedure at trial.

To date, the trial of Court-Martial has been conducted five times, and military personnel witnesses and civilian witnesses for prosecu-

tion submitted by the officer for prosecution against the accused personnel was examined. Remaining witnesses for prosecution and witnesses for defence submitted by the officer for defence will be examined in accordance with the procedure at trial.

A total of 264 local men and women attended and observed the five times of such trial of Court-Martial, according to Tatmadaw True News Information Team.—MNA

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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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Deputy Minister U Soe Aung discusses humanitarian works with MRCS

DEPUTY MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung received a delegation of Myanmar Red Cross Society led by its Vice President Dr Daw Amaya Maw Naing at the ministry yesterday.

The meeting focused re-

settlement programmes for Kachin IDPs, discussions with relevant local governments on education talks for landmine hazards, operating mobile clinics and other possible assistance of the MRCS.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Deputy Minister U Soe Aung holds talks with a delegation of Myanmar Red Cross Society led by its Vice President Dr Daw Amaya Maw Naing. **PHOTO: MNA**

MP to issue postcards for Yangon University Pre-Centenary

MYANMAR Post (MP) under the Ministry of Transport and Communications will issue two new postcards to commemorate the Pre-Centenary of Yangon University. The two new postcards will go on sale at 9:30 am from 1 January 2020 (7th Waxing of Pyatho 1381 ME) at all post offices in the states and regions.

As a special programme, the Central Post Office of Nay Pyi Taw, the Yangon General Post Office, and the Mandalay General Post Office will stamp the postmark and date on the postcards purchased on 1 January 2020. — MNA

(Translated by TTN)



New batch of green grams enters Mandalay market

MANDALAY bean merchants say the new batch of green grams (anyar shwe wah) for the new year are already entering into local markets.

U Soe Win Myint (Soe Win Myint Sales Center) from Mandalay said the green grams from DaikU, Penwagon and Kyauktada townships of Bago Region have been entering Mandalay's markets at a rate of five 12-wheeled trucks per day. He said the weather had been on their side and not only has production increased from last year, prices are a bit higher as well.

U Soe Win Myint said India bought 200,000 tons of green grams in May 2019 and farmers and merchants are hoping India will sign a contract to purchase them again in 2020.

Similarly, the anyar shwe wah variety of green grams

have begun to enter the markets of Madaya and Singu townships in Mandalay Region and Myaung and Myinmu townships of Sagaing Region and are fetching K10,000 more for each bag containing 3 baskets compared to last year.

At the same rate of 3 baskets per bag currently, the shwe wah variety of green grams fetch K120,000 and the anyar shwe wah variety fetch K116,000, with the main buyers from China.

Green grams are cultivated in Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Bago regions all year round in the same manner as rice and is also a high demand crop. Mung beans are the top export crops from Myanmar followed by green grams.—Min Htet Aung

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Mandalay bean merchants check the quality of green grams (anyar shwe wah) for the new year at the market. **PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MAN SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)**

Local gold price bucks global trend, remains stable on back of stronger Kyat

By Nyein Nyein

WITH the Kyat gaining against the US dollar, the price of gold in the domestic market has remained stable in spite of an increase in global gold prices, said U Ohn Myaing, general secretary of the Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

“At present, gold price is on the rise in the global market. At the same time, the Kyat has become stronger against the US dollar in the internal forex market. Therefore, local gold price has not increased. Gold is fetching around K1.197 million per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilograms) in the domestic market,” he said.

The domestic gold price is

positively related to the global gold price. Global prices rose to over US\$1,514 per ounce on 30 December, but domestic gold was priced at just K1.197 million. The stable price in the local market was attributed to the lower exchange rate. The US dollar exchange rate stood at K1,488, according to the gold market.

“In early September, the price of pure gold crossed K1.3 million per tical, tracking global cues and rumors in the local banking industry. Then, it dropped to K1.197 million on 30 December. The internal gold market is keeping cool,” said U Ohn Myaing.

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price

hit fresh highs this year, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 7 August), climbing to 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching a record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September.

According to gold traders, the lowest price for gold in June was K1,223,800 (14 September) and the highest was K1,307,000 (5 September). In October, the gold price touched the lowest level of K1,211,500 on 1 October and the highest level of K1,229,000 on 10 October. In November, the price moved in the range of 1,219,400 (2 November) and K1,173,000 (28 November), according to gold traders.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Gold jewelry seen at shop in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

CMP businesses import raw materials worth \$476 mln

THE imports of raw materials by CMP (cut, make, pack) businesses were valued at US\$476 million between 1 October and 13 December in the 2019-2020 financial year, an increase of \$16.26 million compared with the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

As per figures provided by the ministry, the exports of finished industrial goods had touched a high of \$459.95 million in the previous fiscal.

Myanmar’s manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garments and textiles produced on the cutting, making, and packaging basis, and it contributes to the country’s GDP to a certain extent.

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 FY 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.

During the mini-budget period (April-September, 2018), exports of clothes produced under the CMP system were valued at \$2.27 billion.

As per figures provided by the ministry, the exports of finished industrial goods totaled \$1.4 billion during the same period in the 2018-2019FY.

Japan is the largest market for Myanmar apparel, followed by the European Union.

There are currently over 400 garment factories in Myanmar, which employ more than 300,000 workers. Investors prefer to invest in cheap-labour countries like Myanmar. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Dollar exchange rate dips below K1,490

THE US dollar has been sliding against the Kyat in the local currency market, with the exchange rate touching a low of K1,488 per dollar on 30 December, said money exchangers.

While the US dollar index was pegged at 96 in the global market, the exchange rate slipped to K1,488 on 30 December in the local forex market.

“It is normal for the dollar to depreciate against the Kyat this time of the year. At present, exports of rice and pulses are increasing, and the demand for the dollar is falling in the market amid the New Year holidays,” said a money exchanger.

The CBM had set the reference exchange rate (weighted average market rate) at K1,487.8 per dollar on 30 December.

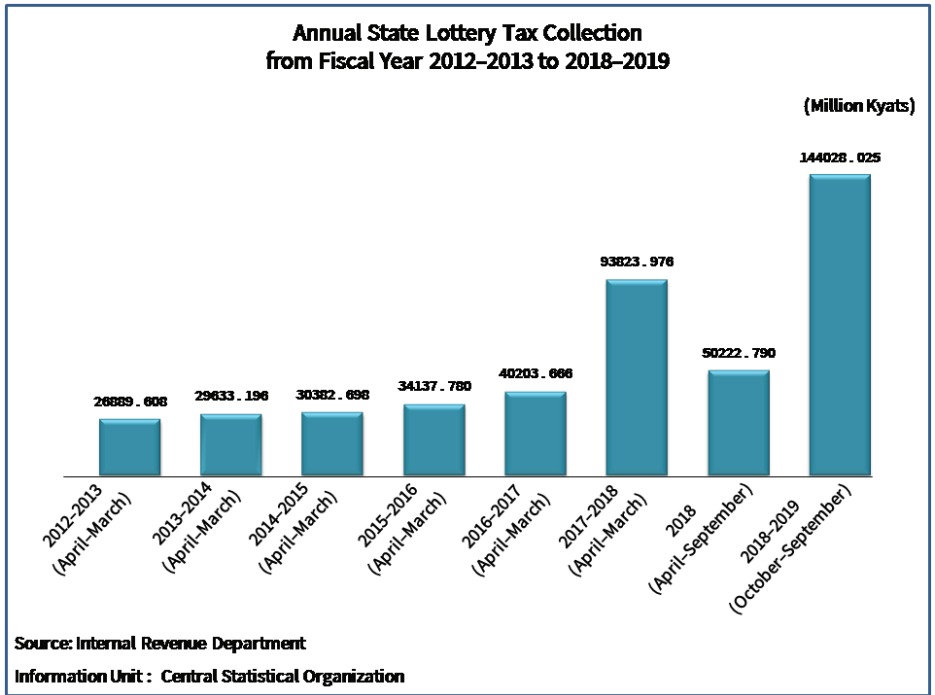
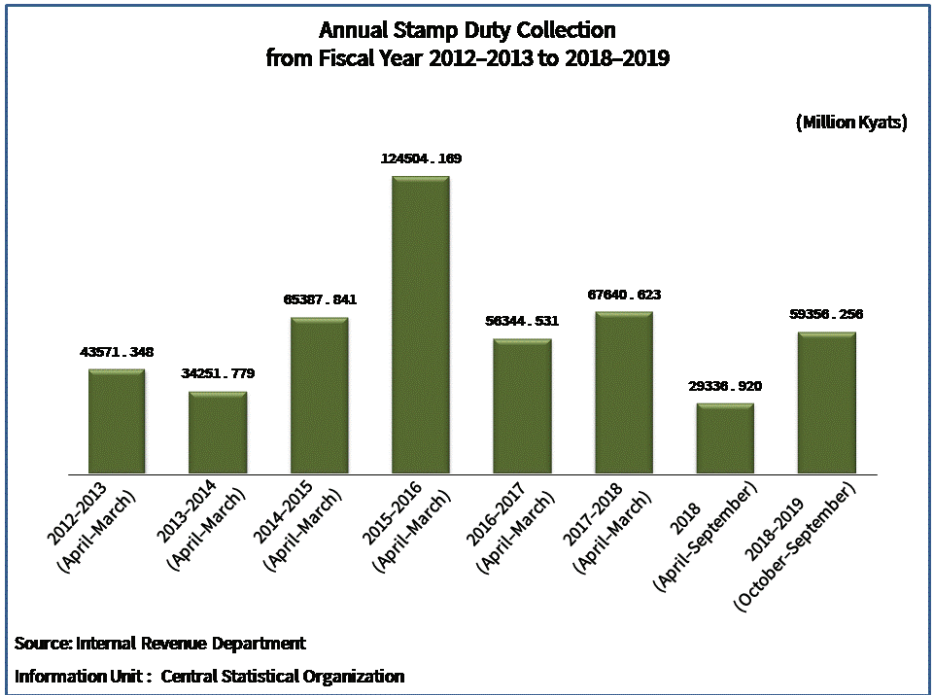
In October last year, the dollar exchange rate had hit a high of K1,600.

Thereafter, the dollar has been falling in the local currency market.

With the Kyat gaining against the dollar in the internal forex market, domestic gold price plunged to K1.185 million per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilograms) on 5 December from a record high of K1.3 million in early September.

This year, the exchange rate stood at K1,540 on 1 January and fell to a low of K1,515 on 15 January. It continued to decline and reached K1,503 on 28 February. Thereafter, it rose to K1,527 on 18 March and K1,538 on 14 May. The rate stood at K1,259 on 1 June and K1,514 on 26 August. Then, the dollar exchange rate hit a peak of K1,565 on 6 September. It was pegged at around K1,528-1,537 in October. Last month, the rate moved in the range of K1,510-1,524. —Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Myanmar health officials discuss action plans for WHO fund period

A ceremony was held at the Department of Medical Research to explain the implementation of processes with the acquisition of World Health Organization funds for 2020-2021 yesterday.

Speaking at the event, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe said his ministry will not be beginning new ventures or restarting existing ones in 2020, but will make minor amendments and beneficial changes to ongoing ones.

He said the ministry must endeavour for early implementation of its health action plans during 2020-2021 with WHO funds.

The Union Minister said all relevant officials must understand the standards for WHO funds, the 13th General Program of Work 2019-2023, prioritized strategic goals, action plans, aims and facts for acquiring funding. He said WHO officials should regularly meet up with

the ministry's health project managers and officials to ensure the fund is not wasted and all processes are beneficial.

Next, WHO technical officers Dr Mohammad Shahjahan and Dr Rahman and Daw Hla Hla Aye explained the 13th General Program of Work and framework, action plans for the 2020-2021 WHO fund period, currently verified action plans and possible fund acquisition, and supplementing programs. They then replied to questions from the audience.

Afterwards, the Medical Research Department Director-General and officials explained preparations for the 48th Myanmar Health Research Seminar, to be held from 13 to 17 January, 2020, in Yangon's department.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe attends the meeting to implementation of processes with the acquisition of World Health Organization funds for 2020-2021 yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Trump faces firestorm after identifying alleged whistleblower



File photo taken on 24 December 2019 shows US President Donald Trump at the Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach Florida. PHOTO: AFP

WASHINGTON (United States) —Donald Trump faced calls from his own party to show more restraint on Twitter amid a storm of outrage Sunday over the president revealing the name of a man widely thought to be the whistleblower who triggered his impeachment.

Criticism has been growing since Trump retweeted an attack that included the name of the reported CIA staffer at the heart of the Ukraine scandal — an act that could violate the whistleblower's guaranteed anonymity under the law. "If the president would tweet a little bit less, it wouldn't cause brain damage. But the president does not have to take my advice, nor do I expect him to," Republican Senator John Kennedy, a key Trump ally, told "Fox News

Sunday."

Trump is ending 2019 as the third president in US history to be impeached after pressuring Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden, a rival in his 2020 reelection bid.

The historic rebuke by the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives for abuse of office and obstruction of Congress is unlikely to pass the Republican-controlled Senate in a trial expected to begin in January.

But Trump, who is reportedly eager to celebrate his acquittal, has appeared increasingly frustrated that no date has been set for the trial amid a partisan stand-off over its rules.

The president spent much of Friday amplifying pro-Trump and anti-Democrat tweets from suspicious-looking Twitter accounts at

the start of what would become a weekend-long rant against the impeachment process.

The incendiary whistleblower retweet was no longer visible in the president's timeline by Saturday morning, although it was not clear who had removed it.

Political action group The Democratic Coalition tweeted Sunday that "while Trump has repeatedly backed efforts to unmask the whistleblower, his retweet marks the first time he has directly sent the alleged name to his 68 million followers."

'Beyond the pale'

Noah Bookbinder, who heads Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), posted that "the president using his power and position to expose and implicitly threaten the Ukraine whistleblower is — like so much else he has done — utterly beyond the pale."

House Republican whip Steve Scalise attempted a defense of Trump's repeated demands for a Senate appearance from the whistleblower — purportedly an intelligence analyst who said Trump linked US aid to Ukraine to his demand for the Biden investigation.—AFP

The Global New Light of Myanmar Daily

Vacancy Announcement

- Applications are invited from qualified candidates for the post of Chief Editor of the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily. The last date for submitting the applications is 15 January, 2020.
 - (A) The candidate for the Chief Editor's post should be a graduate and must be fluent in four skills of English. The candidate must have good writing and editing skills.
 - (B) The candidate must have experience in the newspaper field, and have at least five years' experience in editing English news and good newsroom management skills.
 - (C) The candidate must have computer and internet skills.
 - (D) The candidate must have good health and be willing to work at night.
 - (E) The candidate must be aged between 40 and 65.
 - (F) The salary is negotiable.
- For more information, please contact U Win Zaw Htay, general manager, The Global New Light of Myanmar at No. 150, Ngahtetgyi Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, Mobile: 09-250204653, and U Aye Min Soe, acting Chief Editor, Mobile: 09-428120086. Applications should be attached with resume and license photos.

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WhatsApp ends support for Windows Phone, older Android

CALIFORNIA (USA) — WhatsApp users on Windows Phone OS or older Android OS may have to finally move to a modern device as the messaging service will stop working on older platforms after December 31, 2019.

In its official support blog, WhatsApp notes that it will no longer allow account creation or re-verification of existing accounts on Android versions 2.3.7 and older and iOS 8 and older.

However, it will continue to work until February 1, 2020. WhatsApp might not be available in Microsoft Store after July 1, 2019.



A picture taken on 28 December 2016 in Paris shows the logo of WhatsApp mobile messaging service. PHOTO: AFP

The users are recommended to use devices running Android OS 4.0.3+, iPhone running iOS 9+, select phones running KaiOS 2.5.1+. — ANI ■

NASA releases image of Perseus Molecular Cloud

WASHINGTON D.C. (United States) — The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) released images of a ‘burning’ cloud or the Perseus Molecular Cloud captured by its Spitzer Space Telescope.

The fiery image showcased a gigantic collection of gas and dust that stretched over 500 light-years. The image of the Perseus Molecular Cloud is actually ‘infrared radiation’ of the warm dust and it makes it seem like the outer space is ablaze.

According to Fox News, the cloud consists of more than 10,000 gas and dust solar masses and has been a reason for astronomers’ fascination for years.

“Clusters of stars, such as the bright spot near the left side of the image, generate even more infrared light and illuminate the surrounding clouds like the sun lighting up a cloudy sky at sunset,” Fox News quoted NASA as saying.

According to the space agency, most of the dust particles that could be seen in the image emits no or very little visible light and hence, it was revealed using the Spitzer.

The image was taken by the Spitzer’s Multiband Imaging Photometer (MIPS) during the ‘cold mission’ of the telescope which was from 2003 to 2009. — ANI ■

With purifiers and lawsuits, Pakistanis fight back against smog

LAHORE (Pakistan) — For the past few months Hasan Zaidi’s phone has been ringing non-stop with calls from desperate residents in Pakistan hoping to get their hands on his newly invented air purifier as smog blankets the country.

“Some days, I had so many calls that I couldn’t answer,” says Zaidi during a recent interview with AFP in his workshop.

Tired of choking on putrid air, Zaidi spent six months perfecting his homemade device as he looked for a low-cost solution to battle the increasingly toxic scourge overwhelming Pakistan.

During this winter alone the 31-year-old engineer has already sold some 500 units, which are priced at just 16,000 Pakistani rupees (\$103), but admits to refusing hundreds of orders in recent weeks due to lack of manpower and resources.

In cash-strapped Pakistan Zaidi’s “Indoor Forest” purifiers are cheaper than imported models, which typically cost about two to five times more.

“Now it is less of a luxury and more of a necessity,” explains Sadia Khan, whose

company Autosoft Dynamics recently acquired a dozen of Zaidi’s purifiers so his 180 employees can “breathe safely”.

135,000 deaths

In the past five years, air pollution has worsened in Pakistan, as a mixture of low-grade diesel fumes, smoke from seasonal crop burn off, and colder winter temperatures coalesce into stagnant clouds of smog.

In 2015, 135,000 Pakistanis died due to poor air quality, according to a study published in the scientific journal The Lancet.

Pollution tends to be at its worst in the country’s eastern province of Punjab during winter, particularly in the 12-million strong city of Lahore near the border with India.

In November schools were closed for several days across the province with the level of PM2.5 — tiny particles that get into the bloodstream and vital organs — repeatedly exceeding 200 micrograms per cubic meter of air.

The World Health Organisation’s recommended safe daily maximum is a measurement of 25.

Pakistan is ranked one of the worst countries in the world for air quality and Lahore consistently ranked in the top 10 most smog-hit cities, according to the pollution monitoring site AirVisual.

But Tanveer Waraich, director general of the Punjab’s environmental agency, dismisses those figures, saying pollution readings cited by monitors and activists are not from “authentic machines”.

“To say that Pakistan and Lahore are among the top polluted cities... this statement is not based on facts,” he says, but concedes the country’s air quality is largely unacceptable.

Public awareness about the issue is growing due to increased activism on social media about the dangers of pollution and the dire challenges climate change is bringing to Pakistan.

Yann Boquillod, who co-founded AirVisual, said subscribers to the site from Pakistan have increased tenfold this year.

“In Pakistan, there was a problem but no one knew about it. Pakistanis are (now) mobilising,” Boquillod says. — AFP ■

5G industry fund established in Zhejiang

HANGZHOU — A 2-billion-yuan (around 286.3 million U.S. dollars) fund was recently established in east China’s Zhejiang Province to boost the development of the 5G industry, according to local authorities.

The fund, jointly initiated by social investors and government-industry funds, was established in the 5G Innovation Valley in Xiaoshan District in the city of Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang on Dec. 28.

A 5G exhibition center also opened to the public on the same day.

In the first phase, a total of 1 billion yuan of the fund will be invested in leading enterprises in the 5G industry nationwide and cultivating the 5G industry market with strategic partners in the industrial chain, according to the district government.

Based on the fund, the district aims to build the innovation valley into a 5G industrial highland of China and the world, as well as boost the high-quality development of the digital economy of Xiaoshan.

Covering 2,000 square meters, the 5G exhibition center displays the latest achievements based on 5G technology innovation and application, including fields of advanced manufacturing, smart logistics, tourism, transportation and entertainment.

The 5G Innovation Valley opened in May. More than 20 leading 5G enterprises have settled down there. — Xinhua ■



Illuminated 5G logos are on display during the 10th Global mobile broadband forum hosted by Chinese tech giant Huawei in Zurich on 15 October 2019. PHOTO: AFP

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Mechanized farming quickest way to tackle labor shortage

Due to pest attacks and the impact of climate change, farmers have recorded lower output from rain-fed paddy fields this year. Besides, a lower price for paddy has been another blow to farmers.

Hence, farmers have now pinned their hopes on summer crops, especially summer paddy, grown using irrigation water. Farmers are confident that cultivation using irrigation water, which is considered a nutrient for paddy plants, will ensure a high yield.

For growing summer paddy using irrigation water, farmers have to make preparations, including ploughing and sowing, while irrigation water is flowing into their farmland. However, shortage of farm workers is a huge challenge for farmers.

In some areas, farmer operations are cancelling plans. Labor shortages are adding to the stress on farmers.

How can the sector take advantage of the opportunity if this situation persists?

Without an adequate number of experienced workers in the field, farmers cannot plant or harvest crops.

Myanmar is facing some challenges, including a shortage of farm labor, while making efforts for modernizing the agricultural sector. There are several ways to resolve farming issues. Mechanized farming is one method to overcome manual labor shortage, which is a major problem in the country.

While the government is devoting its time to modernize the country's agriculture sector, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation is making efforts to promote modernized and sustainable production techniques, packaging systems, and

marketing strategies, with a view to meet the demand from home and abroad.

Myanmar's agriculture sector still depends on manual labor, but generates the lowest income per person. Many agricultural workers have changed occupations and left the sector completely to secure more stable incomes, and this could develop into a long-term challenge that could affect the production of agricultural products and food in the country.

Modernizing the agriculture sector is the fastest way to reduce the incidence of poverty, tackle labor shortage, enhance labor capacity, and increase efficiency.

Mechanized farming can not only help resolve labor shortage by making the workers that remain much more productive, it can also ensure a stable quantity and quality of production. This means a better and more stable income for farmers.

Practicing modernized farming with machinery and shifting from traditional to modern agricultural practices with the use of technology, information, and communications technology for production and marketing would ensure that a new generation returns to the farmland.

Good production would mean good income for farmers. We need to create opportunities for them.



Hailing a Hundredth Anniversary of Yangon University

Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja, Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

In terms of history, a hundred years or a century is a period long enough to change a life whether human, or institution. Myanmar word for university is Tekkatho (တက္ကသိုလ်) which is a Myanmar derivative of original word "Taxila". The oldest university of Lord Buddha's time, it remnants are now in Pakistan. Taxila is composed of two words "taka" and xila (တက္က + သီလ) Taka means to reason and sila သီလ means to observe and practice. So Taxila means an Institute of higher learning where "reasoning" and observing and practicing are imparted: Jatakas [Buddha's live stories] have mentions of or reference to Taxila. So also Myanmar history, literature and visual and Performing Arts have Taxila [တက္ကသိုလ်] classical duet dance of Prince and his fiancé lover Princess in Myanmar classical drama is the return of the two lovers from Taxila University to their home land. They had a long journey while taking a rest in the forest, the two lovers create a romantic scenes. The princess being tried sings that she could not continue the journey anymore. Her fiancé lover the Prince consoles her "we are nearing my homeland. I shall carry on my back if you could not walk anymore. When we reach my home kingdom, my royal father King would welcome you and you would become my consort. As I am Crown Prince, I shall succeed to the throne". All that moment two ministers appeared on the scene, sent by the King to bring his son and fiancé princess to Nay Pyi Taw [King's Palace City] Though Yangon University was typical university of British

University Oxford, Cambridge, London etc. Residential Institutions where only monks, aristocrats and upper middle class were trained it changed to become the institute of producing patriots to liberate their mother country from British Colonial Rule.

A long period of a hundred years of Yangon University is an exciting story deserving not only celebrations such as Diamond Jubilee etc. but also writing an authentic history. First, the writer wishes to draw the attention of all to the conditions of Yangon University today. The name Rangoon Arts and Science University (RASU) is now outdated. There is no arts and Science University in the world. Universities are higher learning centres where all academic professional and technical subjects are taught and where academic researchers are carried out.

Next we should correct names, spellings and Burmese words so mistakenly used on the Campus. First the straight road from main gate leading to Convocation Hall is the Chancellor Road. Now we are using wrong Burmese translated name Adipadi Lan (အိပတိလမ်း) Even Myanmar word lan (လမ်း) is spelt in English "lan" not correct original English word Road. Similarly Convocation Hall is spelt in English "Bwe Hnin Thabin Saung" in English, Why not its original English word Convocation Hall. Very recently two amusing but serious mistakes were made at the Yangon Institute of Economics. Two ways with 2 gates of the campus of that Institute are marked with English words "IN" and "OUT". In Myanmar words (အဝင်) and



(အထွက်). These two Myanmar words are spelt in English "Awin" and "Ahtwet". Amusing and horrible. It reminds me of a song sung by a famous vocalist Ma Kyi Aung. In it Myanmar game "hide and seek" is always accompanied by the rhyme "တုတုရေ ဝါး" which is directly translated into English "Hamer, hamer, water, Bamboo".

The writer had many experiences of such amusing mistakes during his sea voyage to London. One outstanding was his cabin mate to understanding Myanmar Licking salt လျက်ဆား၊ လေချိုးရစ်ဆတ်လျက်ဆား into direct English translation "Eighty kinds

of wind". It took more than 2 hours to explain the English customs officer that it was not powdered drug but only Myanmar traditional herbal medicine 80 kinds of wind was direct translation of Myanmar word. There are five central hostels for men students Inwa Hostel, Sagaing Hostel, Pinya Hostel, Pegu Hostel and Thawtar Hostel. In Burmese hostels are called အဆောင်. Now instead of using English word "hostel" Myanmar word (အဆောင်) is used spelt in English "Ah Saung".

There were two men hostels and one women hostel of Judson College – namely Wellington Hall or Hostel and North Hall or Hostel. English Lords Wellington and North were prominent historical persons. So their names honoured at these two men hostels. But North hall was translated into Myanmar Ottara Saung (ဥတ္တရဆောင်) pali word for North Direction as to the Wellington Hall it was named Shwebo Saung name of the capital city of Late Konbaung dynasty. Benton Hall for women students was Myanmar as Thiri Saung (သီရိဆောင်).

Today spelling tif;om; is absolutely wrong. It was originally spelt (အင်းလှား) Inlyar because the shape of the lake is oblong. Inya means "Itching Lake". If you bathe in it your body becomes very itchy.

Similarly Yangon University Students Union in Myanmar is ရန်ကုန်တက္ကသိုလ်ကျောင်းသားများသမဂ္ဂ R.U.S.U (Rangon University Students' Union). But today it is rendered into direct English transliteration "Yangon Tetkatho Kyaung Tha Mya Thamagga". Today we call Tetkatho Hsey Yone (တက္ကသိုလ်ဆေးရုံ) was called Sanatorium. Today Tetkatho Surpo Htana was just University Post Office. Similarly Swimming pool, sports stadium are now English transliterated Yey Ku Kan (Swimming Pool), Ar Kazar Yone (Stadium). Customs means revenue collected on commodities imported or exported custom means custom and traditions of people. After renovation and face lift the customs House on the Strand Road downtown Yangon forget to add "S" to the word "custom". We should correct our mistakes

in translation and transliteration as we celebrate Diamond Jubilee of Yangon University.

Yangon University is noted as the best in South East Asia and equal to Oxford Cambridge and London. Due to the mistaken opinion of policy maker of Education Department "English language and literature and English education are the main causes of slavish mortality on the contrary they are the eye-openers and remote and immediate causes of Myanmar people from political lethargy leading us to partitionism.

Bogyoke Aung San, Thakin Nu Prime Minister, UN Secretary-General U Thant ECAFE U Nyunt and many Myanmar in international services and organizations today – UN, UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO, WHO, WB, ADB etc. are proofs of fruits of English language. We should not let our true patriotism corrupt to become Xenophobia. The writer stops here for look of space. He would present more articles on Yangon University of his salad days.



2020, 72nd Anniversary Independence Day National Objectives

1. All National Ethnic Races to defend and protect with "collective strength" to ensure Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of the Unity of National Ethnic Races and Perpetuation of National Sovereignty.
2. To give priority and work for transformation of the rule of law and justice sector which is important for stability, peace and development of the State.
3. To work on amendment of the Constitution, which is the basic foundation for building a Democratic Federal Union.
4. To build and create conducive environments for Union citizens which can elevate their sense of duty and improve their capabilities while the Democratic Federal Union is being built.
5. Emergence of a peaceful and prosperous Democratic Federal Union by implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

HE U Aung Kyaw Moe Presents Credentials to President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

U Aung Kyaw Moe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the People's Republic of Bangladesh, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, on 23 December 2019 in Dhaka.—MNA

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

Iran seizes ship, arrests 16 Malaysians: state TV

TEHERAN — Iran's Revolutionary Guards have seized a ship suspected of fuel-smuggling and arrested 16 Malaysian crew members, state media reported on Monday.

The website of IRIB state television said the Guards confiscated 1.3 million litres of "smuggled fuel" from the unnamed vessel 15 nautical miles from Abu Musa island.

"The ship's 16 crew who are of Malaysian nationality were arrested," the Guards' naval commander for the region, Brigadier General Ali Ozmayi, was quoted as saying.

Abu Musa is one of three islands in the southern Gulf that are under Iranian control but claimed by the United Arab Emirates.

"This is the sixth ship smuggling fuel that (the Guards') navy has confiscated," added Ozmayi.

In September, Iran seized a boat and arrested 12 Filipino crewmen from a suspected fuel-smuggling ring in the Strait of

Hormuz, state media reported.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps detained a "foreign tanker" in Gulf waters on July 14 for allegedly smuggling contraband fuel.

Iran also seized another ship on July 31 with seven foreign crew aboard over fuel smuggling, but it never revealed the vessel's identity or the nationality of its crew.

Tensions have been high in the Gulf this year, after the United States stepped up a stated campaign of "maximum pressure" on Iran following its withdrawal from a landmark nuclear deal in 2018.

The escalation saw ships mysteriously attacked, drones downed and oil tankers seized in the Strait of Hormuz — a choke-point for a third of world's seaborne oil.

And on July 19 the Guards seized the British-flagged oil tanker Stena Impero for allegedly hitting a fishing boat and released it two months later. —AFP ■

Suspect denies stabbing five at New York rabbi's home



US media reported that the suspect in the Hanukkah stabbings, Grafton Thomas, 37, was covered in blood when officers detained him. **PHOTO: AFP**

MONSEY (United States) — A suspect appeared in a New York court on Sunday charged with five counts of attempted murder after a stabbing spree at a rabbi's suburban house that left Hanukkah celebrants throwing furniture to defend themselves.

It was the latest in a spate of attacks on Jewish targets.

Grafton Thomas, 37, allegedly entered the property

in Monsey, Rockland County, during celebrations on Saturday evening for the Jewish Hanukkah festival, knifing several people with a machete before fleeing.

US media reported that the suspect was covered in blood when officers detained him.

Thomas was ordered held in custody after appearing in Ramapo Town Court, where he

denied the charges. The attack at the home of Rabbi Chaim Rotenberg was quickly condemned as another incident underscoring growing anti-Semitic violence in the United States.

President Donald Trump tweeted that Americans "must all come together to fight, confront, and eradicate the evil scourge of anti-Semitism." New York Governor Andrew Cuomo told reporters at the scene on Sunday that "these are people who intend to create mass harm, mass violence — generate fear based on race, color, creed."

The New York Times quoted Taleea Collins, a friend of the suspect, and his pastor Wendy Paige, as saying the suspect had struggled with mental illness.

No official details were released about the victims. Local media said one person was seriously injured. Thomas was reportedly arrested in his car about 30 miles (50 kilometers) away, two hours after the attack. —AFP

US civil rights icon John Lewis announces cancer diagnosis

WASHINGTON (United States) — Civil rights icon and US House Representative John Lewis announced on Sunday he had been diagnosed with stage four pancreatic cancer.

The diagnosis followed a "routine medical visit," Lewis, a 79-year-old Democrat who has repeatedly sparred with President Donald Trump, said in a statement, adding that he would seek treatment while continuing to represent his Georgia district.

"I have been in some kind of fight — for freedom, equality, basic human rights — for nearly my entire life. I have never faced a fight quite like the one I have now," he said.

Known for his decades of work in the civil rights movement, Lewis marched with slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr at the August 1963 rally in Washington at which King gave his "I Have a Dream" speech.

"I have decided to do what I know to do and do what I have always done: I am going to fight it and keep fighting for the Beloved Community," Lewis said.

He added he will miss a few



Civil Rights icon Congressman John Lewis. **PHOTO: AFP**

votes while he undergoes treatment. "But with God's grace I will be back on the front lines soon."

The son of sharecroppers, Lewis also took part in the Freedom Rides — challenges to segregated facilities at bus terminals in the South. On March 7, 1965, he led a march in Selma, Alabama that ended in an attack by state troopers on the protesters that later became known as "Bloody Sunday."

He joined Congress in 1987, representing a district that in-

cludes parts of Georgia's state capital and largest city, Atlanta.

Lewis was among a group of Democratic lawmakers to skip Trump's inauguration in January 2017, saying he saw his election as illegitimate.

In response, the president-elect tweeted that Lewis should "spend more time on fixing and helping his district, which is in horrible shape and falling apart (not to mention crime infested)," a remark drawing widespread criticism. —AFP ■

147 IS suspects detained across Turkey

ISTANBUL — Turkish police on Monday detained a total of 147 people in nine provinces, including foreign nationals, over their suspected links to the Islamic State (IS) militant group.

Police launched operations in many locations in the central provinces of Ankara and Kayseri, the northwestern provinces of Istanbul and Bursa, Batman, Hatay and Gaziantep in the southeast, Samsun in the north and Adana in the south, state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

In Ankara, 30 Iraqis, two Syrians and one Moroccan were detained, Anadolu said, noting police were continuing to hunt 17 other foreign suspects.

Police captured 24 suspects, including four foreign nationals, in Istanbul, along with organi-

zational documents and digital materials.

In Batman, some 400 police officers apprehended 22 suspects and an unspecified amount of weapons, ammunition and documents.

Police caught 23 Iraqis in Kayseri and Samsun, four Syrians and two Iraqis in Adana, and 16 people, including 13 Syrians, in Bursa and 23 suspects in Gaziantep and Hatay. On Dec. 26, 21 IS suspects, among them 20 foreign nationals and a Turkish citizen, were detained in Istanbul as they were believed to have been planning terror attacks.

IS militants were blamed for a series of deadly attacks in Turkey over the past years, in which more than 300 people were killed. —Xinhua ■

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Cyprus court finds British teen guilty of false rape claim

PARALIMNI (Cyprus)—A court in Cyprus on Monday found a British teenager guilty of falsely claiming she was gang-raped by a group of Israeli tourists in a case that prompted allegations of police mistreatment.

The 19-year-old was convicted of “public mischief”, which carries a sentence of up to one year in prison and a fine of around 1,700 euros. Sentencing was adjourned until 7 January.

The defendant, who pleaded not guilty, alleged that 12 Israelis raped her on 17 July at a hotel in Ayia Napa.

But the Israelis, aged 15 to 18, were released without charge the same month after the woman was arrested on suspicion of “making a false statement about an imaginary crime”.

“The statements you have given were false,” the judge told the woman at the Famagusta

District Court in Paralimni in southeast Cyprus in remarks translated by an interpreter.

She appeared frustrated by the delay to the sentencing, telling her lawyer: “He already made his decision! I thought we were asking for a fine.”

‘Many violations’

The defence said it would lodge an appeal with the Supreme Court.

“We believe there have been many violations in the procedure and the rights of fair trial have been violated,” the woman’s lawyer, Nicoletta Charalambidou, said.

Rights groups argued the teenager has suffered humiliation and been mistreated by the police and media.

They have called for an investigation into police handling of the case and criticised the way rape cases and victims are

treated in Cyprus.

More than a dozen women from an association for the protection of women attended court wearing white scarves with an image of lips sewn shut printed on them. As the defendant was led from the court with her face blindfolded to shield her identity 20 protesters chanted: “We are with you” and “We believe you”.

“The way the case of this young lady was handled by the police and Cyprus government was wrong,” said one of the demonstrators, Maria Mappouridou.

Another protester, Helena Gonata, said “everyone will find a reason not to believe her. That’s the case with rape — no one will believe you.”

“We’re trying to encourage women to talk. Many women are afraid to come forward.”

The woman’s lawyers had claimed she was pressured into signing a retraction written by a detective.

But the judge said during the trial that police had acted properly at all times, with no pressure exerted to change the woman’s mind about her initial rape claim.

The defendant had said police were “hostile and negative” and asked her to sign a statement she had not seen.

British legal aid group Justice Abroad, which is supporting the woman, said the defence would take the case to the European Court of Human Rights if necessary.—AFP ■



Germanwings operates flights on behalf of the larger Lufthansa subsidiary. PHOTO: AFP

Cabin crew could prolong walkout at Lufthansa’s Germanwings

FRANKFURT AM MAIN (Germany) — Cabin crew at Lufthansa subsidiary Germanwings began a planned three-day strike Monday, with their union warning the industrial dispute could last longer.

Daniel Flohr, deputy head of air stewards’ union UFO, told public broadcaster ZDF “we could prolong it at short notice” short of concessions from bosses, although “we don’t want that”.

A live list on the carrier’s website showed 182 flights between major German cities like Berlin, Cologne, Hamburg and Munich were slashed as UFO called members off the job.

Some connections to cities in neighbouring Austria and Switzerland, including Zurich and Vienna, were also cut.

Set to be folded into Eurowings over the long term, Germanwings operates flights on behalf of the larger Lufthansa

subsidiary.

Around 15 per cent of Eurowings flights over the three-day period were affected by the walkout, a company spokesman told news agency DPA.

With a relatively small number of departures affected, there was little sign of the travel chaos that has accompanied previous broader-based strikes, and many travellers were able to book alternative flights. Frankfurt airport — Germany’s largest — said on its website it was a “normal day” with “occasional short waits at security checks”.

Germanwings bosses judge the strike over rules governing part-time work unjustified.

The labour dispute has already seen a short “warning strike” at four Lufthansa subsidiaries, while the group’s flagship airline suffered a two-day walkout affecting 1,500 flights and 200,000 passengers in November.—AFP ■



Women rights activists protested outside the court in Cyprus in support of the British woman. PHOTO: AFP

French government, unions exchange barbs in strike deadlock

PARIS (France) — 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 1995 — has 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.

Aside from two driverless

lines, the Paris metro was again almost completely shut down on Sunday while only a fraction

of high-speed TGV trains were running. The government and unions are only due to hold their

next talks on 7 January, two days ahead of a new day of mass demonstrations against the reform which is championed by President Emmanuel Macron.

In an interview with the Journal de Dimanche newspaper, Djebbari angrily accused the CGT of “attitudes of intimidation, harassment and even aggression” against railway workers who had opted not to down tools.

He accused the CGT of showing a “systematic opposition to any reform, of blocking and sometimes intimidation”. “The CGT wants to make its mark through media stunts. But the French are not going to be duped by the extreme-left politicisation of this movement,” he added. —AFP ■



Demonstrators Saturday showed support for the stoppage, protesting that French young people are “in hell” and the elderly “in poverty”. PHOTO: AFP

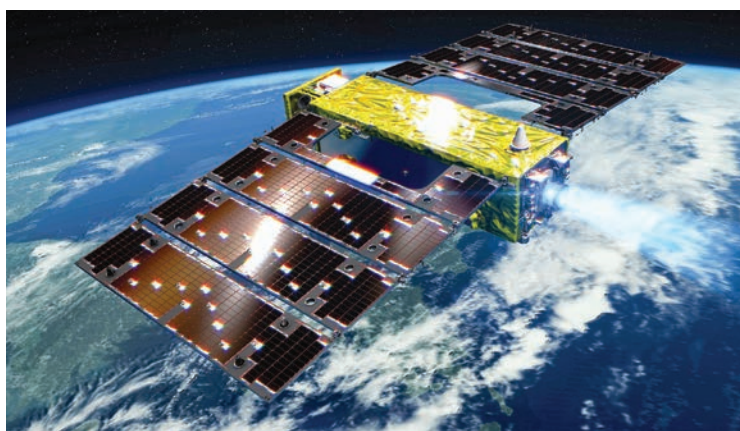
Japan low altitude satellite registered in Guinness World Records

TOKYO — Japan's super low altitude satellite "Tsubame" has been registered by the Guinness World Records as having achieved the "lowest altitude by an Earth observation satellite in orbit," the nation's space agency has announced.

The satellite flew at an orbital altitude of 167.4 kilometers from Sept. 23 to 30 as part of its test mission from Dec. 23, 2017, to Oct. 1, 2019, compared with the 600 to 800 km zone where most Earth observation satellites operate.

Tsubame maintained the record-low altitude for a period of seven days by using its ion engine system — cultivated by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency or JAXA — and gas-jet thrusters, successfully taking high resolution images and acquiring data on atmospheric and atomic-oxygen density.

Since this type of satellite requires a greater amount of propellant than conventional ones, JAXA adopted an ion engine, which utilizes propellant 10 times more efficiently than gas jets, to counter the atmos-



Japan's super low altitude satellite "Tsubame." PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

pheric drag.

While placing a satellite in the super low orbit can yield more detailed observations of activities on the Earth's surface, operation at an altitude below 300 km is difficult.

JAXA said at such altitude the satellite will be exposed to "1,000 times more atmospheric resistance than those at usual altitudes and concentrated atomic oxygen" that would accelerate the deterioration of satellite parts.

According to JAXA, the 2017 to 2019 test mission also showed that material it developed is ca-

pable of withstanding exposure to atomic oxygen for a lengthy period of time.

"I'd like to make use of this achievement toward future science, technology and satellite utilization, and contribute to helping solve as many social issues as possible," said Masanori Sasaki, the Super Low Altitude Test Satellite project manager at JAXA. Tsubame first reached an orbital altitude of 271.5 km last April and gradually descended to the record-low altitude before completing its mission on Oct. 1 and burning up in the atmosphere. — Kyodo News ■

BoE chief calls for faster action on climate change

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Bank of England head Mark Carney, soon to become UN special envoy on climate action and finance, urged companies on Monday to move faster on helping to cut carbon emissions.

In an interview with BBC radio's Today programme guest-edited by Swedish teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg, Carney said the world of business needed to step up action, including on the disclosure of climate risk from their operations.

"A question for every company, every financial institution is: what's your plan? We now have \$120 trillion of balance sheets of banks and asset managers wanting this type of disclosure."

But he stated that such action is "not moving fast enough".

Asked whether pension funds should divest from fossil fuels even if the returns are currently attractive, Carney said:

"Well, that hasn't been the case, but they could make that argument. They need to make the argument, to be clear about why is that going to be the case if

a substantial proportion of those assets are going to be worthless."

Carney noted that "up to 80 percent of coal assets will be stranded (and) up to half of developed oil reserves" if current climate targets are to be met.

Shell's gas and new energies director Maarten Wetselaar, acknowledged the need for "urgent action" on climate change by companies.

But he said regulators and customers needed to play their part, too.

"We see this very much as a transition where we need to replace the consumption of fossil fuels with a consumption of low-carbon products and as that consumption goes down then obviously the production of it will go down as well," Wetselaar told BBC radio.

One of Carney's last tasks as Bank of England governor before he steps down early next year has been to put in place systems that would eventually lead to British banks being stress-tested for risks posed by climate change.—AFP ■

RBI issues draft norms on prudential exposure limits for cooperative banks

MUMBAI (India) — The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday released a draft circular on limits on exposure to single and group borrowers and revision in priority sector lending targets for urban cooperative banks (UCBs).

The move comes after the recent Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank debacle which left thousands of depositors clamouring for withdrawals amid reports of major financial irregularities, failure of internal control and systems of the bank, and wrong or under-reporting of its exposures under various off-site surveillance reports.

The RBI circular stipulates that prudential exposure limits for UCBs for a single borrower and a group of connected borrowers will be 10 per

cent and 25 per cent respectively of their tier-one capital. Besides, at least 50 per cent of their loan portfolio will comprise loans not more than Rs 25 lakh per borrower.

The target for loans and advances to the priority sector for UCBs will be increased to 75 per cent of adjusted net bank credit or credit equivalent amount of off-balance sheet exposure, whichever is higher, by 31 March, 2023.

"An appropriate glide path is proposed to be provided to UCBs for compliance with these norms and limits," said the central bank in a statement.

"These measures are expected to reduce credit concentration risk of UCBs and promote financial inclusion," it said calling for comments on the draft circular by January 20, 2020. — ANI

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‘Star Wars’ stays aloft to again top N America box office

LOS ANGELES (United States) — “Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker” stayed on a strong glide path in North American theaters, taking in an estimated \$73.6 million for the three-day weekend, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported Sunday.

The Disney film, marketed as a grand finale of the nine-film “Skywalker Saga,” has had mixed reviews and was down considerably from last weekend’s lofty \$177.4 million opening.

But it has compiled a strong domestic total of \$364.5 million.

It again maintained a big lead over the No. 2 film, Sony’s “Jumanji: The Next Level,” an action sequel starring Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson and Kevin Hart, which had \$34.4 million in North American ticket sales for the Friday-through-Sunday period.

In third for the second straight week was Disney’s “Frozen II,” at \$17 million. The animated musical film has



This file photo taken on 18 December 2019 shows actors Daisy Ridley and John Boyega posing upon arrival for the European premiere in London of ‘Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker’. **PHOTO: AFP**

Broadway star Idina Menzel voicing Queen Elsa in her latest adventures.

Louisa May Alcott’s classic novel “Little Women” has been brought to the screen many times — no fewer than seven, by Variety’s count — but the new version from director Greta Gerwig has drawn strong reviews and netted \$16.2 million to place fourth in its debut this weekend.

The film stars Saoirse Ronan, Florence Pugh, Timothee Chalamet, Emma Watson and Laura Dern, in the story of the joys and struggles of four sisters during the US Civil War.

In fifth was new Fox/Disney release “Spies in Disguise,” at \$13.4 million. The animated children’s film features the voices of Will Smith and Tom Holland. — AFP ■

2019 was hottest year on record for Russia

MOSCOW (Russia) — This year was the hottest ever registered in Russia, the country’s weather chief said on Monday, as climate change pushes global temperatures to record highs.

“This year in Russia was the hottest for the entire period of instrumental observations,” the head of the Gidromedtsentr weather service, Roman Vilfand, told Russian news agencies.

He said Moscow’s average temperature for 2019 had hit 7.6-7.7 degrees Celsius (45.7-45.9 degrees Fahrenheit), beating the previous record by 0.3 degrees.

Weather records have been kept since 1879 in Moscow and since 1891 in Russia as a whole.

Global warming has sent temperatures rising around the world, with the United Nations saying earlier this month that 2019 was on course to be one of the three hottest years on record.

Known for its notoriously harsh winters, Moscow has seen its warmest December in a century this year.

While some flurries fell on Monday, the Russian capital — normally covered with a blanket of snow by mid-December — saw a largely snowless and cloudy last month of the year.

The city’s ski resorts were closed and spring buds were beginning to show on trees — three or more months too early.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has always been reluctant to acknowledge the link between human activity and global warming. At his traditional year-end annual news conference earlier this month, Putin insisted that “nobody knows” the causes of climate change.

But he acknowledged the consequences of global warming could be catastrophic for a country that is one of the world’s biggest producers of carbon fuel and with a fifth of its land within the Arctic circle.

Putin said that the rate of warming for Russia was 2.5 per cent higher than elsewhere on the planet. — AFP ■

Education ministry requires strengthened administrative law enforcement

BEIJING — China’s Ministry of Education has unveiled a guideline to strengthen administrative law enforcement to deal with illegal enrollment, illegal charges and cheating in national exams.

The guideline demands educational authorities above the county level to investigate illegal schools, illegal issuance of academic certificates, teachers’ illegal behaviors and misappropriation of education funds.

The parents and legal guardians who fail to send school-age children or adolescents to receive compulsory education would also be investigated, according to the guideline.

The guideline also asks local educational authorities to improve law enforcement bodies and the quality of law enforcement teams. — Xinhua ■

Greta’s father says activism makes her happy: interview



Svante Thunberg (L), father of Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg (C), says it’s clear his daughter is much happier since starting her protest. **PHOTO: AFP**

STOCKHOLM (Sweden) — Svante Thunberg, father of eco-warrior Greta Thunberg, thinks his daughter is happier being an activist but admitted in an interview he at first had reservations about her taking up the struggle.

The 50-year-old actor-turned-producer told the BBC he and Greta’s mother — opera singer Malena Ernman — originally objected to their daughter’s decision to become a climate activist.

“Obviously we thought it was a bad idea, putting herself out there with all the hate on social media,” he said.

Greta, described as a shy 16-year-old, has found herself in the role of spokesperson for a generation haunted by climate change after she started sitting outside the Swedish parliament in August 2018 with her “School Strike for the Climate” sign.

Instantly recognisable with long braids and impish looks, she has become the face of youth concerns over climate change, inspiring millions and being invited to address the United Nations climate summit.

Greta’s family realised just how much the existential threat of climate change weighed on her when she became de-

pressed at age 11.

She stopped eating, started missing school and even stopped talking.

Despite his initial apprehension Svante Thunberg — who has accompanied Greta on two sail trips over the Atlantic — also said he thought it was clear his daughter was much happier since taking up activism.

“She changed and she could do things that she could never have done before,” he said.

Diagnosed with Asperger’s syndrome, Greta used to be able to eat only in her own home and “didn’t speak to a single person”.

She is now “an ordinary child”, her father added.

Greta has also faced severe criticism and been subjected to a swarm of online conspiracy theory.

Some have claimed she is a puppet of doomsayers, or paid by the “green lobby”.

But her father said she was prepared for the “hate” she would receive even before she started her protest.

“She knew exactly what she was doing and I think quite frankly she’s very surprised that she has been so well received,” Svante Thunberg told the BBC. — AFP ■

French tourist injured in Seychelles shark attack

VICTORIA (Seychelles) — A French tourist was seriously injured after being attacked by a shark while swimming in the Seychelles, a popular tourist destination, the French ambassador said Monday.

The attack on the 45-year-old woman took place Sunday night off the island of Praslin, the second-largest in the picturesque archipelago famed for its pristine beaches. The victim was injured in one arm and was transported

to a hospital. “She underwent an operation last night and her life is not in danger,” Ambassador Dominique Mas told AFP.

The attack comes during the high tourist season for the Seychelles, an archipelago of 115 islands located off the coast of East Africa in the Indian Ocean.

Such incidents are rare in the Seychelles, though two tourists — one French and one British — were killed in shark attacks off Praslin in August 2011. — AFP ■

All eyes on 'new way' in Kim Jong Un's New Year speech

SEOUL (South Korea) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for “offensive measures” to strengthen security ahead of a New Year speech that could flesh out the nuclear-armed nation's threat to seek a “new way” forward after the expiration of its year-end deadline for US sanctions relief.

Kim's latest comments, made during a meeting of top ruling party officials in Pyongyang, came amid concerns that the North could formally close down dialogue with Washington and resume nuclear and long-range missile tests.

Addressing the officials, Kim stressed the need “to take positive and offensive measures for fully ensuring the sovereignty and security of the country,” the state news agency KCNA reported Monday.

Nuclear talks between the North and the US have been

largely stalled since the collapse of a February summit between Kim and US President Donald Trump in Hanoi.

Pyongyang has been demanding the easing of international sanctions imposed over its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, while Washington is insisting it takes more tangible steps towards giving them up.

The North has not so far specified the “new way” it would adopt if the US does not offer fresh concessions by the end of the year, and Kim is expected to make it clearer on Wednesday.

This month China and Russia — the North's biggest economic partners — proposed loosening UN sanctions against Pyongyang, and analysts say Kim is likely to seek to exploit rivalries between Washington, Beijing and Moscow.

The “new way” was more likely to be an old way with denuclearisation firmly off the table, said Henri Feron, Senior Fellow at the Center for International Policy in the US.

“What North Korea refers to as a new path is new in the sense that it will differ from its relatively engaging posture the past two years, but will actually be a return to the posture it maintained notably in the Obama era,” he told AFP.

“It will focus on developing its military leverage and economic resistance to sanctions, while demanding unconditional peace and normalisation before there can be any talk on denuclearisation.”

Speculation has mounted that Pyongyang could abandon its moratorium on intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) tests — although its ominous threat of a “Christmas gift” to



Kim told a meeting of top ruling party officials that ‘positive and offensive measures for fully ensuring the sovereignty and security of the country’. **PHOTO: AFP**

the US appears to have fizzled.

US National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien said that Washington would be “extraordinarily disappointed and we'll demonstrate that disappoint-

ment” if Pyongyang carries out a long-range missile test. “But we have a lot of tools in our toolkit, and additional pressure can be brought to bear on the North Koreans.” —AFP ■

China jails scientist who gene-edited babies

BEIJING (China) — A Chinese court on Monday sentenced the scientist who claimed to be behind the world's first gene-edited babies to three years in prison for illegal medical practice, state media reported.

He Jiankui, who shocked the scientific community last year by announcing the birth of twin girls whose genes had allegedly been altered to confer immunity to HIV, was also fined three million yuan (\$430,000), Xinhua news agency said.

He, who was educated at Stanford University, was sentenced by a court in Shenzhen for “illegally carrying out the human embryo gene-editing intended for reproduction”, Xinhua said.

Two of his fellow researchers were also sentenced. Zhang Renli was handed a two-year jail term and fined one million yuan while Qin Jinzhou was given 18 months, suspended for two years, and fined 500,000 yuan.



He Jiankui shocked the scientific community last year by announcing the birth of twins whose genes had allegedly been altered to confer immunity to HIV. **PHOTO: AFP**

The trio had not obtained qualifications to work as doctors and had knowingly violated China's regulations and ethical principles, according to the court verdict, Xinhua said.

They had acted “in the pursuit of personal fame and gain” and seriously “disrupted medical order”, it said.

The researchers had forged ethical review materials and re-

cruited couples where the husband was HIV positive for their gene-editing experiments.

The trial was held behind closed doors as the case related to “personal privacy”, Xinhua said.

He's gene-editing experiments resulted in two pregnancies — the twin girls and third baby which had not previously been confirmed, it said.

He announced in November last year that the world's first gene-edited babies — the twins — had been born that month after he altered their DNA to prevent them from contracting HIV by deleting a certain gene under a technique known as CRISPR.

Days later, He, a former associate professor at the Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, told a biomedical conference in Hong Kong he was “proud” of his gene-editing work. —AFP ■

Taiwan's Tsai maintains big lead over rivals: polls

TAIPEI — Polls released on Monday showed that the gap between Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen and her main contestant is widening, with Tsai leading by about 30 percentage points.

Tuesday will mark the last day for publication of any opinion polls before the Jan. 11 elections, in which Taiwanese voters will elect a president, vice president and 113 members of the state legislature.

Tsai, of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, is running for re-election against Han Kuo-yu, of the main opposition Nationalist Party (KMT), and James Soong, leader of the People First Party, a splinter party of the KMT.

“The general trend toward a Tsai victory is unmistakable,” said political commentator Lin Chia-cheng. “It's now just about how much she'll win by.”

According to a poll published by the Taiwanese Public Opinion Foundation on Monday, Tsai and her running mate, former Premier William Lai, are leading Han and his running mate, former Premier Simon Chang, by 30.6 percentage points. Nearly 53 per cent of the respondents said they would vote for the Tsai-Lai ticket if the election were held the next day, while only 21.9 per cent said they preferred the Han-Chang ticket. —Kyodo News ■

Hyderabad: Advocates celebrate passage of CAA, support NRC

HYDERABAD (India) — Advocates in Hyderabad on Monday celebrated the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act and supported the National Register of Citizens (NRC) by gathering at Nampally court premises.

“Today, advocates under the banner of ‘Advocates For Nation’ celebrated the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act and also supported the implementation of NRC to weed out the illegal immigrants,” an advocate named Karuna Sagar said. “We also condemn the violence by so-called protestors who are creating a

wrong perception against CAA. We advise people to go through the Citizenship Act and then decide whether to protest or not. Muslims are being misguided and no citizen of this country will face any problem due to this Act,” he added.

Protests have erupted in the country after the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019, was passed in the parliament. The Act seeks to grant Indian citizenship to Hindu, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Parsi refugees from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh and who entered India on or before December 31, 2014. — ANI ■

US strikes on pro-Iran group in Iraq kill 25, sparking anger

BAGHDAD (Iraq) — US air strikes against a pro-Iran group in Iraq killed at least 25 fighters, a paramilitary umbrella said Monday, triggering anger in a country caught up in mounting tensions between Tehran and Washington.

The attacks on Sunday night saw US planes hit several bases belonging to the Hezbollah brigades, one of the most radical factions of Hashed al-Shaabi, a Tehran-backed Iraqi paramilitary coalition.

The strikes “killed 25 and wounded 51, including commanders and fighters, and the toll could yet rise,” according to the Hashed, which holds major sway in Iraq. It said it was still pulling victims from the rubble of bases near Al-Qaim, an Iraqi district bordering Syria, on Monday.

Iran’s foreign ministry



Iraqi Shiite fighters from the Iran-backed Hezbollah brigades take part in a military parade to mark the pro-Palestinian Al-Quds (Jerusalem) Day in Baghdad in May this year. **PHOTO: AFP**

spokesman Abbas Mousavi said the US had “shown its firm support for terrorism and its neglect for the independence and sovereignty of countries” by carrying out the attacks.

Washington — itself a key ally of Baghdad — must accept the consequences of its “illegal act”, Mousavi added.

US Defence Secretary Mark Esper described the attacks

against the Hezbollah brigades — which hit three locations in Iraq and two in neighbouring Syria — as “successful”, and did not rule out further military action against Iran-backed militias.

Bahrain, a key US ally in the region, welcomed the strikes.

The operation was retaliation for a series of rocket attacks since late October against US interests in Iraq, including a barrage of more than 30 fired on Friday against an Iraqi base in Kirkuk, which killed a US civilian contractor.

US-Iran tensions have soared since Washington pulled out of a multilateral nuclear agreement with Tehran last year and imposed crippling sanctions.

Iraqi leaders fear their country could become a battleground between Tehran and Washing-

ton, in a context where they are also grappling with huge street protests against corruption and Iran’s enormous political influence. The demonstrations forced prime minister Abel Abdel Mahdi to resign last month, although he remains in a caretaker role. The protest movement, along with President Barham Saleh, have rejected Iran’s favoured successor.

US sources say that pro-Iran armed factions now pose a greater threat than the Islamic State, a jihadist group whose rise saw the US freshly deploy troops on Iraqi soil.

But significant elements of the Iraqi political class view the 5,200 US troops in the country as a “threat”, with Sunday night’s strikes reviving calls for them to leave the country. — AFP ■

Bushfires reach Melbourne as heatwave fans Australia blazes

MELBOURNE (Australia) — Around 100,000 people were urged to flee five Melbourne suburbs on Monday evening as Australia’s spiralling bushfire crisis killed a volunteer firefighter battling a separate blaze in the countryside.

Authorities in the country’s second-biggest city downgraded an earlier bushfire emergency warning but said residents should steer clear of the blaze, which has burned through 40 hectares (nearly 100 acres) of grassland.

In Bundoora — just 16 kilometres (10 miles) north of the city centre and home to two major Australian university campuses — the fire’s spread toward houses had been halted for now but it was yet to be brought under control, said Victoria Emergency.

Local media showed images of water bombers flying over neighbourhoods, and families hosing down their homes in the hope of halting the fire’s spread.

A volunteer firefighter died in New South Wales state and two others suffered burns while working on a blaze more than five hours south-west of Sydney, the Rural Fire Service said.

“It’s believed that the truck rolled when hit by extreme winds,” the agency said in a tweet. Ten others, including two volunteer firefighters, have been killed so far this fire season.

The crisis has focused attention on climate change — which scientists say is creating a longer and more intense bushfire season — and sparked street protests calling for immediate action to tackle global warming.

While conservative Prime Minister Scott Morrison belatedly acknowledged a link between the fires and climate change, he has continued his staunch support of Australia’s lucrative coal mining industry and ruled out further action to reduce emissions. — AFP ■



Hundreds of blazes are burning across Australia, which is experiencing a devastating summer bushfire season fuelled by a prolonged drought and climate change. **PHOTO: AFP**



A Turkish military plane arrived on Sunday to evacuate Turkish nationals among the more than 200 casualties in the blast. **PHOTO: AFP**

Death toll in Somalia bombing climbs to 81: govt

MOGADISHU (Somalia) — The death toll from a massive car bomb in the Somali capital has risen to 81, a government spokesman said Monday, as rescue workers pursued their search for the missing.

The bombing Saturday at a busy intersection in Mogadishu was the country’s deadliest attack in two years.

No one has claimed responsibility, though President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed blamed Islamist group Al-Shabaab, which has regularly carried out car bombings and other attacks as part of its decade-long bid to topple the internationally-backed government.

“The overall number of the dead stands at 81 currently. Two more people died from their in-

juries,” Ismail Muktar, a spokesman for Somalia’s information ministry, told AFP Monday.

One of the new fatalities was among the injured who had been evacuated to Turkey via a Turkish military plane on Sunday, Muktar said.

Muktar said the death toll could climb further as rescue operations entered a third day.

Around two dozen people were listed as missing after the attack, but 12 have been located — five of them dead — and the rest remain unaccounted for, he said.

Some 125 people were injured in Saturday’s blast, a caseload that has overwhelmed health facilities in Mogadishu.

At least 16 of those killed were students from the capital’s

private Banadir University, who had been travelling on a bus when the car bomb detonated.

The attack was the biggest to hit Somalia since a truck exploded in 2017 near a fuel tanker in Mogadishu, creating a fireball that killed over 500 people.

Al-Shabaab was blamed for that strike too, though it never formally claimed responsibility — as it often does not do when there is a large amount of civilian casualties. The United States military said Sunday it had killed four “terrorists” in three airstrikes targeting Al-Shabaab.

US Africa Command (AFRICOM) said two militants were killed and two vehicles destroyed in Qunyo Barrow, while two more militants were killed in Caliyow Barrow. — AFP ■

Coordination meeting held ahead of MFF Charity Cup 2020



The coordination meeting for the MFF Charity Cup 2020 in progress at the meeting hall of the Myanmar National League Office in Yangon on 30 December 2019. **PHOTO: MFF**

A coordination meeting for the MFF Charity Cup 2020 was held yesterday at the meeting hall of the Myanmar National League Office in Yangon.

MNL CEO U Soe Moe Kyaw, DY CEO U Ye Myo Tun, Shan United F.C. coach U Han Win Aung, COO U Yezar Htwe, Yangon United F.C. manager U Myint Thein, MNL officials and referees, and officials from the medical department attended the meeting.

MNL CEO U Soe Moe Kyaw made the opening remarks at the meeting and also led the discussion about successfully holding the tourney, including matters regarding cooperation. The attending teams also discussed their requirements.

The decisions taken at the meeting include directly holding a penalty shootout with-

out playing extra time if two teams are tied after 90 minutes of play, using only three foreign players at the same time though four foreign players can be included in the 18-player list, and allowing a maximum substitution of five players in a game.

The MFF Charity Cup 2020, to be played between Shan United and Yangon United, will start at 3:30 pm on 5 January at the Yangon United Sports Complex (YUSC).

Tickets for the match are priced at K2,000 for grandstand seats and K1,000 for ordinary seats.

All money received from Myanmar football fans will be donated to orphanages across Myanmar, according to the Myanmar National League's website. —Kyaw Khin

First round of MFF Myanmar Futsal League 2019-2020 enters last week

THE last week matches of the first round of the MFF Myanmar Futsal League 2019-2020 will be held today (31 December) at the National Indoor Stadium (2) in Hline Township, according to the Myanmar Football Federation's Facebook page.

The opening match of Week-11 will feature On Doctor vs AMM Brothers F.C. and will start at 8:30 am Then, Futsal Chit Thu F.C. will take on GV F.C. at 10 am, the MFF U19 Team will play Myoma JY F.C. at 11:30 am, Do Do Ko Ko F.C. will be pitted against Let Wel Thone Nara F.C. at 1 pm, MIU F.C. will face VUC F.C. at 2:30 pm, and Dream Team F.C. will clash with Winner F.C. at 4 pm.

After Week-10, VUC F.C. is at the top of the standing table with 30 points, followed by MIU F.C. (30 points), GV F.C. (24 points), and On Doctor F.C. (19 points).

Winner F.C. is in the fifth place with 18 points, followed by the MFF U19 team (16 points), Myoma JY F.C. (15 points), and Do Do Ko Ko F.C. (9 points).

The last four teams on the standing table are Dream Team F.C. (6 points), Let Wel Thone Nara F.C. (6 points), Futsal Chithu F.C. (4 points), and AMM Brothers F.C. (1 point).

The Week-11 matches of the MFF Myanmar Futsal League 2019-2020 will be broadcast live on the MFF Futsal Facebook page. — Kyaw Khin

Moyes confident he will make West Ham beg him to stay



David Moyes believes he will do so well in the 18 months he is contracted to West Ham that they will have no option but to renew his contract. **PHOTO: AFP**

LONDON (United Kingdom) — David Moyes said he would perform so well in his second spell as West Ham manager that the owners would have no option but to renew his contract when it comes to an end.

The 56-year-old Scotsman, whose reputation took a batter-

ing during a deeply unsuccessful spell as Manchester United boss in 2013-14, signed an 18 month contract with the Premier League strugglers on Sunday.

Moyes was let go by co-owners David Gold and David Sullivan after the 2017-18 season despite leading the club to survival

and a 13th-place finish.

He was replaced by Manuel Pellegrini, whose tenure came to an end on Saturday following the 2-1 home defeat by high-flying Leicester City which left the Hammers fourth from bottom just a point above Aston Villa.

Moyes, who established his reputation with Everton before the demoralising spell at United, said he was not bitter about being let go in 2018. "No, because things were done correctly — I wasn't taken on and I was told that," he said on Monday at a press conference ahead of Wednesday's home game with fellow strugglers Bournemouth.

"I was disappointed, I've said that, but I've got another chance to go again.

"I think it says a lot about the owners, they thought the job I did was good enough to give me another opportunity. — AFP ■

Lakers outmuscle Mavericks, Thunder surprise Raptors

LOS ANGELES (United States) — Anthony Davis had 23 points and nine rebounds as the Los Angeles Lakers defeated the Dallas Mavericks 108-95 on Sunday at Staples Center.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope came off the bench to score 19 points while LeBron James, who turns 35 on Monday, finished with a double double, 13

points and 13 assists.

James became the ninth player in league history to reach 9,000 career assists.

Luka Doncic, who entered the contest as the NBA's third-leading scorer at 29.1 points per game, had 19 points on five-of-14 shooting and seven assists.

The Mavericks got a scare

in the second quarter when Doncic was slammed to the ground by Lakers Dwight Howard, who was hit with a foul on the play.

Doncic was driving to the basket and in the air when Howard reach in with his left arm sending Doncic crashing to the floor.

This is the second vicious

hit by Howard on Doncic this season. In November, Howard bloodied the 20-year-old Slovenian with an elbow to the head.

Delon Wright added 14 points off the bench, while Kristaps Porzingis managed 11 points on 4-of-10 shooting.

The Lakers outshot the Mavericks 48.7 per cent to 36 per cent.

The Mavericks also played most of the game without Tim Hardaway who left the contest with 5:26 remaining in the first quarter after suffering a hamstring injury.

Hardaway, who had 25 points in the Mavericks' win at Golden State on Saturday, seemed to hurt himself after a dunk. — AFP ■