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President U Htin Kyaw, Cambodian PM hold talks in Phnom Penh

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw held talks with Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen on several issues in Phnom Penh yesterday including resumption of a direct flight and avoiding double taxation between the two countries.

President U Htin Kyaw, who is on a four-day state visit to Cambodia at the invitation of Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni, and Mr Samdech Techo Hun Sen discussed promoting cooperation in the tourism sector between the two countries as Myanmar's ancient Bagan and Cambodia's Siem Reap have been established as sister cities.

The two sides discussed the resumption of the direct flight which was operated by Myanmar between the two historic cities.

The two leaders also pledged to promote cooperation not only between the two governments but also between the peoples of the two countries and to promote cultural exchange, which will include language and literature.

The meeting also discussed signing an agreement on preventing double taxation as part of efforts for promoting the trade sector of the two countries.

President U Htin Kyaw (L) shakes hands with Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen as he arrives for a meeting at the Prime Minister's office in Phnom Penh, Cambodia February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

The discussions also included matters related to giving assistance from Myanmar to Cambodia for promotion of Buddhism and holding meetings of the joint-commission of the two countries.

Following the meeting, President U Htin Kyaw met with Myanmar diplomats, MPs, scholars and members of the Cambodia-Myanmar Friendship Association, businessmen and Myanmar nationals in Cambodia.

At the meeting, he called on them to obey the laws in Cambodia as they are living in the country.

He has also urged Myanmar families in Cambodia to make use of their knowledge and experiences gained in Cambodia for the development of Myanmar when they return to their home country.

In the afternoon, the Myanmar delegation led by President U Htin Kyaw left for Siem Reap by special flight and visited the Angkor National Museum.—*Myanmar News Agency*

The most important thing for the peace process is for all national ethnic armed groups to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement: H.E. Mr. Hong Liang

Following is the interview with Ambassador of China to Myanmar Mr Hong Liang.

Khin Maung Htwe, Win Win Maw, Myat Sandi

AS the saying goes, "Friends are chosen, but neighbours come with the house." According to the historical record saying that during the reign of King Liu Qi of Han Dynasty, a Chinese delegation went to Afghanistan via Myanmar and another record stating that an ancient Myanmar musical troupe visited Changan (now, Xian) in 801 during the Han dynasty, is proof that China-Myanmar relations had lasted for nearly 2000 years.

Yangtze and Ayeyawady Rivers can prove bilateral co-operations in various sectors. Myanmar was among the first countries to recognize establishment of the People's Republic of China, and Myanmar supported the PRC's efforts to join the United Nations as a member country, from the very beginning.

Following the friendly state visit of Chou En Lai, Premier of PRC to Myanmar in June, 1954, China-Myanmar relations improved to such a high level and the two countries were able to issue bilateral communiqué on the "5 Principles of Peaceful Co-existence."

Successive leaders from both sides have been fostering the relations of brotherhood. At such a time, the Myanmar News Agency has conducted an exclusive interview with H.E. Mr Hong Liang, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Myanmar.

Interviewer: Please let me know your attitudes towards the current China-Myanmar relations.

Ambassador: After forming the new Myanmar Government, Mr Wang Yi, the incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs of PRC visited Myanmar as the first-ever Foreign Minister. That trip was made to stress the important role of China-Myanmar bilateral co-operation. And it showed that the Government of the People's Republic of China supported the new Myanmar Government.

At the invitation of Li Keqiang, the current Premier of the State Council of the PRC, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Counsellor, paid a State Visit last August. The trip was of great success. During the visit, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi friendly discussions with Mr Xi Jinping, President of PRC, Mr Li Keqiang and Mr Zhang Dejiang, Speaker of Chinese Parliament.

Leaders from both countries agreed to implement the project, "One Belt One Policy," together. That is, with the rapid development of China, it can help and create Myanmar People develop more than ever, and leaders from both sides agreed to implement bilateral co-operation in sectors such as the economy, agriculture, health and so on.

Besides, leaders of both

Mr. Hong Liang. PHOTO: WIN SANDI

countries have an important agreement. It is essential for Sino-Myanmar co-operation to help Myanmar to gain peace, stability and development. It is necessary for Sino-Myanmar co-operation to help upgrade the economic and social development of the Myanmar people. Last year, the Chinese embassy in Myanmar implemented many projects to help promote the living standards of the Myanmar people.

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President U Htin Kyaw and First Lady Daw Su Su Lwin offers light to Buddha during their visit to Watt Phnom Pagoda in Cambodia on 4th February, 2016. PHOTO MNA (NEWS ON PAGE-1)

New playgrounds to be built in Yangon in FY2017-18

THE Yangon City Development Committee plans to develop new playgrounds in the city within the next fiscal year, according to the YCDC's Playgrounds, Parks and Gardens Department.

Plans are underway to establish 12 more playgrounds in the commercial hub Yangon, with the committee planning to upgrade two parks including a park in Dagon Myothit Township (South).

The department demanded to get Ks1.6 billion budgets from the region government to implement its project in 2017-2018 FY.

The YCDC spent around Ks2 billion funds on upgrading of nine football grounds plus three parks in the largest city this financial year.

The Playgrounds, Parks and Gardens Department is now repairing a space located beside the river in Kyimyindaing Township as a public relaxation area.

The current project is expected to be finalized at the end of this FY.

Since 2013-2014 FY, when the YCDC started to implement the improvement of parks for public, the committee has stopped the collection of entrance fees from people and allowed them to visit the park free of charge.

The YCDC upgraded a total of 23 parks in the city during the three fiscal years, removing some commercial structures constructed in the park.—*200*

Retired professor Killed at home

A retired Professor was murdered in his house in Dangon Township on February 4.

The body of old man who was punched with something was died in the blood on the floor of the apartment-20 located in No 292-B, Shwedagon Pagoda road.

His wife who went out found he was dead and police investigated the site.

The victim's name is U Tun Aung was murdered while his wife named Dr Daw Phwe Phwe was going out.

According to the investigation, he is a merchant and the two stays at the apartment as their children live in Singapore. The police filed a case under the act-302 and, investigate and hunt the murder.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Teak logs seized in Moemauk Township

TROOPS of the Tatmadaw seized illegal teak woods weighing about 2.7 tonnes in an area clearance operation in Momauk Township, Kachin State, yesterday.

The troops intercepted and searched a Pajero car driven by Aung Tun Aye near Panmu Village in Moemauk Township on 3rd February and discovered 49 teak logs.

The troops also found further 115 teak logs in an area clearance operation following the discoverer of illegal teak logs.

They handed over Aung Tun Aye, the driver, and Kyaw Kyaw Tint, who was found on board when the car was searched, to a local Forest Department.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Four trucks carrying illegal timber seized

FOUR trucks carrying illegal teak weighing about ten tonne were seized near Kengtung Township in Northern Shan State yesterday.

While conducting an area clearance operation in the township, the troops of the Tatmadaw stopped and searched the four vehicles about six miles east of Kengtune and discovered the illegal 33 logs of timber. The troops arrested eight men including three drivers who were on board.

The drivers Sai Kyaw, Soe Min Htun , Ar Tea and Aik Sai and the other four are Naung Kham, Kyaw Min Tun, Shan Lay and Aik Lay.

The eight men and, four vehicles and illegal timber will be transferred systematically to Kengtung Police Station and the Forest Department.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Crime NEWS

189,000 amphetamine tablets seized in Maungtaw

A local anti-drug squad seized 189,000 pills of amphetamine from two motorcycles at the Six-mile checkpoint in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, yesterday.

The members of the squad searched a motorcycle driven Maung Than Win and another one driven by Zaw Min Tun and discovered 97,500 tablets from each vehicle.

In an interrogation, the drug traffickers said that they were hired by Soe Win, brother of Ma Than Ye, who was on board of the motorcycle driven by Zaw Min Tun when the police stopped it, to transport the stimulant tablets to his home in Mawyawady Village in Maungtaw Township.

But, Soe Win managed to escape when the members of the anti-drug squad searched his house.

The squad has opened a file against the four suspects under the anti-narcotic law at the Pyinpyu Police Station in Maungtaw Township.— *Min Min Zaw (MNA)*

Mine deactivated on Union Highway in northern Shan State

SECURITY forces deactivated a remote controlled mine on the Lashio-Muse Road in northern Shan State yesterday.

Workers who were carrying out repairs on the road found the mine near the Mile Post 269/5 and informed the security forces.

The security forces also discovered another mine with two detonators and one battery at the site where the remote controlled mine was planted.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Man arrested for drug trafficking in Lashio

SHAN STATE police on Wednesday arrested a young man after he was found in a possession of a cache of yaba pills as well as drug-related equipment and substances to produce the drug.

Anti-drug Squad No. 24 stopped a motor vehicle suspected of containing drugs driven by Kyaw Lin, also known as Yan Shin Kwun, 28, near a toll gate in Lashio, northern Shan State, Wednesday evening.

Police confiscated 60,000 yaba tablets and laboratory equipment commonly used for manufacturing the illicit drugs.

An investigation is being made by local authorities in an effort to arrest others involved in the case, a police officer said.

Investigators say that the suspect resides on Khineshwewah Street in Ward-5 in Lashio.

Action is being taken against the suspect under Section 15/19 (a)/ 20 (a)/ 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Kyaw Lin is seen together with drug seized from him. PHOTO: MNA

Discuss on Direct Flight from Bagan to Thailand

MANDALAY Region Chief Minister discussed with H.E. Dr. Somkid Jatusripitak, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand for the plan of direct flight from Thailand to Bagan, known as the tourist destination. The two-country ministers met at the Amazin Bagan Resort in NyaungU township to promote the two country tourism taking advantage on Bagan region.

Thai Deputy Prime Minister said Myanmar should take lesson learns from Thailand tourism industry for the best and the worst. Myanmar should consider not only for tourism development alone but also try to sell local product to the visitors. He added that Hotel business men will be benefit if tourism alone becomes developing and local would not get any advantage from that.

After discussion, Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Zaw Myint Maung served lunch to Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister and group at Bagan Thitipuitsaya Hotel.

Thai Deputy Prime Minister took Balloons ride on Bagan to enjoy the beautiful scenario the area in the morning and visited pagoda at the afternoon. He enjoyed the sunset from Makara Queen commuter in the Ayeyawady River at the evening.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand Dr. Somkid Jatusripitak visits a lacquareware workshop in Bagan. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (Left) meets students from singing troupe of Mawlamyine University led by Daw Kyin Than, wife of the Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs, at her residence. PHOTO: MNA

Mon students sing Mon National Day welcoming songs at State Counsellor's residence

AS a gesture to welcome the Mon National Day, students from the Literature and Cultural Association of Mawlamyine University sang traditional songs of Mon ethnic people at the residence of the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The troupe was led by Daw Kyin Than, Chairperson of the Shin Saw Pu Women Entrepreneurs' Association and wife of Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Naing Thet Lwin.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Vice President U Henry Van Thio tours Chin State to review the development activities

THE Vice President made his first stopover at the General Hospital in Tonzang Township to receive the presentation of the hospital organization structure, staff strength and treatment services and the most common diseases in the area, which were presented by the Head of the Hospital. The Vice President then gave encouragement to the patients who were receiving treatment and gave them cash assistance.

During the visit to Natzan Bridge construction site in Tonzang Township which links Tonzang and Kyikha township, he reviewed the status of implementation of the bridges projects and developments in the area presented by U Win Khaing, Union Minister of Construction.

"Transportation is the most important for local development. If the transportation is getting better in the undeveloped area, it will cause rapid commodity flow and also assist in local development," said the Vice President who told the managers that the projects need to be safe, of high quality and to be timely.

The Vice President also met with the people from Tonzang at the township stadium to listen to the feedback given by the people on education, health, electricity and transportation, and he gave his support to the use of solar plates for electricity generation in the villages.

Vice President U Henery Van Thio is welcomed by students in his tour of Chin State. PHOTO: MNA

Continuing on his tour, the Vice President visited Rhi Dil Lake in Rihkhawdar township where responsible officials presented the environmental condition of the lake, water flow situation and the activities for its sustainability. He advised that the lake needs to be checked in detail for its sustainability without affecting the environment and to develop tourism based on that lake.

He also checked the condition of the border bridge that links Myanmar and India. He later inspected the theater and patient halls in the 100- bed Hospital in Tiddim Township and presented cash assistance to the patients before meeting with township people at the stadium where he handed over MMK 10 million together with stationary to be utilized for education and health.

He said that the aim of the tour was to know the situation at the ground level regarding natural disaster preparedness and to help the needs of development as much as he can. "Government is making efforts by applying various ways to develop the country which is left behind in everything," he said.

He also warned that the shifting cultivation system can impact on the environment so that long-term growth trees should be cultivated. He advised that coffee plantation should be done by Individual or groups which had been successful in Chin State since a long time ago.

Myanmar will be the most developed country according to the World Bank and people participation is needed to reach that goal, he urged the public at the township stadium by adding that 21 century Panglong conference will be held again to achieve internal peace and national reconciliation.

During the tours, Union Minister for Border Affairs, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr Aung Thu, U Win Khaing, Dr Win Myat Aye, Chin State's Chief Minister Salai Lian Luai, Deputy Ministers, and responsible officials accompanied the Vice President. —*Myanmar News Agency*

LOCAL Business

Myanmar traditional arts and crafts faces shortage of artisans, skilled labours

THERE is shortage of skilled local artisans despite the rise in demand Myanmar traditional crafts.

It is rare to find the skilled artisans who can make items cast or wrought from bronze, copper, and brass in the traditional handicraft industry. The religious items such as umbrella, writing inscription are offered at the monasteries, the pagodas and the religious edifices, and the demand went up this year compared to that in the previous years. This art of making items cast or wrought from bronze, copper, and brass is one of ten Myanmar traditional arts and crafts. The demand is high in open season. However, the shortage of artisans renders the businessmen difficult to meet the demand, said a businessman who is engaged in making items cast or wrought from bronze, copper, and brass industry in Pyinmana Township.

An artisan making item cast or wrought from bronze, copper, and brass is hired at Ks12,000 to 15,000 a day. Those assistants who are still learning are paid Ks8,000 a day. This job allows them to earn well, it is learnt. — *Min Ma Haw (IPRD)*

A worker creates a traditional floral design for religious edifice. PHOTO: MIN MA HAW (IPRD)

Japanese manufacturer opens new facility in Myanmar

YANGON — Japan's Kubota Corp. opened its import and sales facility in Myanmar Friday, vowing to support the Southeast Asian country's growing farm machinery market and expand its dealer networks with access to quality products.

Located in the Japanese government-backed Thilawa Special Economic Zone on the outskirts of Myanmar's commercial capital Yangon, Kubota's new $10 million facility that covers more than 10,000 square meters will also do some assembly works, the company said in a statement.

The new facility is operated by Kubota Myanmar Co. jointly owned by Kubota and Siam Kubota of Thailand, 80 per cent and 20 per cent respectively, it said.

Speaking at the opening ceremony in Yangon, Kubota President Masatoshi Kimata said the new facility combined with Kubota's long experienced technical expertise will help for further development of the agriculture industry in Myanmar.

"We are sure that business activities of KMCL will support and contribute for further economic development and agriculture mechanization in Myanmar, with our accumulated know-how and experiences as number one comprehensive agriculture product manufacturer in Japan," he said.

Kubota Myanmar was established in 2015 with a registered capital of $23.8 million. The company offers the sales of tractors, combined harvesters, rice transplanters, power tillers, diesel engines and construction machinery, the statement said.—*Kyodo News*

External trade value up by over US$130m as of 27th Jan

THE external trade value as of 27th Jan in this fiscal year 2016-2017 is up by US$130.309m, with an export value of US$9,333.195m and import values of US$13,075.037m, according to the Commerce Ministry.

The external trade value from 1st to 27th Jan in this FY amounted to US$22,408.232m which is up from US$22,277.923m in the previous FY, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar is conducting the trade with foreign countries through normal trade and border trade. The normal trade as of 27th Jan fetched US$16,434.428m whereas the border trade value was US$5,973.804m. The sea trade value this FY declined by US$21.123m compared to that in last FY, resulting from the drop in import value. However, the border trade with the neighbouring countries via 16 border trade camps increased by US$151.432m.

There is a trade deficit of US$3,741.842m as of 27th Jan in this FY since the import surpassed the export. There were trade deficits of US$91.9million in 2012-2013, US$2,555.5million in 2013-2014, US$4,912.559million in 2014-2015 and US$5,407.464million in 2015-2016 respectively, according to the statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO). The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by lowering the imported items, except for essentials, according to the second five-year National Development Plan.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, livestock, fishery products, forest products, minerals, manufacturing and other products while capital goods, consumer goods and raw industrial products are imported into Myanmar, it is learnt. –*Ko Khant*

Myanmar-China border trade value down by over US$27million

THE trade value of Myanmar and China as of 27th Jan in this fiscal year 2016-2017 was down by US$27.665million when compared to that in the similar period of last FY as the trade value at Muse border trade camp which has the largest trade volume out of all 16 border camps declined by nearly US$300million, according to the statistics of the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar-China trade value from 1st April to 27th Jan in this FY reached US$4,842.166million whereas that in the similar period of last FY hit US$4,869.831million.

Myanmar and China trade is flowing in and out of these border trade camps: Muse, Lweje, Chin Shew Haw, Kan Pike Tee and Keng Tung.

Out of five, Muse and Keng Tung border trade camps are found to have the decrease in trade value. But, the trade values have risen in the remaining three camps.

The trade values as of 27th Jan in this FY were US$ 4,133.631m in Muse, US$ 149.084m in Lweje, US$ 477.119m in Chin Shwe Haw, US$ 78.279m in Kan Pike Tee and US$ 4.053m in Keng Tung respectively, according to the Commerce Ministry. In the same period, the trade values via 16 border camps_ Muse, Lwejel, Kanpiketee, Chinshinhaw, Tamu, Reed, Myawady, Tachilek, Kengtung, Kawthaung, Myeik, Hteekhi, Mawtaung, Maese, Sittway and Maungtaw totaled US$ 5,973.804m, with an export value of US$ 3,720.716m and an import value of US$2,253.088mil. The figure is up by US$ 151.432m than that of last FY, it is learnt. —*Mon Mon*

Real estate rental market within YCDC areas thriving

THE real property market for rent in the townships within the areas of the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) looks healthy with the price on the rise in spite of the low-cost housing complex being developed in suburban Yangon, said the real estate agents.

The real estate market for rent in the townships within YCDC's areas is flourishing, which is seen better than those in the townships in downtown Yangon, said a real estate businessman.

The prices of the real property in the townships near the downtown—Bahan, Kyimyindine, Ahlon, Yankin and Sanchaung are on the upward trend. The houses and apartments in those areas are highly demanded for rent. Rental market for realty is outstripping sales market in Yangon. The apartments in the satellite townships of Yangon are highly rented, according to an announcement released by house.com.mm.

Over 1,000 high-end apartments with the services provided were developed in Yangon, targeting the foreign businessmen staying in Myanmar. During this year, Daewoo Amara, Junction City and Kanthaya housing complexes including the cleaning and other necessary services will be totally built for rent, it is learnt. —*200*

Japan, US defence chiefs show unity over S China Sea situation

TOKYO — The Japanese and US defence chiefs on Saturday took a united stand against security challenges in the region, agreeing to beef up their bilateral alliance and step up involvement in the situation in the South China Sea where China's assertiveness is seen as a concern.

The meeting was the latest in a series of talks that involved US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis who was the first member of the Cabinet of US President Donald Trump to visit Japan.

Mattis was seen as trying to address any possible concerns Japan may have about the Trump administration, reaffirming fully the US commitment to the defense of Japan and even hailing at a press conference Saturday that Japan's cost-sharing burden for hosting US forces is "a model" for other nations to follow.

US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis (L) and Japanese Defence Minister Tomomi Inada hold a joint press conference at the Defence Ministry in Tokyo on 4 February, 2017. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Whether the United States will demand an increase in financial contributions has been a concern for Japan as Trump demanded during his presidential campaign that Japan, South Korea and other US allies pay a larger proportion of the costs of US troops deployed in these countries — or else defend themselves.

Japanese Defence Minister Tomomi Inada, who attended the press conference with Mattis after their talks, said the issue was not discussed. Mattis said he thought Japan was "on the right track" as he watched the defense budget grow under Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government amid the worsening security situation.

The two agreed during their talks to beef up the deterrence power of the alliance and to closely cooperate to deal with the security challenges, which Mattis said range "from the threat of nuclear and missile provocations by North Korea to increasingly confrontational behavior by China in the East and South China seas."

"The US-Japan alliance is critical for ensuring that this region remains safe and secure, not just now but for years to come," Mattis said at the press conference, while assuring that "President Trump's administration places a higher priority on this region and specifically on long-term allies like Japan."

As he did in meetings on Friday with Abe and Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, Mattis promised that the US defence commitment extends to the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which China claims and calls Diaoyu.

Turning to the situation in the South China Sea, where China is stirring concerns through its island construction and military buildup in disputed areas, Inada offered her support for a US freedom of navigation operation in the waters and said she agreed with Mattis on the need to step up their involvement there.

The US defence secretary said that "freedom of navigation is the absolute" and indicated that the operation will continue. At the same time, he added "At this time, we do not see any need for dramatic military moves at all."

Mattis came to Japan as part of his first overseas trip as the Pentagon chief, which also took him to South Korea, another key US ally. Mattis and Inada agreed to also step up trilateral defense cooperation involving South Korea.

The trip came ahead of the 10 February summit meeting between Abe and Trump in Washington. Tokyo is apparently gauging how Trump's "America First" agenda will affect the bilateral alliance, while it has been baffled by his position on trade and currency issues.

Under the Japan-US security treaty, around 54,000 US troops are stationed in Japan, enabling the United States to respond rapidly to contingencies in the Asia-Pacific region.

Japan's so-called host-nation support covers costs for base workers, utilities and other items and totals nearly 200 billion yen ($1.8 billion) annually. Tokyo has maintained that the Japan-US alliance is a mechanism that provides benefits to both countries, and that the costs are being "appropriately" shared. *—Kyodo News*

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Voting underway for local elections in India's Punjab, Goa

NEW DELHI — Voting for the local elections in two Indian states of Punjab and Goal Saturday began amid tight security and adequate arrangements, officials said.

Polling in Goa began at 7:00 am local time, while as in Punjab it started at 8:00 in morning and would go on at both the states until 5:00 pm local time.

Long queues of people including women both young and old were seen waiting to cast their ballots at the designated polling booths in the twin sates.

Reports poring in from northern state of Punjab said 35 per cent voting was recorded until 1:00 pm while as in western Goa it was 53 per cent. Officials said more than 22,500 polling stations have been set up across Punjab, where nearly 20 million voters would exercise their franchise. Authorities have deployed 100,000 security personnel and police in the state to ensure violence free voting. Political analysts said there is a three-cornered contest in Punjab's 117-member constituencies among the ruling Shiromani Akali Dal-Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) alliance, Congress party and new entrant Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) or common man's party. Shiromani Akali Dal, a regional party has been in power in the state for past one decade.

In western state of Goa, more than 1.1 million voters are expected to cast their votes for 40-member Goa Assembly. Reports said 90 companies of paramilitary forces and local police have been deployed in the state for smooth conduct of polls. According to political analysts in Goa, the ruling BJP is facing a strong competition from Congress and AAP in the elections. *—Xinhua*

Malaysia seeks to revise ICJ judgment on islet

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia said on Friday it has applied to the International Court of Justice for a review of its nine-year-old decision to award a disputed rocky outcrop in the Straits of Singapore to the island republic, based on the discovery of new fact.

In response, Singapore Foreign Ministry said in a statement that is has formed a legal team to study Malaysia's application to the world court in The Hague.

Malaysia's Attorney General Mohamed Apandi Ali said in a statement that an application was filed on Thursday against the ICJ's decision on 23 May, 2008 to grant Singapore sovereignty over Pedra Branca or Batu Puteh as it is known in Malaysia. The application was made "upon the discovery of some fact of such nature as to be a decisive factor, which fact was, when the judgment was given, unknown to the court and also to Malaysia as the party claiming revision," Apandi said.

He added that Malaysia's move was within the statute of limitation set by the ICJ that is an appeal can be brought within six months of the discovery of a new fact and within ten years of the date of judgment. Malaysia and Singapore decided to resolve its nearly three-decade-old wrangling over Pedra Branca, which is about half the size of a football field, and two other even smaller islets, Middle Rocks and South Ledge to the ICJ in 2003. The chain of rocky outcrops is located about 7.7 nautical miles off the coast of southern Malaysia and 24 nautical miles off the east coast of Singapore.

The court awarded Middle Rocks to Malaysia and South Ledge to the country in the territorial waters of which it is located.

In its decision on Pedra Branca, the court said although Malaysia's ancient Sultanate of Johor had original ownership over the island, the government has failed to respond to the conduct of Singapore when the city-state asserted its sovereignty over the tiny outcrop such as when it installed military communication equipment on the tiny outcrop in 1977.

By the time the dispute emerged in the 1980s after Malaysia published a map claiming Pedra Branca belonged to it, "sovereignty... had passed to Singapore," the ICJ said in its judgment.

The island is of strategic importance to Singapore which operates one of the world's busiest ports because it is situated at the eastern entrance of the Straits of Singapore, which is joined to the Malacca Straits, one of the world's busiest shipping lanes.—*Kyodo News*

UN lifts sanctions on notorious Afghan warlord

KABUL — The United Nations Security Council has dropped sanctions against Afghan strongman Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, potentially paving the way for the notorious warlord to return openly to Afghanistan.

The Afghan government requested the move as part of a peace deal with Hekmatyar and his militant group, Hezb-i-Islami, in September.

The deal was criticised by some Afghans and human rights groups for the pardon it granted to Hekmatyar and many of his fighters.

While playing only a small role in the current insurgent conflict in Afghanistan, Hekmatyar was a major figure during the bloody civil war of the 1990s, when he was accused of indiscriminately firing rockets into Kabul, as well as other human rights abuses.

A screen shows the broadcast of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar during a signing ceremony with Afghan government at the presidential palace in Kabul, Afghanistan, on 29 September, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

The Afghan government welcomed the UN's decision made on Friday as a "a major step toward peace and stability in Afghanistan," said Mohammad Akram Khpalwak, a political advisor for President Ashraf Ghani.

"This was a demand of the people and government of Afghanistan," he told Reuters on Saturday. "It is a major step for the peace process between Hezb-i-Islami and the government of Afghanistan."

In removing Hekmatyar from the list of people sanctioned for their ties to al-Qaeda, Islamic State, and other militant groups, the UN unfroze his assets, and dropped a travel ban and arms embargo against him.

Hekmatyar's whereabouts have been unknown since he signed the peace deal with Ghani in September via a prerecorded video from an undisclosed location.

With the UN sanctions now removed, government officials expect Hekmatyar to eventually return to the Afghan capital, despite the continued controversy.

Many foreign governments, including the United States, praised the accord at the time as a step toward wider peace in Afghanistan.—*Reuters*

Turkey says kills 51 Islamic State militants in northern Syria

ANKARA — Turkey hit 59 Islamic State targets and killed 51 militants in northern Syria as part of its ongoing incursion, the Turkish military said on Saturday.

Turkish forces have surrounded the Islamic State-controlled town of al-Bab for weeks as part of an operation that has been going on for more than five months.

Four of those killed were so-called emirs, or local commanders, the Turkish military said, adding that its jets destroyed 56 buildings and three command control centres in the al-Bab and Bzagah regions. Coalition forces also conducted eight airstrikes in the al-Bab region, destroying two defence positions and two armed vehicles. —*Reuters*

US-backed Syrian force in new phase of Raqqa assault

RAQQA PROVINCE, Syria, — An alliance of US-backed militias said it had started a new phase of its campaign against the Islamic State-held city of Raqqa on Saturday, aiming to complete its encirclement and sever the road to militant strongholds in Deir al-Zor province.

A volunteer British fighter talks with Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in the north of Raqqa city, Syria, on 3 February 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said in a statement the action was being undertaken with "increasing support from the (US-led) international coalition forces through guaranteeing air cover for our forces' advances, or via the help provided by their special teams to our forces on the battle ground".

The SDF, which includes the powerful Kurdish YPG militia, launched its multi-phased campaign aimed at encircling and ultimately capturing Raqqa in November.

A SDF commander told Reuters the forces had so far advanced a few kilometres (miles) in the latest phase, which aims to capture areas to the east of the city, including the highway linking it to Deir al-Zor province.

Deir al-Zor, which is almost entirely in Islamic State hands, stretches all the way to the Iraqi border. A Kurdish military source told Reuters on Tuesday that the goals of this phase included capturing the main highway.

Several hundred US special forces soldiers have been supporting SDF operations against Islamic State in northern Syria. France said in June that its special forces were advising rebels in the same area.

This is the third phase of the Raqqa operation. The first phase targeted areas north of Raqqa city. The second phase, targeting areas to the west of the city, is ongoing, with SDF forces yet to capture the Islamic State-held Euphrates dam.

US support for the SDF has been a point of tension with NATO ally Turkey, which views the YPG as an extension of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), a group that has fought a three-decade insurgency in Turkey.

The United States says it is providing training and material support only to Arab elements of the SDF. It supplied them last month with armoured vehicles for the first time to help in the Raqqa campaign.

US President Donald Trump signed an executive order last week requesting the Pentagon, joint chiefs of staff and other agencies to submit a preliminary plan in 30 days for defeating Islamic State.

One key decision awaiting the Trump administration is whether to directly provide weapons to the YPG.—*Reuters*

Iran vows "roaring missiles" if threatened, defies new sanctions

DUBAI — A Revolutionary Guards commander said Iran would use its missiles if its security is under threat, as the elite force defied new US sanctions on its missile programme by holding a military exercise on Saturday.

Tensions between Tehran and Washington have risen since a recent Iranian ballistic missile test which prompted US President Donald Trump's administration to impose sanctions on individuals and entities linked to the Revolutionary Guards.

Trump's national security adviser Michael Flynn said the Washington was putting Iran on notice over its "destabilising activity", and Trump tweeted Tehran was "playing with fire"

"We are working day and night to protect Iran's security," head of Revolutionary Guards' aerospace unit, Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh was quoted as saying by Tasnim news agency.

"If we see smallest misstep from the enemies, our roaring missiles will fall on their heads," he added.

Despite the heated words, US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis said on Saturday he was not considering raising the number of US forces in the Middle East to address Iran's "misbehaviour", but warned that the world would not ignore Iranian activities.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards is holding the military exercise in Semnan province on Saturday to test missile and radar systems and to "showcase the power of Iran's revolution and to dismiss the sanctions," according to the force's website.

Iranian state news agencies reported that home-made missile systems, radars, command and control centres, and cyber warfare systems would be tested in the drill.

Iran has one of the Middle East's largest missile programmes and held a similar exercise in December to showcase its defence systems, including radars, anti-missile defence units, and short and medium-range missiles.

Tehran confirmed on Wednesday that it had test-fired a new ballistic missile, but said the test did not breach the Islamic Republic's nuclear agreement with world powers or a UN Security Council resolution endorsing the pact.

Iran has test-fired several ballistic missiles since the nuclear deal in 2015, but the latest test was the first since Trump entered the White House. Trump said during his election campaign that he would stop Iran's missile programme.—*Reuters*

A member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards checks a missile inside an underground depot in an undisclosed location, Iran, in this handout photo released by the official website of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) on 8 March 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Toyota, Suzuki to form tie-up in technology development

NAGOYA — Toyota Motor Corp and Suzuki Motor Corp have agreed to form a tie-up in advanced technology development and other operations, sources close to the matter said on Saturday.

The two Japanese automakers will continue to discuss whether to expand their partnership to include a capital alliance, the sources said.

The comprehensive tie-up comes after Toyota, Japan's biggest automaker by volume, and Suzuki, a small-car making specialist, said in October they would start talks on how they could join forces. The deal is expected to be announced on Monday, according to the sources.

The global auto industry is facing soaring costs to meet stricter emission regulations and develop advanced safety technology needed for electric vehicles and autonomous driving systems.

The Toyota-Suzuki partnership is the latest in a number of recent tie-ups in Japan's auto industry to share such hefty costs. Nissan Motor Co took a 34 per cent stake in Mitsubishi Motors Corp last year.

Toyota also expanded its joint operations with Mazda Motor Corp in 2015 to cooperate in developing green and self-driving technology. The two companies are now studying joint development of electric vehicles.

Combined photo shows the headquarters of Toyota Motor Corp (L) in Toyota, Aichi Prefecture, taken in March 2016, and those of Suzuki Motor Corp in Hamamatsu, Shizuoka Prefecture, taken in June 2016. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Suzuki, which has been lagging behind in technology development, is hoping to gain Toyota's support after the Shizuoka-based carmaker dissolved a broad alliance with Germany's Volkswagen AG in 2015.

The Japanese auto giant may also seek to jointly developing small electric vehicles with Suzuki, capitalizing on its new partner's strength in making small vehicles.—*Kyodo News*

Toshiba aims to raise 300 billion yen by selling preferred shares

TOKYO — Toshiba Corp is considering issuing preferred shares to raise 300 billion yen ($2.66 billion) to avoid falling into negative net worth when it books a huge write-down on its nuclear business, sources close to the matter said on Saturday.

The Japanese industrial conglomerate eyes issuance of non-voting preferred shares convertible to stock in the flash memory business it will spin off, the sources said. Toshiba said in December that it could book an impairment loss of "several billion dollars" on its US nuclear business.

The losses could reach 700 billion yen, with Toshiba facing the risk of reporting greater liabilities than assets when it posts its business results for the year ending 31 March.

Toshiba has said it will finalize the write off amount by 14 February, when it reports earnings for the April-December period.

Last week Toshiba unveiled a plan to spin off its profitable chip business to raise money needed to offset the massive loss on its nuclear operation. It said it planned to sell a stake of less than 20 per cent in the memory chip business.

Toshiba hopes to boost capital by linking the preferred shares to its profitable flash memory operation, as Toshiba is likely to find it difficult to sell shares in itself. Toshiba will hold an extraordinary shareholders' meeting at the end of March to finalize the spinoff and to seek approval to issue the preferred shares.

Bidding for the stake being sold in the chip business began on Friday.

Potential bidders include US data storage company Western Digital Corp, a joint operator of Toshiba's Yokkaichi flash memory plant, and foreign funds.

Canon Inc had shown interest in investing in the new chip company but said this week it decided not to, and various funds also do not necessarily see it as a good deal.

Toshiba is looking to decide the successful bidder and to complete the capital increase by the end of March. —*Kyodo News*

At Snap, cost of hosting sets high bar for revenue growth

SAN FRANCISCO — Snap Inc's initial public offering filing seemed to show a company with a basic math problem: the company's cost of revenue for 2016 — the amount it had to spend just to keep the messaging service running — was $47 million higher than its $405 million in sales.

The high cost of revenue, which in Snap's case consists mainly of payments to Alphabet Inc's (GOOG-L.O) Google for hosting the service, means that, on an annual basis, Snap lost money on every one of its 158 million users in 2016, even before accounting for salaries, office rents or anything else.

Snap revealed in its IPO prospectus, filed with securities regulators on Thursday, that it will pay Google at least $2 billion over the next five years.

But the cost side of the problem may not be as serious as it seems. The company's hosting costs are broadly in line with other social media companies. Its cost of revenue per active daily user was 97 cents in the last quarter of 2016, not much higher than the 85 cents that Facebook Inc (FB.O) paid for each of its 1.23 billion daily users in the final quarter of 2016.

Further, while Snap's cost of revenue was higher than sales on a yearly basis in 2016, the company drastically tightened up hosting costs over the course of the year. While costs were nearly double revenues at the start of the year, by the fourth quarter, when Snap hit 158 million users, the company eked out a small gross margin.

Snap's bigger math problem is how much revenue it generates per user. The $1.05 per user for the last quarter of 2016 was a massive increase from the 31 cents per user it drew in the same period in 2015. In its IPO filing, Snap said it hopes to increase its revenue per user by focusing on more lucrative advertising markets, like North America, where its revenue per user was $2.15 at the end of 2016, nearly double the global rate. But even those higher rates for Snap pale in comparison to the $7.16 in revenue per user that Facebook brought in in the fourth quarter.

"Snap's issue is not cost, but user growth and revenue per user," said Ethan Kurzweil, a venture investor with Bessemer Venture Partners who backed startups such as Twitch and Periscope but has not backed Snap. "If they can get revenue per user into the kind of territory they think is possible, the cost of hosting will be a hit to gross margin but it's not going to be an issue."

Facebook provides the example. Even though its cost per user rose 7.4 per cent between the last quarter of 2016 versus a year earlier, its revenue per user grew at a much faster 27.5 per cent, a difference that helped drive its $10.2 billion in profits for the full year. All of that does, however, mean that Snap has little leeway in delivering dramatic revenue growth in light of the high underlying cost of delivering all those pictures and videos.

The cost of revenue figure, noted analyst Brian Wieser at Pivotal Group, "was notable for what it indicates about the expense of running Snap."—*Reuters*

Opinion

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The importance of vocational education

Dr. Nu Nu Win

IN Myanmar, we have a saying, "know one vocation, whether it's handicrafts or oratory, it can become your livelihood". These days this saying has more meaning than ever.

For example, we have to pay a high price to our tailors if we want to get beautiful tailor-cut jackets and skirts. The tailor, although she does not have a University degree, she can earn her living using her skill in tailoring. In the same way a motor car mechanic can earn his living with his knowledge about repairing cars. She or he can also become rich one day, because in time these vocations can let them have a high income.

So, it is really important for a person to have training in a particular vocation or a profession.

Nowadays, poor children from poor families cannot go to school and some other children, although they can go to school, become dropouts before finishing the Basic Education. Some have to leave school because their parents cannot afford to let them stay in school due to financial difficulties. In some cases, as the children become a little older, they have to help their families earn extra income due to the financial needs of the family. So they have to leave school.

In Myanmar due to successive years of economic mismanagement under previous administrations, the cost of living became high while good jobs become scarce. Sometimes, natural disasters like the Cyclone Nargis leave many families without parents; in some case many members of the same family lost their lives. In times like these, young girls and boys leave their villages and converge in Yangon. Some young women get jobs in garment manufacturing factories while many end up in dead end jobs where the working conditions are far from satisfactory. All these young workers work under harsh conditions and save whatever meagre cash they could save to send back to their parents who struggle each day to make ends meet. Sometimes, if one of the parents fall seriously ill or meet with a fatal accident, it could mean total disaster for that family.

Some have to depend on the Monastic Education Schools, where they can get help from the monk Abbots, who provide not only books and stationeries, but also other necessities as such as school uniforms, slippers and umbrellas. In such schools, children are given breakfast and lunch. So the poorest of all children have to go to these Monastic Education Schools. Some are not even Buddhists, but although they believe in other religions, they can join the Monastic Education Schools till they get a job. Some can become primary school teachers in their own schools after they have passed their matriculation and then continue their study by taking advantage of the Distance Education System. The monk Abbots let them go to University to get a degree. In this way, the poor little ones can become educated to get a job for their living. But, the ones who leave school early, they have to work hard to earn a living.

That is why the writer wants to introduce Vocational Training to the Monastic Education Schools first and as soon as possible. Some already have these kinds of training in their schools, while others do not. If a child can get vocational training while he is still in the primary classes, a vocation that can use local materials available in different regions, and if they could be trained by local teachers, it would truly become a win-win situation. In this way, even if a child has to leave school, he already has a good vocation o support himself.

If a child has to leave school early without any vocational training, he has to earn his living in great difficulty. When he cannot face these difficulties, he will turn to dishonest ways to earn his living. Maybe he will become a pickpocket or turn to other criminal ways to get money. Consequently, if crimes in the country multiply and turn from bad to worse, it will be a great burden for the Union government to maintain law and order and keep the peace in the country. How can a country troubled with crimes and lawlessness and armed conflicts develop without any peace? So, to have some vocation for a living is great blessing not only for the individual, but also for the country.

Our national leader, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi , realized the importance of Vocational Education well. While meeting with the students and the Principal from the SMVTI (Singapore-Myanmar Vocational Training Institute) on (3 December 2016), she stated , "Our country greatly needs vocational training. It plays an important role in the world, failing to be recognized of its importance by many. Most regard only graduates as men of wisdom and educated persons. Education means the qualification to confront the challenges of life. Only if we overcome challenges of life, can we be recognized to be men of wisdom. Failing that, it is difficult to become so. Only the people who can rely on self-help are endowed with the dignity of a human -being. There is no work void of virtue. Any work or job we value is valuable."

She not only stressed the value of vocational training, but she also extended the period of the MOU on Vocational Training between Singapore and Myanmar for three years during her visit to Singapore in December 2016.

Under the leadership of a visionary leader like Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who fully understands the value and importance of Vocational Education, the writer also wishes to support the argument that our country needs more and more vocational training schools in all regions and states.

This will go a long way in our efforts to create more jobs and manufacture more products for exports to earn foreign exchange.

Hope to have more Vocational Training schools and institutes for children and youths!

The Budget: What Do Taxpayers Want?

May Thandar Win

IN Nay Pyi Taw, preparations are now well advanced for finalising the budget and Union tax law which will establish the Government's revenue-raising and spending priorities for the 2017-18 financial year. It is an annual event that always encourages advance speculation. But this year it is being more eagerly anticipated than usual because it provides the first unequivocal indication of what the detail of the NLD's economic outlook will really mean for Myanmar. Where will the balance be struck between raising more money to pay for better public services yet not taxing so heavily that the money emigrates to other countries that tax it more leniently?

All over the world, politicians and economists argue about the level at which tax and regulations stop improving living standards and start harming them. In Myanmar, the debate is particularly intense. This is because there is widespread agreement that the Government needs to spend more on public services but also that tax evasion is widespread and the bigger the tax burden the more likely that people will seek ways to avoid their legal obligation to pay it.

As decision time in Nay Pyi Taw draws near, what do Myanmar taxpayers think is a fair and reasonable amount to contribute? The answer of course depends upon who is asked and whether they think higher tax is a good idea only if someone other than themselves is forced to pay it. In this debate, the perspectives of four current taxpayers for whom the budget could have a major effect on their personal and professional lives offers some clues.

Daw Aye Thida, managing director of Ngweinzali Audit firm is familiar with the tax concerns of her clients but certain that tax evasion is indefensible. "I would like to urge every citizen to pay tax. As a fledgling modern economy, Myanmar needs tax to build the country's developments and infrastructure projects," she says, "and we also need to pay decent salaries to government employees in important sectors like education and health." Whilst she believes the current tax rates "are not high compared to some international rates, I don't think our rates should be either increased or lowered in the coming budget."

Daw Aye Thida is passionate about encouraging individuals and companies to pay their fair share, but some tax advisors enrich themselves by ensuring their clients dodge that obligation.

Ma Youn Mee, owner of the Empress beauty salon and spa in Yangon, dutifully pays her taxes despite being aware that she could pay less in return for offering a bribe. She says that small business owners often find it difficult to get the right information on tax payment and that they "want to avoid tax offices and government ministries as much as possible because of the unfriendly manner and complicated procedures. I would like these difficulties to be lessened. This would discourage the culture of overcoming barriers by bribing accountants and officials."

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The most important thing for the ...

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Projects such as China-Myanmar Friendship School, China-Myanmar Friendship Scholarship, China-Myanmar Friendship Forest, are the ones which can bring about benefits for the people.

Last year on 8 June, the day on which China-Myanmar diplomatic ties commenced, the ceremony for the first China-Myanmar Friendship Day was held. By celebrating such a ceremony, relations and friendship are increasing between the two peoples. During previous years, Sino-Myanmar Brotherhood Friendship had increased. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Services also visited PRC last year. This trip also gave support to the progress of relations between both armies.

In the transitional period of the State, Myanmar is facing favorable prospects. The whole populace needs to contribute their labor in accomplishing Myanmar's development.

Myanmar's peace is of great importance for Myanmar. Likewise, peace and stability along China-Myanmar border and co-operation and friendship between the two countries are important too. Last year, the special envoy of PRC worked closely with Myanmar Government, Myanmar Tatmataw and national ethnic armed groups. We will support to the best of our ability to push forces in the process of Myanmar Peace. We firmly believe that peace and national reconciliation can succeed through such meeting for dialogues. From our side, we will support and help the peace process of Myanmar as before. This is the hope of the Myanmar people and China's responsibility. And, it is the hope for international communities, too.

The longer the period of combining China-Myanmar Friendly Cooperation and Peaceful Development of Myanmar take time, the deeper it will be. We are more convinced that it will suit the long-term benefits of the Myanmar People. Myanmar will become stronger and develop, as will China more than ever. We sent our solemn wish for China-Myanmar Friendly Cooperation to develop and succeed in the New Year.

Interviewer : It was learnt that the PRC donated US $ 3 million to the process of national reconciliation and internal peace. Let me know the PRC's attitude regarding Myanmar's peace process and, concurrently as to whether there are further plans concerning cooperation in future.

Ambassador : As said above, first of all, we will support for all to take part in the discussions in the peace process. Now, respective ministries of PRC, special envoys appointed by PRC and all PRC embassies are encouraging everyone concerned to take part in dialogues in every corner. Presently, the most important thing for the peace process is for all national ethnic armed groups to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

PRC encouraged national ethnic armed groups in northern Myanmar to actively take part in the Myanmar peace process to sign the NCA for a long time.

By signing NCA, all battles can be avoided, and there can be guarantees for peace and stability along China-Myanmar Border. PRC encouraged national ethnic armed groups in northern Myanmar to actively take part in the Myanmar peace process to sign the NCA for a long time. Problems cannot be solved by weapons. As long as fighting exists problems will become worse. Increased momentum of fighting will beget increased conflicts. People from China and Myanmar are brethren, as are national ethnic people.

If there is a fighting between brethren, there will be a conflict in a family. Then, it is necessary for the whole community to stop the conflict as soon as possible, whereas for the process of stopping armed conflicts, respective parties need to be well convinced of each other. As for the PRC, we encouraged respective groups to contact more with each other. In doing so, we came to know the main cause as to why national ethnic groups in northern Myanmar did not sign the NCA yet. The main thing is misunderstanding among armed groups. Under these situations, PRC is more actively encouraging for them to closely contact for discussions. Having close meetings to discuss can increase mutual trust and understanding.

At the time of encouraging for the peace process, the regions where ethnic nationals assemble to live, economic situations are lagging behind much. They are finding it difficult to survive. We need to lay emphasis on this. It is necessary for the government to alleviate poverty by paying more attention and subsidize the regions where ethnic nationals assemble to live so that the above regions will develop and their living standards will rise up, leading to the great help for the peace process.

The people are not likely to take part in these armed conflicts. For the time being, I myself met with some youths from northern Myanmar. Having asked them why they left their origins for Yangon, they all replied that there have been more opportunities for jobs and better prospects in Yangon. I pondered it deeply later. Myanmar can develop in economy and create job opportunities for youths. So, armed conflicts can lessen. But, we know that it will yet take time to implement peace process, hence we need to implement with strong belief and great patience in performing the task.

Interviewer: We heard that the P.R.C has offered US$3 million for national reconciliation and peace process. So please tell me your country's intention concerning this peace process and your future programme of co-operation?

Ambassador : As I said just now, our first and foremost task is to help facilitate the meeting of all parties to the peace talks with assistance for transportation and communication, etc. We've been urging all the ministries concerned, all the special envoys appointed for the purpose and Chinese Embassy staff in Myanmar to meet together and to discuss things over. The most important point for the peace process now is for all the armed national race groups to sign the NCA agreement. The conclusion of peace process will take time, of course. Therefore, it is necessary for us to work patiently and with full confidence. When the peace process was started, given a push, the regions where the national races dwell the economic condition was very backward. We need to be careful about this. The livelihood of those people was rather difficult. So the government needs to make concerted efforts to uplift the living conditions there and only when the economic progress in the regions have been achieved and the peoples' livelihood have been raised, will it be helpful to the achievement of peace in the country as a whole.

The people there are not willing to participate in the war, of course. I have recently had a chance to talk with some of the young people there. I asked them why they had left their native regions and why they came to Yangon, etc. Their answer is that there are more opportunities for work and more prospects for careers here. After I talked with them, I have been thinking a lot. Myanmar's economic conditions have made progressive strides recognizably and opportunity for employments have been opened visibly and armed conflicts could be lessened. To my mind, although the peace process would take some time, with patience and confidence it could possibly be achieved.

During the last year to boost the Myanmar's peace process, Chinese government and Myanmar government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence sponsored (2+2) talks. Under the new machinery of their talks Chinese and Myanmar's Armed Forces could work more closely and co-operatively. The machinery enabled it to control the peace and stability of border area of the two states more effectively. China could also demonstrate the help it offers to Myanmar in its peace process.

China has committed itself to help in Myanmar's peace process in accordance with the needs that arises. In the three years to come, China will be giving US$ 3 million for the purpose. China's financial aids would be very different from the aids offered by other states. There will be no strings attached for the aid-political or otherwise. And we are willing to give aids and help on an ongoing basis-up to its successful conclusion.

Interviewer: We'd like to know your view on Chinese Myanmar economic co-operation works past, present and future?

Ambassador: It has been a long time ago since China became the biggest trading partner of Myanmar and also the largest investor in Myanmar. The past year's China-Myanmar volume of trade reached US $10.00 billion and investments, excluding financial sector, reached US$ 4 billion. The real investment figures exceeded for more than the above figures. The bulk of investments from Mainland China passed through Hong Kong, Macao and ASESAN countries.

Myanmar's economic sector could interactively help China's economy. Especially the agricultural product sector, infrastructure sector, construction sector, tourism sectors are those that will interactively help in the growth of both countries' economies. Myanmar has economic infrastructure corridor that started from its extreme north that passes through its central regions reaching up to its southern part. A great many economic industries of Myanmar stretched along the Ayeyawady which is dotted with innumerable big and small towns. When Myanmar makes efforts to strengthen its economy, the Ayeyawady economic corridor need to be strengthened first and foremost, inevitably. After the Ayeyawady economic corridor has been strengthen fully, we can construct China-Myanmar economic corridor in full force. We already have bilateral agreement for the construction of China-Myanmar economic corridor. The agreement is for the China-Myanmar "One Belt, One Road" co-operation programme is of prime importance. China has been negotiating with Myanmar for the construction of an Economic Zone on the Muse-Shweli frontier.

China had won a bid on international tender for the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone comprising construction of an Industrial Zone and Deep Water Harbour in Kyaukpyu. We hope to implement the terms of the tender as quickly as possible. We are quite happy on hearing the news that the Yangon Region government has been active in construction of a new economic zone in the region. The People's Republic of China is hoping to participitate in the said construction of the Zone actively. We are hoping to link the Kyaukpyu Zone, the New Yangon Zone and the Northern border area zones very profitably both for China and Myanmar.

Interviewer: Mr. Ambassador, how do you feel when you first heard of the news that you will be posted to Myanmar as an Ambassador? How do you hope to overcome the challenges here?

Ambassador: I have been doing my duty here for nearly one year and a half. I felt much elated as soon as I heard the news that I'll be posted to Myanmar. Myanmar is in the process of a big change. There are many chances for development and co-operation here. It's a great time for China-Myanmar co-operation. I think I will be able to do many fine jobs for co-operation as an Ambassador.

Actually I know a lot of things about Myanmar. Formerly, I worked in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and my duty there was China-Myanmar relations.

The Budget: What Do Taxpayers Want?

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In the coming budget, she says that "I wish the government could enact and enforce some rules and regulations on wiping out this corruption and reducing the complicated procedures for tax payers.''

Regulation and the cost of compliance can be disproportionately time-consuming and burdensome for small business owners like Ma Youn Mee, but they are also a concern for large scale employers. "I would like to urge the government to expand the coverage of collecting tax at the base rather than just targeting only the prominent figures or businesses" says Dr Maung Maung Lay, vice president of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI). He believes that only a tax system that is comprehensive and broadly based can prevent a budget deficit that "will create inflation which will be a huge impediment for the country's future" and at the same time raise sufficient revenue for what he describes as "everyone's wish" which is "a bigger budget for health and education."

Aung Moe Kyaw, Group Chairman of the beverages company, IBTC which includes Grand Royal whisky, also accepts the responsibility for successful companies to make a fair contribution. "We are fully supportive" he says, "of the existing tax rates and structure, especially the Special Goods Tax while all domestic producers transition towards full compliance."

Indeed, his company — which employs more than 2,000 people — has consistently been one of the top commercial taxpayers in Myanmar, contributing over MMK 200 billion (almost USD 200 million) over the previous five years to March 2017.

His budget hopes are not pinned upon asking for a lowering of tax rates but rather that the existing burdens should remain stable and consistent. "Uncertainty about what level of tax and regulation we will face in two, four or six years' time," he says, "is what makes it difficult for companies like Grand Royal to plan future major investments in developing new products and creating more jobs."

Aung Moe Kyaw fears that a combination of "complicated regulations and higher taxes alongside inadequate enforcement would harm law-abiding businesses yet give a huge advantage to counterfeit or illegally smuggled trade which avoids health safeguards and pays no tax. The result," he says, "would leave consumers with fake or dangerous products and the Government with less tax to spend on the services we all need."

For all their different priorities, what is noticeable is the extent to which these four taxpayers agree that the Government's priorities should be schools, hospitals and infrastructure which should be paid for not by adjusting the tax rate but by better enforcement of the existing levies. In Myanmar, fiscal policy is not just about economics but also cultural attitudes and the means of enforcing existing burdens rather than creating new ones. It is a problem that State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi herself addressed in April 2013 when she observed, "if people are to abide by the taxation law and pay tax and tariffs responsibly, the law and the rates themselves must be acceptable for the people and suitable for the country."

Seattle judge blocks Trump's travel ban; White House to appeal

SEATTLE/BOSTON — A Seattle federal judge on Friday put a nationwide block on US President Donald Trump's week-old executive order that had temporarily barred refugees and nationals from seven countries from entering the United States.

The judge's temporary restraining order represents a major setback for Trump's action, though the White House said late Friday that it believed the ban to be "lawful and appropriate" and that the US Department of Justice would file an emergency appeal.

Still, just hours after the ruling, US Customs and Border Protection told airlines they could board travellers who had been affected by the ban.

Trump's 27 January order caused chaos at airports across the United States last week as some citizens from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen were denied entry. Virtually all refugees were also barred, upending the lives of thousands of people who had spent years seeking asylum in the US.

The State Department said Friday that almost 60,000 visas were suspended in the wake of Trump's order; it was not clear Friday night whether that suspension was automatically revoked or what travellers with such visas might confront at US airports.

While a number of lawsuits have been filed over Trump's action, the Washington state lawsuit was the first to test the broad constitutionality of the executive order. Judge James Robart, a George W Bush appointee, explicitly made his ruling apply across the country, while other judges facing similar cases have so far issued orders concerning only specific individuals.

The challenge in Seattle was brought by the state of Washington and later joined by the state of Minnesota. The judge ruled that the states have legal standing to sue, which could help Democratic attorneys general take on Trump in court on issues beyond immigration.

Washington's case was based on claims that the state had suffered harm from the travel ban, for example students and faculty at state-funded universities being stranded overseas. Amazon.com (AMZN.O) and Expedia (EXPE.O), both based in Washington state, had supported the lawsuit, asserting that the travel restrictions harmed their businesses.

Tech companies, which rely on talent from around the world, have been increasingly outspoken in their opposition to the Trump administration's anti-immigrant policies.

Judge Robart probed a Justice Department lawyer on what he called the "litany of harms" suffered by Washington state's universities, and also questioned the administration's use of the 11 September, 2001, attacks on the United States as a justification for the ban.

People hold protest signs after attending Friday prayers, to show solidarity with the Muslim community, at the Islamic Center of Southern California in Los Angeles, California, US on 3 February, 2017.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Robart said no attacks had been carried out on US soil by individuals from the seven countries affected by the travel ban since that assault. For Trump's order to be constitutional, Robart said, it had to be "based in fact, as opposed to fiction."

Gulf carrier Qatar Airways will allow passengers barred by an executive order last week to board flights to the United States, after Robart's order, a spokeswoman told Reuters.

But for some who had changed their travel plans following the ban, the order was not enough reassurance.

In Dubai, Tariq Laham, 32, and his fiance Natalia had scrapped plans to travel to the US after their July wedding in Poland, where Natalia is from.

Laham said the couple would not reverse their decision.

"It is just too risky," said Laham, a Syrian who works as a director of commercial operations at a multinational technology company. "Everyday you wake up and there is a new decision."

The White House said it would file an appeal as soon as possible.

"At the earliest possible time, the Department of Justice intends to file an emergency stay of this outrageous order and defend the executive order of the president, which we believe is lawful and appropriate," the White House said in a statement.

"The president's order is intended to protect the homeland and he has the constitutional authority and responsibility to protect the American people."

Washington Governor Jay Inslee celebrated the decision as a victory for the state, adding: "No person — not even the president — is above the law."

The judge's decision was welcomed by groups protesting the ban.

"This order demonstrates that federal judges throughout the country are seeing the serious constitutional problems with this order," said Nicholas Espiritu, a staff attorney at the National Immigration Law Centre.

Eric Ferrero, Amnesty International USA spokesman, lauded the short-term relief provided by the order but added: "Congress must step in and block this unlawful ban for good."

But the fluid legal situation was illustrated by the fact that Robart's ruling came just hours after a federal judge in Boston declined to extend a temporary restraining order allowing some immigrants into the United States from countries affected by Trump's three-month ban.

A Reuters poll earlier this week indicated that the immigration ban has popular support, with 49 per cent of Americans agreeing with the order and 41 per cent disagreeing. Some 53 per cent of Democrats said they "strongly disagree" with Trump's action while 51 per cent of Republicans said they "strongly agree."

At least one company, the ride-hailing giant Uber, was moving quickly Friday night to take advantage of the ruling.

CEO Travis Kalanick, who quit Trump's business advisory council this week in the face of a fierce backlash from Uber customers and the company's many immigrant drivers, said on Twitter: "We have a team of in-house attorneys who've been working night & day to get US resident drivers & stranded families back into country.

"I just chatted with our head of litigation Angela, who's buying a whole bunch of airline tickets ASAP!! #homecoming #fingerscrossed"—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Air France reopens US flights to passengers hit by travel ban

PARIS — Air France said on Saturday it had reopened US-bound flights to passengers affected by President Donald Trump's travel ban on nationals from seven Muslim-majority countries, after the executive order was temporarily suspended by a federal court.

"Starting today we are implementing this court decision," Air France spokesman Herve Erschler said. "Nationals from the countries concerned are being authorised to fly once again to the United States, providing their papers and visas are in order." Erschler said American government representatives in Paris had advised local airlines they could resume US-bound services for citizens of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. A federal judge in Seattle on Friday suspended Trump's week-old executive order barring their travel.—*Reuters*

China's Tianjin issues air pollution alert

TIANJIN — North China's Tianjin Municipality issued a yellow alert for air pollution and activated emergency response measures on Saturday.

According to the city's environmental protection bureau, the Air Quality Index (AQI) reading passed 200 around noon, with the PM2.5 reading exceeding 150 micrograms per cubic metre.Emergency measures included banning heavy trucks in the downtown area and suspending dusty construction site work. The bureau said that increased coal consumption, unfavorable weather conditions and fireworks were to blame for the smog. The smog will disperse Sunday, the bureau said. Beijing, which is adjacent to Tianjin, issued a blue alert for air pollution on Friday.—*Xinhua*

Thousands protest in London against Trump's refugee ban

LONDON — Several thousand people demonstrated outside the US embassy in London on Saturday against President Donald Trump and his temporary ban on refugees and nationals from seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States.

Protesters held black banners with blood stains bearing slogans such as "No to Trump. No to War" and "Trump: Special Relationship? Just say no." at the demonstration against the ban and Trump's foreign policy. Trump signed an order just over a week ago putting a four-month hold on allowing refugees into the US and temporarily barred travellers from Syria and six other Muslim-majority countries. On Friday, a Seattle judge blocked the order but many in Britain are angry about the measure, which they see as discriminatory, and the time it took for Prime Minister Theresa May's government to criticise it.—*Reuters*

Five die in fire in Tochigi, north of Tokyo

UTSUNOMIYA, Japan — Five people were found dead after a fire early Saturday at a restaurant in Oyama, Tochigi Prefecture, north of Tokyo, police said.

The fire broke out at around 1:15 am at a restaurant that was also the home to Kazumi Tanaka's family. The fire was put out in about three hours.

The police said they have been unable to contact Tanaka, 58, his father Shioya, 87, and wife Michiyo, 60, daughter Chika, 30, and granddaughter Hina, 9. The police believe the bodies are those of the family members and continue the identification process.

A total of six people lived here but Tanaka's second son, 23, was away for work when the fire occurred. According to an investigative source, the fire is believed to have started in the kitchen.—*Kyodo News*

Qatar Airways to let barred passengers on US flights after ban blocked

DUBAI — Gulf carrier Qatar Airways will allow passengers barred by an executive order last week to board flights to the United States, after a federal judge blocked the move, an airline spokeswoman told Reuters on Saturday.

President Donald Trump on 27 January suspended the entry of people from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. —*Reuters*

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS SCHEDULE

YANGON TO BANGKOK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-304	09:50	11:45	Daily
TG-302	15:00	16:55	Daily
TG-306	19:50	21:45	Daily
PG-706	6:00	8:15	Daily
PG-702	10:30	12:25	Daily
PG-708	15:30	17:25	Daily
PG-704	18:20	20:15	Daily
8M-335	7:30	9:15	Daily
8M-331	16:30	18:15	Daily
UB-017	17:45	19:15	Daily
UB-019	8:00	9:30	3,5,7
UB-019	8:55	10:25	1,6

BANGKOK TO YANGON

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-303	8:00	8:45	Daily
TG-301	13:15	14:00	Daily
TG-305	18:05	18:50	Daily
PG-701	8:45	9:40	Daily
PG-707	13:45	14:40	Daily
PG-703	16:45	17:35	Daily
PG-705	20:30	21:45	Daily
8M-336	10:15	11:00	Daily
8M-332	19:20	20:05	Daily
UB-020	10:35	11:10	3,5
UB-018	21:05	21:35	Daily
UB-020	11:30	12:05	1,6

YGN TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-252	8:30	10:20	Daily
FD-256	12:55	14:40	Daily
FD-254	17:35	19:25	Daily
FD-258	21:40	23:30	Daily
DD-4231	08:00	9:45	Daily
DD-4235	12:00	13:45	Daily
DD-4239	21:00	22:55	Daily
SL-201	11:00	13:35	Daily
SL-207	19:45	21:45	Daily

DMK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-251	7:15	8:00	Daily
FD-255	11:35	12:25	Daily
FD-253	16:20	17:05	Daily
FD-257	20:15	21:10	Daily
DD-4234	10:30	11:15	Daily
DD-4230	6:30	7:15	Daily
DD-4238	19:25	20:15	Daily
SL-200	08:45	10:00	Daily
SL-206	17:10	18:35	Daily

YGN TO CAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-713	20;25	01:00+1	1
8M-711	8:40	13:15	2,4,5,7
CZ-3056	11:35	15:50	3,6
CZ-3056	17:40	22:20	1,5

CAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-714	2:05	3:40	2
8M-712	14:15	15:50	2,4,5,7
CZ-3055	8:40	10:35	3,6
CZ-3055	14:40	16:40	1,5

YGN TO SIN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-231	8:20	12:40	Daily
SQ-997	10:25	15:10	Daily
MI-515	14:20	18:50	1,3,5
MI-519	17:35	22:10	Daily
MI-522	16:20	20:50	4,6
MI-533	13:35	20:50	2
3k-584	19:40	00:10	Daily
3K-582	11:35	16:05	Daily
TR-2823	9:25	13:55	1,2,4,5,7
UB-001	7:15	11:45	Daily

SIN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-232	13:45	15:15	Daily
SQ-998	07:55	09:20	Daily
MI-522	11:30	15:30	4,6
MI-518	15:15	16:40	Daily
MI-516	12:00	13:25	1,3,5
MI-533	11:30	12:45	2
3K-583	17:30	19:00	Daily
3k-581	09:10	10:40	Daily
TR-2822	7:20	8:45	1,2,4,5,7
UB-002	13:00	14:30	Daily

YGN TO NRT

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-814	22:10	06:45	Daily

NRT TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-813	11:00	16:30	Daily

YGN TO ICN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KE-472	23:30	7:50	Daily

ICN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KE-471	18:30	22:30	Daily

YGN TO KUL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-505	8:30	12:45	Daily
AK-503	19:10	23:30	Daily
8M-501	16:10	20:10	2
8M-501	11:45	15:45	1
MH-741	11:15	15:40	Daily
MH-743	16:00	20:15	1,4,6,7

KUL TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-504	6:55	8:00	Daily
AK-502	17:20	18:30	Daily
8M-502	16:45	17:45	1
8M-502	21:10	22:10	2
MH-742	13:55	15:05	1,4,6,7
MH-740	09:10	10:15	Daily

YGN TO KMG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-416	12:30	16:00	Daily
MU-2032	15:30	18:50	Daily
MU-2012	12:55	19:55	3

KMG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-415	10:50	11:30	Daily
MU-2031	13:50	14:30	Daily
MU-2011	08:20	11:55	3

YGN TO TPE

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7916	10:50	16:10	Daily

TPE TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7915	7:00	9:50	Daily

YGN TO PEK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-906	23:50	0550+1	1,3,5,7

PEK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-905	19:30	22:50	1,3,5,7

YGN TO HAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-956	19:10	21:30	Daily

HAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-957	16:40	18:10	Daily

YGN TO SGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-942	12:10	14:55	2,3,4,5,7

SGN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-943	9:25	11:10	2,3,4,5,7

YGN TO HKG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA -251	1:05	5:25	Daily
UB-8027	09:00	13:30	1,3,5,7

HKG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-250	21:50	23:45	1,3,5,7
KA-252	22:20	00:10	2,4,6
UB-8028	14:50	16:20	1,3,5,7

YGN TO DOH

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-919	8:05	11:30	1,3,4,6,7

DOH TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-918	20:10	5:20	1,3,4,6,7

YGN TO CNX

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG -724	13:40	15:35	Daily

CNX TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-723	12:00	12:55	Daily

YGN TO DAC

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-061	16:45	18:30	1,3,6

DAC TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-060	13:30	16:00	1,3,6

MDL TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-245	12:55	15:15	Daily

DMK TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-244	11:10	12:25	Daily

MDL TO SIN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-533	15:45	20:50	2
MI-522	14:15	20:15	4,6

SIN TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-522	11:30	13:20	4,6
MI-533	11:30	14:50	2

MDL TO BKK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-710	14:10	16:35	Daily

BKK TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-709	12:00	13:20	Daily

MDL TO KMG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2030	14:25	17:15	Daily

KMG TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2029	13:20	13:15	Daily

NYT to BKK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-722	19:50	22:50	1,3,4,5,6,7

BKK TO NYT

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-721	17:20	19:20	1,3,4,5,6,7

AIRLINE CODES

8M	= Myanmar Airways International		
BG	= Biman Bangladesh Airlines		
MH	= Malaysia Airlines		
MU	= China Eastern Airlines		
NH	= All Nippon Airways		
SQ	= Singapore Airways		
PG	= Bangkok Airways		
UB	= Myanmar National Airlines		
VN	= Vietnam Airline		
3K	= Jet Star	AK	= Air Asia
AI	= Air India	CA	= Air China
CI	= China Airlines	CZ	= China Southern
DD	= Nok Airline	FD	= Air Asia
KA	= Dragonair	KE	= Korea Airlines
MI	= Silk Air	QR	= Qatar Airways
TG	= Thai Airways	TR	= Tiger Airline

DAY			
1	= Monday	4	= Thursday
2	= Tuesday	5	= Friday
3	= Wednesday	6	= Saturday
		7	= Sunday

Fat shaming tied to increased risk of metabolic problems

SEATTLE — Boeing Co has hired a small company to make about 600 3D-printed parts for its Starliner space taxis, meaning key components in the United States manned space program are being built with additive manufacturing.

The company, privately held Oxford Performance Materials, will announce a $10 million strategic investment from advanced materials company Hexcel Corp as early as Friday, adding to $15 million Hexcel invested in May and lifting Hexcel's equity stake to 16.1 per cent, Oxford and Hexcel said.

Boeing's award of the parts for its flagship space program and Hexcel's funding are strategic bets that printed plastics can perform flawlessly even under the extreme stress of a rocket launch and sub-zero temperatures of space.

They offer further evidence of a shift in 3D printing from making prototypes to commercial production of high-grade parts for space ships, aircraft engines and other critical equipment.

Oxford's parts will help Boeing lower costs and save weight on each seven-seat capsule, compared with traditional metal and plastic manufacturing, Larry Varholak, president of Oxford's aerospace business, said in an interview.

"What really makes it valuable to NASA and Boeing is this material is as strong as aluminum at significantly less weight," he said. Boeing said the weight savings on Oxford's parts is about 60 percent compared with traditional manufacturing.

A 3-D printed 'OxFab' air revitalization system duct for Boeing's manned Starliner spacecraft made of 'OXPEKK' material by an EOS 3-D printer unit is seen at Oxford Performance Materials Inc., the maker of more than 600 parts to be used on the Starliner in South Windsor, Connecticut, US, on 31 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Boeing is building three Starliner capsules under a $4.2 billion NASA contract. Entrepreneur Elon Musk's SpaceX is building a competing capsule under a $2.6 billion NASA contract.

Oxford has already shipped parts for the Starliner. The plastic it uses, known as PEKK, also resists fire and radiation, according to Oxford. Boeing declined to say how much of the capsule Oxford's parts represent.

"It's a significant fraction of the Starliner from the aspects of design, assembly and reliability of high integrity parts," said Leo Christodoulou, director of structures and materials engineering at Boeing. "Using Oxford's materials takes out a lot of cost."

Despite its promise and potential sales, customers and investors need to be convinced by repeatable results from printed plastics.

"We're still in the show-me stage," Oxford Chief Executive Scott DeFelice said in an interview. "If you don't show me the data I'm not going to believe you."

Oxford, based in South Windsor, Connecticut, started as a materials science company in 2000 and added 3D printing in 2006. It also makes aircraft parts and cranial and facial implants, as well as replacement human vertebrae.

In 2012 it delved into aerospace and defense. Working with NASA, Northrop Grumman Corp and incubator America Makes, it demonstrated printed PEKK could handle temperatures from minus 300 to 300 degrees Fahrenheit among other qualities,

"It's everything from brackets supporting the propulsion system to internal structures for the air revitalization system," Varholak said of the parts for Boeing's Starliner.

Printing parts is often faster and less expensive than traditional forging, machining or molding. It requires minimal tooling and touch labor, and allows companies to keep a "digital inventory" of parts, printing as needed, said Terry Wohlers, chief executive of consulting firm Wohlers Associates, which has tracked additive manufacturing for more than 20 years.

Use of 3D technology is surging. Sales reached $1 billion in 2007, jumped to nearly $5.2 billion in 2015 and are expected to hit $26.5 billion by 2021, according to the Wohlers Report, which analyzes the sector.

Several relatively small listed companies such as Stratasys Ltd, 3D Systems Corp and ExOne Co offer investors exposure.

Other firms have been snapped up. General Electric last year bought a controlling stake in Swedish 3D printing company Arcam AB and Germany's Concept Laser, and launched an additive manufacturing division. GE already prints metal parts for the new LEAP engine that powers Boeing and Airbus SA single-aisle jetliners. Aerospace already accounts for about 17 per cent of 3D printing revenue, ranking second after industrial and business machines but ahead of automotive, consumer, electronics and medical products, according to Wohlers.

Aerospace is a "near perfect fit" for 3D printing because it involves complex, expensive parts made in relatively low volumes, Wohlers said. The Starliner is due to blast off for the first time in June 2018 from Cape Canaveral, and carry its first crew in August 2018. It will be launched on an Atlas V rocket supplied by United Launch Alliance, a joint venture between Boeing and Lockheed Martin Corp.—*Reuters*

Le Pen kicks off campaign, promises French "freedom"

LYON, (France) — France's far-right party leader Marine Le Pen kicked off her presidential campaign on Saturday, hoping promises to shield voters from globalisation boost her chances at a time of French political turmoil.

Opinion polls see the 48-year old daughter of National Front (FN) founder Jean-Marie Le Pen topping the first round on 23 April but then losing the 7 May run-off to a mainstream candidate.

But in the most unpredictable election race France has known in decades, the FN hopes a two-day rally in Lyon, where Le Pen is spelling out her electoral platform, will help convince voters to back her.

In 144 "commitments", Le Pen proposes leaving the euro zone, taxes on the job contracts of foreigners, lowering the retirement age and increasing several welfare benefits while lowering payroll tax for small firms and income tax.

The manifesto also foresees reserving certain rights now available to all residents, including free education, to French citizens only, hiring 15,000 police, building more prisons, curbing migration and leaving NATO's integrated command.

"The aim of this programme is first of all to give France its freedom back and give the people a voice," Le Pen said in the introduction to the manifesto.

Marine Le Pen, French National Front (FN) political party leader and candidate for French 2017 presidential election, attends a news conference in Paris, France, on 26 Janaury, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Emmanuel Macron, a pro-European centrist candidate whom polls say might be Le Pen's opponent in the run-off, will also hold a rally in Lyon on Saturday to propose a radically different platform.

"This presidential election puts two opposite proposals," Le Pen said. "The 'globalist' choice backed by all my opponents ... that wants to abolish all borders... and the 'patriotic' choice which I personify."

Buoyed by last year's unexpected vote to take Britain out of the EU and Donald Trump's election in the United States, the FN hopes to ride the same populist wave to victory.

If elected, Le Pen says she would immediately seek an overhaul of the European Union that would reduce it to a very loose cooperative of nations with no single currency and no border-free area. If, as is likely, France's EU partners refuse to agree to this, she will call a referendum to leave the EU.

The electoral manifesto is short on macro-economic details and does not give any public deficit or debt targets and does not explain how a Le Pen government would balance raising welfare benefits while cutting taxes.

The FN would combine leaving the euro with unorthodox policies including money printing, currency intervention and import taxes, Jean Messiha, who has overseen the drafting of Le Pen's manifesto, told Reuters ahead of the rally.

The Lyon rally is also bound to focus on militant threats facing France, with the FN quick to react on Friday to an attempt by a machete-wielding man to enter the Paris Louvre museum. FN officials said it proves France must reinstate border controls and be tougher on radical Islam.

While Le Pen is hoping to benefit from an unpredictable campaign that has seen the favourites drop out one after the other and that has caught up with hitherto favourite Francois Fillon, embroiled in a scandal over alleged ghost jobs for his wife, opinion polls still see her losing the second round.

But that leaves grass-roots supporters undeterred. "The rally will show people are backing the National Front and our ideas," said Victor Birra, the regional head of the FN youth association. "We're fighting to win the 2017 election," he said, before driving around Lyon to put up posters for the rally. Le Pen and her party are also facing their own scandals, including one over assistants in the European Parliament and investigations over her 2012 campaign financing.—*Reuters*

EU founders speak of possible 'multispeed' future after Brexit

VALLETTA, (Malta) — German Chancellor Angela Merkel and leaders of other founding states of the European Union spoke on Friday of some countries moving ahead faster than others with further integration.

After a summit in Malta at which all national leaders discussed plans for a formal declaration in March on the future of the bloc following Britain's departure, Merkel and others offered endorsements of a so-called "multispeed Europe", which some governments fear could damage EU unity in the wake of Brexit.

Though they disagree on details, Berlin, Paris and many of the 17 other states which use the euro currency are keen to bind the euro zone closer together after years of crisis in which investors have doubted the currency's survival. But some countries around the periphery of the bloc fear creating a system in which a hard core of states pushes the EU into policies they do not want.

The last few years, Merkel told reporters, showed "that there will be an EU with different speeds, that not everyone will take part in the same levels of integration".

One area in which governments are divided over the degree of integration is defence. With the departure of long-time sceptic Britain, France and Germany are keen to develop closer EU ties.

L-R, Greek Prime Minister Alexis tsipras, French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel visit a vantage poit overlooking Valletta during a break in the European Union leaders summit in Valletta, Malta, on 3 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

The 27 leaders are due to meet without British Prime Minister Theresa May on 25 March in the Italian capital to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding Treaty of Rome.

French President Francois Hollande said he thought that the Rome statement could mention "several speeds" as a possible way forward, though he stressed: "European unity is essential."

In a reminder of divisions in the bloc, Hollande, who will step down in May, took a dig at East European states which Paris complains fail to honour commitments — such as taking in asylum-seekers — while accepting big subsidies from Brussels:

"Europe isn't a cash-box, not a self-service restaurant, a Europe where you come and take what you need, where you take your structural funds or get access to the internal market and then show no solidarity at all in return," he told reporters.—*Reuters*

Australian foreign minister says US refugee swap proceeding

SYDNEY — Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said on Saturday that a controversial refugee resettlement deal with the United States would go ahead, despite US immigration officials postponing interviews with asylum seekers.

Reuters reported on Friday that US officials had pulled planned second-round interviews with detainees in an Australian camp on the Pacific island of Nauru, suggesting Washington is already blocking progress on a controversial refugee resettlement deal.

Detainees and an official source said interview dates were pulled on Saturday, hours after US President Donald Trump signed an executive order that suspended the US refugee programme for 120 days and stopped visits by travellers from seven Muslim-majority countries.

Bishop said both countries were still working through the details of the agreement, which sparked a rare diplomatic spat between the two staunch allies, with Trump berating Australia's prime minister in an angry phone call.

"The agreement is to be honoured by the Trump administration (so) I'm pleased this agreement will continue," Bishop told reporters in Western Australia.

"We remain in contact with the Trump administration and our embassy in Washington is also working with US officials and we expect that vetting process would be as tough as Australia's vetting process in terms of health and security checks," she added.

Bishop said "my understanding is that interviewing and vetting is still taking place", without providing any further details.

Several detainees on Nauru showed Reuters the cancelled interview dates in their online applications, while a source said the second-round interviews had been postponed while officials tried to work out what was meant by the "extreme vetting" announced by the White House.

Under the refugee swap deal, agreed in the final months of Barack Obama's presidency late last year, the United States would take up to 1,250 asylum seekers. In return, Australia would take refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.—*Reuters*

Mattis says no need for dramatic US military moves in S China Sea

TOKYO — US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis on Saturday played down any need for major US military moves in the South China Sea to contend with China's assertive behaviour, even as he sharply criticized Beijing for "shredding the trust of nations in the region."

"At this time, we do not see any need for dramatic military moves at all," Mattis told a news conference in Tokyo, stressing that the focus should be on diplomacy.

In his Senate confirmation hearing, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said China should not be allowed access to islands it has built in the contested South China Sea. The White House also vowed to defend "international territories" in the strategic waterway.

But how the United States would achieve that has been unclear, including whether it would have a military dimension.

Analysts have said Tillerson's remarks, like those from the White House, suggested the possibility of US military action, or even a naval blockade.

Such action would risk an armed confrontation with China, an increasingly formidable nuclear-armed military power. It is also the world's second-largest economy and the prime target of Trump accusations of stealing American jobs.

Mattis suggested that major military action was not being currently considered.

"What we have to do is exhaust all efforts, diplomatic efforts, to try to resolve this properly, maintaining open lines of communication," Mattis said, in his most complete remarks on the issue to date.

"And certainly our military stance should be one that reinforces our diplomats in this regard. But there is no need right now at this time for military maneuvers or something like that, that would solve something that's best solved by the diplomats."—*Reuters*

Participants attend protest rally against wildlife farming in Nepal

Participants attend a protest rally against wildlife farming in Kathmandu, capital of Nepal, on 4 February, 2017. The protest is against the possibility of fur farms, bile farms, circuses, mini zoos, meat farms, slaughter houses and experiments on animals due to wildlife farming. PHOTO: XINHUA

Regional party chief urges Fillon to drop French presidential bid

PARIS — French presidential candidate Francois Fillon faced mounting pressure from his own conservative camp to withdraw from the race on Saturday, as a senator from The Republicans party warned it could split if he refused to bow out.

Senator Bruno Gilles, head of the party's influential Bouches-du-Rhone region, said in a radio interview that party faithful had "turned the page" and overwhelmingly wanted a change of candidate.

Fillon, 62, has been embroiled in a deepening scandal since satirical newspaper Le Canard Enchaine reported he had paid his wife hundreds of thousands of euros of public money for work she may not have done.

He denies the allegations, but they have rocked his campaign. An opinion poll published overnight showed the former front-runner is now set to trail in third behind far-right leader Marine Le Pen and independent centrist Emmanuel Macron in the first round of the election on 23 April.

"This scandal is doing us more damage every day, and we can't wait another two weeks," Gilles told France Bleu Provence radio. "There are presidential and legislative elections at stake and, beyond that, the survival of our political party."

He added: "This could go as far as a party split."

Fillon, a former prime minister, vowed on Friday to fight on despite public calls from a growing number of Republican lawmakers and officials for him to step aside.—*Reuters*

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV OCEAN WINNER VOY. NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV OCEAN WINNER VOY. NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S PRIMETRANS PORT ELITE SHIPPING

Phone No: 2301191/2301178

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV MATHU BHUM VOY. NO (1031)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MATHU BHUM VOY. NO (1031) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 MOL (S'PORE) PTE TD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV SIMA PRESTIGE VOY. NO (004)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SIMA PRESTIGE VOY. NO (004) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.2.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

Expect "Fifty Shades Darker" to go even further, says Jamie Dornan

LOS ANGELES — Fifty Shades of Grey" star Jamie Dornan said fans of the erotic box office hit could look forward to more action when the sequel, "Fifty Shades Darker", reaches theaters next week.

The Northern Irish actor and co-star Dakota Johnson reprise their sadomasochist relationship in the follow up to the 2015 hit, which made $571 million worldwide.

"We pull out all the stops," Dornan said at the world premiere of "Fifty Shades Darker" in Los Angeles on Thursday.

"If you're making a sequel to anything, I think there has to be some kind of advancement on the first, you have to go a bit bigger in a lot of areas, and I don't think this film is any different."

"Fifty Shades Darker", based on the second book in the trilogy of novels by E L James, begins its global roll out from 8 February.—*Reuters*

Cast members Jamie Dornan (L) and Dakota Johnson pose at the premiere of the film 'Fifty Shades Darker' in Los Angeles, California, on 2 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Will be true to my beliefs during Super Bowl show, says Gaga

HOUSTON — Lady Gaga revealed few details on Thursday of what viewers can expect from her much anticipated Super Bowl halftime show, but the outspoken singer assured she would remain true to her beliefs and passions.

An advocate for lesbian, gay and transgender rights and a champion for inclusion, Lady Gaga's 13-minute concert on Sunday has generated speculation over whether she might use the spotlight to rebut US President Donald Trump's controversial appointments and policies, including travel restrictions targeting seven Muslim-majority nations.

"The only statements I will be making during the halftime show are the ones I have been consistently making throughout my career," Gaga told a standing room only press conference.

"I believe in passion for inclusion, I believe in the spirit of equality and the spirit of this country — one of love, compassion and kindness.

"So my performance will uphold those philosophies."

Not once during what appeared to be a carefully scripted news conference did Trump's name come up. Certainly Lady Gaga would have no shortage of causes to protest, including Trump's plans to build a wall between Mexico and the United States, a large portion of which would cut across Texas, and legislation introduced by a Texas Republican state senator to limit public restroom access for transgender people.

"I think that music is one of the most powerful things the world has to offer no matter what race or religion or nationality, sexual orientation, gender that you are it has the power to unite us, so this performance is for everyone," said Gaga, a six-time Grammy Award winner.

"I want to, more than anything, create a moment that everybody that is watching will never forget."

One of the most memorable and controversial halftime shows ever occurred the last time the Super Bowl was held in Houston in 2004, when Janet Jackson suffered what became known as a "wardrobe malfunction" exposing one of her breasts to millions of viewers.

Lady Gaga played coy about everything from her wardrobe choices to set list and theatrics.

The singer, who won rave reviews for her rendition of the US national anthem at Super Bowl 50 last year, adds her name to the list of Super Bowl halftime performers that includes some of rock music's most iconic acts in Bruce Springsteen, Paul McCartney, Prince, U2, Rolling Stones and The Who.

"As much as I always wanted to be an artist I never really decided to be a musician until later in my life and I think I saw the halftime show even before I made my decision that I wanted to try to be a song writer," said Gaga. "Watching Michael Jackson do the halftime show is one of the fondest memories I have."—*Reuters*

Lady Gaga speaks to the media during the Super Bowl LI halftime show press conference at Media Center in Houston, TX, USA on 2 February. PHOTO: REUTERS

Singer LeAnn Rimes focuses on love for new album 'Remnants'

LOS ANGELES — Just ahead of Valentine's Day, singer LeAnn Rimes' latest album "Remnants" is all about love.

"We take a look at (love) in so many different angles," the 34-year-old Grammy-winning country pop singer told Reuters.

"From giving it, receiving it, making it, standing up for it. I think there's a softness about it but there is also this balance of real power, inner power," she added.

The album, out on Friday, features songs inspired by Rimes' own marriage, to actor Eddie Cibrian, and her family. "Learning Your Language" is about her relationship with her husband while "Love Lines" is about her two step-sons, Cibrian's children from his first marriage.

"That song is very honest in the verses about kind of the struggles of that — step-parenting," Rimes said. "I just wanted them to know that's how I felt. And I'm good at communicating that through music."

Rimes released her first album when she was 13, and has found herself growing up in the spotlight, including her relationship with Cibrian, which began when they both were married to other people and became tabloid news.

"None of my life has ever been really private," she said.

"I think I had to go through everything that I've gone through to make me understand and to have empathy and compassion and to be able to write a record like this," she added. —*Reuters*

LeAnn Rimes speaks during a panel for the VH1 television series ''LeAnn & Eddie'' during the Television Critics Association Cable Summer Press Tour in Beverly Hills, California on 11 July 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

German mini-world park builds a wall around US

HAMBURG — A German tourist attraction that features miniature models of various parts of the world has put up a wall around the United States, in a dig at President Donald Trump's plan to build a full-sized one on the border with Mexico.

The display at Miniature Wonderland, which Trip Advisor rates as the top destination in the city of Hamburg, is a hit with tourists, including some from the United States, who are usually drawn by its vast model railway.

Visitors on Friday could be seen peering over a miniature concrete wall topped with razor wire to look at sites such as a tiny Mount Rushmore and a Las Vegas skyline.

The slogan "Let the world be great again" was scribbled on the wall, a reference to Trump's election slogan "Make America Great Again".

"I don't want to tell anyone what to think. Everybody should look at that wall, and then decide regardless of whether they are on the left, right or centre," said Gerrit Braun, co-founder of Miniatur Wunderland.

"The main thing is that the people think about it."

Ryan Ott, a tourist from the United States, said: "I think it's a good use of humour, which is what the world needs, I think, right now to help cope with what's happening in our country." —*Reuters*

A wall with barbed wire on its top is seen behind Cape Canaveral at the exposition 'Miniature-Wonderland' in Hamburg, Germany, on 3 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

New Brussels museum displays costumes of Manneken Pis statue

BRUSSELS — Visitors to Brussels will soon be able to admire scores of colorful costumes used over the years to dress the city's most famous landmark, the 400-year-old Manneken Pis.

The 61 cm (24 inch) bronze statue of a naked boy urinating into a fountain is one of the biggest attractions for visitors to the Belgian capital and on Saturday a museum that celebrates his extensive and diverse wardrobe will open near to the site.

The museum, called Garderobe MannekenPis after the French word for 'wardrobe', will display 133 costumes from a 965-item collection. They include a fireman, a coal miner, a bee-keeper, Mickey Mouse, Santa Claus, Dracula and a Chinese dragon.

A giant mural depicting the Manneken Pis in a jacket and jeans emblazons the side of the museum building.

Manneken Pis receives about 15 to 20 new costumes annually and is dressed for 130 days of the year. But there are strict rules about what he can wear — no political or religious garb, and none for commercial purposes.

The new museum is split into seven sections: geography, folklore, charity and citizens' associations, trades, celebrities, sports and designers. Visitors will also be able to dress up a Manneken Pis model.

All the outfits on display are original except one — the replica of a costume donated by French King Louis XV in 1747 as an apology after his soldiers tried to steal the statue.

The origins of Manneken Pis are unclear. One story says a little boy saved Brussels from burning down in the 13th century by urinating on the blaze. Another says a rich man lost his son and found him relieving himself on a street corner.

The original statue dates from 1619 and now sits in the City Museum. Other statues have been stolen or vandalized. The current Manneken Pis statue was put together from fragments found after an 1817 theft by a reprieved French convict.

On Saturday, the Manneken Pis will receive a new costume based on a mediaeval city pageant. —*Reuters*

An employee adjusts one of the costumes of the famous Belgian statue Manneken Pis at the museum called GardeRobe MannekenPis in central Brussels, Belgium on 2 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

6 "dangdang" buses start operation in N China's Hohhot

BEIJING — These buses are modelled after the old-fashioned trams, known as 'dangdang' buses, after the sound of the bells drivers used instead of horns.
A "dangdang" bus runs in Hohhot, capital of north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. A total of 6 "dangdang" buses started operation in Hohhot on Saturday. These buses are modelled after the old-fashioned trams, known as "dangdang" buses, after the sound of the bells drivers used instead of horns. PHOTO: XINHUA

Masked teenagers chase children in centuries-old Spanish festival

MADRID — Spain's village of Casavieja observed its annual celebration of Saint Blaise on Friday, where masked 18-year-olds dress as "zarramaches", a reference to their outlandish costumes topped by a multicoloured conical hat.

Teenagers gather at the central Spanish village's town hall, dressed in white robes, straw mats and cowbells, before parading through the streets brandishing wooden sticks and oranges and chasing younger children.

The origins behind the folk tradition that dates back centuries are unclear with some suggesting that the jangles of cowbells serve to purify the village.—*Reuters*

mitv Myanmar International
Programme Schedule

(5-2-2017 07:00am ~ 6-2-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:27	Am	Conflict & Solution Between Man & Elephant
07:44	Am	The Recycle Art: Tyre
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Versatile Artist
08:52	Am	Talented Kid "Moe La Win"
09:03	Am	News
09:27	Am	Snow Flakes… Scenic Confluence… To Kachin State
09:49	Am	Mt.Naw Bu Baw
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	The Richly Blessed Gem Land
10:51	Am	The Youth & Library

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)- Saturday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	New
07:26	Pm	A Day In Bagan
07:47	Pm	Today Myanmar: Classic Car Show
08:03	Pm	News
08:25	Pm	National Literary Icon & Guiding Light of Myanmar Literature: Sayar Zaw Gyi (Episode-3) National Literary Icon in His Old Age
08:54	Pm	Now in Pathein

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)- Saturday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

9th Waxing of Tabodwe 1378 ME | Sunday, 5 February 2017

Mourinho wants Man Utd players to lift burden off Ibrahimovic

Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Jose Mourinho wants to see more of his Manchester United players scoring goals to take some of the burden off striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic as the club pushes for a top-four finish.

"I have to agree with you that we don't score enough goals," the Portuguese manager told reporters ahead of Sunday's trip to struggling Premier League champions Leicester City.

"Some of our players from these attacking creative positions they could, they should, score more goals."

Ibrahimovic has scored 19 goals for United in all competitions this season, and 14 in the league, with Juan Mata and Paul Pogba a long way behind the 35-year-old Swede with seven each.

United are unbeaten in 14 games in the top flight but have drawn their last three, with Wednesday's home match against relegation-threatened Hull City ending in a 0-0 draw.

That disappointing result left Mourinho's side sixth overall, 14 points behind leaders Chelsea, with more home draws to their credit than wins.

In Leicester, United come up against a side who have already shipped 38 goals — two more than all of last season — while struggling to score.

Mourinho, who led Chelsea to the league title in 2014-15 and then left when their form slumped the following year, said Leicester's woes came as no surprise.

"What Leicester did is one of the big things in the world of football. Total respect for what they did. Next season will be much better for them," he said.

"It will be a tough game for us but it will also be difficult for them."

United will be without injured centre back Phil Jones, who was substituted in the second half against Hull and has a bruised foot, for the match.—*Reuters*

Newcastle United manager Rafa Benitez. PHOTO: REUTERS

Benitez says he is committed to Newcastle

LONDON — Newcastle United manager Rafa Benitez assured fans he was not about to walk away after media reports suggested he was frustrated by the club's lack of signings in the transfer window.

Newcastle are second in the Championship, a point behind leaders Brighton, and on course for a swift return to the Premier League. "I will not quit. I will not leave," the Spaniard told reporters ahead of Saturday's game against former Newcastle manager Steve McClaren's Derby County.

"At the end of the season, I expect us to win promotion and we will enjoy and be happy. We cannot be blaming each other now after the transfer window, we have to be sure that we concentrate on getting three points from every game."

Former Newcastle winger Andros Townsend had been widely linked with a move back to the club from relegation-threatened Premier League Crystal Palace during the January transfer window. Palace manager Sam Allardyce told reporters there had been interest from Newcastle in a loan deal but that was never going to happen.—*Reuters*

Tottenham defender Rose to see specialist after knee scan

Tottenham's Danny Rose in action. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Tottenham Hotspur's England defender Danny Rose will see a specialist on Monday after suffering a knee injury that could sideline him for several weeks.

"Danny Rose had his scan yesterday," manager Mauricio Pochettino said on Friday. "Now we need to wait until Monday when he is going to see the specialist and we'll see afterwards."

Rose injured his left knee in the first half of Tuesday's 0-0 Premier League draw at bottom side Sunderland. Pochettino, whose side host Middlesbrough on Saturday, did not put any time frame on the left back's recovery but media reports have speculated at a possible month's absence due to ligament damage. Rose, and right back Kyle Walker, have been pillars of the Spurs defence this season with the second-placed North Londoners sharing with leaders Chelsea the honour of fewest goals (16) conceded in the league.

Tottenham are already without Belgian centre back Jan Vertonghen, who is recovering from an ankle injury suffered two weeks ago.

"Jan Vertonghen is doing better, he's started to run on the pitch, he is very positive and we'll see in the next few weeks how he is doing but we are very positive about him," said Pochettino.

There was also positive news about Argentine midfielder Erik Lamela, who has been out since October with a hip problem.

"Erik Lamela's progression is good — every day is step-by-step going ahead. It's better to be cautious but we are positive and happy," said the manager.

Goalkeeper Hugo Lloris trained on Thursday and Friday and is set to return at White Hart Lane after missing the Sunderland game through illness.—*Reuters*

Ranieri doesn't fear sack, focused on Leicester survival

LONDON — The possibility of getting sacked is far from Claudio Ranieri's thoughts as the Leicester City manager is intent on ensuring the struggling Premier League champions maintain their top-flight status.

Following their stunning title triumph last season, Leicester have continued producing the unexpected, only this time they are battling relegation as they sit 16th in the table, two points above the bottom three. "It's not my philosophy to think about this. If my thoughts go there... I remember what was said by my chairman the first time I met him. He said 'if we go down will you stay with us?' And I said 'yes'," Ranieri told British media.

"Now why do I have to think about this? I am thinking to fight and to survive. That's it. I don't speak about my position with the owner. Never do I speak with the chairman about my position," the Italian added.

"We know that is football. When everything is right, everyone is fantastic. When you start to lose, the manager is bad."

Ranieri said he has no problem playing striker Leonardo Ulloa, who tried to force a move away from Leicester in January and accused the manager of betraying him. "Yes, he will play, don't worry. He is a professional 100 per cent. I don't know if Leo could give more because he always gives 120 per cent," Ranieri added. "Sooner or later, when he is ready, he will have the chance to play. There is no issue. He tried to say everything to push hard but it is okay. He will fight, not for me, for Leicester. Everybody is fighting." Leicester host sixth-placed Manchester United on Sunday. —*Reuters*

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