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State Counsellor meets with Wheel Chair Train for Peace

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met with a group of about 50 physically challenged people yesterday at the National Reconciliation and Peace Center in Nay Pyi Taw and welcomed their collective desire for peace in Myanmar.

In a speech to Wheel Chair Train for Peace, the group that travelled for 12 days from Myit-kyina township in Kachin State to Nay Pyi Taw in order to highlight the need for peace, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said that all Myanmar citizens need to come together to strive for peace. She said the group representing Wheel Chair Train for Peace showed that physical limitations have no bearing on a person's participation to achieve peace in their homeland.

"Failure to gain peace is attributed to the disability of spirit, absolutely not to physical and intellectual disability. We need to collectively help the spiritually disabled. Though this group faces suffering and physical disabilities, it is heartening to see the strength of their spirits, making a good example for the whole nation. The ability to overcome all difficulties encountered is true strength."



SEE PAGE 9 >> Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets a member of Wheel Chair Train for Peace, a group that travelled to Nay Pyi Taw to support the peace effort. PHOTO: MNA

US\$90 million in losses due to attacks on border trade zone



General Mya Tun Oo.
PHOTO: REUTERS

CLASHES between armed ethnic groups and the Tatmadaw in November in north-eastern Shan State effectively halted border trade with China, causing losses of US\$90.5 million in just five days, a military leader said yesterday.

"The attack on Mongko is believed to have threatened the China-Myanmar main trade route because Mongko is located at a strategic point," said General Mya Tun Oo, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air), at a press

conference in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the clashes, the armed groups set fire to trucks, blocked the highway seven times and killed four civilians, including two drivers.

Three-hundred armed members of the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) led by Phone Tar Shwen planned to raid Mongko and Muse in the second week of November and a combined group

comprised of about 200 troops of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the MNDAA attacked the Mongko outpost of the Tatmadaw on 20 November from four directions.

They also attacked eight other locations, including the 105-mile trade zone and military outposts.

Civilians were killed in mine attacks and sabotage acts of the combined troops of the KIA, MNDAA, Ta'ang Nation-

al Liberation Army (TNLA) and Arakan Army (AA) in the 22 November clash at the Mongko outpost and another skirmish on 1st December.

The Tatmadaw forces gained control of the Union Highway on 26 November.

The Tatmadaw is committed to achieving eternal peace in the country and the democratic system does not accept armed conflicts, said General Mya Tun Oo.

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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw: Okkalapa Pagoda, Rehabilitating illegal tenants

THE 14th day of the 2nd Pyithu Hluttaw 4th regular meeting continued yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker informed the Hluttaw on transferring duties between Pyithu Hluttaw committee members and the appointment of new members.

In the meeting, Dr. U Saw Naing from South Okkalapa constituency posed a question: "How will ministries concerned handle the building of high-rise buildings over 70 feet within 100 feet of the precinct of Okkalapa Pagoda in North Okkalapa?"

To this the Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko replied that, in accord with the accepted submittal of lowering landowner U Htay Aung's original approval of constructing five-storied buildings with basement+12.5 story buildings to basement+8.5 storied buildings was approved on 8 April 2015 at the Yangon Region Government meeting No. 18/2015, decision clause 7, the Yangon City Development Committee has viewed and found the proposals of high-rise building constructions are in accord with the set rules and therefore had been approved. The Okkalapa pagoda was erected in

1990 and has a height of 108 feet.

In the seventh State Sangha Maha Nayaka (First Sect) second ninth meeting on 10 June 2015, it was submitted to the Yangon Region Government to carefully analyse building projects with experts so as to avoid obstructing the view of the pagoda and threatening its infrastructure. On 3 August 2015 an investigation team was formed and in the Region Government meeting in 3 March 2016 they concluded the acceptable height of 96 feet, which was approved.

Similarly, the Okkalapa Pagoda board of trustees submitted to the Ministry of Religious Affairs to halt construction of the 8 storied Sakura Co. building 59 feet from the pagoda. The Ministry of Religious Affairs together with Yangon Region Government and the YCDC entered discussions and found the building to be in terms with the permitted building height and after submitting to the YCDC meeting on 29 August 2016 approved construction of the building at the proposed height of basement+8.5 storey/96 feet.

U Kyaw Min Hlaing of Uttarathiri constituency asked, "Is there consideration to abrogate

the classification of settlements and farmlands in Uttarathiri Township as forestry areas?"

To this Union Minister U Ohn Win from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation replied that in the (7/2016) meeting decision clause (11) conducted in Nay Pyi Taw on 16 June 2016 that 12 designated villages in Uttarathiri Township and 49 villages in Nay Pyi Taw Council's vicinity were taken off the list of over 50 villages and farmlands include in the 2014 survey on illegal tenants in Nay Pyi Taw Council's Area, and were approved as agricultural farmlands and horticultural zones with the granting system of long-term grants still in function.

He further explained that after careful inspection of the 6,838.483 acres in the Nay Pyi Taw Council forestry area, 807.736 acres of village lands, farmlands and public areas will be cleared from being listed as forestry areas. Also the remaining 1,570.367 acre in Uttarathiri Township will be permitted as agricultural lands for local residents and long-term grants for 50.94 acres of horticultural zones will be permitted as well.

Later, Union Minister U Ohn Win and Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein responded to questions posed by U Sai Oo Kham from Hsenwi constituency and U Win Thein Zaw from Salingyi constituency.

Daw Mi Kun Chan from Paung constituency induced the Union government to name the Thanlwin bridge connecting Mawlamyine and Chaungzon "Bogyoke Aung San Bridge" in honour of the late national leader, to which U Tin Ko Ko Oo from Bilin constituency voiced his approval and Hluttaw Speaker announced that Hluttaw representatives wishing to discuss on this matter could put down their names on the waiting list.

Nine Hluttaw representatives discussed a matter presented by U Khin Cho from Hlaingbwe constituency: "I would like to urge the Union Government to promote the bamboo plantation industry." U Saw Victor Clyde from Thandaunggyi constituency said that if we were to review cutting down of trees and bamboo from the times of designating wild and vacant lands as outside the protected area, we would find that private companies holding

long-term grants for teak and other hardwood, long term crops, and mixed forestry plantations and other such private companies deal in irresponsible deforestation and little to no reforestation efforts resulting in damage in the ecosystem and climate change.

"This is why it is necessary to review the companies that were granted long-term grants and halt the ones that bring harm to the natural ecosystem and brings down the profit of the Nation. If we were to properly work together with the people and government departments concerned and systematically plant bamboo and trees in deforested lands, in a short time we can revitalise the landscape back into a lush and thriving scene, especially the planting of species of bamboo in appropriate districts and regions will help preserve the soil and prevent soil erosion and landslides," U Saw Victor Clyde said.

To this appeal, eight Hluttaw representatives engaged in a discussion with Union Minister U Ohn Win, after which the Hluttaw Speaker with approval from the majority of the Pyithu Hluttaw announced approval of the appeal.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

2nd Amyotha Hluttaw 4th regular session holds its 14th meeting

At the 14th meeting of the 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw's 4th regular session held yesterday morning, U Win Maw Tun, Deputy Minister for Education, replied to a question raised by U Htay Oo of Yangon Region constituency 2, as to whether there has been any arrangements for making magistrates and judges in courts of justice, law officials and well-known lawyers teach in state high schools at least once a week as an additional subject, over deterioration of "rule of law" at present, with a view to keeping rule of law adjustable in future.

"Presently, character cultivation and civil ethics are additionally taught in history and other related subjects, though it was not officially included in the high school syllabus. But, arrangements are being made to be included in new syllabus," U Htay Oo said.

"Although civil ethics and character cultivation were not officially included in high school syllabus, it was being taught additionally, in history and other related subjects so as to share the knowledge on civil rights and privileges of citizens, responsibilities and duties to be performed by citizens, principles of democracy, good practices of democracy to be abided by the citizens and basic principles of human rights.

"Law officials are occasionally sharing knowledge on laws

and leaflets are being delivered to students. Educating knowledge on the law will be carried out. Township and district law officials will also conduct similar educating and sharing talks by linking with ministries and regional administrative bodies. So, the ministry of education has no arrangements, for making magistrates and judges in courts of justice, law officials and well-known lawyers teach "Basic Law" in state high schools at least once a week as an additional subject, in existing syllabus and in the new syllabus under revision."

Thura U Aung Ko, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture, replied to a question raised by U Aung Myo, Sagaing Region constituency 2, as to whether there have been any arrangements to deal with the matter through negotiation for having the Holy Black-Robed Buddha Image that U Aung Zeya, King Alaungphaya, used to bring whenever he set out for frontier areas, to be brought back to Shwebo.

"The Holy Black-Robed Buddha Image was aged to be 100 years or more, so it can be designated to be an antique. According to the law of protecting and conserving antiques, the Ministry is liable to keep the antique as an item of cultural heritage if the antique is considered to be easily harmed or decayed or damaged. Yet, the above-said Buddha Image is being used as an antique



Thura U Aung Ko, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture. PHOTO: MNA

of worship as a religious symbol, hence the Ministry has no right to protect and conserve it as an item of cultural heritage under section 8, sub-section b and subsection 1. The Reverend Mother, Dr Pannya Thiri, of Dhamme Thaka Nunner in Mayangon township, has been keeping it at the pagoda of Thabinnyu, letting people worship this Buddha Image and other historical Buddha Images at any time. On 20 May, 2016, the head of Yangon Region Religious Affairs Department negotiated with the Mother Superior Dr Pannya Thiri to bring back the Buddha Image to Shwebo. But the negotiation was unsuccessful, as Dr Pannya Thiri did not agree with it," Thura U Aung Ko said.

Afterward, U Win Maw Tun,



U Win Maw Tun, Deputy Minister for Education. PHOTO: MNA

the Deputy Minister for Education, replied to questions raised by U Han Win Thein of Taninthayi Region constituency 4, U Kyaw Ni Naing of Shan State constituency 11, U Zonehlehtan of Chin State constituency 4 and U Soe Thiha (a) Maung Tu of Mon State constituency 10.

Sai Tun Aung, a member of Bill Committee, read out the report "findings and assessments" of the Committee, concerning "Bill on the amendment of Legal Subsidiary Law" sent back by the Pyithu Hluttaw, with amendment attached.

The Speaker of Hluttaw took the decision of the Hluttaw concerning each paragraph of the amendment and submissions of the committee on the Bill for ap-

proval.

As regards the Bill on Statistics, U Htay Oo of Yangon Region constituency 2 said, "Policy makers and those who make planning wholly depend upon facts and figures included in the statistics. Thus, facts and figures are very important for the country. So, arrangements so as to draw statistics accurately were made after compiling a law on statistics. Facts and figures in the statistics are important so much so that it can lead to the ruin of a country.

In 1988, the Socialist Republic of Myanmar and the USSR implemented the projects based on fake statistics, facts and figures submitted from the bottom level, coming to the state of causing disorders and splits. Especially, it will be a great burden for data collectors and central committee members in superior levels. Provided that there is a person who intentionally changes or adds or fills the false figures, knowingly that they are incorrect, among responsible officials, false policies and projects will happen to be compiled, like the above examples. At that time, the country will be greatly harmed. For this, fines and punishments are urgently needed to be promulgated as an amendment in the law, as a lack of prescription that forbids the personnel so that they dare not include wrong data, knowingly." —*Myanmar News Agency*

State Counsellor receives Cambodian Deputy PM

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the delegation led by Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Hor Namhong at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, they exchanged views on promoting bilateral relations and cooperation,

cooperation in tourism and transportation sectors, cultural and political improvements.

Also present at the meeting were Union Ministers Dr Myo Thein Gyi and U Ohn Maung, Deputy Ministers U Min Thu and U Kyaw Myo and other responsible officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Hor Namhong. PHOTO: MNA

President U Htin Kyaw receives Cambodian Deputy PM Mr. Hor Namhong



President U Htin Kyaw shakes hands with Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Hor Namhong. PHOTO: MNA

THE president of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw received Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Hor Namhong and delegation at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace yesterday morning in

Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed promoting a bilateral relations and investment, cooperation in the education and tourism sectors and promoting mutual understanding between

the people of the two countries.

Also present at the call were Union Ministers Dr Myo Thein Gyi and U Ohn Maung, Deputy Ministers U Min Thu and U Kyaw Myo and responsible officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*

VP U Henry Van Thio oversees development tasks in Chin State

Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspected an airport construction site in Chin State yesterday.

The Vice President and entourage arrived at the construction site for Lailimpi's airport where an official from the Department of Civil Aviation explained on the choice of location for the airport and requirements in the construction process. Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung gave a briefing about future construction plans.

After inspecting around the site and technical equipment and bulldozing works, they toured on motor vehicles around Lailimpi and monitored the progress of development works in that township.

Then a cordial meeting was held with local residents in the Lailimpi's sports stadium where explanations were given on how the State was working on supporting development processes in Lailimpi.

Town Elder Dr. Sar Sar presented topics in need of development including betterment of roads in the city, improving the system of communications, constructing a Mindat-Lailimpi road, receiving stable electric power, upgrading schools and hospitals to which officials present explained the development works in progress in the respective sectors.

Deputy Minister Major-General Than Htut then handed over cash assistance of K50 lakhs from the Ministry of Border Affairs to Dr. Sar Sar.

The Vice President and entourage arrived at Yayzwa Town in the afternoon and visited construction works for expanding the 16 bedded hospital. He then consoled the patients and gave them cash assistance.

Afterwards the Vice President met with local residents and elders in meeting hall of the Township General Administration Department Office and explained the government's plans in helping regional development efforts. Town Elder U Raw He presented requirements in the city's development process to which each official of each respective sector gave replies and explanations. This was followed by the Vice President receiving souvenir gifts from residents of Yayzwa.

The Vice President and entourage then travelled to Matupi in the evening and inspected the sick ward, surgery rooms and ward expansions and then visited and gave words of encouragement to patients after which he gave them cash assistance.

Afterwards the Vice President met with local residents at the Bonetalaw Hall and explained the State's plans in helping regional development efforts. In the meeting a Town Elder presented requirements in Matupi's development plans to which the respective officials of each sector gave replies and explanations.

The Vice President then gave financial assistance of K100 lakhs from the Ministry of Border Af-

fairs to a member of Township Management Committee. Then, Union Minister U Win Khaing and Deputy Minister Major-General Than Htut presented 50 solar panels and 250 blankets given by the Ministry of Border Affairs to officials concerned.

The Vice President then inspected Kobwe and Sanbaung among other wards in Matupi that were devastated in a landslide during the Komen storm. A department official briefed the Vice President on the progress of current works and long-term objectives that need to be implemented with help from the State.

Then the Vice President and entourage observed the progress of Matupi township's development, improvement of water currents into the city, possible sites for city expansion, and sites of the landslide devastation from TheinByul golf course observation deck.

They then toured Matupi town bypass on motor vehicles.

The Vice President stressed to the citizens of each region visited in the day to effectively utilize the natural resources available to them, the importance of shifting from nomadic terrace cultivation to long-term crops.

He also explained how they are working on safeguarding the people from calamities and preventive measures to avoid similar events that had occurred. He also explained how in developing preventive measures from natural disasters like landslides consideration is put into supplying the region with adequate electricity and drinking water. In this endeavor, he suggested that a joint committee should be formed as soon as possible, comprising experts on geology, geography and irrigation and led by the Chief Minister of Chin State.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Vice President U Henry Van Thio presents cash assistance to a patient receiving treatment at Matupi Hospital. PHOTO: MNA

Pagoda trustees to build more guest houses for pilgrimage season

THE Alaungdaw Kathapa Pagoda's board of trustees want to increase the number of guest houses for pilgrims from across the country.

The pagoda hosts two festivals each year that draw thousands of people who make the pilgrimage from across Myanmar. Currently, Alaungdaw Kathapa pagoda has 45 guest houses with a capacity of about 3,265. At the height of the pilgrimage season, the current housing situation is insufficient, trustees said.

"Some people are sleeping on the road during the pagoda festival season. Some of the pilgrims are over 70 years old. So, it is not good for them to sleep on the road," said U Maung Maung Cho, the vice chairman of the pagoda trustees.

The Pagoda Board of Trustees plan to submit a proposal to the State government and Union ministers to get the land for this religious purpose.

"Then, the trustee will build the building on the land. We also



Pilgrims take elephant ride to Alaungdaw Kathapa Pagoda.

PHOTO: MYANMAR ALINN

have planned to supply the water and electricity to the building," U Maung Maung Cho said.

"Even though we have donors to construct the building, construction permit is difficult. Currently, we are building the health center for the pilgrims," he added.

The festival of the Alaung-

daw Kathapa Pagoda is held every year from 25 December to 25 April.

The Alaungdaw Kathapa Pagoda is most crowded with pilgrims on the full moon of the lunar month of Tabodwe and in the following month on the full moon of Tabaung.—*Myanmar Alinn*

70% of coral reefs along Myeik Archipelago damaged: FFI

ABOUT 70 per cent of the coral reefs along Myeik Archipelago, a part of Taninthayi Region, were damaged by overfishing, according to Fauna and Flora International (FFI).

Illegal and unreported fishing is threatening the natural coastal environment. Declines in the fish population due to overfishing can have an adverse effect on marine biodiversity, destroy the environment and

marine ecology, according to the FFI, an international conservation NGO.

Conservation efforts are being made in prioritised preservation areas to restore coral reefs, said an official from the FFI, which conserves threatened species and ecosystems worldwide, choosing sustainable solutions based on sound science and which take into account human needs.

Because of its natural attractions, marine tourism has gradually developed in the Myeik Archipelago that lies in the Andaman Sea off the coast of southern Myanmar. The archipelago has become a popular destination among international travellers, but the destruction of coral reefs may have a negative impact for the region's tourism development, FFI official said.—200

MFF to spend Ks600m on nurturing young players via football academy

THE Myanmar Football Federation is set to spend about Ks600 million on developing young footballers through the new Myanmar National Football Academy in Yangon, said its Chief Executive Officer U Phone Zaw Naing.

The target budget will cover costs of food, educational expenses, medical charges, training fees and related expenses.

Selection of talented players for the programme is planned to

start in the second week of March by the MFF, which will choose youths under 11 years of age from the largest 52 cities across the country.

Plans are underway by the MFF to collect population data of young people in townships in collaboration with the Sports and Physical Education Department, with the MFF inviting youths to send their application forms through online, U Phone Zaw Naing said.

The MFF on 17 February launched the football academy established on Waizayanda Road in Thingangyun Township near the MFF's offices.

The total costs of the project reached US\$2.784 million, including the contributions of \$500,000 from the FIFA and \$284,794 from the MFF under the FAP grant.

U Zaw Zaw donated \$1.5 million for the establishment of two artificial turf pitches.—200

US\$90 million in losses due to attacks on border trade zone

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"The Tatmadaw has opened the door to peace for inclusiveness of the peace process," said General Mya Tun Oo, urging ethnic armed groups to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

Following the Mongko issue, he clarified the Rakhine issue, saying that the military launched area clearance operation in northern Rakhine only after nine police of-

ficers were killed in attacks on border outposts on 9 October. He also disclosed that violent attackers are still holding arms that they have taken from the police outposts and that security forces are discovering improvised explosive devices and home-made guns from attackers in northern Rakhine.

"We need time to bring the rule of law to northern Rakhine. The threat from the drug traffick-

ing is getting bigger," said General Mya Tun Oo, referring to the increase in the volume of drug seizures worth about Ks11.1 billion in 224 cases from 2011 to 2015 to about Ks54.56 billion in 61 cases in 2016.

Regarding the alleged human abuses, he pledged the Tatmadaw would take serious action if evidence of abuse are found.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Judicial ethics are to be conformity with international norms: Union Chief Justice

THE 3rd meeting on drawing and implementing judicial ethics took place at the Horizon Lake View Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with an opening address by Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo.

The union chief justice said judicial ethics were drawn up with the aim of materialising a fair and unbiased judicial system and standardising that system as moral ethics for the judges and judicial officials. He continued that judicial ethics are to be in conformity with international norms and standards and the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct, urging them to strictly abide by the law. Those en-

gaged in the judicial sector need to provide necessary support in order to undertake important points that should include ethics and to release comprehensive judicial conduct.

The greetings by Danish Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Peter Lysholt Hansen and UNDP's Country Director Mr. Peter Batchelor followed. The two-day event was jointly organised by the Supreme Court of the Union, the Embassy of Denmark in Myanmar, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).—*Myanmar News Agency*

9th grade final exams wrap up in Maungtaw

EXAMINATION centers in schools all over Maungtaw Township conducted the last day of final exams for 9th grade yesterday, with 338 students taking the exams in Maungtaw B.E.H.S(2).

"Today is the last day of the 9th grade exams. We were able to raise exam scores due to cooperation between the teachers and volunteers and this has helped produce exceptional students from our school," said Headmistress Daw Hla May Thein of Mangtaw B.E.H.S (2).

"My name is Mg Min Myat Thein from 9th grade class (A). I studied persistently since the beginning of the year so there was no difficulty answering the exam. I want to thank my teachers and everyone who helped

me pass the examination and I hope for the success of everybody taking 5th and 9th grade examinations all over the country."

"My name is Ma Phoo Pyae Sone. I was able to answer all 6 days of the examination well. If you started studying since the beginning of the year then you will not face much difficulty. Transportation is back to normal again after all the recent unrest. I pray that everyone is able to answer the exams with no difficulty."

Similarly teachers in Maungtaw Township are working hard to ensure that students are able to take the University Entrance Exams coming March 8 with no difficulties.—*Aye Mya (Mandalay), Aye Min Thu*

Crime NEWS

Fire destroys monastery and house in Maungtaw

TWO fires destroyed a house and a monastery in Pharwutchaung village in Maungtaw on Monday.

According to the investigation, a fire broke out in a house owned by Anta Hsaung and spread to a neighbouring house and a shop at about 3pm at Pharwutchaung

in Maungtaw.

Another fire broke out at Hteetayar monastery near the six-mile inspection gate at 5pm the same day.

The fire started from a candle on the shelf of a Buddha image and destroyed a zinc-roofed building.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Fire fighters pull out the fire at monastery in Maungtaw. PHOTO: MNA

LOCAL Business

Domestic gold price soars to record high of Ks903,500

WITH the global gold price turning upward, the domestic gold price reached a record high of Ks903,500 per tical on 27th February for the second time in four months, according to the local gold market.

The domestic gold price hit a record high of Ks903,500 per tical on 4th Oct 2016. With the global gold price rising as of 23rd February, the gold price rose to a high of above Ks895,000 per tical in the domestic market and it reached over Ks900,000 on the evening of 24th February. The domestic gold price remained on

the rise, with the price of Ks902,400 on 25th February and Ks902,00 on 26th February. The gold price continued to soar to Ks903,500 on the afternoon of 27th February, it is learnt from local gold and jewellery merchants.

The global gold price rose against the decline in the US dollar index on 24th February, with a price of US\$1,257 per ounce at closing time on 24th February. The gold price on 20th February was US\$1,235 per ounce in the global market, whereas it jumped to US\$1,258 on 27th February, it is learnt.—*Ko Htet*



An employee prepares gold jewellery in the counter at a shop in Yangon on 15 February 2017. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

Efforts for permaculture to be widely practiced

EFFORTS will be exerted so that the permaculture is widely practiced across the country in order to reduce the cultivation cost with the use of biomass and resource recycling, said Dr Thet Khaing, a project manager of Farmer to Farmer Project.

The awareness campaigns and courses of permaculture, the development of agricultural ecosystems

intended to be sustainable and self-sufficient. will be conducted in Yangon, Ayeyawady and Mandalay regions for farmers and those engaged in agriculture and livestock so that they can adopt this system. The plan will further proceed to the rural areas, it is learnt. This system was developed in Australia based on agroecology, which utilise biowaste and household waste recycling to treat farmland.

clinging to treat farmland.

The system includes techniques such as intercropping trees, mixed farming, planting perennials, water harvesting, and resource recycling. Using natural resources, the practice of permaculture can reduce the cost of fertilizer and pesticide. Permaculture is successfully practiced in Australia, Kenya, Serbia and Ethiopia.—*200*

Earthen utensils industry facing extinction in Rakhine

PRODUCTION of pottery became obsolete in Rakhine State because people preferred using industrial products, according to Rakhine State craftsmen.

"Today, people are using the industry products, so pottery handicrafts businesses are almost extinct. Hundreds of pottery handicrafts businesses closed.

Currently, only five pottery business are producing based on the water pots," said U Kyaw Shwe from Kyaukpyu. About 10 years ago, there were about 55 pottery business in Yanbye island. The finished pottery products were exported to Yanbye island, Minbya and Myebon townships.

"People from towns

and rural regions are not using the handicraft products, they only use the plastics, steels and ceramics. We are selling for a few people who are using the pots for offering on the altar and drinking water," said Daw Khin Thein Shwe, a seller of the handicrafted pottery from Kyaukpyu.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Shrimp larvae to be bred in Ayeyawady and Rakhine

FIVE million shrimp larvae will be experimentally bred in Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State, according to a local shrimp farming association.

If the experimental farming brings forth a fruitful result, it will help reduce the trade deficit and fulfil the requirements of local consumption, said an official from the association.

Marine Genetics will farm five million larvae of shrimps under the name of Best Burma PL. In the shrimp farming process, the biosecurity, management and aeration techniques will be shared with local businessmen. The black tiger shrimp, a native species, is farmed extensively

in the country but has been known to be prone to disease. The new white shrimp larvae has been imported from Thailand at a high price. Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) white shrimp are being experimentally bred in order to be free from pathogenic organisms in the local shrimp farming sector, it is learnt.—*200*

FMI share price jumps to Ks19,000

THE share price of First Myanmar Investment on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) surged to Ks19,000 at closing time on 28th February, according to stock trading data of YSX.

The high share price resulted from FMI's investment seminar held on 4th February by U Thein Wai, FMI's executive chairman, in order to discuss FMI's current businesses and its future direction. The share price rose to Ks15,000 on 15th February, then FMI's share price climbed up to

Ks17,000 on 27th February from 16,000 on 24th and 15,500 on 23rd Feb.

FMI share price hit its highest mark of Ks41,000 on 29th and 30th March 2016, whereas the price hit a low of Ks15,500 per share on 25th Nov 2016. FMI share price turned to a downward trend in December, plunging down to Ks13,500 per share on 30th Dec 2016, it is learnt.

Currently, there are four companies trading shares on YSX; FMI, Myanmar Thailawa SEZ Hold-

ings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB) and First Private Bank (FPB).

On 28th Feb, a total of 24,112 shares worth Ks 237,308,600 were traded on YSX, with the stock trading volumes of 3,125 from FMI, 17,290 from MTSH, 287 from MCB and 3,410 from FPB. The share prices at the closing time were Ks19,000 for FMI, 4,300 for MTSH, Ks8,800 for MCB and Ks30,500 for FPB respectively, according to the official figures of YSX.—*Mon Mon*

For Rent / For Joint Venture

Cordially invite entrepreneurs (foreign / local) who are interested in industry, warehouse, industrial land, showroom and government grant-land at the following locations:

1. Coffee mix manufacturing industry: building and warehouse (Hlaing Tharyar Industry Zone)
2. Warehouse at industrial land (Shwe Pyi Thar Industrial Zone)
3. Thirimon (Bayintnaung) Plaza (3 storey & rooms space) Mayangone Township
4. (1) Area government grant-land, Banyardala Street, Tamwe Township (good location)
5. (0.5) Area government grant-land, Banyardala Street, Tamwe Township (good location)
6. (8) Area government grant-land, Mingalardon Township near Alpine and Pepsi industries (Pyi Road)

Contact Phone: 01-291175, 01-290054, 01-202860
09 799302653, 09 795448987
09 36706534

Cambodia's Hun Sen says he and Trump object to 'anarchic' media

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia's authoritarian Prime Minister Hun Sen has expressed sympathy for US President Donald Trump's antipathy towards the media, saying both he and Trump saw the media as stirring anarchy.

Hun Sen, whose rule of more than 30 years has been marked by accusations of human rights abuses and corruption, said Cambodian journalists who reported on human rights could undermine national security.

"Donald Trump understands that they are an anarchic group," Hun Sen said of journalists at an event on Monday, in comments later posted on his Facebook page. Hun Sen had said before the US election in November that he hoped Trump would win as he would be good for world

peace.

Political tension has been increasing in Cambodia in recent months as opponents of Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge guerrilla, accuse him of unfair manoeuvring to maintain his grip on power in local elections in June and a general election next year.

Hun Sen has warned that an opposition election win could lead to the return of civil war. He has long dismissed Western concerns about human rights, democracy and corruption. Last week, the US embassy said it was deeply concerned about legislation introduced by Hun Sen's ruling party to make it easier for the government to dissolve political parties, saying it restricted freedom of expression and legitimate political activity.—Reuters



Japanese Emperor Akihito (L) and Empress Michiko (C) receive bouquets as arrive at the hotel in Hanoi, Vietnam on 28 February 2017. Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko during their six-day visit, are expected to meet with surviving widows and families members of Japanese WWII war veterans. PHOTO: RETUERS

China says hopes US defence spending benefits global stability

BEIJING — China's Foreign Ministry on Tuesday said it hoped US defence spending would be beneficial to maintaining global peace and stability, after the White House proposed a 10 per cent increase in military spending.

The proposed rise in the Pentagon budget to \$603 billion comes as the United States has wound down major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and remains the world's strongest military power.

An official familiar with the proposal said US President Donald Trump's request for the Pentagon included more money for shipbuilding, military aircraft and establishing "a more robust presence in key international waterways and choke points"

such as the Strait of Hormuz and the disputed South China Sea.

That could put Washington at odds with China, which claims most of the South China Sea and has alarmed its neighbours by building artificial islands and airports there, among other facilities.

"We hope that relevant US policies and measures can benefit the maintenance of global peace and stability," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a daily news briefing, when asked about the proposed US increase.

It was hypothetical to link the rise to the situation in the South China Sea, Geng added.

"But on the South China Sea issue we have

repeatedly said that the situation is at present developing well, in a positive direction, and is stable," he said.

China hopes countries outside the region — usually a reference to the United States — can respect the efforts of China and Southeast Asian nations to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea, Geng said.

The United States already has the world's most powerful fighting force and spends far more on defence than any other country. China unveils its defence budget for the year at this weekend's opening of the annual meeting of its largely rubber stamp parliament.

China last year set military spending at 954.35

billion yuan (\$138.93 billion), likely understating its investment, according to diplomats.

The 7.6 per cent increase was China's lowest in six years, however, and its first single-digit rise since 2010, following a nearly unbroken two-decade run of double-digit jumps.

The influential state-run Global Times tabloid on Tuesday called for a rise of at least 10 per cent this year, to deal with the uncertainty brought by Trump.

"The US is a military superpower," it said in an editorial. "But it still wants to expand its military, which foreshadows the unavoidability of further strategic turbulence internationally."—Reuters

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Philippine president says some police to rejoin drugs war

MANILA — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said on Tuesday he would recall some police to fight his controversial war on drugs, nearly a month after suspending the entire force from all operations in the bloody campaign.

In an about-face on his decision to remove the 160,000-member Philippine National Police (PNP) from his signature campaign, Duterte said the country was beset by security and law enforcement

challenges and he needed more manpower to sustain the crackdown on drugs.

Duterte has been scathing in his criticism of police corruption after it was discovered that rogue drugs squad officers had kidnapped and killed a South Korean businessman at PNP headquarters.

After banishing police from the anti-drug campaign, Duterte handed the lead role to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and has called for

the military to provide firepower for its operations.

On Tuesday, he said those police recalled to operations would have to be supervised by PDEA agents.

"So, I need more men. I have to call back the police again to do the job most of the time on drugs, not everyone," he told reporters. "And it's meant to be PDEA-supervised, whether done by the military or the police. There should always be a PDEA

... who will be supervising everything." Since the 30 January police suspension, the drug trade has come back out of the shadows, more than half a dozen drug users and dealers in some of Manila's toughest areas told Reuters. PNP chief Ronald dela Rosa said on Monday drugs had returned to the streets in the past few weeks and police were ready to rejoin the campaign because "the sooner we return, the better".—Reuters

Indonesian, French FM's meet to discuss enhancing bilateral cooperation

JAKARTA — Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister Retno Marsudi met with her French counterpart Jean-Marc Ayrault on Tuesday, discussing ways to further enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

During the meeting, two Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) documents were signed by related officials of the two countries on education and diplomatic training and space activities sectors.

Besides discussing development of regional and international issues in which Indonesia and France have interests in, Retno and Ayrault also identified further cooperation in economy, trade and investment that can be expanded by the two countries.

Regarding the ongoing negotiation process of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between Indonesia and European Union (EU), the two ministers agreed on the need to speed up the process so as to reach agreement that paves the way for the implementation.

Possibilities to ex-

pand cooperation in counter terrorism, maritime, palm oil, tourism and efforts to build smart cities were also featured in the discussions of the two ministers.

Ayrault's visit to Indonesia was also intended to prepare for the official visit of French President Francois Hollande to Indonesia scheduled next month.

Prior to his meeting with Retno, Ayrault was officially received by Indonesian President Joko Widodo in the presidential palace.

France is a significant European trade partner to Indonesia with two-way trade recorded at 2.34 billion US dollars last year.

Indonesia exports electrical equipment, rubber, footwear, garments, fishery products, coffee, tea, woods and cacao to France.

French investment in Indonesia was recorded at 730.08 million US dollars from 2010 to 2015, comprised of various projects in telecommunications, warehouse, transportation, water, electrical, food processing, chemical and pharmacy sectors.—

Xinhua

Malaysia to charge women with airport murder of North Korean

KUALA LUMPUR — Two women — an Indonesian and a Vietnamese — will be charged on Wednesday with murder over the killing in Malaysia of the estranged half-brother of North Korea's leader, Malaysia's attorney general said.

Police have said the women smeared VX nerve agent, a chemical on a UN list of weapons of mass destruction, on Kim Jong Nam's face in an assault recorded on security cameras in the Malaysian capital's airport on 13 February.

US and South Korean officials believe Kim was the victim of an assassination orchestrated by North Korea. He had been living in exile, under Beijing's protection, in the Chinese



Indonesian Siti Aisyah (L) and Doan Thi Huong of Vietnam (R). PHOTO: REUTERS

territory of Macau, and had criticised the regime of his family and his half-brother Kim Jong Un.

Malaysian police arrested Doan Thi Huong, the Vietnamese woman, and Indonesian Siti Aishah in the days after the attack.

Police are also holding



one North Korean man and have identified seven other North Koreans wanted in connection with a case that reads like the plot to a spy movie.

Both women will be formally charged on Wednesday under section 302 of the penal code, which

carries the death penalty.

"I can confirm that," Attorney General Mohamed Apandi Ali told Reuters in a text message.

He said the North Korean in custody would not be charged yet. His remand period ends on Friday.

The security camera footage, which has been released in the media, showed two women assaulting Kim Jong Nam in the departure hall of Kuala Lumpur International Airport, and the victim stumbling into a clinic. He died within 20 minutes of the assault. Both women have told diplomats from their countries that they had been paid to take part in what they believed was a prank for a reality television show.—Reuters

Bangladesh police break up protest over gas price increase

DHAKA — Bangladesh police used tear gas and water cannon to break up hundreds who took to the streets of the capital on Tuesday in protest against an increase in the price of gas.

The Energy Regulatory Commission last week announced an increase in gas prices by an average 22.7 per cent in two phases start-

ing next month.

The second increase in less than two years is being introduced despite objections from political parties and industry groups, including the \$28 billion garments export sector.

Many Bangladeshis use gas for cooking and for running vehicles. It is also used to generate electricity.

Police said they broke up the protest after the activists tried to block roads in the centre of Dhaka during a half-day strike called by leftist political parties.

"We had to use water cannon and fire tear gas as the protesters paid no heed to our requests to move away," police official Sheikh Abul Bashar told

Reuters.

Demonstrators said police detained about a dozen protest leaders and about 20 people were injured.

"The government has illogically burdened people with the increase," a student union leader, Lucky Akter, told reporters. "We demand the government scrap the decision."—Reuters

Senior North Korea envoy visits Beijing after China coal ban

BEIJING — A senior North Korean diplomat arrived in Beijing on Tuesday for talks, China said, the first such high-level visit since June, after the Asian giant halted coal imports from its impoverished neighbour this month under UN sanctions.

North Korea's main diplomatic ally said it would ban coal imports about a week after the isolated country tested an intermediate-range ballistic missile, for the first time since US President Donald Trump took office.

The North's Vice Foreign Minister Ri Kil Song

arrived in Beijing at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and will hold talks with his host, the Chinese foreign ministry said.

"This visit of the North Korean vice foreign minister is normal diplomatic contact and exchange between China and North

Korea," foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular briefing.

Ri will meet other Chinese diplomats, including vice foreign minister Liu Zhenmin, on the visit set to run until 4 March, Geng added.

North Korea's state-run KCNA news agency

confirmed the visit.

South Korea's foreign ministry said it was aware Ri would be travelling to China but did not elaborate, and declined to comment when asked if the visit might be related to the killing of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's estranged half-brother.

Before he was killed at the Kuala Lumpur airport on 13 February, Kim Jong Nam lived quietly in the Asian gambling hub of Macau, a Chinese territory, avoiding controversy and seemingly relaxed about personal safety, sources close to him have said.—Reuters

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV INTREPID VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV INTREPID VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.3.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES PTE LTD

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CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV BMC CALYPSO VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BMC CALYPSO VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.3.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T-1 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.

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Dated 1 March 2017

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Opinion

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Friends are chosen, but neighbours come with the house!

Khin Maung Oo

EACH and every one of us have inborn rights to do, to have and to choose what we want to, in many cases. We name these rights "human rights," today. But claiming "human rights, human rights," many happen to exercise the rights excessively so much so that their deeds are likely to become public nuisances. Ethics control us in exercising our human rights. Dictionaries define "ethics" as moral principles that control or influence a person's behavior. Civil ethics, medical ethics, media ethic, professional ethics, business ethics, code of conduct are being heard in our environment almost every day. The word, "civil ethics" is simple but it is meaningful, and it is very useful if we employ it rightfully.

In schools, work places, work-sites and social communities and societies we have to

work with others and have to associate with people. People vary in nature and they differ from each other in attitude, character, vision, skill and qualification. There is a saying that birds of a feather flock together. So, we select friends of the same type, hobby or interest to associate. Among them, some become alter egos for us. Although we do not find it difficult to associate with those with different likes, they will not become close enough for us to want to confide our secrets with them. The most important thing is for us to be able to co-exist peacefully, without any problems. Here, I dare say only ethics or code of conduct can bring about peaceful co-existence. No matter how much we love each other, our friendship will be destroyed if one party breaches the code of conduct or ethics.

People living in the im-

mediate vicinity are our neighbors. They may include salary earners, workers, teachers, doctors, drunkards and drug-addicts. Some may be kind, some cruel, some proud, some with good will, some honest and some cunning. As time goes past, we will come to know their different characters, habits and nature. Being neighbours living in the same street or ward, we cannot avoid them and or turn our face to the other side. They will become our neighbors forever.

In other word, we can choose friends, but neighbours cannot be chosen. However, if we move to another place, we must meet new neighbours in the new environment—maybe the kind of neighbours we want or just the opposite. We have no alternative but to decide to live with them peacefully. Here, having a code of conduct will

help us in our effort to live in peace and harmony.

In the same way our neighbouring countries are very important for us. We need to have good neighbourly relations with all our neighbours to make sure that conflicts do not appear unnecessarily. We need to be reminded all times that ethics and code of conduct are very important for the maintenance of good relations with our neighbours. Both sides must abide by the code of conduct. Failing that, unnecessary things can spark a conflict or some ugly confrontation between the two neighbouring communities. Ethics should not be a rarity for all. It can bring about peace as well as friendship. To sum it up, we must build up mutual trust between neighbours by exercising respective ethics so that we have a peaceful and pleasant co-existence.

Punitive Action must be taken against Fake drug manufacturers and sellers

Tommy Pauk

WE learnt the miserable news about the findings of fake drugs in the local markets in Myanmar from the dailies in the recent months. The news says, "Various imitation medicines and fake BPI medicines were seized." It was a very cruel and inhumane act of making fake BPI (Burma Pharmaceutical Industry) drugs and other brand of potent drugs. BPI is famous for its drugs and highly potent medication in Myanmar. Local people nationwide rely on BPI medicines and the physicians recommend BPI drugs to all the patients to use for treating illness. We were deeply concerned about the presence of fake drugs in Myanmar market when we learnt about that news. We simply understand that all drugs sold at the pharmacies must be guaranteed for their potency and high-quality.

In any society, the medicines are regarded as most essential things for maintaining human life, curing diseases and relieving pain etc. Basically, medicines are used to cure, halt or prevent or prevent disease; ease symptoms; or help in the di-

agnosis of certain illness. Everybody might need some kind of medication to be used for any ailment or injury in their life time. It is extremely important for the sick persons to find or buy or use the genuine drugs for chronic disease or some illness or infirmity. Drug manufacturers as well as the sellers must be honest and reliable for their drugs on sale.

The perpetrators are, by no means, to be given harsh punishment. They are much more callous than narcotic drug pusher because they sell these fake drugs to those who are under the treatment with some BPI medication and other brand of drugs for their chronic disease or some illness or infirmity. People trust BPI (Burma Pharmaceutical Industry) drugs and normally when they are sick they buy and take BPI medicine from pharmacy. Majority people keep BPI drugs and other imported drugs at home as home remedies. Innocent people cannot examine whether the drugs at the markets or drug stores are genuine or not. The unscrupulous people manufacture fake BPI drugs illegally and distribute to the markets as BPI drugs are the most demanding. At first people were

not aware of the fake BPI drugs mixed together with the real BPI drugs at the market. Later people became aware of the fake BPI drugs at the market only after they had found the impotencies of the fake drugs, and they realized that the BPI drugs they had bought were fake ones. Consequently, the side effects and contents of the fake drugs give adverse effects to the users very badly.

Actually, people know that BPI drugs are potent and their potencies are higher than any imported drugs from neighboring countries. We trust BPI products and take or use them in accordance with the doctor's instruction when we suffer from some illness. BPI is a state-owned industry and its medical products such as tablets, capsules, liquids, lotions, solids, control drugs, injection, vaccine and infusion are manufactured in conformity with WHO standard. BPI drugs have been produced by modern pharmacology for many decades. Burma Pharmaceutical Industry (BPI) was changed to Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory (MPF) after 1988. It is under the administration of Ministry of Industry (1). Significantly, these drugs have

contributed to Myanmar public health and they are of high quality and potency. Medical Doctors and healthcare professionals highly recommend BPI or MPF drugs as they are potent and the patients also prefer to take BPI drugs for use as pain relief or for use as medicinal treatment. Therefore, the usual medications or home remedies or recommended medicines are the products of BPI or MPF in Myanmar indeed.

The unscrupulous persons make a fortune out of fake drugs — BPI brand and other demanding imported drugs. The licensed drug dealers of various places in Myanmar ought to examine the legally imported medicines whether they are genuine or not. Even if they are found to be genuine, the dealers also need to check the manufactured dates and expiry dates of the medicines on sale. We, in Myanmar, have National drug law which was promulgated in 1992. The law enforcement has to not only investigate the illegal fake drug dealing and fake drug making but also to eliminate them in Myanmar so that the consumers will escape from the danger or harm of fake drugs. The authority concerned or FDA (Food and

Drug Administration) must inspect the drugs sold at the drug stores in Myanmar on periodical basis. Whoever violates the National Drug Law must be given penalty in accordance with the law. Actually, fake drugs are poisons for the innocent users and their infirmity get even worse. Since the fake drugs exacerbate the illness of the concerned people, they become aware of the fact that they have unknowingly bought the fake drugs from the drugstore. FDA and law enforcement forces must combat the fake drug makers and sellers across the country and especially the border areas in which illegal or fake drugs are secretly manufactured. Moreover, the illegal drugs and fake drugs distribution network must be exterminated by the law enforcement forces so that the public health can be safe and secure. In fact, a making- fake- drug is a criminal act which either kills or harms to the innocent people. In conclusion, the makers and sellers of fake BPI drugs or any other fake drugs shall be severely penalized. We, people in Myanmar hope to enjoy good health with genuine and potent drugs forever!

Kachin state gov't to set up fund for rural development

KACHIN state government will establish a fund with the use of income from selling illegal timber through the tender system to carry out rural development in the state.

Authorities from the state government and forest department are monitoring illegal timber extraction around the clock and have seized the illegal timber in real time.

"Lwan Taung company won the tender this week. Last year, a school from rural area was destroyed by the flood. We received funds of Ks500 million from the selling of seized illegal timbers, but we have to pay Ks 300 million to the forest department. We will provide assistance to needy areas with the remaining funds," said U H La Aung, Kachin State government minister for resources and environmental conservation.

"We will build schools, hospitals and clinics to develop the state rural area. If we have extra funds, we will build camps

for internally displaced persons and also roads and bridges.

"Illegal timber extraction occurred because the state does not produce the finished products. So we will take action against the owners of illegal timber extraction, replant trees in areas where timber is rare and provide awareness training concerning illegal timber extraction," said the minister.

Kachin state forest department arrested 13 illegal timber extractors and seized nine trailers, one vehicle and one saw mill near Palanam village, Myeikgyina town on 18 February.

Illegal timber is seized in Kachin state every year. Most of the seized timbers are teak and hardwood.

According to statistics, illegal teak weighing 603.4232 tonnes, hardwood weighing 53.7605 tonnes and other kinds of illegal timber weighing 8634.3992 tonnes were seized between April, 2016 and January 2017.— *Myitmakha News Agency*

State Counsellor receives JICA President Mr. Shinichi Kitaoka



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Mr. Shinichi Kitaoka, President of JICA. PHOTO: MNA

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Counsellor and the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received a delegation led by Mr. Shinichi Kitaoka, Pres-

ident of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they

discussed matters relating to the achievements of the mutual cooperation between Myanmar and JICA in diverse areas and potential cooperation for the future.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Italian ambassador



CHAIRMAN of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann received HE Mr. Pier Giorgio Aliberti Ambassador of Italy to Myanmar at the meeting hall of Hluttaw building yesterday. At their meeting, they discussed bilateral relation and legal affairs.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Electric Power and Energy Minister receives Charge' d' Affairs of the State of Kuwait



H.E U PE ZIN TUN, Union Minister for Electric Power and Energy being welcomed by MR AHMAD A.M.S.H AL MUZAINI, Charge' d' Affairs of the Embassy of the State of Kuwait on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of National Day and 26th Anniversary of Liberation Day which held on 27th February 2017 at Sedona Hotel, Yangon.— *GNLM*

State Counsellor meets with Wheel Chair Train for Peace

>> FROM PAGE 1

There will be no progress unless there is courage to overcome these difficulties. Peace must be achieved for the eternal development of the country. Therefore, weak spirit that can harm the peace must be cured, practically, not in words only. It must be proved by working. Hence, they must be encouraged that they can overcome all the difficulties and weakness that they have. Only with concerted efforts of all in unison can peace can be achieved. The destiny of a country must be created by all those living in the country. It cannot be achieved with the effort of an individual or a group. The government alone cannot bring about it."

A campaign by Wheel Chair Train for Peace to bring awareness about the civil war, peace dialogues, and assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) began in Myitkyina township in Kachin State on 15 February. From there, the convoy stopped in Mogaung, Mohnyin, Katha, Tagaung, Thabeikkyin, Letpanhla, Mandalay, Meikhtila, Tatkon and Pyinmana and four other towns. They arrived in Nay Pyi Taw on 27 February. Pupils from Khawechan School for the Blind made up most of the group.

The State Counsellor said the path to peace, much like the decision of the Wheel Chair Train for Peace to undertake a nationwide campaign, takes motivation and desire.

"According to the Reverend Sayadaw, Viriya has four stages. The decision to work is the first stage. Implementation as per de-

cision is second stage. Continual implementation even when faced with difficulty is third stage. Diligence (Viriya) is the last and highest stage at which one can work to achieve success without being depressed, though with faced failure. We all need to bear this kind of Viriya. All citizens must work hard to widen the road with the spirit of getting to the destination. We must widen the street so that all who are worth participating can join. Yet, how much the road is wide or smooth, we will get on the road only if we all have the desires to walk on this road. The most important thing is desire. Therefore, I urge you to try hard to have desire for walking, and help us with your capabilities, as for the group that arrived here. We will accept your help further."

U Thein Lwin, leader of Wheel Chair Train for Peace, explained the origin of the group and experiences of peace process with Daw Mya Thida Lwin, Vice-Principal of Yangon Khawechan School for the Blind, clarifying the activities of the group with a slide presentation.

The State Counsellor said the group had improved the country's vision for peace.

"Participants in the peace process need to have the courage to disclose justice and injustice, so that they can build trust. We will carry out to publish periodicals recording news and activities for the peace in consultation with authorities concerned, to make people know transparently. People in peaceful lands as well need to participate in the peace

process, assuming that peace is concerned with all the people. We thank Wheel Chair Train for Peace, who comes here to help us to improve our vision of peace and to widen our vision of peace. I wish you to help us further."

The Chairman of the Board for the Yangon Khawechan School for the Blind agreed it would take all the citizens of Myanmar to achieve peace.

"The entire public is now showing its sincere good will for peace. I'd like to request all the armed forces to negotiate or to give a little soft heart of what we can give for the country. In the 68-year duration of the civil war, all I can say is that either we are all right or we all are wrong. If there is true desire for peace, nothing is impossible," said Rev.Thein Lwin, Chairman of Board of Yangon Khawechan School for the Blind.

The campaign includes a selection of disabled athletes who have helped collect more than 40,000 signatures calling for peace.

Following this, the State Counsellor and responsible officials of Wheel Chair Train for Peace exchanged gifts. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi individually greeted all those present at the meeting, posing for many photos.

Present at today's ceremony were Dr Myint Htwe, Union Minister for Health and Sports, Dr Win Myat Aye, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, U Khin Maung Tin, Deputy Minister for Ministry of State Counsellor's Office and responsible officials.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Trump seeks 'historic' US military spending boost, domestic cuts



US President Donald Trump. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is seeking what he called a “historic” increase in defence spending, but ran into immediate opposition from Republicans in Congress who must approve his plan and said it was not enough to meet the military’s needs.

The proposed rise in the Pentagon budget to \$603 billion (485 billion pounds) comes as the United States has wound down major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and remains the world’s strongest military power.

The plan came under fire from Democratic lawmakers, who said cuts being proposed to pay for the additional military spending would cripple important domestic programmes such as environmental protection and education.

A White House budget official, who outlined the plan on a conference call with reporters, said the administration would propose “increasing defence by \$54 billion or 10 per cent.” That represents the magnitude of the increase over budget caps Congress put in place in 2011.

But Mick Mulvaney, the White House budget director, said the plan would bring the Pentagon’s budget to \$603 billion in total, just 3 per cent more than the \$584 billion the agency spent in the most recent fiscal year, which ended on 30 September, 2016.

The rise would be slightly higher than the country’s current 2.5 per cent rate of inflation.

“President Trump intends to submit a defense budget that is a mere 3 per cent above President (Barack) Obama’s defence budget, which has left our military underfunded, undersized, and unready to confront threats to our national security,” John McCain, the Republican chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said in a statement.

The defence boost would be balanced by slashing the

same amount from non-defence spending, including a large reduction in foreign aid, the White House budget official said.

Trump does not have the final say on federal spending. His plan for the military is part of a budget proposal to Congress, which, although it is controlled by his fellow Republicans, will not necessarily follow his plans. Budget negotiations with lawmakers can take months.

McCain told reporters he would not vote for a budget with the slight military increase and thought it would face opposition in the Senate.

Trump told state governors at the White House his budget plan included a “historic increase in defence spending to rebuild the depleted military of the United States of America.”

He said his proposal was a “landmark event” and would send a message of “American strength, security and resolve” to other countries.

Officials familiar with Trump’s budget blueprint said the plan would call for cuts to agencies including the State Department and the Environmental Protection Agency.

One official familiar with discussions over State’s budget said the agency could see spending cut by as much as 30 per cent, which would force a major department restructuring and elimination of programmes.

The United States spends about \$50 billion annually on the State Department and foreign assistance.

More than 120 retired US generals and admirals urged Congress on Monday to fully fund US diplomacy and foreign aid, saying such programmes “are critical to keeping America safe.”

Trump has vowed to spare middle-class social programs such as Social Security and Medicare from any cuts.

Nancy Pelosi, the top Democrat in the House of Represent-

atives, said Trump’s plan to slash funding for federal agencies to free up money for the Pentagon showed he was not putting American working families first.

“A \$54 billion cut will do far-reaching and long-lasting damage to our ability to meet the needs of the American people and win the jobs of the future,” Pelosi said. “The president is surrendering America’s leadership in innovation, education, science and clean energy.”

An official familiar with the proposal said Trump’s request for the Pentagon included more money for shipbuilding, military aircraft and establishing “a more robust presence in key international waterways and choke points” such as the Strait of Hormuz and South China Sea.

That could put Washington at odds with Iran and China. The United States already has the world’s most powerful fighting force and it spends far more than any other country on defence.

About one-sixth of the federal budget goes to military spending.

Trump has said previously he would expand the Army to 540,000 active-duty troops from its current 480,000, increase the Marine Corps to 36 battalions from 23 – or as many as 10,000 more Marines – boost the Navy to 350 ships and submarines from 276, and raise the number of Air Force tactical aircraft to 1,200 from 1,100.

He has not said where he would place the extra hardware and forces or made clear what they would be used for. The United States has been shutting some of its military bases in recent years.

Trump has also said he would bolster the development of missile defences and cyber capabilities. Last week, he told Reuters the United States had “fallen behind on nuclear weapon capacity.” He pledged to ensure that “we’re going to be at the top of the pack.”—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Putin says draft UN resolution to sanction Syria ‘inappropriate’

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday a draft UN Security Council resolution put forward by Western powers to sanction Syria’s government over the alleged use of chemical weapons was inappropriate.

The Security Council will vote later on Tuesday on a resolution drafted by France, Britain and the United States to ban the supply of helicopters to the Syrian government and to blacklist Syrian military commanders.

“I think it is totally inappropriate,” Putin told a news conference in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, after meeting his Kyrgyz counterpart Almazbek Atambayev.

“It would undermine trust in the negotiating process. Russia will not support any new sanctions against the Syrian leadership.”

Russia’s Deputy UN Ambassador, Vladimir Safronkov, told reporters on Friday that Moscow would veto the draft resolution.—Reuters

PM: Opening of chapters significant news, message to investors

BELGRADE — The opening of new chapters in Serbia’s EU accession talks is significant news and a message to investors around the world, Serbian PM Aleksandar Vucic said on Monday.

Serbia has done a decent job and it is making progress at an accelerated pace, considering the political difficulties with Pristina, he told the RTS.—Tanjug

South Korea suggests suspending North Korea’s UN seat

GENEVA — South Korea called on Tuesday for “collective measures” against North Korea, including possible suspension of its UN membership, saying the use of chemical weapons to assassinate the half-brother of North Korea’s leader was a “wake-up call”.

Yun Byung-se, South Korea’s foreign minister, told the UN-sponsored Conference on Disarmament: “North Korea is reported to have not just grams but thousands of tonnes of chemical weapons including VX all over the country ... The recent assassination is a wake-up call to all of us to North Korea’s chemical weapons capability and its intent to actually use them.”

Yun said that states could invoke the Chemical Weapons Convention and take “collective measures”. “It could take the form of suspension of North Korea’s rights and privileges as a UN member,” he said, calling South Korea’s isolated neighbour a “serial rule-breaker”.—Reuters

Poland cannot back EU’s Tusk under any circumstances — Kaczynski

WARSAW — Former Polish prime minister Donald Tusk cannot under any circumstances count on Poland’s support for a second term as European Council President, the leader of the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party said on Tuesday.

“Donald Tusk is a politician who breaks the elementary rules of the European Union,” Jaroslaw Kaczynski said of his long-time political foe.

“Someone who breaks such rules cannot simply be the European Council’s president and cannot under any circumstances count on our support - or a lack of our objection,” Kaczynski told a press conference.—Reuters

Thai police nab Japanese man for smuggling wildlife

BANGKOK — A Japanese man has been arrested at a Thai airport for trying to smuggle 20 live wild animals, including a dozen otters, to Japan, the police said on Tuesday.

The suspect, identified as 57-year-old Kazushi Yamamoto from Fukushima Prefecture, was arrested Monday night at Don Meung airport after the 12 baby otters, five owls and three hawks were found in cardboard boxes inside his two suitcases.

The police said Yamamoto confessed through a translator that he bought the wild animals from Bangkok’s infamous Chatuchak weekend market, paying a total of 15,000 baht (\$430), and claimed he intended to raise them as pets at his home in Japan.

If found guilty of violating Thailand’s Wildlife Reservation and Protection Act, he could be sentenced up to four years in prison and fined up to 40,000 baht.—Kyodo News

Russia, Turkey in talks over supply of air defence systems

BISHKEK — Russia and Turkey are in talks over the possibility of an air defence systems supply contract but no specific agreements have been concluded yet, Russia's Deputy Defence Minister Aleksandr Fomin told the media.

"There is no process

of supplying air defence systems.

There is a process of negotiations. The talks are continuing but there are no supplies.

Supplies will be possible only if agreements have been concluded but there have been no such agreements yet," Fomin

said.

The head of Russia's Rostec corporation Sergey Chemezov last week said that Turkey had displayed interest in Russia's air defence systems S-400 and negotiations over possible supplies were afoot. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Rus-

sia's talks with Turkey on the issue were proceeding positively.

Turkish television broadcaster NTV said Russian and Turkish presidents might discuss the issue at a meeting of the Russian-Turkish High Level Cooperation Council in March.—TASS



Handout pictures released on 21 December, 2016 and acquired from the web site of the German Bundeskriminalamt (BKA) Federal Crime Office show suspect Anis Amri searched in relation with the Monday's truck attack on a Christmas market in Berlin. PHOTO: REUTERS

Taliban kill 12 Afghan police with silenced weapons

LASHKAR GAH — Taliban fighters in the southern Afghan province of Helmand attacked a check-point with silenced weapons and hand grenades early on Tuesday killing 12 policemen and stealing weapons and ammunition, officials said.

But a provincial official said that it could be an insider attack as one of the guards was still missing.

"An investigation is ongoing to find out if someone from inside has defected to the Taliban and paved

the way for this crime," he said.

The attack, in the provincial capital Lashkar Gah, underlined the threat facing Afghan security forces in the opium-producing province, where they struggle to match well-equipped Taliban fighters who now control several districts.

The police killed in the attack had been pulled back from the southern district of Khanshin district which security forces abandoned last year.

"The Taliban attacked

a guard with silenced guns and then entered the check post," Helmand deputy police chief Haji Gulai told reporters.

"They attacked other policemen with hand grenades and killed all of them. They later took their weapons and ammunition and escaped," he said.

In a separate incident, another 12 policemen were killed in the Marjah district of Helmand after an hour-long gunbattle, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said.

Taliban fighters now control most of Helmand, including areas in Lashkar Gah. British and US forces suffered their heaviest casualties of the war in the province in years of fighting following the removal of the Taliban in 2001.

Afghan security forces now control less than 60 per cent of the country, according to US estimates, with the Taliban in control of about 10 per cent and the remainder contested between government and insurgent forces.—Reuters

Zimbabwe public sector workers to protest over bonuses

HARARE — Zimbabwean public sector workers will hold a demonstration on Monday calling on the government to pay bonuses for 2016, the civil service union said, setting them on a collision course with President Robert Mugabe's cash strapped administration.

Without balance of payment support from foreign lenders, the southern African nation is spending more than 90 per cent of the national budget on salaries, leaving no money for infrastructure or bonuses that

were due by December.

Last July, doctors joined nurses, teachers and other civil servants in a national shutdown over unpaid wages, which coincided with anti-government protests called by social media groups over a deteriorating economy.

The Apex Council, which represents all civil service unions, issued a notice of the strike to the government. It accused the government of trying to undermine unions by directly engaging workers in a sur-

vey to determine whether public employees could opt for residential land in lieu of the bonuses.

Public sector unions last month rejected the land proposal.

The government then issued forms to every civil servant asking whether they preferred residential land instead of cash bonuses, angering the unions.

"Bonuses are part of our conditions of service so we can't mix that with land. The government is being provocative and disrespect-

ful by engaging workers directly," Apex Council president Cecilia Alexander said.

Alexander said next Monday's demonstration "will show that we have a constituency that we represent."

Public Service and Labour Minister Prisca Mupfumira defended the survey, saying it would determine how the government should proceed on the issue of bonuses. "We will continue to dialogue with them but we do not tolerate threats," Mupfumira said.—Reuters

Police search Berlin properties linked to Christmas market attacker's mosque

BERLIN — German police on Tuesday searched more than 20 properties in Berlin with links to a mosque visited by the Tunisian asylum seeker who killed 12 people at a Christmas market.

About 450 officers have been searching apartments, two companies' premises and six prison cells connected to an organisation called "Fussilet 33 e.V.", which ran the mosque, since 6 am (0500 GMT), police said in a statement.

"The cause for these raids is the fact that Berlin's state interior ministry has issued a ban against the 'Fussilet 33' organisation," Berlin police spokesman Winfrid Wenzel said.

Police said they have searched 24 properties and searches were ongoing.

"These 24 locations are above all apartments but also business addresses of those in charge of this mosque organisation. Also, a few cells at Tegel and Moabit prisons have been searched," Wenzel said. Berlin state's inte-

rior ministry was not available to comment further when contacted by Reuters.

Andreas Geisel, interior minister for the state of Berlin, is due to give further details at a news conference at 1 pm (1200 GMT).

The federal prosecutor has said that Anis Amri, the Berlin attacker, visited a mosque run by the "Fussilet 33 e.V." organization on the day of the December attack. On 31 January German police arrested three men on suspicion of having close links to Islamic State militants and planning to travel to the Middle East for combat training. Newspaper Bild reported that those men were frequent visitors at a mosque in the Berlin district of Moabit that Amri also used to visit.—Reuters

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 2nd March (Thursday) 2017 "PEASANT Day" under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar

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MV SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.3.2017 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.

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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.

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El Niño may be fast-tracking to arrive by summer — Braun

CHICAGO —The path to another round of El Niño in 2017 appears to be shortening, as tropical Pacific Ocean waters have been warming at a substantial rate.

Weather forecasters have been eyeing for a couple of months a possible return this year of El Niño, which normally comes around every two to seven years and last occurred in 2015/16.

The El Niño-Southern Oscillation is one of the most widely followed long-term indicators of climate, as both its warm and cool phases can trigger varying effects on weather patterns globally.

El Niño, which is associated with warmer-than-normal sea surface temperatures (SSTs) along the equatorial Pacific, is known to bring volatile weather to some parts of the world and is closely watched by agricultural and energy markets. Some notable impacts include droughts in Southeast

Asia and heavy rains and erosion along the Pacific coasts of North and South America.

La Niña, the cool phase of ENSO, just concluded its six-month run last month. In the last several weeks, remnants of the colder waters have been all but eliminated.

In the week centered on 22 February, the SST anomaly was positive 2.3 degrees Celsius in the Niño 1+2 region, the easternmost of the four Niño regions, directly off the coast of Peru. Warming in this region sometimes precedes the onset of El Niño (<http://reut.rs/2lZ3o-Og>).

To put this into perspective, since weekly record-keeping began in 1990, the only other instances that featured warmer SST anomalies in this region occurred during the mega-El Niños of 2015/16 and 1997/98, as well as the moderate-to-strong El Niño in early 1992.

The week centered

on 25 January, 2017, also recorded a 2-degree anomaly, so the latest value is not necessarily an outlier. But if this trend eventually translates into a full-on El Niño later in the year, the outcome would be unprecedented.

A record-breaking El Niño surfaced in mid-2015 and lasted through early 2016, after which SSTs dropped off and gave way to the relatively weaker La Niña event to cap off the year.

But following the previous occurrences of strong El Niño — 1997/98, 1982/83, 1972/73 — the warm cycle did not appear again until three or four years later. So the possible return of El Niño this year would present a unique situation against which there is not much comparable data.

This month for the first time, El Niño is the most favoured scenario over neutral or La Niña conditions starting in July or August, according to the

International Research Institute and the US Climate Prediction Centre. The probability for El Niño between August and October stands at 51 per cent, while the chance of neutral is at 38 per cent (<http://reut.rs/2lZbc2H>).

But some models are calling for El Niño's arrival a bit earlier based on the progression of the SSTs in recent weeks.

Monday's run of the CFS version 2 model, maintained by the US National Centres for Environmental Prediction, shows steady El Niño conditions — SST anomalies of at least 0.5 degree Celsius — for most of the Northern Hemispheric spring and then a moderate to strong event in place by the summer (<http://reut.rs/2mx1Vga>).

The projections of the CFSv2 should be considered with caution, however, as the models are run each day with a shifting 10-day period of initial model conditions, meaning the output can be high-

ly dependent on a small segment of time. However, other models have been increasingly leaning toward both El Niño and its earlier onset.

The latest chart of international ENSO forecast models compiled by IRI and CPC has shifted in a warmer direction compared with the previous update, and several models suggest that El Niño could be comfortably in place as early as May (<http://reut.rs/2lZ8Dh7>).

The forecast trends are starting to show a divergence between the statistical and dynamical models, the latter of which is based on the actual atmospheric and oceanic state rather than historical tendencies.

Since the dynamical models are now mostly calling for El Niño by the start of Northern Hemispheric summer, this gives confidence that environmental conditions are indeed turning favorable for the quicker return of the warm cycle.—Reuters

Vietnamese capital to build 5-storey underground parking

HANOI — Vietnamese capital Hanoi will build three underground parking lots, including a five-storey underground car park, according to the city's People's Committee on Tuesday.

Among five floors of the underground car park in the city's Thong Nhat Park, the first underground floor will be used for commercial and service purposes, while the remaining four underground floors will be car parking area, reported local VNEconomy online newspaper. The total construction area of the car park is over 15,000 square metres with over 5,600 square metres on each floor, providing enough space for 390 cars. On the ground, there should be trees, operating house, and other supporting buildings with total investment of some 100 billion Vietnamese dong (4.48 million US dollars).—Xinhua

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Daw May Thwe Hlaing, LL.B., LL.M., (H.G.P.)

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Email address: myanmar@tilleke.com

Dated: 1st March 2017.



Russia's President Vladimir Putin shakes hands with his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rakhmon during their meeting in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on 27 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Putin stresses Russia never interferes in other countries' domestic policy

BISHKEK — Moscow has never interfered and will not interfere in internal political processes in other countries and the change of power should process strictly under law, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday.

"As for internal political processes, this is not our business. We never interfere in the internal political processes of other countries, especially of our allies," the Russian leader said after talks with

Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev.

"I fully join what has been said by President Atambayev: we proceed from the fact that we must value stability in the post-Soviet space," Putin stressed.

The Russian president added: "We proceed from the fact that any change of power must proceed within the framework of the Constitution and the effective law."—TASS

Yi ethnic people celebrate Er Yue Er in SW China's Yunnan



People of Yi ethnic group perform to celebrate Er Yue Er, or the second day of the second month on the Chinese Lunar calendar in Zika Village of Malong County, southwest China's Yunnan Province, on 27 February, 2017. Er Yue Er fell on 27 February this year. Chinese people call it the day when the "dragon raises its head", which means the spring awakens after winter hibernation. PHOTO: XINHUA

The billionaire philanthropists intent on using satellites to save the world

SEATTLE — Some of the world's most influential billionaire philanthropists plan to launch a powerful digital platform to harness the avalanche of data sent from satellites each day - and make it freely available for humanitarian and environmental causes.

Bill and Melinda Gates — who are also custodians of legendary investor Warren Buffet's billions — have joined forces with Pierre Omidyar, founder of eBay, to fund the 'Radiant Earth' project, a repository and archive of the world's satellite, aerial and drone imagery.

The project, expected to cost "multi millions" of dollars, aims to find ways to combine and analyse Earth data and imagery and offer it free of charge in formats that do not require specific expertise to understand.

Anne Hale Miglarese, Radiant CEO, said the world is now awash in data but for non specialists, finding it and creating ways to use it practically can be both difficult and expensive.

"(Radiant) will help build the 'who, what, where when or why' for the planning and management of issues such as land tenure, global health, sustainable development, food security and disaster response," she said.

The Gates Foundation invited more than 150 academics and data analysis specialists to Seattle last week for what was billed as a 'Thought Leaders Summit' on the project.

Experts discussed what humanitarian agencies, environmental and land rights groups might want and need.

Amazon Web Services Global Open Data chief, Jed Sundwall, said Radiant would try to "give humans back their time to focus on research and analysis".

"Open data is happy data: we have so much data that can tell us about our world but we can't know it because it is too expensive to know it," he said.

Industry experts said over the past five years the number of operational satellites has jumped 40 percent, and nearly 1,400 now orbit the Earth. This number could more than double over the next five years as satellites become smaller, lighter and more affordable.

Entrepreneurs have increasingly begun to view the sky as a new market which can help feed the burgeoning global demand for more communications, satellite TV and broadband services. However satellites are also collecting data from space about the Earth itself. Applications are far reaching - from tracking plant health through chlorophyll to gauging the impact of natural disasters and the surveillance of illegal logging.

Two weeks ago, India launched 104 satellites — 101 of them for foreign companies and agencies — in a single mission as part of its strategic bid for a bigger share of the \$300 billion global space industry.

Experts at the Seattle summit said the multiple launch, described as a world record by its space agency, was also significant because 88 were shoe-box-sized Dove satellites launched by Planet, a San Francisco-based private satellite operator founded by former NASA scientists. The constellation of small satellites will, once settled into orbit in six months' time, will photograph the entire Earth every day. "Satellite imagery might be one of the most powerful and unbiased tools to tell people what is going on with the planet" Albert Lin, Research Scientist at the University of California, San Diego, told the summit.

The key, he said, lay in finding ways to translate enormous amounts of information into something that can be understood by everyone. This means finding ways of sorting and interlinking the trillions of bits of data sent to Earth and re-construct them into readable, digital and sometimes 3D models. In some cases, data can be analysed with the help of communities of "citizen scientists sitting alone at their computers all over the world".—Reuters

Light aircraft crashes into California home, killing three on board

LOS ANGELES — Three people were killed and two critically injured when their light aircraft crashed into a house on Monday, causing several fires in a residential neighborhood in southern California, the local fire chief said.

The Cessna 310 crashed at about 4:30 pm (0030 GMT Tuesday) shortly after take-off from Riverside Municipal Airport, 60 miles (100 km) east of Los Angeles. The pilot and two passengers died. The two survivors, both women, were found inside the ruined house in critical condition, Riverside Fire Chief Michael Moore said. The house was unoccupied.

TV images of the scene showed firefighters spraying water on several houses ablaze and covering what appeared to be a body with a sheet.

At least five families were forced to leave their homes, a local Red Cross official said. The passengers were from San Jose in Northern California and in the area for a cheerleading event at Disneyland, Moore said. FAA spokesman Ian Gregor said the plane crashed "under unknown circumstances" shortly after taking off from the airport, bound for San Jose.

The incident will be investigated by the FAA and National Transportation Safety Board, he said. — Reuters

INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Provision of Consulting Services to Verify the Network Performance of the Mobile Operators Network

Ministry of Transport and Communications now invites eligible Consulting firm to indicate their interests to provide hands on Provision of Consulting Services to verify the performance of mobile operators' networks by doing the drive test and QoS measurement.

Expression of interest and other supporting documents (such as the experience on the similar tasks, the profile of the team members, company registration) must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax or by e-mail) on or before 1630 hours of 8 March 2017.

Attention: U Than Htun Aung, Project Director

Post and Telecommunication Department

Office No. 2, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

Tel: +95 67 407435, Fax:+95 67 407539

E-mail: thanthtunaung@ptdmyanmar.com, tsrporject2014@gmail.com, seintseintaye@ptd.gov.mm

The REoI and ToR for the assignment are available at http://www.motc.gov.mm/news/ptd_news

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(3)	IFB-121(16-17)	8" ERW API 5L Grade X-42 MS 3 layer PE Coated Steel Line Pipe (PSL-2) (8050) MTR	US\$
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Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 27 TH February, 2017 at the Finance Department , Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.			
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Future's self-titled album tops Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Future topped the weekly US Billboard 200 chart on Monday, scoring his fourth chart-topping album.

Atlanta rapper Future's self-titled album sold 140,000 units in its first week, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan for the week ending 23 February.

The rapper released another album, "HNDXXX," on Friday, which Billboard said is projected to top the charts next week.

Future's album knocked off last week's chart-topper, the soundtrack to the "Fifty Shades Darker" film, which dropped to No 3 this week. Bruno Mars' "24K Magic" held steady at No 2.

New entries in the top 10 of the Billboard 200 album chart this week included R&B singer Charlie Wilson at No 7 with "In it To Win It," alt-rocker Ryan Adams' "Prisoner" at No 8 and bluegrass-country artist Alison Krauss at No 9 with "Windy City."

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, Ed Sheeran's "Shape of You" held onto the top spot with another 147,000 copies sold.—Reuters



Rapper Future. PHOTO: REUTERS

Stephen Moyer to feature in Fox's Marvel drama



Actors Stephen Moyer and Anna Paquin from the drama series "True Blood" arrive at the 16th annual Screen Actors Guild Awards in Los Angeles. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — "True Blood" star Stephen Moyer has been signed on to star in Fox's Marvel action-adventure.

The 47-year-old actor will feature in the untitled film from director Bryan Singer, confirmed The Hollywood Reporter.

Moyer will essay the role of Reed, who is an ambitious attorney trying to strike a work-life balance as struggles with the demands of his job at the DA's office and shoulders responsibilities towards his family.

The script of the film will be penned by Matt Nix, which focuses on two ordinary parents who discover their children possess mutant powers.

They are forced to go on the run from a hostile government as the family joins up with an underground network of mutants and must fight to survive. The drama will also star Blair Redford and Jamie Chung.—PTI

Ed Sheeran performs Shape Of You with classroom instruments

LOS ANGELES — Singer Ed Sheeran performed his latest hit "Shape Of You" on the rhythm of classroom instruments.

The 26-year-old musician appeared on the "Tonight Show" and crooned his special rendition of his recent with a little help from Jimmy Fallon at the xylophone, reported People. While Sheeran performed the song with a banana-shaped

fruit shaker in hand, he was supported by a group who played other mini instruments such as synthesiser, tambourine and guitar, among others.

Earlier, "Tonight Show" Music Room also saw ultimate a capella collaboration for many recording artists including Adele, Mariah Carey, Idina Menzel, One Direction, Metallica and Sesame Street.—PTI



Singer Ed Sheeran. PHOTO: REUTERS

Oscars draw lowest US audience since 2008 with 32.9 mln viewers

LOS ANGELES — ABC's Sunday night broadcast of the Academy Awards drew 32.9 million US viewers, the smallest audience for the Oscars since 2008, according to Nielsen data released by the Walt Disney Co unit on Monday.

This year's audience

dropped 4 percent from the 2016 Oscars, which drew 34.4 million viewers. The 2008 Oscars averaged 32 million viewers.

Despite the low numbers, the Oscars are still expected to be the most-watched non-sporting event on US television this year.

The decline in viewership

for the Oscars breaks the streak of higher ratings for award shows in 2017 after both the Grammys and Golden Globes showed gains over last year.

The awards ceremony went a few minutes past midnight on the East Coast and ended in controversy when "La La Land" was

mistakenly named best picture winner after presenters were given the wrong envelope.

The actual winner, announced minutes later, was "Moonlight." —Reuters

Selena Gomez, The Weeknd enjoy romantic date night

LOS ANGELES — Actress-singer Selena Gomez and her alleged boyfriend The Weeknd stepped out together in Paris mere blocks away from where the "Starboy" hitmaker ex Bella Hadid was partying.

The duo was all smiles as they were spotted enjoying a romantic night at La Reserve, reported HollywoodLife.

The 24-year-old "Hands to Myself" singer looked elegant

in a sleeveless black turtleneck dress, with her hair tied back in a tight ponytail, while the Weeknd, 27, dressed a bit more casually in a tan jacket and a black ball cap.

The pair, who have been spotted on several dates here and Italy over the last two months, touched down in the famously romantic city just ahead of the start of Paris Fashion Week, which kicks off today.—PTI



The Weeknd. PHOTO: REUTERS

Milan’s fashion week wraps up with Armani’s expressive colours



Models present creations from the Giorgio Armani Autumn/Winter 2017 women collection during Milan Fashion Week, in Milan, Italy on 27 February, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

MILAN — Once again Italian designer Giorgio Armani stunned with bright and eloquent colours in his autumn and winter collection, wrapping up six days of catwalk shows at Milan’s Fashion week.

As with his Emporio line, shown on Friday, the designer brought to life his

creations with ruby and deep reds, purple, orange, emerald green, turquoise, petrol and electric blue, as well as multicolored polka dots.

“Colour is an expressive gesture,” the 82-year-old said in the style notes given to guests at the show on Monday.

The black velvet and silk was enriched with tassel and pompom details and necklaces, fringes and strings of coloured beads and sparkling sequins, showing off the sharp, elegant lines of Armani couture.

The collection also showcased big mohair

coats and tops and capes in acidic green and black.

Dog-shaped patterns adorned knitwear and jackets, while puffs and frills on sleeves and at the hemline of tops and skirts hinted at Pierrot costumes.

Models wore bowl-er-style hats, carried big fur bags and wore flat shoes in velvet or polished leather.

“The collection is a new adaptation of the Armani style: free, aware and subtly irreverent,” the style notes said.

But “King George” kept true to his style, with geometrics in both the cut and the patterns.

Tops were architectural: sculpted with pleats; jackets and tops were asymmetric; skirts were paneled and big shawls were draped to form cascades. Models walking a shiny black runway gleamed in fluid trousers that merged into skirts or with big frontal flaps, matched with clean-cut jackets, furs, quilted vests and long textured cardigans.—Reuters

Flour power lifts spirits as Greek village stages mock battle

GALAXIDI, GREECE — Greek villagers staged a street battle on Monday with bags of coloured flour in an annual tradition called the Flour War.

The popular event attracts visitors from across the country and overseas to the coastal fishing town of Galaxidi, about 200 km (124 miles) west of Athens.

“Clean Monday” cel-

ebrations mark the end of carnival season and the beginning of the Greek Orthodox Lent fast.

“It’s an outburst. You let off steam. What else to do?” said participant Efi. “If you are feeling downcast in Athens, the villages, anywhere with this [economic] crisis, you come here and let off steam.”

Villagers fill hun-

dreds of bags with baking flour, tinted with food colouring, to be used as bombs.

The battle starts with the ringing of cow bells and then the flour flies as participants parade, fire flour bombs and try to douse each other with as much flour as possible.

Anyone who does not wish to be covered can watch from across the vil-

lage quay. Villagers cover their houses with plastic sheeting and don goggles and plastic suits.

The custom is believed to have originated in 1801 when Galaxidi residents defied the Ottoman rulers occupying Greece by celebrating the forbidden carnival and painting their faces with ash while dancing through the streets.—Reuters

Faith puts Ghana at heart of global Christianity

ACCRA — Ghana is embracing the Christian faith with a fervor that is increasingly shaping its national identity.

The country is central to a wave that puts West Africa at the heart of global Christianity, said professor Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu of Trinity Theological Seminary in Accra.

More than 70 percent of Ghana’s 26 million people are Christian. The statistics understate the fervency of everyday faith. Many attend church on weeknights. All night prayer vigils are common and billboards advertising Christian meetings line the streets.

It’s common to see people studying the Bible on the bus and many office workers keep open Bibles on their desks. Mega-church pastors such as Mensa Otabil are revered, according to opinion surveys.

“By the middle of the 20th century scholars ... started predicting that Africa (and Latin America) was going to be the hotbed of Christianity,” said Asamoah-Gyadu, an authority on African Christianity.

“What happens in the minds of African Christians was going to shape church history for many years to come,” he said.

Some 41 per cent of the world’s 560 million Protestants live in Africa and it could rise to 53 percent by 2050, said an article this year in the Interna-

tional Bulletin of Mission Research. Muslims are a minority in Ghana.

Isaac Ollennu’s story is typical. The 36-year-old Accra resident works with a Chinese import company, putting him in the middle class. He says he prays throughout the day and often wakes at 3 am to pray.

“My faith is everything to me,” he said.

Christianity was brought to the Gold Coast by Roman Catholics and mainstream Protestants but Pentecostal faith featuring ecstatic worship and in a God of miracles has underpinned the recent rise of faith, said Asamoah-Gyadu.

“Pentecostal religion promises breakthroughs ... You tithe, you pray and you will get (what you want),” he said. Churches spread because authority flows through spiritual experience, rather than church hierarchy or formal education.

Charismatic faith came from North America and people were receptive because it chimed with traditional beliefs in which people appeal to spirits to solve problems, he said.

It also appealed to social aspirations. Wealthy pastors are seen as blessed and their entertaining, informal services cater to popular taste. Nana Kofi Acquah, a preacher, said Christian leaders also make faith compatible with Ghanaian culture.

—Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

Programme Schedule

(1-3-2017 07:00am ~ 2-3-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3)(Part-1)
07:50	Am	Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (EP-3)(Part-2)
08:03	Am	News
08:25	Am	Lawka Nandar Wildlife Sanctuary And Its Rare Star Tortoises
08:49	Am	Farming: Duck Breeder
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Chef Life “Thit Htoo”
09:38	Am	Civic Duty

09:51	Am	Graffiti: Portraiture
10:03	Am	News
10:25	Am	Shrinking Footprints
10:49	Am	Sai Ye Kwan

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)- Tuesday 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	News
07:27	Pm	Cruising To Precious Islands (Part-1)
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Mosaic Painting (Precious Stones & Gems)
08:42	Pm	Five Hair Relic Enshrined Pagodas
08:55	Pm	Modifying Natural Thanakha Bark into Ready-Made Skin Care Product

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

MRTV		Programme Schedule (1-3-2017, Wednesday)
6:00 Am		(Part-1)
◆ Paritta by Venerable Min Gun Sayadaw	2:55 Pm	◆ Kyae Pwint Myaye Yin Khone Than
7:00 Am		
◆ Breakfast News	3:30 Pm	◆ Suday Talk
7:30 Am		
◆ Money Talk Myanmar	4:20 Pm	◆ 2017 Matriculation Examination Lessons (Biology)
8:35 Am		
◆ Life Struggles	5:40 Pm	◆ People’s Talk
9:15 Am		
◆ Documentary	6:15 Pm	◆ Football Magazine
9:20 Am		
◆ Pyi Thu Ni Ti	6:30 Pm	◆ Real Story Real Movies
10:30 Am		
◆ General Knowledge	7:15 Pm	◆ TV Drama Series
11:00 Am		
◆ 2017 Martrication Examination Lessons (Biology)	8:00 Pm	◆ News/International News/ Weather Report
11:35 Am		
◆ Documentary (MRTV Education Program)	8:35 Pm	◆ Documentary
1:00 Pm		
◆ Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competitions		◆ Fine Arts-Bosom of Dramatic Performance
2:35 Pm		
◆ Documentary (GAP)		

Emotional night as Leicester begin post-Ranieri era

LONDON — Leicester City fans trudged towards the King Power Stadium for Monday's crucial home clash against Liverpool still reeling from last week's sacking of title-winning manager Claudio Ranieri.

Murals of the popular Italian, who led the club to the most improbable of Premier League titles last May, still adorn walls surrounding the ground and many fans were sporting Ranieri face masks in the build-up to the 2000 GMT kickoff.

While some celebrated the 65-year-old's achievement with banners and chants, others mourned his passing.

One fan was photographed driving a black hearse around

the streets surrounding the stadium with flowers arranged in the windows spelling out "RIP Football".

Inside the stadium, a banner read "Grazie Claudio" while a rendition of the opera classic "Nessun Dorma" was played over the loudspeakers, stirring memories of Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli singing on the day Leicester were presented with the title.

The programme notes penned by Leicester's Thai chairman Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha offered his thoughts on the "painful" sacking that shocked English football last Thursday.

"We made the most difficult decision we have ever had to make in seven years with Leices-



Leicester City's Jamie Vardy scores their third goal during their Premier League at King Power Stadium on 27 February 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

ter City," he wrote.

"I don't expect everybody to understand it and I know that some people are angry about it. But we have to think about the club's long-term interests and the best way to bring the club we love forward."

He also paid tribute to Ranieri's "warmth, charm and good humour".

Emotions aside, the immediate priority for Leicester is to retain their top-flight status.

After five consecutive defeats they began Monday's game

in the bottom three following results at the weekend.

Ranieri's former assistant, 53-year-old Craig Shakespeare, was in charge on Monday and is among the candidates to replace Ranieri on a full-time basis.—Reuters



Roger Federer. PHOTO: REUTERS

Federer returns with easy win over Paire in Dubai

DUBAI — Roger Federer breezed back into action to reach the second round of the Dubai Open with a straightforward 6-1, 6-3 win over erratic Frenchman Benoit Paire on Monday.

In his first match since memorably claiming his 18th grand slam title by beating Rafael Nadal at the Australian Open a month ago, the 35-year-old was immediately back in the old routine to give Paire the runaround.

There was precious little resistance from the Frenchman as Swiss maestro Federer, the seven-times champion and third seed, delighted a large Centre Court crowd with flashes of brilliance. Paire was warned for unsportsmanlike behaviour at one point after hurling his racket and

also needed treatment on a foot injury. Federer claimed victory in less than an hour.

"I think I returned very well for a first round. I was able to get my second serves in deep, was able to go into the offensive quickly," Federer, who does much of his training in Dubai, told a news conference.

"Didn't have to move that much. It was very quick rallies. So we'll see how that's going to turn out. But obviously couldn't be a better first round for me here in Dubai."

Top seed and world number one Andy Murray also returns after a lengthy layoff, which included a bout of shingles, when he takes on Tunisia's Malek Jaziri on Tuesday.—Reuters

Villarreal keeper Asenjo suffers fourth ACL injury

MADRID—Villarreal goalkeeper Sergio Asenjo has ruptured the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee, effectively ruling him out for the rest of the season, the club said.

Asenjo suffered the fourth such injury of his career, although the first to his left knee, during his team's 3-2 home defeat to Real Madrid on Sunday evening.

"Tests done to Sergio Asenjo have confirmed that the goalkeeper has suffered a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament to his left knee," the La Liga club said in a statement.

Asenjo, who has made 29 appearances in all competitions this season for Villarreal, will have to undergo surgery. The typical recovery time for a rup-

tured anterior cruciate ligament is around six months.

The 27-year-old suffered his first ACL setback in 2010 while on the books of Atletico Madrid and tore it again a year later while on loan at Malaga.

Villarreal then lost Asenjo for seven months in April 2015 after he ruptured his right ACL for the third time.—Reuters

Barcelona have resources to upset PSG but need belief, says Iniesta

BARCELONA — Barcelona must believe in their ability to make history as the first Champions League team to overturn a 4-0 first-leg deficit when they line up against Paris St Germain at Camp Nou on 8 March, captain Andres Iniesta said on Monday.

"Considering how complicated it is, we have to believe, we must believe," Iniesta said ahead of the last-16 second leg. "I think we have the resources to cause them problems."

"A 4-0 result is substantial but we might have an option to get back in the tie."

Barcelona's star-studded attack led by Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar have scored the most goals in La Liga this season, at 65 — five ahead of leaders Real Madrid, who have a game in hand.

Messi has scored 10 goals in this season's Champions League but Suarez, who has 18 in La Liga, and Neymar have

just two apiece in Europe's elite club competition and need to find their goalscoring touch again.

While their Feb. 14 mauling in Paris made for a difficult period at the club, Barca have ground out a couple of La Liga victories since, winning at home against Leganes and, on Saturday, beating Atletico Madrid 2-1 away.

"To win at the Calderon stadium after the week we had was

to celebrate," Iniesta said at a promotional event.

Iniesta said he hoped coach Luis Enrique would sign a new contract after his current deal expires at the end of the season.

"There are no doubts regarding our commitment to him," Iniesta said. "I hope he has the desire to continue in this team in order to continue to win titles."—Reuters



Barcelona's Andres Iniesta. PHOTO: REUTERS