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Thursday, 11 January 2018



in
Picture

Work begins on buildings to house refugees

Land is prepared in Hlaphoekhaung Village in Maungtaw District, Rakhine State on which buildings will be constructed and used for temporary housing for returning refugees. **PHOTO: AUNG YE THWIN (NEWS ON PAGE-3)**

Myanmar pledges cooperation with Mekong River countries: U Myint Swe

VICE President U Myint Swe attended the second Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (LMC) leaders' meeting that began in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh yesterday with the theme of "Our River of Peace and Sustainable Development."

The meeting was chaired by Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.

The meeting also brought together Lao Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc and Vice President U Myint Swe.

In his address at the meeting, Vice President U Myint Swe pledged that Myanmar would continue efforts for strengthening relations and mutual trust with members

of Mekong countries to tackle economic, social and environmental challenges and non-traditional challenges being faced by Myanmar. He also stressed the need to strengthen connectivity among the Mekong countries in order for the Mekong region to become a growth centre. He also acknowledged the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation as a collaborative organisation which further binds together

the ASEAN community and makes the efforts of ASEAN more effective. "People to people contacts play an important role in establishing a community with coexistence.

It needs to promote people to people contacts through cooperation in cultural education sectors and experts of the member countries," said the Vice President.

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'BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017'

Awarded by The Banker

Union Minister meets MPHA delegation in Nay Pyi Taw

UNION Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint received a delegation from the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association (MPHA) at the hall of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The delegation was led by Chairman of MPHA U Aung Ko Myint, General-Secretary U Myat Thu Win, Joint Secretary Dr. Myo Myat Maung, Executive Officer Daw Aye Thinzar Maung, i-School Programme Manager U Ye Win and Programme Director of Myanmar Deaf Community Development Association U Kyaw Kyaw.

During the meeting, officials of the MPHA discussed the transmission of weather news, emergency news and other matters for physically-disabled persons. They also suggested the minister should adopt sign languages and crawl bars, publish newspapers



Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint (Fourth from Right) poses for photo together with the delegation of the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association (MPHA). **PHOTO: MNA**

in Braille for the blind, help the disabled by using online platforms and call centres to raise public awareness, transmit free-to-air broadcast programmes and show television series that include episodes with handicapped characters on dedicated channels. Officials from the ministry were also present at the meeting. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Endangered Irrawaddy dolphin found dead in Katha

THE carcass of an Irrawaddy female dolphin was found in the Ayeyawady River, according to an official of Katha Township's Department of Fisheries.

"We received information that one Irrawaddy dolphin was found dead near the Aung Chan Thar ward in Katha Township in Sagaing Region. The dolphin was found with an injury on her blowhole believed to have been caused by a human. And it can also be assumed to be old in age because its size is 7 feet long", said an official from the Depart-

ment of Fisheries.

The Department of Fisheries makes annual surveys in February and is carrying out efforts to extend conservation areas to Hteechaik, Katha and Shweku.

The fisheries department also released a notification on 2 January to conserve the dolphins, expressing that action would be taken against those who kill, catch, wound and threaten the Irrawaddy dolphin, in accord with the Myanmar Marine Fisheries Law. — Shin Min ■



MYANMAR GAZETTE

- The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred U Myint Thu, Director-General of Department of ASEAN Affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Director-General of Office of the Union Minister from the date he assumes charge of his duties.
- The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on the expiry of one-year probationary period from the date they assume charge of their duties.
- The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(1) U Min Chit Oo	Principal Central Institute of Transport and Communications Ministry of Transport and Communications
(2) U Min Thu	Managing Director Myanmar Agriculture Development Bank Ministry of Planning and Finance
(1) U TheinZaw Deputy Director-General (Admin) Department of Buildings	Director-General Department of Buildings Ministry of Construction
(2) Daw May Toe Win Deputy Director-General Monetary Policy Affairs and Financial Institutions Regulation Department Central Bank of Myanmar	Director-General Foreign Exchange Management Department Central Bank of Myanmar
(3) Daw Tin Moe Moe Deputy Director-General Monetary Policy Affairs and Financial Institutions Regulation Department Central Bank of Myanmar	Director-General Monetary Policy Affairs and Financial Institutions Regulation Department Central Bank of Myanmar

State Counsellor receives Philippines' Arroyo, S'pore Ambassador



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes Hon. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, former president of the Philippines. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi receives Singapore's Ambassador to Myanmar Ms. Vanessa Chan Yuen Ying in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received the Hon. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, former President of the Republic of the Philippines, yesterday at the Ministry of For-

eign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Hon. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was the 14th President of the Republic of the Philippines (2001-2010), and is currently the Representative of the 2nd District of the Province of Pampanga.

During their meeting yesterday, they discussed matters relating to the promotion of trade, investment and cooperation in the education sector between the two countries. Also present at the meeting were senior officials from the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Following the meeting with the former President of the Philippines, the State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

met Singapore's Ambassador to Myanmar Ms. Vanessa Chan Yuen Ying, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, they discussed matters relating to boosting bilateral relations. — Myanmar News Agency ■



(L-R) Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha, Viet Nam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen, Laos' Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith and Myanmar's Vice President U Myint Swe pose for a photo yesterday during the second Mekong-Lancang Cooperation leaders meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. **PHOTO MNA**

Myanmar pledges cooperation with ...

FROM PAGE-1

U Myint Swe also reiterated that the strategies of Mekong-Lancang, including the Belt and Road Initiative, should comply with the work procedures of organisations in the region such as ASEAN.

He expressed thanks to the Chinese government for finalizing the first batch of 132 projects to be implemented by Mekong-Lancang's special fund, saying that 10 projects in Myanmar include in the first batch.

Besides, the second batch of 214 projects would benefit the people of Mekong countries, he added. In conclusion, the Vice President pledged to actively participate in the Mekong-Lancang cooperation effort at present and in the future, maintaining friendship, good neighbourly relations, mutual trust and mutual benefits.

After the meeting, Vice President U Myint Swe attended a ceremony to hand over the chairmanship from the Cambo-

dian Prime Minister to the Lao People's Democratic Republic's Prime Minister.

Initiated by China in 2014, the LMC consists of six countries - China, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand and Viet Nam. It focuses on several priority areas of cooperation: connectivity, production capacity, cross-border economic cooperation, water resources management, as well as agriculture and poverty reduction.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Work begins on buildings to house refugees

AUTHORITIES have started the land work to construct buildings that will accommodate refugees repatriated from Bangladesh in Hlaphoekhaung Village in Maungtaw District yesterday.

The work was launched on 7 January by pressing into service eight backhoes and four bulldozers.

The refugees will be temporarily housed in the buildings after their citizenship is scrutinised.

“Those who return from Bangladesh will be scrutinised at Ngakhuya and Taungpyolawe, and they will be provided with temporary accommodation here,” said U Ye Htut, Maungtaw district Deputy Commissioner.

Myanmar and Bangladesh came to an agreement on the terms of repatriation for those who fled Rakhine State four months ago and are staying in temporary Bangladeshi camps. —Ko Min ■

Reuters reporters charged with Official Secrets Act

Prosecutors yesterday charged two Reuters reporters under the Official Secrets Act, which carries a maximum prison sentence of 14 years, their lawyer said.

Yangon Region's northern district court started the hearing yesterday morning of Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, both reporters for Reuters, who have been charged under the Official Secrets Act, a Colonial-era law that prohibits “entering prohibited places, taking images or handling secret official documents

that might be, or is intended to be, directly or indirectly, useful to an enemy”.

Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo along with two policemen were detained on 12 December in Yangon for illegally obtaining and possessing government documents, according to the Myanmar Police Force. The next hearing for the journalists is scheduled for 23rd January, with a police officer who opened the file against the two reporters expected to testify.—Zaw Gyi ■

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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.

A tour guide conducts tourists around the Shwedagon Pagoda. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Over 5,000 tourism, transport licences issued until December 2017

THE Ministry of Hotels and Tourism issued some 5,127 tourism and transport licences across the country, as of December 2017, according to a ministry official.

The ministry had issued some 2,593 tourism licences, including one to a foreign com-

pany, 40 to foreign and local joint ventures and 2,552 to local firms.

Moreover, the ministry also issued some 4,371 tour guide licences, 3,449 local tour guide licences and 2,534 transport licences by December 2017.

The number of hotels and guest houses that were issued hotel licences by the ministry has increased each month. Since 2011, the ministry has relaxed restrictions to encourage investment in the accommodation sector for international visitors.—Min Thu ■

Housing project for retired employees to be launched in Mandalay

THE Urban and Housing Development Department of the Ministry of construction is planning to launch a housing project for retired government services personnel in the Mandalay Region.

The housing project will be funded from the union government's budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. The residences will be built on land near Mae Kin

Kone Village, Patheingyi Township, in the Mandalay Region, said U Thet Naing, Director of the regional Urban and Housing Development Department.

"The housing project will accommodate government employees who have retired. The government will sell the houses through the instalment system," he said. Payments for

these houses must be settled within 10 to 15 years through the instalment scheme. The project is expected to be launched this year. Further, the department is planning to launch an affordable housing project in Chanmyathasi Township, under a plan created by the Mandalay Region's government.—Mandalay Sub-printing house ■

Dee Doke waterfalls elephant camp to be opened in Pyin Oo Lwin

THE Dee Doke waterfalls elephant camp, established by the Myanma Timber Enterprise in Pyin Oo Lwin, will hold its opening ceremony on 20 January.

The elephant camp is near Three-Step Falls, nine miles and three furlongs from Kyauk Chaw-Ye Ywa Road in Pyin Oo Lwin, Mandalay Region.

"We had planned to establish the elephant camp since November. We expected to open the camp in December but could not do so, because we were trying to solve the land issues. Now, everything is fine, and we plan to open the elephant camp on 13 January. The grand opening ceremony will be on 20 January," said U Aung Myint Htay, General Manager of Myanma Timber Enterprise.

"Safe and secure elephant riding services will be provided to visitors. They will also get an opportunity to feed sugarcane to the elephants," he added.

The authority is planning to keep six elephants at the camp. An entry fee of Ks1,000 will be charged at the camp, while an elephant ride will cost Ks3,000. The Myanma Timber Enterprise has established 10 elephant camps in Myanmar: Wingabaw, Hmawyawgyi, Nathmaw, Pawlangyaintba, Wawma, Warphyutaung, Natmawk, Chaungtha, Kyarzwé and Mokekha elephant camps.—Zwe ■

Drugs and weapons seized in Eastern Shan State

STIMULANT tablets worth Ks. 390 million and weapons were seized in Monghsat Township, Eastern Shan State on 8 January. Local security personnel performing law enforcement activities in the area found seven persons near a military outpost in Lwelang Village-tract in Monghsat Township. The security forces confiscated 391,100 stimulant pills which were hidden in four backpacks belonging to the seven people, three M-22 assault rifles, three magazines,

63 bullets and three mobile phones with Thai SIM Cards. The seized drugs are valued at more than Ks. 390 million. The suspected drug carriers were handed over to officials at a police station in Monghsat.

They have been charged with the narcotics drug and psychotropic substance law by the local police department, according to a source from the Information and Public Relations Department.—Myanmar Digital News ■

Seven suspects are seen together with confiscated drugs and weapons. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**



Farmers harvest tea leaves at Mong Mao in north east Myanmar. PHOTO: REUTERS

Myanmar's pickled tea leaves, assorted peas retain strong market share in Europe

MYANMAR'S unique package of tea-leaf dressing and salad ingredients, such as assorted peas, peanuts and sesame seeds, has maintained a strong market share in Europe, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

Myanmar's traditional pickled tea, locally called lahpet, was first introduced to Ire-

land before being distributed to Germany and Britain.

Pickled tea leaves, various types of peas, edible peanut oil and sesame oil have been distributed to some 63 stores in Ireland.

Previously, Europeans were not aware that pickled tea leaves could be enjoyed in a salad. Businessmen from

Ireland helped Myanmar introduce the product to the London market, said U Ye Kyaw Zin, a small and medium entrepreneur.

Systematic packaging plays an important role in the export sector. Pickled tea leaves are being sold by the kilogram in packages and bottles. — GNLM ■

Stock trading volume on YSX declines this week

THE stock trading volume of four companies listed on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) declined over three days this week compared with last week.

Between 8 and 10 January, the volume of stock traded was less than 10,000 shares, with 5,378 shares traded on 8 January, 9,407 shares traded on 9 January and 3,865 shares traded on 10 January. The stock trading volume fell to five digits last week. Currently, First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB) and First Private Bank (FPB) are trading shares on the YSX.

The share prices of the listed companies are also decreasing. The price of a single share of FMI dropped from Ks14,000 on 2 January, 2017, to Ks12,000 on 10 January, 2018. The share price of MTSH decreased from Ks4,500 on 2 January, 2017, to Ks2,950 on 10 January, 2018.



Share prices of YSX companies are also in decline. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

MCB's share price fell from Ks9,600 to Ks7,000 in the same period. The share price of FPB dropped from its basic price of Ks39,000 on 20 January, 2017, to Ks27,000 on 10 January, 2018.

More than 2.5 million shares were traded in 2016, with estimated values of Ks70 billion. In 2017, despite the in-

crease in stock trading volume by 2.6 million shares, the trading value was only 22 billion, according to statistics from the YSX. The stock trading value hit its highest point of Ks3.4 billion in March 2017, whereas it reached an all-time low of some Ks850 million in December 2017. — Mon Mon ■

Fresh butter beans enter Mandalay market at high price

FRESHLY harvested butter beans that are entering the Mandalay market are selling at high prices.

Butter beans are produced in the Myingyan, Mahlaing and Taungtha townships in the Mandalay Region. On 1 January, butter beans entered the Mandalay market at a price of Ks90,000 per three-basket bag, some Ks10,000 higher than last year's price. The price of butter beans then increased to Ks100,000 per bag on 10 January, according to the Soe Win Myint depot.

Although the yield has been moderate, huge demand from China is contributing to the high

price. Butter beans have also penetrated the markets of West Europe and Japan.

In fact, butter beans had greater demand than pigeon peas and mung beans in foreign markets. The size of the bean determines its price.

As the larger butter beans grown in the Madaya and Singu areas are expected to enter the market soon, the price is likely to go up further to Ks110,000, said a dealer. Butter beans are mostly cultivated in central Myanmar in September. The early harvest season is in December. — Min Htet Aung (Man Sub-Printing House) ■

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- Market Place by City Mart (Junction City)
- City Mart (Aung San Stadium)
- City Mart (47th street)
- City Mart (Yankin)
- City Mart (China Town)
- City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)
- City Mart (FMI)
- City Mart (Junction Square)
- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
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Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From H.E. Mr Michel Temer
President of the Federative Republic of Brazil
Mr. President,

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, celebrated on January 4th 2018, I extend to your Excellency the most effusive and cordial congratulations on behalf of the Brazilian people and on my own, with the renewed wishes for the happiness and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E Mr. Milos Zeman

President of the Czech Republic
Excellency,

I would like to sincerely congratulate you and the people of your country on the 70th anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my firm conviction that the friendly relations between our two countries will continue to develop and deepen in many areas.

I wish you and the people of your country lots of success in the future.

From H.E Mr Giorgi Margvelashvili
President of Georgia

Your Excellency,

Allow me to extend to You my cordial congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

On this notable day, I wish to reiterate that Georgia attaches great importance to the development of friendly and mutually beneficial relations with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. I express my confidence that amicable relations between our countries will be further developed and intensified in the coming years.

Your Excellency, please accept the assurances of my highest consideration along with the best wishes for the peace, security and prosperity to the highly esteemed People of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to State Counsellor

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From H.E. Mr. Aloysio Nunes Ferreira
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil
Excellency,

On the occasion of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, celebrated on January 4th 2018, I would like to express to Your Excellency our best wishes and sincere congratulations as you celebrate another year of Independence, on behalf of the Brazilian government and on my own. On this important occasion, I reaffirm our commitment to strengthening relations between our two countries.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E Mr. Andrej Babis
Prime Minister of the Czech Republic
Excellency,

Let me extend my most sincere congratulations

to you and the people of your country on the 70th anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my firm conviction that the friendly relations between our two countries will continue to develop and deepen successfully and dynamically in many areas.

I wish you, Excellency, lots of success and health.

From H.E. Mr Martin Stropnický
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic
Excellency,

Let me extend my most sincere congratulations on the Independence Day of your country.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my encouragement and hope that the process of democratization, national reconciliation and modernization will successfully continue towards prosperity and stability of your country.

I believe that your country's progress on political

and economic reforms provides new opportunities for strengthening bilateral relationship between our countries for our mutual benefit.

Let me wish you lots of health and success.

From H.E. Mr Mikheil Janelidze
Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
Excellency,

Allow me to extend my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Georgia attaches great importance to the development of friendly and mutually beneficial relations with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. On this special day for your country, I would like to convey to you and to the friendly people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar best wishes of continuous peace, success and prosperity.

Excellency, please accept the assurance of my highest consideration.

Kachin State Day celebrated in Myitkyina

A CEREMONY to mark the 70th Anniversary Kachin State Day was held on the lawns of Kachin State Government Office in Ayeya Ward, Kyitkyina this morning.

Minister for Social Affairs Dr Thin Lwin of the Kachin State Government read out the message to commemorate the Kachin State Day sent by President U Htin Kyaw, and those present took part in the “Htongkar” dan together with young national brethren.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Speaker of Kachin State Hluttaw U Dein Khan Phon (a) Khan Lin, Chief Justice U Tu Jar and cabinet members, Hluttaw representatives, leaders of respective ethnic groups, departmental officials and local people totaling over 1200.

The ceremony covers mini-marathon, tennis, cycling, volleyball and other sports meets. — Win Naing-Kachin Land/ Myanmar Digital News



Kachin ethnic people perform at Kachin State Day celebration. **PHOTO: WIN NAING**

Schools to reopen in Maungtaw

SCHOOLS that were temporarily closed following terrorist attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army in the Maungtaw region will be reopened, as peace and stability return to the region.

Of the 650 primary schools in Maungtaw, some 424 schools have been closed to date, while some 46 schools will be reopened soon.

According to an official from the education department, some 283 schools have already been opened, including 98 schools in Maungtaw, 175 schools in Buthidaung and 10 schools in the Yathedaung region.

Another 46 schools will be reopened, and preparations are underway to reopen 95 schools as soon as possible. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than welcomes Singapore's Ambassador to Myanmar Ms. Vanessa Chan Yuen Ying. PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker receives Singapore Ambassador

SPEAKER of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than received Singapore's Ambassador to Myanmar Ms. Vanessa Chan Yuen Ying at the Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters concerning

promotion of social, economic and bilateral relations between the two countries.

Also present at the meeting were Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and officials of the Amyotha Hluttaw office.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Senior General receives Gen. Koji Yamazaki of Japan, German Ambassador

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Gen. Koji Yamazaki, Chief of Staff of Japan Ground Self-Defense Forces, at Zeyar Thiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, they exchanged views on improving military relations between the

two countries, Tatmadaw efforts to stop ARSA terrorists in Rakhine State, and the role of the Tatmadaw in the peace process in Myanmar.

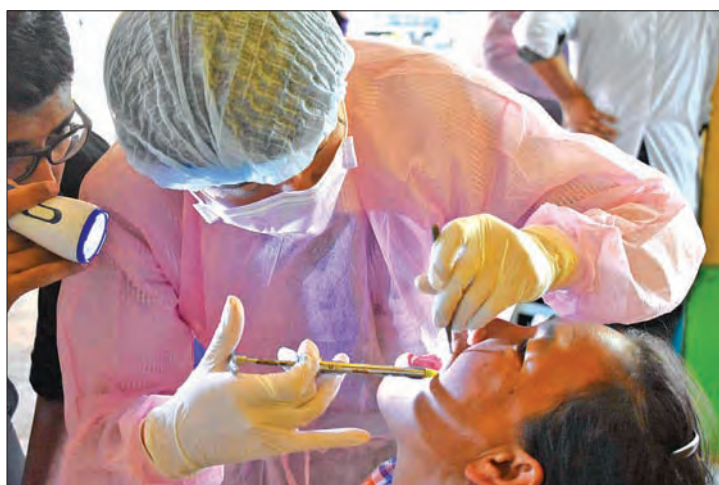
In the afternoon, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received the newly appointed German Ambassador to Myanmar Mrs. Dorothee Janetzke - Wenzel, at Zeyar Thiri Beikman.

In the meeting, matters relating to efforts by the Tatmadaw on achieving lasting peace and stability in Myanmar, increasing Myanmar-Germany military defence cooperation, the role of female Myanmar soldiers, and assigning Tatmadaw representatives at the Hluttaw were discussed.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives German Ambassador to Myanmar Mrs. Dorothee Janetzke - Wenzel. PHOTO: MNA

Dentists from UDM-Yangon provide care in Magway



A dentist gives medical care to a patient. PHOTO: UDM-YANGON

A medical team from the University of Dental Medicine (Yangon) provided oral health-care services in Magway Region from 3 to 7 January.

The team comprised of about 200 included 150 students who have passed the fourth year of Bachelor of Dental Science, 30 surgeons

and 20 faculty members from UDM-Yangon. They gave educative talks on dental and oral health to residents in Pakokku, Yesagyo, Seikpyu and Myaing townships in Magway Region. They also checked the oral health of 3,581 residents and treated 2,140 patients.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Villagers, security forces involved in killings of 10 armed Muslims

Some villagers and security forces were involved in the killing of 10 armed attackers whose bodies were found in a mass grave last month in a cemetery in Inndin Village in Maungdaw Township, Rakhine State, the True News Information Team of the Ministry of Defence acknowledged yesterday.

"Action will be taken against some security forces who broke the Rules of Engagement and some villagers who were involved in the killings," said the announcement from the ministry posted on its Facebook page yesterday.

An investigation team led by Lt-Gen Aye Win of the Ministry of Defence probed the killing from 20th December to 2nd January, interrogating 21 security force members, three border guard police, 13 members of the No. 8 security regiment, six villagers and six departmental officials.

Since the 9th October terrorist attacks, Muslim villagers, whose population is about 6,000 in the village-tract, had been threatening ethnic minorities, of which there are about 840 in three villages.

The Muslim armed men allegedly killed Maung Ni, a villager from Inndin Village, who had been on his way to a rice field on 25th August, 2017, and threatened nearby ethnic villagers with attacks every day, said the statement.

The ethnic villagers moved to a monastery and security forces arrived to provide security.

The announcement said on 1st September, about 200 armed attackers tried to attack security forces. In response, the security forces fired warning shots into the air to disperse the attackers and arrested 10 armed men.

During a subsequent interrogation, the 10 men con-

fessed that they had ties to the terrorists and that they were organised by Muslim religious leaders also known as Mawlawi at mosques in Muslim villages.

The detainees should be handed over to police. However, two vehicles from Inndin Village Police Station were set on fire by terrorists and terrorists attacks were happening at that time in the local areas, the statement said.

"Some villagers from Inndin village and security members confessed they killed 10 Muslim terrorists and action would be taken against the villagers and security members who violated the Rules of Engagement. Besides, action would be taken against those officers who failed to report the incident to the upper commands though they did not involve in it but those who involved in the incident are under their command," said the statement.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Those who create fruitless results

ON the wrong pretext of the Rakhine State affair, the European Union has made its ex parte announcement that it has put off the inking of the Investment Protection Agreement (IPA) between the European Union and Myanmar. Over the allegation that ethnic cleansing and violations of human rights are being committed in Rakhine State, the EU put off the signing of the agreement of investment protection ex parte. Here we would like to question the EU as to whether such an ex parte announcement to put off the agreement which took time, money and efforts on both sides has the power to create any progress in the Rakhine State affair.

It need not be explained that there would be no progress in the Rakhine State affair on account of such a deed. Then, why did the EU take such an action knowingly that it would be a fruitless result? It was to demonstrate its position that the EU would never ever accept and neglect such a violation. Here, the EU should note that the Rakhine State affair has not only the human rights dimension but also the sovereignty and economic development dimensions.

Myanmar and Bangladesh have already agreed through negotiations as regards the process of solving the Rakhine State affair. It must be assumed that the EU's failure to patiently monitor Myanmar's efforts has exposed its true intentions.

under a peculiar name is tantamount to demanding sovereignty for a piece of territory. The EU's negligence of the sovereignty dimension of Rakhine State affair is in fact to exaggerate the human rights dimension as desired by them.

Myanmar and Bangladesh have already agreed through negotiations as regards the process of solving the Rakhine State affair. It must be assumed that the EU's failure to patiently monitor Myanmar's efforts has exposed its true intentions. To put it simply, the EU's decision to ignore the Investment Protection Agreement between EU and Myanmar tantamounts to ignoring the potential development of Myanmar including Rakhine State. Obviously enough economic development is of great necessity in dealing with the Rakhine State affair. We hereby humbly submit that the present initiative of the EU to protect human rights rather than solving the actual problem would indeed be a fruitless endeavour. ■

Public Talk to be held at Community Centre in Hpa-An

PUBLIC Talk, titling "Youth and Literature" will be held at the Community Centre of Hpa-An, Kayin State at 10am on 13 January.

The public talk is organized by Information and Public Relations Department, Ministry of Information.

Mon Ethnic Affairs Minister U Min Tin Win of the Kayin State Government, Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Thant Zin Aung, author Min Wai Hin, author Hnin Wai Nyein and local youth representative Ma Hnan Htet Htet Lin Soe will participate in the talk. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Welcome to the Festival of 66th Anniversary Kayah State Day!

By Maung Tin Hlaing
[Hotel & Tourism]

THE festival marking the 66th anniversary Kayah State Day to be held from 10th January to 19th January in 2018 for 10 days at the Kandarawady grounds at Loikaw will include myriads of entertainment shows—dancing contests of traditional culture, stage shows presented by famous vocalists, Myanmar Anyeint and Zat show performances, Kandarawady Beauty Contest, bike-riding competition, mini-marathon and soccer matches, departmental and civilian exhibition rooms, Thai Emporium, sale rooms and 21 kinds of sport contests.

On Kayah State Days held annually, every Kayah national will remember the Panglong Conference held in February, 1947 because Panglong Agreement, a result of the national unity, was successfully singed on this auspicious day.

66th anniversary of Kayah State Day

At 9 am on Tuesday, 15th January 1952, that is, 4th Waning of Pyatho 1313 ME, "Namakarana" festival was held at Loikaw, Kayah State, now reaching 66th anniversary Kayah State Day on 15th January 2018 to come. That day will be resoundingly observed as the auspicious occasion.

Looking back into the past history, leaders from Kayah State took part in the struggles against the British Imperialists for the nationwide liberation including the hilly regions where national ethnic



Taung Kwe Pagoda in Loikaw, Kayah State. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

people lived, under the leadership of our national leader, Bogyoke Aung San.

Kayah State Leaders

Due to the strenuous efforts, great unity and bravery of Kayah State leaders, local population and Tatmadaw-men Kayah State Day was successfully celebrated. Minister Sao Wunna, Saw Phyar Sao Ngai Htoo, Maha Tharay Sithu U Sein, Saw Phyar Sao Lawi, Thaing Bahan, Thiri Byanchi U Aye Mya Lay, Wunna Kyaw Htin Captain

Than Tin, Sithu U Myat Soe, U Bu Rei, U Lwi Zi, Thiha Bala Boh Byan Thu were leaders of Kayah State.

Leaders and local populace exerted concerted efforts days and nights for the development of their State, making a solemn vow to consolidate and develop Kayah State and conserve Kayah national race and cultures. As committed according to their vows, they have been performing the tasks for Kayah State development until now.

Pagodas in Kayah

Kayah State is the one with beautiful scenic views and considerable developments. It is accessible to anywhere in the country. Loikaw, Kandarawady—Land of the Mt Silver Kayah State's city is small but it is of great beauty. Once in the past, it was a mountain resort camp, where Buddhism flourished greatly. It abounds with monasteries, pagodas, stupas and many religious and cultural heritages. Mingalar Thiri Taungwe Pagoda and Shwe Taung Pagoda are excellent symbols of Kayah

State and religious edifices of great glamour. Situated in the middle of mountains surrounding as great walls, mosaic view of the town can be seen from the top of the mountain "Taungwe Pagoda." There seems to be an element of hyperbole in such a claim that it is worth imitating to see pleasant views, neat and tidy roads and systematically built houses.

State famous for its legend, "Return of Dwemenaw to the Land of Mt Silver"

Loikaw, a small town on the hilly region situated at 2950 feet above the sea level has the natural water-fall and lakes. Natural lakes located at 14 miles far from south of Loikaw are believed to be the ones in the legend of Dwemenaw and her sisters. Dwemenaw is said to be the youngest of seven daughters of the King of the Land of the Mt Silver. According to the legend they played swimming in the lakes.

As for the travellers, they can visit to study Biluchaung Hydro Power Plant supplying electricity power to many regions of the country situated in Lawpita moun-

tain resort camp. The region has clean and sufficient water resources which come from Biluchaung flowing from Inlay Lake in Shan State, Ngwe-taung Dam, Great Pe-khon Lake on the bordering area of Shan and Kayah States, all the year long. Accordingly, Loikaw has no problems as regards the acquisition of water; likewise other hilly regions.

Famous Kayah Orchids and a whole slew of flowers of variety make Kayah more beautiful. Living on the hilly region, Kayah nationals are healthy. On arrival at Kayah State we can see simple and honest Kayah nationals and their lovely cultures and traditions. Transportation also greatly developed. It is easily accessible by roads, trains and plane from any places across the nation all the year around, hence the convenience for trade to easily flow.

Defend from internal and external destructive elements

Kayah leaders who were worth imitating devoted themselves for the development of their region, sacrificing their lives

if needed. They exerted concerted efforts to fight against not only the insurgents in the land but also external forces of aggression at 2 am on 8th February 1953, for the sovereignty of their state.

Loikaw City

The town was built with systematic arrangement under the leadership of the learned U Thiri in 1200 ME, knowing that it was geographically situated in the main place. Naming after the founder of the town U Thiri, it was initially named "Thiritaw alias Thiridaw," meant for the town established by U Thiri. Afterward, at the time when Shan nationals came to settle down there it was called "Loikhaw," naming after the mountain situated separated. Here, Loi means the mountain in Shan language, with Khaw meaning "in separation." When time went past, Loikhaw changed into Loikaw.

State of natural resources

Teak from Kayah State is a famous product. Lead, granite, tin, tungsten, antimony and iron are minerals produces in Kayah State, earning foreign exchanges for the national economic development. And Biluchaung Hydro Power Plant fulfilled the electricity need of the nation.

Ceremonial bronze drums and Ngwetaung Bags

Kayah nationals are patriots, admiring their traditions and customs. They always conserve their ancestral heritages. They are ready and willing to perform for the development of their State and their own race. They tend to treat guests with great hospitality. Musical instruments of "Pharsi—ceremonial bronze drums" highly valued by Kayah nationals and famous "Ngwetaung Bags" are the regional products. According to Kayah nationals, Kayah became famous for their place where stars of good fortune assemble.

We should pay a visit to Kayah State overwhelmed with beauties and developments, where 66th anniversary of Kayah State Day festival will be resoundingly held. ■

(Translated by Khin Maung Oo)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
President's Office
Order 3/2018

9th Waning of Pyatho, 1379 ME
10th January, 2018

Resignation of Magway Region Ministers approvedd

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 264 (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 52 (a) of Region or State Government Law, following Magway Region ministers have been permitted to resign of their own volition from their positions.

- (1) U Soe Myint, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation
- (2) U Nay Myo Kyaw, Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population

Sd/ Htin Kyaw
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Towards a healthier tomorrow, today

Dr. Poonam Khetrapal Singh, regional director on child health issues, World Health Organisation

Seven years ago this month, the South-East Asia Region recorded its last case of wild poliovirus. In 2014, three years later, the region was declared polio-free. Not a single case of wild poliovirus has been recorded region-wide since, sparing millions of children the risk of contracting the paralysing and life-threatening disease. The region's achievement, and its contribution to global polio eradication, is one of the world's great public health success stories.

Last year, 3 million more children in the region survived the first five years of life than in 1990 – the most dramatic reduction anywhere in the world. The region's contribution to global under-five mortality meanwhile dropped to 25 per cent, down from 37 per cent at the start of the same period. The region has now achieved the Millennium Development Goal target for under-five mortality, while a few of its member countries have already surpassed the child health-related Sustainable Development Goals. In short, across the South-East Asia Region, more children than ever are not only surviving, but are growing into strong, healthy and productive adults.

To maintain this trajectory and ensure all countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, accelerated progress is needed. By 2030, all countries should have reduced under-five mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births, while neonatal mortality should be at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births. Maternal mortality – a related concern – should meanwhile be reduced to less than 70 per 1,000 live births. To achieve these targets, concerted action is needed.

First, member countries should expand access to good quality health services, especially for women, children and adolescents, with universal health coverage (UHC) remaining a top priority. Through targeted investments, countries can greatly reduce each of the leading causes of maternal, newborn and under-five deaths (a regional flagship priority), including complications associated with prematurity, pneumonia, birth asphyxia, diarrhea, sepsis and birth defects. A good way to achieve these outcomes is by recruiting more health workers, advancing the skills of health workers, and finding innovative ways to retain health workers in rural areas. Second, member countries should focus on mitigating cause-and-context-specific mortality. Even where national averages are good, for example, children belonging to poor or marginalised groups can suffer mortality rates well above national levels, often due to easily preventable diseases such as pneumonia or diarrhea. ■



Leader of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the acting German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Social Democratic Party (SPD) leader Martin Schulz shakes hands before exploratory talks about forming a new coalition government at the SPD headquarters in Berlin, Germany on 7 January, 2018. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

German Social Democrats wary as coalition talks enter crunch stage

BERLIN — German Social Democrats sounded downbeat about their coalition talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives on Wednesday, a day before both camps decide whether they want to move to formal negotiations on establishing a new government.

Merkel, weakened by an election setback in September, turned to the left-leaning Social Democrats (SPD) to seek a re-run of their so-called "grand coalition" after the collapse in November of talks on a three-way coalition untested at national level. The chancellor, who has won widespread respect abroad in more than 12 years in power, needs the coalition talks to succeed in order to avoid her personal authority being further undermined and Germany's international standing diminished. The Social Democrats know this, and are playing hard ball. "The mood is like the weather," Ralf Steg-

ner, one of the SPD's deputy leaders, said as he gazed at the cloudy sky above Berlin ahead of Wednesday's talks.

SPD leader Martin Schulz added: "It will be a long day."

As Europe's largest economy and pre-eminent power broker, Germany is crucial to the region's fortunes. Berlin's partners are eagerly awaiting a new German government to help drive forward Brexit talks, euro zone reform and EU diplomatic initiatives.

Senior officials from the SPD, Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) and their Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), have been holding exploratory talks this week on whether to pursue formal coalition negotiations. The talks are due to conclude on Thursday, before SPD leaders recommend to their members whether they should shift into official negotiations.

"We have a lot of work

ahead of us today and tomorrow," said conservative Finance Minister Peter Altmaier.

Participants have described the negotiations as "good", but SPD leaders need to convince their party members as they are offering them a vote on 21 January on whether to proceed.

The leader of the Jusos youth branch of the SPD told broadcaster ARD that a deal between the coalition negotiators to drop plans to lower carbon dioxide emissions by 40 per cent from 1990 levels by 2020 "was not a good start to these talks".

Merkel has ruled with the SPD in a sometimes unwieldy "grand coalition" in two of her three previous terms in office, including in the last parliament from 2013-2017. But both parties bled support in the 24 September election, which saw the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) enter the Bundestag (national parliament) for the first time. Many in the SPD rank-

and-file oppose a repeat of the grand coalition as they fear it will further diminish the identity of the party, which suffered its worst result in September's vote since 1933. Some SPD members are also concerned that a new grand coalition would make the AfD the main opposition party.

Despite such reticence, German media reported on Tuesday that conservative and SPD negotiators had reached agreement on a law to attract skilled immigrants.

Should the two biggest party groups fail to agree on moving ahead, Merkel could try to form a minority government or Germany could face new elections.

President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, eager to broker a deal, is keenly aware that the source of Germany's international clout is its economic might and that businesses want a stable coalition soon to end the uncertainty and avoid another vote. —Reuters ■

WORLD BRIEFS

US judge blocks Trump move to end DACA programme for immigrants

WASHINGTON — A US judge blocked President Donald Trump's administration on Tuesday from ending a programme that shielded from deportation children brought to the United States illegally by their parents.

Trump decided in September to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA. US District Judge William Alsup ruled in San Francisco on Tuesday the program must remain in place while litigation over Trump's decision unfolds. —Reuters ■

UK business minister meeting Peugeot CEO to discuss Vauxhall UK plant — source

LONDON — Britain's business minister Greg Clark is meeting Peugeot Chief Executive Carlos Tavares in Paris to discuss matters including the firm's Vauxhall car plant, a source familiar with the matter told Reuters on Wednesday.

Peugeot-maker PSA said in October it would make around 400 jobs cuts at the site and announced a further 250 losses this week, reducing the plant's workforce by a third in a bid to make it more efficient by reducing it to one shift. "The meeting has been in the diary for a while," the source said. —Reuters ■

Petrol bombs thrown at Jewish school in Tunisia during anti-government protest

TUNIS — A Jewish school in southern Tunisia was hit by petrol bombs during anti-government protests, witnesses said on Wednesday.

No one was hurt but the school suffered some light damage in the attack late on Tuesday during a violent protest against austerity measures in the tourist resort island of Djerba, the head of the Jewish community, Perez Trabelsi, told Reuters. —Reuters ■

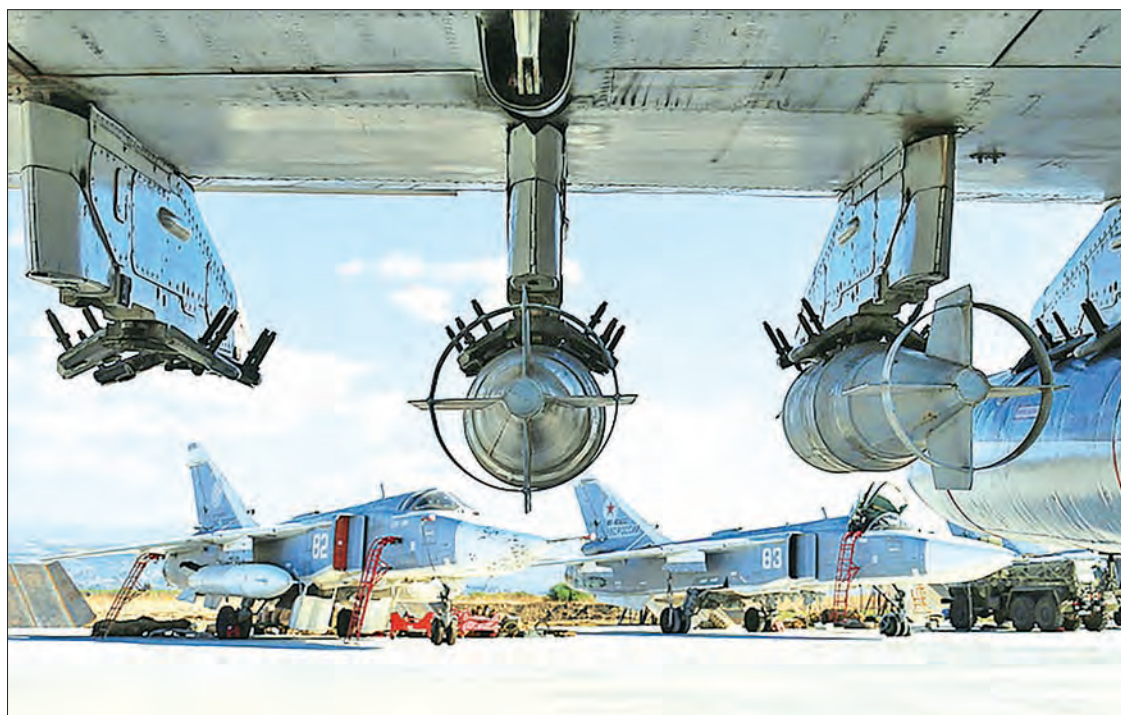
Reports of 31 drones attacking Russian facilities in Syria untrue, says defence official

MOSCOW — The allegations saying as many as 31 drones attacked Russian facilities in Syria in the small hours of 6 January are not true, a senior Russian Defence Ministry official said on Wednesday. Earlier, some media quoted the coordinator of the Syrian and Russian parliaments' friendship support group, Dmitry Sablin, as saying that 31 drones were involved in the attack on Russian military bases in Syria. The legislator said all of them were combat aircraft.

"Participating in the attack on Russian military facilities in Syria on 5-6 January were 13 combat fixed-wing drones. The militants used ten drones in the attempt to hit Hmeymim and another three against Tartus. Claims to the effect a far greater number of UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) was involved have nothing to do with the reality," the source said.

He pointed out there were no reasons to keep secret or understate the number of drones that attacked Russian military facilities in Syria.

"All of the drones forced to land by our radio-electronic warfare means and the debris of the



Hmeymim air base. PHOTO: TASS

drones shot down have been collected and are being examined by the Russian Defence Ministry. In the near future we will show them and present our preliminary findings," the source said.

The official confirmed that the very instance militants possessed the knowhow to make drones, control them at a distance of tens of kilometres and issue commands to drop bombs

on the basis of GPS coordinates should become a matter of great concern for the entire world community.

"In practice, further proliferation of the technologies and software which the militants used to control such UAVs in attacks against our facilities in Syria are extremely hard or impossible to control. Non-military facilities and civilian population in any

country around the world may be under the threat of a real combat strike by terrorists armed with such drones," he said.

Attack on Russian military facilities in Syria

Earlier, the Russian Defence Ministry said that in the small hours of 6 January Russian military facilities at Hmeymim and Tartus came under an attack by

terrorists-guided drones. All of the UAVs were either shot down or put under control by Russian military specialists. The Defence Ministry said the solutions employed by the militants could have been obtained only from an industrialized country. They warned of the risk of more such attacks in any other country around the world.

The ministry also said the drones that tried to attack Hmeymim and Tartus had been launched from the area of Muazzar, in the southwestern part of the de-escalation zone Idlib, held by the armed groups of the so-called moderate opposition.

In this connection the Russian Defence Ministry dispatched messages to the chief of the Turkish Armed Forces' General Staff Hulusi Akar and chief of the National Intelligence Organization Hakan Fidan.

Four de-escalation zones were established in Syria in the middle of last September: in East Ghouta (a suburb of Damascus), in the south of the country, near Homs, and in Idlib province and some areas of neighbouring provinces Aleppo, Latakia and Hama.—Tass ■

Pakistani journalist critical of military escapes kidnap attempt

ISLAMABAD — A Pakistani journalist, known for criticising his country's military establishment, said on Wednesday he had narrowly escaped being kidnapped by armed men, in an incident that came months after he complained of being harassed by security services.

Taha Siddiqui, who reports for France 24 and is the Pakistan bureau chief of Indian television channel WION, said the attempted abduction took place while he was being driven by taxi to the airport serving the capital Islamabad and the neighbouring, larger garrison city of Rawalpindi.

"I was on my way to airport today at 8:20 am when 10-12 armed men stopped my cab & forcibly tried to abduct me. I managed to escape. Safe and with police now," Siddiqui tweeted from a friend's Twitter account

early in the morning. "Looking for support in any way possible #StopEnforcedDisappearances," he added in the same tweet.

Rights groups have denounced the kidnappings of several social media activists over the past year as attempts to intimidate and silence critics of the Pakistan's security establishment. Last year, five Pakistani bloggers went missing for several weeks before four of them were released. All four fled abroad and two afterwards told media that they were tortured by a state intelligence agency during their disappearance.

The military has staunchly denied playing a role in any enforced disappearances, as has the civilian government. In the past, militants have also targeted journalists.

Siddiqui spoke to Reuters

from a police station where he was filing a report on the incident, and described how his taxi was stopped on the highway when another vehicle swerved, and braked suddenly in front of it.

About a dozen men armed with rifles and revolvers pulled him out of the cab, beat him and "threatened to kill" him.

"They threw me in the back of the vehicle in which I had been travelling, but the door on the other side was open," Siddiqui said.

"I jumped out and ran and was able to get into a taxi that was nearby, whose driver then floored it."

In a police statement, seen by Reuters, Siddiqui said during the kidnap attempt he appealed for help from a military vehicle that was passing by.

"I saw a military vehicle and shouted for help but one of the

abductors gestured (the vehicle) to move on and they did," Siddiqui said in the police statement, adding he had previously been "intimidated" by civilian and military security officials.

Siddiqui pleaded with police to help him recover his personal belongings — laptop computer, phone, hard drives, passport and suitcase — and provide him and his family with "police protection". "My life is under threat," he said in the statement.

Last year, the Committee to Protect Journalists said "Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency should stop harassing Taha Siddiqui", referring to the civilian agency that last year began a crackdown on online criticism of the powerful military.

Siddiqui last year filed a court petition to stop the agency from harassing him.—Reuters ■

Turkey says all court cases of coup participants to be concluded by year-end

ANKARA — Turkish courts will have ruled on all cases of suspects who allegedly took part in failed coup attempt by the end of this year, Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said on Wednesday.

Yildirim told a justice conference in Ankara that cases related to the July 2016 attempted putsch could be divided into two groups — those involving individuals who allegedly participated directly in the coup and those who are accused of indirect involvement. He said the former cases would be all concluded by the end of 2018.—Reuters ■



The first of the delivered helicopters was already dispatched to its Baltic Fleet home base. **PHOTO: TASS**

Russian Helicopters deliver upgraded Ka-27Ms to Defence Ministry

MOSCOW — Russian Helicopters (part of Rostec) have delivered a batch of Ka-27M helicopters to the Russian Navy, the company's press service reported on Tuesday.

"The first of the delivered helicopters was already dis-

patched to its Baltic Fleet home base. In addition, Ka-27Ms will be deployed to the Pacific and Northern Fleets. Upgrading Ka-27Ms is part of the state defence order," Russian Helicopters said in the statement.

The Ka-27-class multirole

helicopters of various versions are the core of the helicopter units of the Navy's marine aviation.

They are built to conduct air reconnaissance at sea, provide anti-submarine protection of ship groups, search for, detect,

track and destroy submarines and surface ships, as well as conduct search and rescue operations for crews of ships and aircraft in distress at sea and perform transport tasks to support the actions of ship groups.—Tass ■

Pro-independence parties to back former Catalan leader as regional head

MADRID — The two main pro-independence parties in the Spanish region of Catalonia have agreed to back former leader Carles Puigdemont as candidate for regional head, raising the likelihood of a renewed push for a split from Spain this year.

Junts per Catalunya (Together for Catalonia) representative Jordi Xucla said on Wednesday that his party and Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC) (Republican Left of Catalonia) will support Puigdemont's return to the job in which he spearheaded the independence push.

"The 21 December result

gave us the mandate to reflect the majority. The presidential candidate will evidently be Puigdemont," Xucla told Spanish national radio.

Puigdemont is in self-imposed exile in Brussels and could be arrested if he returns to Spain. The other main potential candidate to represent the pro-independence parties would be ERC leader Oriol Junqueras, who is serving a custodial sentence in a Madrid jail.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy called a regional election on 21 December to resolve Spain's worst political

crisis in decades after Catalan leaders declared independence in October following a banned referendum on secession.

Pro-independence parties achieved a slim majority of parliamentary seats in the election although they failed to get over 50 per cent of the popular vote. The inconclusive results failed to resolve the crisis as it showed Catalans split between backing independence and unity with Spain.

The new Catalan parliament will hold its first session on 17 January, the first step in reinstating local government after Ma-

drid fired the old regional administration, led by Puigdemont, for illegally declaring independence.

Once the parliament is formed, potential leaders of the regional government will put themselves forward for a vote of confidence, although it could take months for a new government to emerge.

Many of the Catalan political leaders were arrested on charges of sedition and rebellion after the independence declaration, with three still behind bars pending a trial, while Puigdemont, with four of his cabinet members, fled to Brussels.—Reuters ■

German union IG Metall to step up strike action ahead of wage talks

FRANKFURT — Powerful German union IG Metall said it would step up industrial action ahead of a round of negotiations with employers as it pushes for higher wages and the right to shorter hours for 3.9 million German workers.

"We have started with warning strikes and will widen them in the coming days," IG Metall chief Joerg Hofmann told German daily Passauer Neue Presse in an interview published on Wednesday.

In the state of North Rhine-Westphalia alone, the industrial heartland of Germany, more than 20,000 workers at companies including industrial group Thyssenkrupp and automotive supplier Benteler have been called on to strike on Wednesday, according to a spokesman for IG Metall.

To the south in Bavaria, rallies are planned at firms including engineering group Siemens.

Around 80,000 German industrial workers have taken action since the start of last week in support of IG Metall's wage claims, and further walkouts have been announced for Thursday.

With the economy in robust health and unemployment at record lows, the country's biggest union is demanding an inflation-busting 6 per cent pay hike this year. It has also called for a right to reduce weekly hours to 28 from 35 and return to full-time employment after two years for shift workers and those who need to care for children or elderly relatives.

Employers have so far offered 2 per cent plus a one-off 200 euro (\$239) payment in the first quarter and have rejected demands for a shorter work week unless hours could be increased temporarily as well.—Reuters ■

Ecuador says exploring mediation to solve Assange standoff

QUITO — Ecuador said on Tuesday it was exploring mediation to solve the standoff over WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who has been holed up in Ecuador's Embassy in London for five years, and called for cooperation from the United Kingdom and the international community. Former leftist President Rafael Correa,

who had said Assange was a "journalist," granted him asylum in 2012 to avoid extradition to Sweden over rape allegations. The Andean country's new government, however, has said it is concerned over Assange's "complicated" situation. President Lenin Moreno has described Assange as a "hacker," while stress-

ing he would not be kicked out of the embassy. "We're considering exploring the possibility of a mediation," Foreign Minister Maria Fernanda Espinosa told foreign reporters on Tuesday, adding that a third country or person could lead a potential mediation. "No solution can be reached without international cooperation and

without cooperation from the United Kingdom, which in addition has shown interest in finding a solution." Further details were not immediately available. In May, Sweden dropped the investigation into rape allegations that led Assange to seek asylum in the embassy in 2012, but British police said he would still be

arrested if he left the building.

Assange, who denies the rape allegations, fears being handed over to the United States to face prosecution over WikiLeaks' publication of thousands of classified military and diplomatic documents in one of the largest information leaks in US history.—Reuters ■

Malaysia to pay US firm up to \$70 mln if it finds missing MH370

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia signed a deal on Wednesday to pay a US seabed exploration firm up to \$70 million if it finds the missing Malaysia Airlines aircraft MH370 within 90 days of embarking on a new search in the Southern Indian ocean.

The disappearance of the aircraft en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in March 2014 with 239 people aboard ranks among the world's greatest aviation mysteries.

Australia, China and Malaysia ended a fruitless A\$200-million (\$157 million) search of a 120,000 sq. km area in January last year, despite investigators urging the search be extended to a 25,000-square-km area further to the north.

Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said a Houston-based pri-



Civil Aviation Malaysia's Director General Azharuddin Abdul Rahman and Ocean Infinity's CEO Oliver Plunkett exchange documents, witnessed by Malaysia's Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai, during the MH370 search operations signing ceremony between Malaysia's government and Ocean Infinity, in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 10 January, 2018. PHOTO: REUTERS

vate firm, Ocean Infinity, would search for MH370 in that 25,000-sq-km pri-

ority area on a "no-cure, no-fee" basis, meaning it will only get paid if it finds

the plane.

"As we speak, the vessel, Seabed Constructor, is

on her way to the search area, taking advantage of favourable weather condi-

tions in the South Indian ocean," Liow told a news conference.

The search will begin on 17 January, said Ocean Infinity Chief Executive Oliver Plunkett, who attended the signing event. Ocean Infinity will be paid \$20 million if the plane is found within 5,000 sq km, \$30 million if it is found within 10,000 square km and \$50 million if it is found within an area of 25,000 square km. Beyond that area, Ocean Infinity will receive \$70 million, Liow said.

Its priority is to locate the wreckage or the flight and cockpit recorders, and present credible evidence to confirm their location within 90 days, Liow added.

"They cannot take forever or drag it on for another six months or a year." —Reuters ■

Iranian oil tanker in East China Sea could burn for a month: South Korean official

SEOUL — The stricken Iranian oil tanker in the East China Sea could burn for as long as one month, South Korea's Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries told Reuters on Wednesday, as the blaze raged for a fourth day following a collision with a freight ship.

Dozens of rescue boats battled strong winds, high waves and poisonous fumes to comb a 900-square-nautical-mile (3,100-square-kilometre) area for 31 missing sailors and tame the fire, amid growing concerns the ship may explode or sink.

"We believe flames would last for two weeks or a month considering previous cases of oil tank accidents," said official Park Sung-dong. "What we are concerned about at this moment is the bunker fuel, which could contaminate water if (the ship) sinks," the ministry official said.

The tanker Sanchi (IMO:9356608), run by Iran's top oil shipping operator, National Iranian Tanker Co, collided on Saturday with the CF Crystal (IMO:9497050), carrying grain from the United States, about 160 nautical miles (300 km) off China's coast near Shanghai.

The Sanchi was carrying 136,000 tonnes of condensate, an ultra-light crude that is highly flammable and to South Korea, equivalent to about 1 million barrels and worth about \$60 million.

The Chinese government said late on Tuesday it had not found a "large-scale" oil leak, and the condensate was burning off or evaporating so quickly it would leave little residue — less than 1 per cent — within five hours of a spill. That reduces the chances of a crude-style oil slick. — Reuters ■

INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited by Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports for the supply of Medicine & Medical Products of Nuclear Medicine Departments in (2017-2018) Budget Year and for the supply of Medical Equipments for Yangon Children Hospital and Women & Children Hospital (Monywar) by Donation of Government of Republic of India.

Tender documents are available during office hours at the Procurement and Supply Division. Department of Medical Services, office No.(4), Ministry of Health and Sports Commencing from (15.1.2018).

Sealed bids are to be submitted to the office, not later than (30.1.2018) 15:00 hour, after which no bid will be accepted. No telegraph/telex proposal will be accepted.

For detail information please contact the Phone No.067-3411510, 067-3411544, Procurement and Supply Division Office, Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports.

Procurement and Supply Division
Ministry of Health and Sports

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V NACC POROS V-309

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NACC POROS V-309 are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-1-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-3 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 MERIDIAN SHIPPING
AGENCIES PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V CAPE FLORES VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CAPE FLORES VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-1-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V FLOURISH OCEAN

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V FLOURISH OCEAN are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-1-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of SPW-7 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 SEA TRANS SHIPPING CO
LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

France's Deneuve denounces #Metoo campaign for 'puritanism'

PARIS — Actress Catherine Deneuve and 99 other French women on Tuesday denounced a backlash against men following the Harvey Weinstein scandal, saying the #Metoo campaign against sexual harassment amounted to "puritanism" and was fueled by a "hatred of men."

In the aftermath of accusations against the US movie producer, millions of women took to social media to share their stories of being sexually harassed or assaulted, using the #Metoo hashtag worldwide or #SquealOnYourPig (#balancetonporc) in France.

"This urge to send men to the slaughterhouse, instead of helping women be more autonomous, helps the enemies of sexual freedom," the 100 women, including 74-year old Deneuve, one of France's most famous screen stars, said in a column published by Le Monde daily.

The man's right to "pester" a woman was an essential part



Actress Catherine Deneuve. PHOTO: REUTERS

of sexual freedom, they said, describing the campaign as "puritanism".

Marlene Schiappa, the

French minister tasked with cracking down on violence against women, said in a comment to Reuters that the Wein-

stein scandal forced a rethink of attitudes toward sexual harassment in France, a country that cherishes its self-image as the

land of seduction and romance.

Schiappa kicked off nationwide consultations on a law that is due to include steps to fight sexual harassment on the streets as well as extend the statute of limitation for rape of minors.

In late October, protesters in Paris disrupted the opening of a retrospective of Roman Polanski's work following new rape allegations against the French-Polish film director.

But for Deneuve and the other signatories of the letter, including writers and journalists, this went too far.

"This vigilante (online) justice has punished men in their jobs, forced some to resign, when all they did was touch a knee, try to steal a kiss, talk about 'intimate' matters in a work diner," they wrote.

"We defend a right to pester, which is vital to sexual freedom," they said. —Reuters ■

Versace TV murder series treats family with kindness, producer says

LOS ANGELES — The producer of an upcoming American TV series about the murder of designer Gianni Versace has defended the show from criticism, saying the family is treated "with respect and kindness."

The Versace company said in a statement issued in Italy on Monday that the series was "an act of fiction" given that it was based on Maureen Orth's 1999 book "Vulgar Favors." It said it "did not authorize and was not involved in the television series."

"The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story" dramatizes the violent death of Versace in a shooting at his Miami mansion in 1997.

Executive producer Ryan Murphy told Hollywood trade publication Variety at a Los Angeles event that Versace's sister, Donatella, sent actress Penelope Cruz flowers when Cruz was representing the series at the Golden Globes ceremony on Sunday.

Edgar Ramirez plays Gianni Versace and Cruz plays Donatella Versace in the nine-part series by Twenty-First Century Fox Inc's FX cable network that will start broadcasting on 17 January. Donatella is artistic director and vice



Italian designer Gianni Versace waves at the end of his presentation of his spring-summer '97 ready-to-wear collection at a Milan fashion show, in Milan, Italy on 5 October, 1996. PHOTO: REUTERS

president of the privately held fashion company.

"I don't know if she (Donatella) is going to watch the show, but if she did I think that she would see that we treat her and her family with respect and kindness," Murphy told Variety on Tuesday night. "She really is a feminist role model in my book, because she had to step into an impossible situation, which she did with grace and understanding. I think that she really loves Penelope and knows that Penelope would

never do anything to represent her in a negative light," Murphy said. Screenwriter Tom Rob Smith said the series aimed to be truthful in its spirit, even if it gets some details wrong.

"The show is full of love for him (Versace)," Smith said. "I'm sure there are points where (the family) could correct some of the smaller details, but I think the bigger picture is that this is a figure that we're celebrating and a figure that we all fell in love with." — Reuters

Gwyneth Paltrow to give marriage a second shot

LOS ANGELES — Actress Gwyneth Paltrow on Monday announced her engagement to US television producer Brad Falchuk, saying she had decided to give marriage a second shot after accepting "the soul-stretching, pattern-breaking opportunities" of intimacy.

Paltrow, 45, who famously described her 2014 separation from her Coldplay frontman husband Chris Martin as a "conscious uncoupling," confirmed the engagement in an interview for the latest edition of her lifestyle magazine Goop.

"I have tried to accept how complex romantic love can be. I have decided to give it (marriage) a go again, not only because I believe I have found the man I was meant to be with, but because I have accepted the soul-stretching, pattern-breaking opportunities that (terrifyingly) are made possible by intimacy," she said.

Paltrow and Falchuk, 46,

have been dating for about two years. Falchuk was the co-creator with Ryan Murphy in 2009 of the popular TV series "Glee." The two also worked together on the TV series "American Horror Story" and "Scream Queens."

Paltrow won a best actress Oscar in 1999 for "Shakespeare in Love," but is now better known as the creator of Goop, a lifestyle website and product store that promotes healthy eating and stress-free living.

She and Martin finalised their divorce in 2016 after 13 years of marriage. They have two children.

Paltrow and Falchuk posed for the cover of the magazine with his arms wrapped around her. Falchuk also answered the popular "How goopy are you?" quiz in a video on goop.com.

The interview appears in the issue of Goop that hits newsstands on Tuesday. — Reuters



A Gucci sign is seen outside a shop in Paris, France on 18 December, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Feeding the fashionistas: Gucci turns to fine dining

FLORENCE, (Italy) — It's all a matter of taste.

Luxury labels are accustomed to tempting fashionistas, and now they're stretching from haute couture to haute cuisine.

Gucci opened a 50-seat restaurant, Gucci Osteria, in Florence on Tuesday where three-Michelin-star chef Massimo Bottura will serve up high-end dishes.

The Italian fashion house, owned by Kering (PRTPPA), is not the only luxury company to foray into food; LVMH (LVMH.PA) announced late last year it would open a second branch of its gourmet grocer La Grande Epicerie in Paris, days before Tiffany's & Co (TIF.N) opened its Blue Box Cafe in New York.

"The big brands are following where their high-spending clients' cash is going," said Fabrizio Pini, professor and joint director of the International Master in Luxury Management of Milan's MIP Politecnico business school.

Gucci and its rivals do not expect these investments to yield significant financial returns, for now, but they are seen as a way of enhancing their global brands. In some cases, eateries can also be a way to make the most out of large, city-centre store sites as customers increasingly shop online. The Gucci restaurant is sited behind the walls of the 14-century Palazzo della Mercanzia building, overlooking the city's most famous square, Piazza della Signoria. Visitors can treat themselves to the likes of Parmigiano Reggiano tortellini, Peruvian-inspired tostadas, pork belly buns and mushroom risotto for 20-30 euros per dish.

Few strategies come without an element of risk, however.

Bernstein analyst Mario Ortelletti said that if luxury companies did not provide a gastronomic experience that matched their other goods, it could dilute their brands. "The experience has to be luxurious and recognisable," he

said. While labels are looking to these investments for marketing rather than profits, a presence in food could offer some financial returns in the long run.

With a global luxury market estimated to be worth 1.2 trillion euros in 2017, sales of luxury wines and spirits and food, together worth just under 120 billions, last year grew 6 percent, more than personal luxury goods such as bags, shoes and clothing, according to Bain & Co's yearly report on the sector.

"Food is luxury as much as fashion," said Stefano Cantino, strategic marketing director at Prada (1913.HK), which owns exclusive Milan patisserie Marchesi. "Barriers have been broken."

The Gucci Osteria restaurant is part of "Gucci Garden", which includes an exhibition area, a bazaar-like boutique and a cinema room. "Haute couture and haute cuisine are a recipe made in heaven," Bottura told reporters. —Reuters ■

Scientists fear Australia's green turtle may become extinct

SYDNEY — A new report on Tuesday claimed that green sea turtles in Australia's Great Barrier Reef could be in danger of going extinct due to warmer ocean temperatures.

Conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the US along with Aussie scientists from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, the study found that male turtle number has been rapidly declining for around two decades. In the cooler southern areas of the Great Barrier Reef, the number of female green turtles ranged between 65 and 69 per cent.

While in the warmer northern tip of the Reef, female green turtles accounted for a staggering 87 to 99.8 per cent of the population. "Considering that sea turtle sex is dependent upon the temperature at which the egg incubates and considering that warmer temperatures produce more female hatchlings, we're concerned climate change might be causing this effect," biological marine researcher at

the NOAA, Camryn Allen, said in the report.

"The pivotal temperature for sea turtle populations where they produce 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female is about 29 degrees Celsius."

"Any variation on that of about one to two degrees, could risk producing all females or perhaps embryonic death."

Average temperatures on the Great Barrier Reef have far exceeded that pivotal temperature, according to Allen.

The impacts of climate change continue to be of huge concern to conservation groups downunder, after two large-scale bleaching events in the past two years have impacted on the tourist destination's famous coral sea floor.

World Wildlife Fund Australia's chief executive officer Dermot O'Gorman said, "If it continues we're going to start to lose the male population, which is essential for breeding and keeping those populations sustainable in one of the world's most important green turtle populations." —Xinhua ■

World's longest thangka painting to be completed in Spring

XINING — A 1,260-metre thangka, a traditional Tibetan Buddhist scroll painting, is expected to be completed in spring in northwest China's Qinghai Province, becoming world's longest thangka.

Previously, a 618-metre thangka was considered the world's longest.

The painting is 2 metres high and depicts the whole life

of Tsongkhapa, founder of the Yellow Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Since 2010, more than 380 painters have participated in the project, completing about 1,100 metres so far.

Thangka is a form of silk painting that dates back to the Tibetan Tubo Kingdom 1,200 years ago. It was listed as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2009. —Xinhua ■

Japanese astronaut apologizes for 'fake news' of height increase

TOKYO — Japanese astronaut Norishige Kanai, on a mission to the International Space Station, apologized on Wednesday for saying he had grown 9 cm (3.5 inches) while in space and expressing concern about whether he'd be safe on his return to Earth.

Most astronauts "grow" during protracted space missions because their spines extend in the absence of gravity, but the gains are usually

limited to a couple of centimeters (inches) maximum and disappear once they are back on the ground. The 41-year-old Kanai, who went to space last month for a nearly six-month mission, posted on Twitter on Monday that he had "a big announcement."

"My height's been measured here in space and somehow, somehow, I've grown 9 cm! In only three weeks I've really shot up, something I haven't seen

since high school," he tweeted.

"This makes me a little worried that I might not be able to fit in the Soyuz seats for our return."

But a bit over a day later — and in the wake of a flurry of news stories — he apologized, saying that he'd measured himself after his captain raised questions about the apparent growth and he had stretched only 2 cm from his Earth-bound height. —Reuters ■



Members of the International Space Station expedition 54/55, Norishige Kanai of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) during the send-off ceremony after checking their space suits before the launch of the Soyuz MS-07 spacecraft at the Baikonur cosmodrome, in Kazakhstan on 17 December 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Coaching certificate course in February in Yangon

Kyaw Zin Lin

WITH the aim of developing good licensed coaches in Myanmar, an AFC 'C' Coaching Certificate Course will be launched at the office of the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) in Yangon from 15 to 28 February, according to an MFF official.

Participation criteria for the AFC 'C' Coaching Certificate course includes: playing experience (with supporting CV), physical fitness; medical fitness, full course attendance, appropriate age (between 21 and 35); at least high school level of education; recommendation from head of department if interested person was a civil officer or servant; literacy (reading and writing) in English and basic computer skills.

All selected trainees must also attend a MFF 'D'

License course as pre-training for the AFC 'C' Course.

All interested candidates need to submit an application to the Myanmar Football Federation no later than 12.1.2018. The AFC 'C' Coaching Certificate course aims to train coaches and develop their basic techniques and skills in football.

The course is designed to teach the coaches to organise, direct and conduct basic coaching practices, especially targeting young players.

The course lasts 13 days and requires a minimum of 85 hours of study time for both the practical and theoretical sessions. In the final examination, students will be assessed on their practical coaching abilities, knowledge of the laws of the game, and learning and understanding of the theory contents of football. ■



Swansea City's Tom Carroll in action with Wolverhampton Wanderers' Ivan Cavaleiro during the FA Cup Third Round match between Wolverhampton Wanderers and Swansea City at Molineux Stadium in Wolverhampton, Britain on 6 January, 2018. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Swansea win appeal over Fer's red card

LONDON— Swansea City have won their appeal over midfielder Leroy Fer's dismissal during last weekend's goalless draw with Wolverhampton Wanderers in the third round of the FA Cup. Fer was shown a straight red card in the second half after his foul on Wolves' Helder Costa was deemed to consti-

tute violent conduct by referee Anthony Taylor but the Premier League side argued the Dutchman should have been cautioned instead.

"Leroy Fer will be available for Swansea's next three games after an independent regulatory commission accepted that he was wrongly dismissed for

violent conduct against Wolves on 6 Saturday, January," an FA spokesperson said.

The 28-year-old was initially ruled out of Swansea's FA Cup replay against Wolves, along with league games against Newcastle United and Liverpool but will now be available for selection. —Reuters ■

Guardiola consoles Bristol City boss after Aguero's late winner

MANCHESTER, England — Bristol City suffered stoppage-time heartbreak in their League Cup semi-final at Manchester City on Tuesday but played better than most Premier League teams that visit the Etihad Stadium, according to the home side's manager Pep Guardiola.

The second-tier visitors had taken the lead with a penalty before the break in the first leg clash and then held on for dear life after Kevin De Bruyne levelled for the hosts.

Yet Sergio Aguero's last-gasp goal gave City a 2-1 advantage heading into the return game in two weeks' time.

The late strike was a gut-wrenching blow for visiting manager Lee Johnson, whose team had already dumped four top flight sides out of the competition, but his opposite number in the dugout had words of consolation at full time.

"Pep Guardiola said to me that we played better than most

of the Premier League teams that come to Man City," Johnson told Sky Sports.

We'll take an awful lot from it and learn a lot. It is not over. It will be an interesting game at Ashton Gate. "The away goal was very important. We tried to



Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

score and certainly didn't park the bus. The lads have to go home and think we can kick on from this performance."

Manchester City, who are unbeaten and 15 points clear in the Premier League, fell behind when defender John Stones dived into a rash challenge on Bobby Reid, who dispatched the penalty.

The visitors' lead lasted until the 55th minute but after De Bruyne's leveller it was one-way traffic as they defended bravely in the face of a City onslaught.

"My players were fantastic because in football you can win, you can lose, but we try until the end," Guardiola said. "We win many games in the last minutes because we don't give up. A semi-final is always complicated.

"I said congratulations to Lee Johnson on full time. They are a fantastic team for many reasons. They can play, they are fast, they know exactly what to do. It will be tough in Bristol." —Reuters ■

New players developed by School of Football

Kyaw Zin Lin

WITH the intention to nurture new, talented players, School of Football provided by Yangon United is being conducted starting from 3 January.

The course is being conducted by Marshall Soper, Youth Development Director and AFC licensed coaches. The teaching will be conducted on three levels starting from basic football skills. Each level will require one month of instruction and study, said an official from the Yangon FC.

"At the moment it is all about the techniques. We need to respond more to techniques and close the gap between youth football, School of Football and youth team 21.

The most important things we make sure to prepare School of Football first, so make sure they have the easy

transfer from junior football, from youth football to senior football that is a goal and my ambition", said Youth Development Director Marshall Soper.

"As I said before football is not supposed to be easy. It is all about working extremely hard, being passionate about the work, being passionate about achieving a dream.

Make Yangon United proud to be associated with the players, and the players must be proud to be associated with Yangon United because this is probably the strongest club in the country and it represents football in the country. To be a part of this club is to be a part of something big and beautiful", he added. School of Football was founded in December 2015 by Yangon United in order to develop the next generation of Myanmar footballers. ■