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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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From friendship to bilateral development between Myanmar and Thailand

About 3,000 Members of the Sangha from Myanmar and Thailand receive provision donated by peoples of Myanmar and Thailand at the ceremony to mark the friendship between the two countries at Myawady, the border town of Myanmar, on 25 February 2018. With the strengthening of the friendship between the two countries, the authorities of the two countries has expected to promote the religious relations, tourism and bilateral trade between the two neighbouring countries. **PHOTO: HTAIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)**

Let Khat Than project to develop weaving industry

TO develop the weaving industry in Myanmar, the Small-Scale Industries Department, the British Council and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation have implemented a three-year project called "Let Khat Than" in 2017.

Two experts from United Kingdom (UK) started the project in July 2017 by reviewing the curriculum and syllabus of weaving training schools in Myanmar. With advice from two experts, trainers from the weaving training schools across the country held a workshop at the Saunders Weaving and Vocational Institute in Amarapura Township in January 2018. The second workshop and woven textiles exhibition is also being held at the Saunders Weaving and Vocational Institute from 24 to 28 February, said Daw Nay Chi Thwin, a project manager from the British Council.

"The workshop and exhibition was organised to exhibit Myanmar weaving works to the world and create a network among the weavers. Other programmes such as educating the weaving trainers and setting up a weaving reference access will also be carried out during the three-year period," she added.

SEE PAGE-3

Gov't, MRF donate 300 tonnes of rice to Sri Lanka flood victims

May Thet Hnin

A ceremony to donate 300 tonnes of rice to Sri Lanka's flood victims was held by the government and the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) on 24 February at Pinlekoethwe rice

mill in Dagon Seikkan Industrial Zone.

Dr Than Myint, Union Minister for the Commerce Ministry, and other officials, along with Mr. K.W.N.D Karunaratne, Sri Lanka's Ambassador to My-

anmar, and officials from the MRF attended the event.

The donation is a humanitarian aid for victims of the flood and landslide in May 2017, which killed more than 200 people and rendered 600,000 homeless.

The MRF donated some 300 tonnes of rice with an estimated value of more than US\$150,000, while the government will pay the cost of shipment charges to Sri Lanka from the Yangon port.

SEE PAGE-3



'BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017'

Awarded by Financial Times (The Banker)

HIV/AIDS flagship UHF project commences

BY May Thet Hnin

THE launch ceremony of the HIV/AIDS Flagship (UHF) project, with a fund of US\$10 million and backed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), was held at Sedona Hotel, Yangon, yesterday.

The two-year project (2018-2019) is being executed in places with the highest rates of HIV infection: Kachin and Shan states, and the Sagaing, Yangon and Mandalay regions.

The project aims to scale up HIV prevention, testing and treatment services by utilising non-governmental organisations and private sector health providers for people living with HIV and key populations, people who inject drugs (PWID), women sex workers, men, women & LGBTQs who are afflicted and transgender people.

The funding from the UHF project will enable partner organisations to develop new outreach and adherence strategies, including social media outreach, common elements treatment approach, mental health counselling and research on transgender people.

The UHF project will also expand the current PWID coverage for methadone maintenance treatment and harm reduction services.

The project is funded by USAID under the US President's Emergency Plan for

AIDS Relief, through the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Myanmar. UNAIDS is overseeing the project, while Community Partners International (CPI) is providing project implementation support and management to five partner organisations: Asian Harm Reduction Network, Medical Action Myanmar, Médecins du Monde, Metta Development Foundation and Population Services International.

"HIV care and prevention services vary depending on organisations. Therefore, organisations tend to refer themselves. Data sharing has become strong due to the concerted efforts of the five groups in this project.

The projects will reach more HIV patients and better treatment will be provided. There are other benefits of co-operation also," said Dr Kiang Thandar Hnin, medical coordinator, Médecins du Monde. The UHF Project aligns with the goals of Myanmar's National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS 2016-2020 (HIV NSP III), developed by Myanmar's Ministry of Health and Sports. By focusing primarily on outreach and linkage to care, the UHF project will complement other HIV/AIDS initiatives funded by the Global Fund and Three Millennium Development Goal Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. "There are many challenges in providing HIV

treatment services, from giving tablets to psychological counselling and receiving treatment. There are some inappropriate cultural and unlawful actions in psychological counselling," said Dr Si Thura, CPI.

According to Myanmar's National Strategic Plan on HIV NSP III, there are an estimated 224,794 people living with HIV in Myanmar, with key populations bearing a disproportionate burden of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The estimated HIV prevalence rates among people who inject drugs, women sex workers and men, women & LGBTQs who are afflicted in Myanmar are 28.5 per cent, 14.6 per cent and 11.6 per cent, respectively. The HIV prevalence can also vary depending on geographical regions. Under the five-year plan of HIV NSP III, some \$460 million is required to carry out activities to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, said Dr Htun Nyunt Oo, programme manager of the National AIDS Programme.

Myanmar is ranked 25 in the list of global countries having a high rate of HIV prevalence. The rate of new patients with HIV infection dropped by 26 per cent in 2016, compared with 2010. Similarly, the death toll due to AIDS-related diseases plunged by 52 per cent.

Dr Myint Htwe and Mr. Scot Marciel, American Ambassador to Myanmar, also attended the launch ceremony of the UHF project. ■



Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa delivers the concluding remarks. PHOTO: MNA

6th meeting of 7th State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee concludes

THE 6th meeting of the 7th State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee concluded at Maha Pathana Cave in Thiri Mingalar Kaba Aye Hill in Yangon yesterday.

The final-day meeting was attended by State Ovadacariya Sayadaws, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaws, State Central Working Committee of the Sangha Sayadaws, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Director-General of Religious Affairs Department U Myint Oo, Pro-rector (Admin) of the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University U Khin Maung Win, states and regions religious affairs heads and officials.

The meeting was presided over by Chairman of State Central Working Committee of the Sangha Abhidhaja Maharathaguru Abhidhaja Aggamaha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa. The sugges-

tions and discussions reported by State Central Working Committee of the Sangha were answered and explained by Joint Secretary Sayadaws of the committee Agga Maha Pandita Dwipitakadhara Bhaddanta Agga Dhamma and confirmed before the morning session was concluded.

Then, State Sangha Vinaya member Sayadaws were offered certificates related to Vinaya and of Theravada Buddhist Missionary Ovadacariya Committee.

The substitutions, decisions and confirmations of the 6th meeting of the 7th State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee were recorded at the the Sasana History Book which was signed by 15 Ovadacariya Sayadaws, Chairman Sayadaw, Caretaker Sayadaw, representative monks from various schools, states and regions. The meeting came to an end with concluding remarks by the Chairman Sayadaw. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Women's Center: Two years and going strong



The entire women-led team of MWSDC at their center's 2nd anniversary in Junction Mawtin. PHOTO: ZAW HTET OO

SAFE, strong, and self-confident', that is the motto of Myanmar Women's Self-Defence Center (MWSDC), a group by women for women empowerment.

MWSDC commemorated their 2nd Anniversary yesterday on the fifth floor of Junction Mawtin, where their self-defence classes are primarily held. The event started with opening remarks from two of their trainers, Ma Suu May and Ma Ei Nge.

MWSDC started back in February 2016 as a group of three women holding classes in the meeting hall of Triangle

Women's Support Group on 50th street. The center has since grown to include nine trainers giving self-defence courses. They also distribute defensive products such as pepper spray key chains for Ks 6,000 apiece, and recently advertised a reusable sanitary napkin by Triple C women's collective.

Ma Michelle aka May Shell, one of the co-founders, said that the center has plans to open an additional center in Mandalay and then later to expand into other regions. She also launched a channel called Yangon Thu Michelle, an entertainment and knowledge

sharing platform on Facebook, for women empowerment.

The event ended with Ma Yu Yu Swe aka Evelyn, also a co-founder, expressing gratitude for all the people and organizations that supported them throughout their two year journey, after which they sliced the celebratory cake.

For further inquiry you can contact MWSDC via their email selfdefensemw@gmail.com or call +95 979 559 6885, +95 951 69968. You can also head to their Facebook page at Myanmar's Women's Self Defence Center for updates on classes and future plans. —Zaw Htet Oo ■

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint inspects Bahan Township IPRD

UNION Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint, along with Hluttaw representatives and departmental officials, visited the Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) in Bahan Township in Yangon yesterday.

The union minister and his delegation inspected the preparedness of the children's reading room and the small museum that are involved in the process to upgrade the IPRD office to a

community centre.

The union minister urged the Hluttaw representatives and departmental officials to establish the IPRD office into a community centre, which would be useful to the public.

The union minister also visited the children's reading room, where he presented the children with gifts and coordinated plans to implement an outdoor children's playground in the future. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint meeting with officials and staff of the Information and Public Relations Department at the Bahan Township IPRD. **PHOTO: MNA**



Women weave traditionally. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Let Khat Than project to develop weaving industry

FROM PAGE-1

Principal of Saunders Weaving and Vocational Institute Daw Tint Tint also said that "Let Khat Than" is aimed at strengthening the weaving industries in Myanmar. "Therefore, we are cooperating with the British Council to develop the weaving sector by teaching modern courses at our institute," she said.

The British Council and

Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, Embassy of Switzerland, are organising the workshop and exhibition from 24 to 28 February at Saunders Weaving and Vocational Institute in Amrapura Township, Mandalay Region, in which the weaving textiles of 11 businesspersons are being displayed. —Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House) ■

Gov't, MRF donate 300 tonnes ...

FROM PAGE-1

"Sri Lanka and Myanmar are engaged in cultural and religious cooperation. Sri Lanka buys rice and other agricultural products from Myanmar, and so, they are our trading clients. Therefore, we would like to express our concern to our trading partner with our contribution," said U Ye Min Aung, general secretary of MRF. The low quality rice (15 per cent broken rice of the Ae-Ma-Hta variety) will be purified. The shipment started yesterday, and is slated to reach Sri Lanka's port in early March.

Myanmar donors will offer more donations in Sri Lanka in mid-March. Dr Than Myint said that Sri Lanka and Myanmar were engaged in economic, social and cultural exchanges during the old days. There is business-to-business cooperation, besides a government-to-government agreement. Bilateral trade with Sri Lanka reached \$36 million, and the volume will grow each year, he added. Sri Lanka's ambassador noted that the country imported rice from Myanmar, Thailand and India owing to a shortage of rice due to floods in

the rainy season. "I would like to express our appreciation, on behalf of the Sri Lankan people, for the humanitarian aid supported by Myanmar's government and the MRF. We will make sure the contributions go directly and effectively to the flood victims.

Earlier, Myanmar and Sri Lanka had a series of discussions for rice exports under the government-to-government system. Sri Lanka has now allowed importers to import the goods with zero tax, and so, the plan turned out to be a business-to-business plan. ■

Talk on youth and philanthropy held in Meiktila

THE Meiktila District Information and Public Relations Department organized a public talk titled "Youth and the philanthropic" at Grand Cosmos Hotel in Kyitawgone Ward in Meiktila Town, Mandalay Region, yesterday.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative Dr Maung Thin, Chairman of the district philanthropic network U Maung Maung Shin, Township Writer Association Chairman Maung Mae Tu (project) and Dr Myat Min from the Kanletmyar Philanthropic Organisation discussed matters such as active youth participation in philanthropic works, and attitudes and basic needs required for philanthropic works, besides giving suggestions on participating in charitable works.

Dr Maung Thin and the panelists answered a few ques-

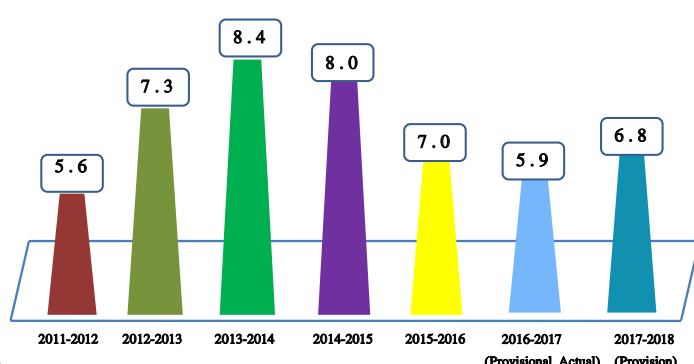


People participate in the public talk in Meiktila. **PHOTO: PHYO MAUNG MAUNG**

tions posed by the attendees. Attendees at the talk were U Aung Kyaw Moe from Meiktila Constituency (1), U Soe Than from Meiktila Constituency (2) and members of the local social and philanthropic organisations. More such public talks will be organised in other townships and districts with the

aim of creating an opportunity to discuss matters relevant to the public, increasing the people's critical thinking capabilities through participation in the discussions, and creating a habit of discussion among the general public on matters concerning their region. —Chan Thar (Meiktila) ■

ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT



Source: Planning Department
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

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300 star tortoises released in Minsontaung Wildlife Sanctuary

SOME 300 star tortoises were soft released on Saturday in the Minsontaung Wildlife Sanctuary in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region.

The programme is coordinated by the Forest Department, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Turtle Survival Alliance.

This is the fourth time star tortoises, a critically endangered species, have been sent to the sanctuary since 2013. Since then, a total of 1,050 star tortoises were successfully released to the natural forest.

According to the conservation programme, 150 star tortoises were released to the sanctuary for the first time. The number of star tortoises released to the sanctuary raised to 300 in 2015 and an additional 300 in 2017. Another 300 star tortoises were soft released to the same sanctuary on 24 February of this year.

According to the follow-up research, seven per cent of star tortoises gave



Conservationists released around 300 star tortoises into their natural environment for the fourth time. **PHOTO: NYI TU**

birth naturally in the Minsontaung sanctuary.

The rare species is native to the dry and deciduous forests in the country. It can be found in Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. This kind of tortoise normally eats grass, weeds, leaves,

flowers and other fibrous plants as well as earthworms and snails. The tortoises normally lay eggs up to four times a year.

There are three protected areas for star tortoises in the country: Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary in Bagan; Shweset-

taw Wildlife Sanctuary in Minbu Township and Minsontaung Wildlife Sanctuary in Natogyi Township.

The conservationists also released some 900 star tortoises to the Shwesettaw Wildlife Sanctuary last month.—Nyi Tu ■

Stone retaining wall being built in Gyobingauk Township

THE Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department said it is now implementing a project to construct a stone retaining wall along the creek in Shankwin Village, Gyobingauk Township, Thayawady District, Bago Region.

The project aims to protect

villagers from riverbank erosion. It has been implemented by Bago Regional Construction Control Authority (BRCCA) in collaboration with the department since 1 January.

The total cost of the project to construct 800-foot long retaining wall is estimated to

reach Ks16 million. The new scheme is now 50 per cent complete and project implementers are putting continuous efforts to meet the set time frame, said U Tin Tun, head of the said department.

As part of riverbank erosion management plan, the region

authorities are installing retaining walls and related facilities in the region to protect residents from riverbank erosion by high tight. The village experiences erosion of riverbank in the previous years due to lack of retaining walls.—Zeya Tun (Gyobingauk) ■

Workshop to bring peace through unity of religious

THE University of Global Peace in Mandalay City hosted a workshop on 24 February to promote world peace, unite all religions and abolish discrimination. The workshop was headed by South Korea-based Heavenly Culture, World Peace Restoration of Light (HWPL) and attended by various religious leaders.

High Court lawyer U Khin Maung Than coordinated the organisation of the workshop with Upper Myanmar's HWPL, which he said is in compliance with the United Nation's (UN) World Interfaith Harmony Week.

U Khin Maung Than explained that the South Korean organisation has been active in Myanmar for four years now.



The workshop on interfaith and ending religious discrimination at the University of Global Peace in Mandalay City. **PHOTO: KHINE SET WAI**

The discussions talked about how to stop discrimination between different religions. A country will never develop if there is discrimination, he said, and he hoped people

would grow more conscious of it. He said people must end discrimination first, before the government and ethnic armed organisations.

HWPL has branches in

14 countries across the world that are working for peace and played an important role in proposing the UN peace treaties. HWPL first came to Myanmar in 2013 and has 22 branches in both Upper and Lower Myanmar. They collaborate with leaders from six major religions to promote world peace and end religious discrimination.

Dr. Win Myint also said this organisation is working for world peace with truth and faith as its platform, which is why he believed Myanmar and the world will have peace one day. He likened the existence of different religions to different flowers in a garden, which add to the variety and colour.—Khine Set Wai ■

Bilateral trade with Brazil exceeds \$180 million in current FY

EXTERNAL trade between Myanmar and Brazil, during the past nine months of this fiscal year (FY), totalled US\$182.825 million, according to the monthly report issued by the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar's exports to the Federative Republic of Brazil, the largest country in both America and Latin America, were worth \$1.885 million, whereas Brazil's exports to Myanmar were valued at \$180 million. Brazil mainly exports sugar and imports baskets and hats.

In 2011-2012 FY, trade with Brazil was valued at nearly \$14 million, decreasing to \$6 million in the following FY. Since 2013-

2014 FY, the two nations saw an increase in the value of trade. Bilateral trade was valued at \$160 million in the last financial year, which increased by some \$124 million over the previous FY.

As a last frontier in Asia, Myanmar welcomes Brazilian investments in sectors such as infrastructure, transportation, hydroelectric power plants, hydrocarbon exploration and mining. According to the ministry's latest report, the value of trade between Myanmar and the American countries, including Canada, Cuba, Panama, Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Ecuador and the United States, reached \$856 million during the current FY.—Shwe Khine



Myanmar's ports are one of the last frontiers in Asia for American countries. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

Bilateral trade with Germany highest among EU countries this FY

GERMANY was ranked first among the European Union (EU) countries for having the largest trade value of some US\$439 million with Myanmar, followed by Britain in second place with some \$251 million in the current fiscal year (FY).

Myanmar's trade with EU members in the last 10 months of the current FY reached more than \$1.74 billion, including \$1.15 billion in exports and \$589 million in imports, according to statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce last Friday.

France was listed in the third place with a trade value of some \$199 million, while Italy stood at fourth place with an estimated trade value of \$161 million. Myanmar's trade with the Netherlands reached some \$148 million.

The value of bilateral trade with Spain was some \$128 mil-

lion, while with Belgium it was \$123 million. Trade with Denmark fetched more than \$108 million. Myanmar's trade with Poland was worth more than \$51 million.

The value of trade with Czech Republic, Greece, Cyprus, Sweden, Finland, Bulgaria, Romania, Luxembourg, Austria, Hungary, Estonia, Ireland, Portugal and Malta was less than \$50 million each. There is still no record of trade with other EU member countries such as Slovenia, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia and Croatia.

Beyond the regional trade regime, Myanmar has established trade links with EU member countries.

The country mainly exported rice, pulses, tea leaves, fruits, coffee, apparel from the garment sector on a cut-make-pack basis and fisheries, while cosmetics,

food and beverages, and consumer goods were imported into Myanmar. Myanmar reinstated EU's generalised scheme of preference (GSP) from 19 July 2013. Myanmar can enjoy GSP in the export of fisheries, rice, pulses, agro products, bamboo and rattan finished products, forestry products, apparel and finished industrial goods.

The value of trade with EU countries was recorded at some \$1.42 billion in the 2016-2017 FY, \$653 million in the 2015-16 FY, \$631 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$543 million in the 2013-2014 FY and \$404 million in the 2011-2012 FY. EU member countries made investments in petroleum and natural gas enterprises, manufacturing and transport sectors, as well as hotels, tourism and livestock businesses in Myanmar.—Ko Htet

8th Japanese flea market on 1 March

THE eight edition of a Japanese flea market is due to take place on a grand scale next week in Yangon, according to a report in the Myawady Daily on Saturday.

Organised by the Myanmar-Japan Socio-Economic Development Association (SEDA), the flea market is to be held at Sein Gay Har (Parami) shopping mall on Pyay Road in Yangon on 1 March.

Members of SEDA, seafarers in Japan, Japanese organisations and companies throughout the country will sell a wide range of Japanese products at more than 50 booths. Clothing, high-tech electronics, cosmetics, household utensils, kitchen wares, clothing and consumer goods will be for sale at the market. In addition, a demonstration of Japanese martial arts

and several entertainment programmes, including traditional Japanese dance shows, will be performed. SEDA plans to organise monthly Japanese flea markets throughout the country.

In Japan, a flea market is held on the first Sunday of every month. A wide range of used Japanese products are commonly displayed for sale at the market.—GNLM

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- Market Place by City Mart (6.5 Mile)
- Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)
- 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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Day-to-day safety should be part of our lives: PM Modi

NEW DELHI — Prime Minister Narendra Modi today urged the people to inculcate safety in their day-to-day lives, stressing that India had to become a “risk-conscious” society.

In his monthly ‘Mann ki Baat’ radio broadcast, he also said the country was looking beyond the concept of women’s development and talking in terms of development being led by women.

Women today were leaders in various spheres of life, he said, calling it a positive step. Modi also urged women in rural areas to become a part of an initiative for “clean energy and green jobs” through the recently-launched “Gobar dhan” programme under which livestock waste including cow dung in villages would be used to generate clean energy. —PTI ■

Malaysia elephant sanctuary trumpets effort to cut human-animal conflict

KUALA GANDAH — A herd of elephants tramp through jungle before lumbering into a river under the watchful gaze of their keepers, training at a Malaysian sanctuary for their vital work in reducing human-animal conflict.

The sanctuary in Kuala Gandah, central Malaysia, is an area of secluded rainforest where “mahouts” — as the keepers are known — care for a 26-strong group of endangered Asian elephants.

A handful were rescued after suffering injuries or being orphaned, but most of them have been domesticated and trained to aid the National Elephant Conservation Centre’s effort to help elephants who become embroiled in conflicts with humans.

They accompany a highly-trained team on their missions to find and subdue fellow pachyderms whose habitats have been encroached on, and are putting themselves and villagers at risk.

Since the centre started operations about 30 years ago, its staff have relocated more than 700 wild elephants, taking them away from inhabited areas and deep into the jungle.

Malaysia is home to vast tracts of rainforest and a kaleidoscope of exotic wildlife, from elephants to orangutans and tigers, but the numbers of many rare species have fallen dramatically in recent decades.

Some have been hunted for their body parts that are then sold on the black market, but a growing number are falling victim to human-animal conflict — which happens when rapid expansion of plantations or development of settlements encroaches on animals’ natural habitats.

Many elephants in Malaysia have been injured or killed after coming into contact with humans when they wander onto the country’s ubiquitous palm oil plantations, or enter settlements and eat crops. —AFP ■



Mahouts care for a 26-strong group of endangered Asian elephants at the sanctuary. PHOTO: AFP



Ciriaco Lagunza (C), Philippine deputy minister of labour and employment, speaks to the Filipino community at his country’s embassy in Kuwait City on 24 February, 2018 after Manila imposed a departure ban on Filipinos seeking jobs the Gulf emirate. PHOTO: AFP

Philippine officials meet nationals in Kuwait amid labour row

KUWAIT CITY — A delegation of Philippine labour officials were in Kuwait City on Sunday to assess the impact of a new ban on Filipinos working in the emirate, a source of much-needed remittances.

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte earlier this month announced a departure ban for Filipinos planning to work in Kuwait, after the murder there of 29-year-old Joanna Demafelis.

Her body was found in a freezer and a Lebanese-Syrian couple suspected of her murder have been arrested in the Syrian capital, Damascus, after an Interpol manhunt.

Philippine Deputy Minister of Labour and Employment Ciriaco Lagunza said the delegation was looking at the side effects of the ban, which will likely impact many families dependent on remittances from relatives who work in Kuwait. Speaking on the sidelines of a meeting with the Filipino community in Kuwait, he told AFP the ban would not be lifted until his government secured safety guarantees.

“I would like to find out from the associations, the organizations of Filipinos whether the other Filipinos working here are in good condition and safe,” he said.

“It cannot be business as usual. Unless the conditions change — and that will be subject to negotiations — the ban stays.”

Among the key demands are that Filipino workers be allowed to keep their cellphones and passports, which currently can be confiscated by employers.

Anna del Mundo, who met the delegation at the Philippines’ embassy on Saturday, said her recruitment agency had already been hurt by the ban.

She said the agency had hired around 100 nurses for a Kuwait hospital but they were now stuck home due to the ban.

Anna Bunda, who also works in the recruiting sector, said she planned to lobby the Philippines’ Overseas Workers Welfare Administration to lift the ban for

skilled workers — who she said enjoy greater protection under a different entry visa.

“There are a lot of opportunities for the Filipinos” in Kuwait, she said. “I hope that the government will hear us.”

But the attendees also included domestic workers, tied to their employers by the “kafala” or sponsorship system prevalent in the Middle East. “I had to go to the embassy because I was in a car accident and my sponsor demanded that I pay for the treatment,” said a former maid, who said she fled her employer.

A second labour delegation tasked with negotiating a bilateral treaty for domestic workers is slated to arrive in Kuwait City next week, Philippines Ambassador Renato Pedro Ovila told AFP.

Authorities in Manila say some 252,000 Filipinos work in Kuwait, many as maids. They are among over two million employed in the region, whose remittances are a lifeline to the Philippine economy. —AFP ■

Philippine police arrest widow of slain Malaysian terrorist leader

MANILA — Philippine police arrested on Sunday the widow of a slain Malaysian terrorist leader in a raid in the southern Philippine province of Lanao del Norte.

Police said Jerome Dongon, the 45-year-old wife of Zulkifli Bin Hir alias Marwan, was arrested early Sunday morning in Tubod town. She is accused of supporting the extremist groups and for

illegally possessing firearms and explosives.

Dongon was previously married to Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani. When Janjalani was killed in 2006, she married Marwan.

Marwan was killed in a clash with Philippine police and military in January 2015 in Mamasapano, Maguindanao.

At least 44 policemen were also killed in the raid that targeted Marwan. He was a top leader of the regional al-Qaida-linked Jemaaah Islamiya (JI) terror network.

Authorities said they seized high-powered firearms, ammunition and bomb-making components during the raid at Dongon’s house. —Xinhua ■

North Korean general and Ivanka Trump at Olympic close

PYEONGCHANG — A blacklisted North Korean general and the daughter of US President Donald Trump attended the Winter Olympics closing ceremony together on Sunday, in the final piece of the Games-led diplomacy that has dominated headlines from Pyeongchang. Brief footage of the VIP enclosure at the arena showed South Korean President Moon Jae-in shaking hands first with Trump's daughter Ivanka, and soon afterwards with North Korean General Kim Yong Chol — who reportedly expressed willingness to talk to Washington. There was no indication of any interaction between Ivanka, who was placed next to Moon's wife, and Kim, who was in the row behind her — just two seats away from US General Vincent Brooks, who commands Washington's forces in the South.

Kim arrived at the head of an eight-member delegation that crossed the Demilitarized Zone Sunday morning, but his visit has sparked angry protests from conservatives as he is accused of masterminding past attacks on the South. The nuclear-armed North has gone on a charm offensive over the Games, sending athletes, cheerleaders and performers. Leader Kim Jong Un's sister Kim Yo Jong attended the



South Korean protesters hold placards showing a picture of North Korean general Kim Yong Chol. **PHOTO: AFP**

opening ceremony. Moon had an hour-long meeting with Kim ahead of the closing ceremony, in which the North Korean delegation said Pyongyang was willing to talk to Washington, according to Seoul. The North — which carried out multiple missile tests last year, including those capable of reaching the US mainland — has long expressed its desire to talk to Washington without preconditions. But the US says it must first take concrete steps towards disarming. Kim Yo Jong had no interaction with US Vice President Mike

Pence at the opening ceremony just over two weeks ago, even though they were just a few seats apart. According to the US, a planned meeting between the delegations from Washington and Pyongyang the following day was cancelled at short notice by the North Koreans. Washington imposed fresh sanctions on Friday, with Donald Trump describing them as the heaviest ever. Pyongyang denounced them on Sunday just as Moon was meeting Kim Yong Chol. Analysts say the North's overtures to the South are intended to

loosen sanctions imposed over its banned nuclear and missile programmes, and to weaken the alliance between Seoul and Washington.

But Moon did not immediately accept an invitation passed on by Kim Yo Jong from her brother to a summit in Pyongyang, saying the right conditions must be created. And the athletes from North and South carried their own national flags at Sunday's closing ceremony, rather than the unification emblem they used at the opening ceremony.—AFP ■

India revokes passport of billionaire jeweller in bank fraud probe

NEW DELHI — India has revoked the passports of disgraced billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi and his uncle and business partner Mehul Choksi for their involvement in the country's biggest-ever bank fraud of 1.8 billion US dollars.

"The passports of Modi and Choksi have been revoked by Indian External Affairs Ministry. Earlier their passports were only suspended for four weeks," sources said on Saturday.

Indian authorities have already launched a massive crackdown on companies linked to Modi, and seized 10,000 luxury watches and nine luxury cars in the past three days, apart from freezing his personal shares and mutual funds. Modi is said to have defrauded Punjab National Bank, India's second largest state-run bank, of 1.8 billion US dollars, though he has said that he owed the bank only 775 million US dollars, in a letter sent to the bank's management. Investigators have so far arrested 12 people, including some high-ranking bank officials, for their alleged involvement in the fraud though they have not yet charged Modi for the crime.—Xinhua ■

.Senate election begins in Cambodia with no opposition participation

PHNOM PENH — Voting began Sunday for the 62-member senate with no opposition party participating, following the government-engineered dissolution

of the country's second most powerful party last November.

The four parties that have fielded candidates are mostly supporters of Prime Minister

Hun Sen, who has been in power since 1985, making him the world's longest serving head of government.

Those parties are the ruling

Cambodian People's Party, royalist FUNCINPEC party, Cambodian Youth Party, and National Unity for Khmer Party.

In the last senate election in 2012, just two political parties won all the then 61 seats in the senate, with 46 won by Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party.

Eleven seats were won by the opposition Sam Rainsy Party, with two seats filled by appointees of the king and two through appointment by the National Assembly or lower house of parliament. But the Sam Rainsy Party has boycotted this election because of the forced dissolution late last year of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, formed in 2012 through the merger of the Sam Rainsy and Human Rights parties to form a stronger opposition.

In this election, 58 senate seats will be determined through voting by the members of the Na-

tional Assembly and by commune councilors throughout the country, 11,695 voters in all. And again two seats will be filled through appointments by King Norodom Sihamoni and another two by the lower house. The Sam Rainsy Party continues to exist despite the 2012 merger, but no longer has any members of commune councils nor in parliament due to the CNRP dissolution.

In a statement issued Sunday morning, the CNRP protested the election, saying 5,062 of the voters do not represent the will of the Cambodian people since they are people picked to fill seats in the National Assembly and on commune councils vacated through the court-ordered dissolution of the CNRP. The CNRP also appealed to all foreign friends of Cambodia not to recognize the election results and to help restore democracy in Cambodia.—Kyodo News ■



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen (C) is surrounded by his supporters in Cambodia's Kandal province on 25 February, 2018, after casting his ballot in the Senate election at a polling station, with no opposition party participating. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Working for national development

SINCE assuming office, the union government has been making concerted efforts for Myanmar's development, to enforce the rule of law and regional peace, as well as to address the ethnic affairs in Rakhine State. The union government works with the Rakhine Advisory Board to implement development plans in Rakhine, and there is evidence of their work. One way the government goes about handling conflicts in Rakhine is by uncovering their root causes and solving them to eliminate future recurrences.

The union government gives priority to the needs of Rakhine's local residents and also manages the situation of Rakhine locals who had fled the country. Myanmar and Bangladesh held a coordination meeting on 20 February to accept returnees into a district in Rakhine. They also discussed joint

coordination plans between Bangladesh and Myanmar's border authorities.

Now, that the process for accepting returnees is underway, a lot of people have been settling between the two countries' borders, and this has to be dealt with in a legal manner by both countries. It is against the law to settle down along a country's border, and so both countries need to find a peaceful solution for this together.

Intentionally settling down near the border could harbour sinister intentions, and aiding this in any way is violating the laws set by both countries. These people spread rumours and deliberately create a situation where removal by security forces will draw criticism from the international community. International organisations supporting humanitarian aid to people living on the borders are intentionally or unintentionally creating a situation for political unrest.

Regardless, Myanmar is working closely with Bangladesh to find legal and peaceful solutions to accept and resettle returnees, and address the illegal settlements on the border. At the same time, both countries will be working on building a solid border gate, establishing maritime security and reinforcing border outposts. This will lead to fewer illegal border crossings and reduce threats from terrorists.

Action will be taken against all people, regardless of their religion, race or political position, who go against the laws of the land and who violate human rights, as accepted by our international community. The government has emerged as a body committed to the defence of human rights, not to defend any particular community's rights, but of all human beings within the borders of our country.

To conclude, Rakhine State's situation is the nation's problem as well, and all good and bad events will affect the nation too, which is why the union government handles things seriously as a matter of national interest with clarity and insight. ■

Conservation of the Ayeyawady Dolphins

By Ko Ba (Kathar)

THERE are 31 species of dolphins found in the world; 27 are oceanic, and 5 are river dolphins. Those who inhabit the ocean dwell in saltwater but those living in rivers, are adapted to freshwater. These numbers are continuously changing because of new discoveries, taxonomic reclassification, and genetic studies. All dolphins belong to the cetacean infraorder which also includes whales, dolphins, and porpoises. Among them, the Ayeyawady dolphin is one of the species which inhabit in the rivers in Myanmar.

The Ayeyawady Dolphin as well as River Pig

Records of the Ayeyawady dolphin in the Ayeyawady River date back to an ancient Chinese text from AD 800 when they referred to as "river pigs". The Ayeyawady dolphin is now found in only three rivers in the world: the Ayeyawady in Myanmar; the Mekong in Cambodia and Lao PDR; and the Mahakham in Indonesia.

The first scientific survey of dolphins in Myanmar was conducted in 2002, which found them in a 400 km stretch of river between Bhamo and Mingun. There is now roughly a minimum of 60 dolphins left in the Ayeyawady River, in addition to approximately 80-100 individuals left in each of the Mekong and Mahakham Rivers.

An English naturalist, John Anderson had been to Myanmar and made a research exploration along the Ayeyawady River from 1871 to 1879. During his research trip, he discovered the round-snouted ash grey dolphin in the Ayeyawady River and he became the first person who ever had discovered such type of fresh water dolphin.

The Ayeyawady dolphin is well-known for helping local fishermen and can be found in Southeast Asian countries such as Myanmar, India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Thailand and Philippines. It can be found in the upstream of Mingun of the Ayeyawady River.

Endangered the Ayeyawady dolphin

The status of the Ayeyawady dolphin has been raised from "vulnerable" to "endangered"



Villagers carry an Ayeyawady Dolphin, found dead in the Ayeyawady River. PHOTO: WCF

because its numbers have fallen by half over the past 60 years due to human activities, according to the latest Red List of threatened species produced by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Currently some of the Ayeyawady dolphins live in the river between Bhamo and Mandalay in Myanmar; in addition to Mekong River in Cambodia and Laos, and in Mahakham in Indonesia, according to the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in Myanmar.

The Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) have launched a community-based ecotourism project in the ADPA zone, which encourages dolphin-watching tours so that humans can experience the unique human-animal interaction and hopefully contribute to the continuous rise of the local dolphin population.

The Ayeyawady Dolphin is a critically endangered species that inhabits murky waters of rivers and estuaries in Southeast and South Asia.

Even though electronic fishing is a major threat to the population of Ayeyawady dolphins locally, other causes such as pollution in the river water, allegedly caused by illegal gold

mines in upstream areas, need to be addressed as well. The Department of Fisheries has enacted the Freshwater Fisheries Law in order to prohibit from electric-shock fishing.

Dolphin Watching Tourism

The dolphins thriving in the segment between Mingun and Kyauk Myaung are famous for having the very peculiar and interesting characteristics. The

like Dolphin Watching Tourism.

Cooperative Fishing

A fishing boat is usually handled by two fishermen, one at the stern pedaling and steering the boat and the other throws the net into the water for catching the fish. The rower usually brings two oars, one short and another long one. The short one is used for propelling and the long one is used as punting pole for push-

ing the boat ahead in the very shallow part of the river where propelling by oar is impossible, by thrusting the long oar at the river bed and force the boat forward. The rower also brings a short wooden stick about one foot long with one end having about one inch in diameter and tapering to the other end.

When the fishermen find the place of dolphins, they row their

A dolphin supposed to be the leader of the group surges its head above the water and then sets its tail vertically above the water. The formation of this type of display indicates the signal for the fishermen to be ready to catch the fish. When the dolphin is exposing its tail horizontally above the water and slaps the surface of the water, the fishermen understand it is the signal to follow them. The fishermen then follow the dolphins which lead to the place where they can find the fish.

The strange relationship and understanding each other between the fishermen and the dolphin is quite interesting. The dolphins signal the fishermen to be ready for fishing by showing its tail straight up above the water as they see the cluster of fishes in the water below.

Once the fisherman saw the dolphin's tail straight up above the water and swaying sideways, he throws the fishing net into the water. Dolphins never take the fishes caught in the net for food; they are just devouring fishes outside the net. It is quite amusing to see the natural rule exhibiting the sharing of food between the fishermen and dolphins. They help fishermen in finding the fish but never breach the nature's law of sharing food.

Conservation of the Ayeyawady dolphin

Despite high growth of population in the past, the Ayeyawady dolphin population is dwindling and only 70 dolphins were counted by the survey in 2014. Local people should have more awareness for the conservation of dolphins whereas the institutions concerned are now taking measures to prevent dolphins from extinction.

The Department of Fisheries is making concerted efforts to manage this area and protect dolphins through monthly patrols and enforcement against illegal fishing techniques; educational outreach activities; research on dolphin behavior and fisheries; monitoring the status of the dolphins and threats to their conservation; and developing alternative livelihoods and economic incentives for conservation such as ecotourism. ■

Translated by
Win Ko Ko Aung

Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw international airports and Asia World Port Terminal support voices for MOMOS

MYANMAR'S wild elephants have found another champion as Yangon International Airport (YIA), Nay Pyi Taw International Airport (NPTIA) and Asia World Port Terminal (AWPT) declare their support for VOICES FOR MOMOS.

Asia World Company Ltd (AWC) is proud to participate in this wildlife education initiative for Myanmar as part of its corporate social responsibility. Through its transport subsidiaries operating key gateways into the country, AWC is ramping up illegal wildlife trade awareness leading up to World Wildlife Day on 3rd March Mr Jose Angeja, Chief Operating Officer, Yangon International Airport said: "Our partnership with VOICES FOR MOMOS is in line with YIA's commitment to operational excellence as a highperformance airport and to environment and wildlife conservation. With almost 6 million passengers passing through Yangon International Airport in 2017 and as part of the global transportation and logistics industry, we aim to play an active role in educating travelers, promoting responsible tourism, defending national biodiversity and making a future illegal wildlife trade-free Myanmar."

In November 2017, WWF-Myanmar conducted an illegal wildlife product identification training at YIA. The trainings were designed to train the YIA retail management team on identifying ivory and other illegal wildlife trade products so they can monitor the shops within the terminals.

As part of the public education program, YIA will be featuring Arker Kyaw's We Love Elephants public art exhibition starting March, to coincide with World Wildlife Day. Six supersized paper mache elephants will be displayed at international Terminals 1 and 2; and domestic Terminal 3.

Working with WWF-Myanmar and other stakeholders, Asia World will post public service information on illegal wildlife trading throughout both airports and the port terminal. Asia World is also committed to work with all relevant government departments to implement illegal wildlife trade detection and enforcement measure at its facilities.

"Asia World's support is critical because it combines public education with action. Myanmar needs trained people and the right tracking technologies at its gateways and borders if it is to tackle the illegal wildlife trade. This is the first step to bring together all stakeholders needed to achieve a zerotolerance approach and an illegal wildlife trade-free Myanmar," said Dr. Nyi Nyi Kyaw, Director General of Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) and CITES Management Authority of Myanmar.

Every week, at least one elephant is hunted in Myanmar. Elephant skin, tail hairs, teeth and ivory are sold at tourist spots around the country and in markets in Yangon and Mandalay. There is also large trading along the border regions of China, Myanmar, Laos and Thailand – an area known as the 'Golden Triangle'. Elephant skin is sold dried for traditional 'medicine' or polished into beads and sold as lucky charm bracelets. The tail hairs are put into silver rings and worn for luck.

Having Myanmar's key transport infrastructures onboard this programme is a step towards greater enforcement and awareness. The largest and busiest airport in country, YIA is the primary gateway into Myanmar which handled 5.92 million passengers in 2017. Foreign visitors accounted for 66 per cent of total arrivals and overall passenger traffic increased by 8.48 per cent. NPTIA is also one of Myanmar's three international airports which has welcomed visitors, VIPs, and business dignitaries from all over

the world – handling a total of 224,478 passengers in 2017. Asia World Port Terminal, the 1st private port terminal set up in 1996, is one of the leading players in professional port services, currently handling one of the highest volumes of container throughput in Myanmar.

Together with WWF-Myanmar, AWC hopes to make a difference for the future. ■

Trump recites inflammatory 'snake' song in anti-immigrant diatribe

NATIONAL HARBOR (United States) — US President Donald Trump on Friday recited the lyrics of a song seen as anti-immigration called "The Snake" to drive home his point about restricting immigration — an inflammatory move that harkened back to his days on the campaign trail.

In a speech to conservatives at a convention outside Washington, he also bashed opposition Democrats for failing to back his proposal for putting 1.8 million so-called "Dreamer" immigrants on a pathway to citizenship in exchange for tightening border security and severely restricting legal immigration.

During his hour-long address, Trump pulled a piece of paper from his pocket and read "The Snake," a ballad by Al Wilson about a reptile who repays a "tender woman" that nurses it back to health with a deadly bite.

During his campaign, as well as in a speech early in his presidency, Trump used the song, based on one of Aesop's fables, as a less-than-subtle allegory about immigrants entering the United States.

On Friday, he made no secret about the comparison he was making.

"Think of it in terms of immigration," he urged attendees at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) as he launched into the song.

"You knew damn well I was a snake before you took me in," he said, reading the final line



As a 2016 candidate, and occasionally as president, Donald Trump routinely read lyrics of an inflammatory fable that he used to compare immigrants to vicious snakes. **PHOTO: AFP**

of the song, before returning to his speech.

"And that's what we're doing with our country, folks — we're letting people in, and it's going to be a lot of people. It's only going to be worse."

Some mainstream Republicans have recoiled at Trump's continued recitation of the lyrics.

"Trump's snake story is vicious, disgraceful, utterly racist and profoundly un-American," tweeted Steve Schmidt, a former campaign aide for president George W Bush.

Democrats 'totally unresponsive'

In his wide-ranging speech,

Trump warned that efforts to reach a deal on the status of undocumented migrants brought to the US illegally as children could fail — and blamed his opponents.

"The Democrats are being totally unresponsive. They don't want to do anything about DACA, I'm telling you," he said, referring to negotiations on Capitol Hill on replacing an expiring programme that defers deportation for some undocumented migrants.

"It's very possible that DACA won't happen."

Former president Barack Obama launched the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programme, whose

recipients were given legal permission to work, live and go to school in the United States.

Last September, Trump announced he was rescinding DACA and called on Congress to craft a solution before 5 March, setting off months of bipartisan negotiations.

The Senate held votes on several DACA-related bills last week, but none of them advanced.

Many conservatives in Congress including Senator Ted Cruz have been outspoken in their opposition to any legislation that provides "amnesty" to people who are in the United States illegally.—AFP ■

WORLD BRIEFS

N Korea expresses readiness to hold talks with US: S Korea

SEOUL — North Korea expressed a readiness during Sunday's meeting between South Korean President Moon Jae In and Pyongyang's delegation to the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics to hold talks with the United States, Seoul's presidential office said. —Kyodo News ■

Four missing after ship capsizes in E China

NANJING — Four people went missing after a fishing boat capsized in east China's Yellow Sea, local authorities said Sunday. At around 9 am on Saturday, four crew members on board the fishing boat fell into the water 12 nautical miles off the coast of Binhai County, Jiangsu Province.

Local fishermen received the signal of distress on the radio and immediately informed the fishing authority. A total of 12 ships have been searching for the missing.

The local meteorology department issued a warning for fresh to strong gale on the sea on Saturday.—Xinhua ■

N Korea slams latest US sanctions as 'act of war'

SEOUL — North Korea on Sunday slammed the latest US measures against it as an "act of war", after US President Donald Trump announced the "heaviest sanctions ever" on the nuclear-armed regime.

The measures, which Washington says are aimed at forcing Pyongyang to roll back its banned nuclear and weapons programmes, target more than 50 North Korea-linked shipping

companies, vessels and trade businesses.

"Like we have said repeatedly, we consider any restrictions on us as an act of war," the North's foreign ministry said in a statement carried by the state-run KCNA news agency.

It also vowed a retaliation if the US "really has the nerves" to confront the North in a "rough" manner.

Trump warned on Friday

that, if the latest sanctions don't work, the US would "go to phase two" that "may be a very rough thing", without elaborating.

In response, the North also vowed to "subdue the US in our own way" if provoked, saying "Trump is trying to change us with such sanctions and hostile remarks, which shows his ignorance about us".

"We already have our own nuclear weapon — a treas-

ured sword of justice to protect us from such threats from the US," the foreign ministry said.

The comment came hours before the North's senior delegation led by Kim Yong Chol, a blacklisted military general, is set to attend the closing ceremony of the South's Winter Olympics, which will also be attended by Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump.—AFP ■

Motorbike bomb kills 4, wounds 13 in Afghan eastern Paktika province

SHARAN, (Afghanistan) — At least four people were killed and 13 others injured as a motorbike bomb rocked Yahya Khil district in Afghanistan's eastern Paktika province on Sunday, police spokesman Shah Mohammad Aryan said.—Xinhua ■

Russia, Serbia are objects of overt pressure — Lavrov

MOSCOW — Moscow and Belgrade are the objects of the West's overt pressure, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in an interview with the Rossiya 1 television channel on Saturday.

"This country, like Serbia, becomes an object of overt pressure," the foreign minister said referring to what his Serbian counterpart Ivica Dacic had said about the West's attempts to make use of Belgrade's interest in the European integration to "make Serbia follow an anti-Russian position."

"By the way, not many in Europe are able to use the simple language to express attitudes to what is going on," Lavrov said.

The minister spoke about how warmly the Serbians welcomed him during the recent visit. "Crowds of people, who came to the Russian embassy in Belgrade, those who in the snow and rain participated in the ceremony of laying wreaths to the memorial, devoted to Belgrade's liberators — nobody made them come, that was their own choice," he said. "These



Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. PHOTO: TASS

are the relations we have, as we love our countries, and the Serbians love Russia, and Russians love Serbia."

Russia's foreign minister was in Serbia on a two-day working visit on 21-22 February. Serbian President Aleksandar

Vucic received him on Wednesday. Lavrov held a meeting with Serbia's Prime Minister Ana Brnabic on Thursday.—Tass ■

Corporations key to rescuing nature, says WWF chief

PARIS — A generation ago, the idea of a veteran international banker leading a global organization charged with saving the planet's dwindling and besieged wildlife would have seemed far-fetched.

For some, it still does.

Even Pavan Sukhdev — recently appointed president of World Wildlife Fund International after a quarter century at ANZ Banking and Deutsche Bank, followed by a decade working with the UN — didn't see it coming.

"Today, I realise this is a natural place for me to be," he told AFP during an interview at the headquarters of WWF France, on the outskirts of Paris.

"Ten years ago, I didn't".

Sukhdev, 57, no longer manages money markets or conjures

up derivatives, but he has not turn his back on the business world. Indeed, the Indian-born economist is convinced that it holds the key to saving the environment — and our place in it.

"Corporations are the single most important institution of our times," he said, noting they account for two-thirds of global economy, and an equal share of jobs. "Their leaders — CEOs, CFOs, CMOs, the 'C-suite' generally — are setting the direction in which we are driving."

Up to now, Sukhdev acknowledges, that direction has mostly taken us down the road to environmental ruin.

Our species is emptying the sea of fish, disgorging 40 billion tonnes of planet-warming CO2 into the atmosphere each year,

and relentlessly polluting soil, sea and air.

When it comes to wildlife, humanity's appetites and expanding footprint have triggered the first mass extinction event since a giant meteorite wiped out terrestrial dinosaurs more than 65 million years ago.

- Beyond profits -

These "externalities" — in the bloodless lingo of economists — of sustained growth have mushroomed into an existential threat for many species, including homo sapiens.

"Today's corporations inflict significant negative externalities on the planet," said Sukhdev. "They need to recognise that responsibility." If C-suite executives are only now beginning to think that way, it's partly because of the

"conventional wisdom" that a corporation is merely a machine to make money for shareholders — a notion he rejects.

"It's purpose goes way beyond profit. It's purpose is societal — solving problems, adding value, serving society."

Just as humans are not defined by their need to breathe, Sukhdev argued, corporations should not be limited to the drive for profits.

WWF International, he said, is a powerful platform for nudging business in the right direction. "Shaming is not outside of our remit. But neither is encouragement," he said. "We need both. And 'we' is not just WWF — it is also the hundreds of millions of people that, under our compact, 'we shall engage, inspire and mobilize'. It involves all of us."

As Sukhdev transitioned from banking to environmental economics, he was commissioned in 2007 by the "G8+5" forum of nations, which included China and India, to investigate the economics of biodiversity.

His highly influential report developed the concept of "ecosystem services" long taken for granted — mangroves protecting coastal communities during storms, aquifers providing drinking water, bees pollinating commercial crops.

- 'Natural capital' -

The value of these vanishing resources, he concluded, must

be entered into society's — and corporate — balance sheets. "It's not about putting a price on nature," as critics of the concept contend, Sukhdev said. "It's for recognising the value, and that it has a public benefit."

Scientists estimate that humanity uses nearly twice as much of this "natural capital" as can be replenished by Earth each year, creating an ever deeper "ecological debt". Founded in Switzerland in 1961, the World Wildlife Fund adopted the iconic giant panda as its logo and quickly spawned autonomous chapters in Britain and the United States.

Today, it has 34 national organisations and 50 project offices under its umbrella, run by a staff of 6,700 and supported by a membership 5.4 million strong. It is present in more than 100 countries.

During its first four decades, the WWF raised money and worked with governments in Latin America and Africa to create and expand wildlife refuges.

As the ecological crisis grew in scale and complexity, however, it became apparent that carving out new marine and forest protected areas — while essential — was not enough. Today, WWF International and its national branches work in six distinct but intertwined areas: wildlife, oceans, forests, freshwater, food and climate change/energy. —AFP ■



Scientists estimate humanity uses nearly twice as much "natural capital" as can be replenished by Earth each year, creating an ever deeper "ecological debt". PHOTO: AFP

Merkel to appoint key party critic to cabinet: reports

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel has decided to give a cabinet role to an outspoken critic within her conservative party, as she looks to quell surging discontent in the right wing of the group, local media reported.

Merkel is tipped to name 37-year-old Jens Spahn as health minister in her new cabinet Sunday, according to reports in daily newspapers Bild and Süddeutsche Zeitung, as well as German news agency DPA.

The German leader has been stung by criticism from within the ranks of her Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party after a tricky September election left her struggling to secure a continued “grand coalition” that would enable her to launch a fourth term governing Europe’s biggest economy.

Spahn has been at the forefront of the backlash, slamming Merkel’s centrist policies, particularly on immigration, and advocating a sharp conservative shift, as the country’s major parties

face pressure from the far-right AfD party which has railed against a mass influx of refugees that peaked in 2015.

The potential inclusion of Spahn in her cabinet line-up could help to defuse the internal rebellion ahead of a CDU congress set for Monday.

Merkel’s conservatives have had to relinquish key cabinet positions — including Finance and Foreign Affairs — to convince the Social Democrats (SPD) to again govern in coalition.

The SPD still needs to approve the arrangement, with the results of a crunch membership ballot due to be announced on 4 March.

If its members vote “no” in the postal and on-line ballot, Germany faces more political paralysis and likely snap elections that would threaten an end to Merkel’s 12 years in power.

The CDU is set to vote on the deal at its meeting on Monday, but with the expected move to assuage her critics, approval is thought likely to be a formality.—AFP ■



German Chancellor Angela Merkel. PHOTO: AFP

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 1st MARCH 2018 (Full Moon Day of Taboung) and 2nd MARCH 2018 (PEASANT DAY), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.



Chaborz M-6 buggy. PHOTO: TASS

Russia’s new military buggy, Chaborz-6, rolled out in Chechnya’s Grozny

MOSCOW — The work presentation of Chaborz M-6, a high cross-country mobile tactical buggy, was held on Saturday in the Chechen capital Grozny, the region’s head Ramzan Kadyrov wrote on his VKontakte page.

“On Saturday, a very important event took place, which is of great significance for special units of

various Russian security and law-enforcement ministries and departments. A work presentation of an absolutely new combat vehicle for special-purpose units, Chaborz-6, was held,” Kadyrov said.

The vehicle was designed by Russian Special Forces University (formerly the International Special Forces Training Centre)

and is made only from Russian-made components. It can be quickly adapted to a specific task and to be used for the transportation of troops and cargo, as an ambulance-evacuation vehicle or for combat. “Designers will come up with several versions of engines and transmissions, which is very important in adopting the model for climatic con-

ditions and mission goals,” Kadyrov said. “Our vehicle outperforms its Israeli and US rivals in terms of price, cross-country ability and speed. I’m sure it will be in great demand at the combat vehicle market.” Kadyrov said an earlier version of the buggy, Chaborz M-3, was upgraded. The vehicle was tested in combat in Syria.—Tass ■

Venezuela opens nominations for presidential vote as US protests

CARACAS — Venezuela is now accepting candidate registrations for its 22 April presidential elections, but opposition politicians and the United States are rejecting the terms of the poll.

Tania D’Amelio, an official of the National Electoral Council (CNE), said nominations would be accepted through Monday. The council will announce which nominations are accepted by Thursday.

Opposition politicians have accused the CNE of being under the thumb of President Nicolas Maduro.

The presidential elections, with Maduro seeking a new term that would keep him in office until

2025, are traditionally held in December. They were moved forward by the ruling Constituent Assembly, which is controlled by the governing party.

Maduro called Wednesday for snap legislative elections for the National Assembly, proposing to bring them forward by nearly two years to coincide with the 22 April poll. And he hit back at the opposition MUD coalition, which had said it would not take part in the early elections without guarantees they would be free and fair.

“We are going to (hold) the elections come rain, shine or lightning, with or without the MUD,” said Maduro.

But the United States, which under President Donald Trump has been deeply critical of Maduro’s leadership in crisis-torn and economically suffering Venezuela, on Saturday rejected the call for an early legislative vote.

“We reject ruling party calls to replace the democratically elected National Assembly simultaneously, rather than in 2021, as provided for under the 1999 Constitution,” said a State Department statement.

“Deepening the rupture of Venezuela’s constitutional and democratic order will not solve the nation’s crises.”

The statement called for “a free and fair election”

involving full participation of all political leaders, the immediate release of all political prisoners, credible international observation and an independent electoral authority.

The opposition Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD) said on Wednesday it would not register presidential candidates, believing there were no guarantees of transparency. But it left the door open to taking part if conditions were improved.

Delcy Rodriguez, president of the Constituent Assembly, has said that that body will consider possible dates for the legislative vote when it meets next week.—AFP ■

Xi may extend power as China poised to lift term limits

BEIJING — The Chinese Communist Party's leadership has called for the removal of presidential term limits, opening the door for China's most powerful leader in decades, Xi Jinping, to remain in office beyond 2023.

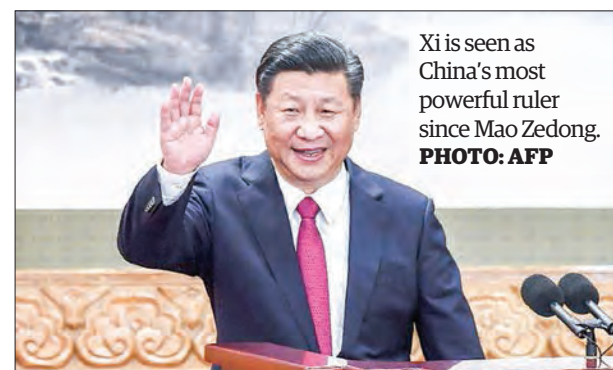
The party's Central Committee has proposed

deleting from the constitution the stipulation that a president "shall serve no more than two consecutive terms" of five years, the official Xinhua news agency said on Sunday. Xi, who is also party chief and seen as the most powerful ruler since Mao Zedong, has been president since 2013

and the 64-year-old leader would have to step down in 2023 under the current system. The proposed change, which would also apply to the vice-president, will be submitted to legislators at the annual full session of the National People's Congress starting on 5 March.

Xi has been chipping

away at the collective model of leadership that was promoted by Deng Xiaoping, the architect of the country's economic reforms in the 1980s. Xi's two predecessors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, both served two five-year terms, but he has signalled that he has bigger ambitions.—AFP ■



Xi is seen as China's most powerful ruler since Mao Zedong.
PHOTO: AFP



Olivier Douliery US President Donald Trump's administration on Friday announced measures targeting more than 50 North Korea-linked shipping companies, vessels and trade businesses. **PHOTO: AFP**

Beijing protests US sanctions on Chinese firms over N Korea ties

BEIJING — Beijing has protested against Washington's decision to impose sanctions against Chinese companies accused of conducting illicit economic deals with North Korea, the foreign ministry said.

US President Donald Trump on Friday announced measures targeting more than 50 North Korea-linked shipping companies, vessels and trade businesses, hailing the package as the "heaviest sanctions ever" levied on the nuclear-armed regime.

The measures, which the US says are aimed at forcing Pyongyang to roll back its banned nuclear and weapons programmes, apply to companies located or registered in North Korea, China, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Marshall Islands, Tanzania, Panama and Comoros.

Washington has been locked in a nuclear standoff with Pyongyang, which is trying to develop missiles that could deliver an atomic weapon to major US cities, and the sanctions are designed to put the squeeze on North Korea's already precarious economy and fuel supply.

"China is strongly opposed to the United States' long-arm jurisdiction and unilateral sanctions on Chinese entities and individuals," foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said on Saturday.

"We have lodged solemn representations to the United States and asked the US to immediately cease the wrong practice so as to avoid undermining relevant cooperation between the two sides," he added.

China, North Korea's only major ally, has steadfastly rebuffed Washing-

ton's calls for a full oil embargo — fearing the chaotic collapse of the Pyongyang regime — but has accepted caps agreed at the United Nations.

"We will never allow Chinese citizens or companies to be engaged in activities that violate resolutions from the United Nations Security Council," Geng said.

But Washington says its latest measures target entities that have helped Pyongyang evade UN sanctions.

The North Korean military and broader economy depend heavily on imports of coal and oil from Russia and China, with the latter accounting for some 90 per cent of the country's trade.

Last year, the Security Council adopted a series of resolutions to ban North Korean exports of commodities, including coal, iron and steel.—AFP ■

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 1st (Thursday) March 2018 " Full Moon Of TABAUNG " & 2nd (Friday) March 2018 " PEASANT DAY " under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar

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Dated: 26th February 2018.



Actress Margot Robbie. PHOTO: PTI

Margot Robbie feels her job is not 'glamorous'

LONDON — Actress Margot Robbie believes her job is not “glamorous” as compared to her other friends’ occupations.

The 27-year-old actor said she feels envious of her friends who work in offices and they get to slip into smart suits every day.

“I feel like my friends who work in offices have more glamorous jobs. They do their make-up, put on a tailored skirt and blouse and go to work. I go to work in my pyjamas and my Ugg boots and we are pretty much on a glori-

fied construction site, sitting in the dirt on plastic chairs using Portalooos and eating fried food,” Robbie told Metro newspaper.

“That’s what acting actually is. Then a handful of times in the year you get to put on a designer dress and get glammed up,” she added. Robbie recently starred in the biopic “I, Tonya”, which based on the life of American ice skater Tonya Harding. She has been nominated for the Best Actress Oscar for the role.

—PTI ■



First-time director Adina Pintilie, 38, clutching the trophy after her surprise win, said the movie was intended to “invite you the viewer to dialogue” with its frank portrayals of sex, disability and inhibitions. PHOTO: AFP

Romanian sex docudrama ‘Touch Me Not’ from first-time director Adina Pintilie wins Berlin Golden Bear

BERLIN — “Touch Me Not”, an experimental Romanian docudrama exploring sexual intimacy and the fears around it, won the Golden Bear top prize at the Berlin film festival on Saturday. First-time director Adina Pintilie, 38, clutching the trophy after her surprise win, said the movie was intended to “invite you the viewer to dialogue” with its frank portrayals of sex, disability and inhibitions.

US filmmaker Wes Anderson clinched the best director Silver Bear prize for “Isle of Dogs”, an animated allegory with political bite. Actor Bill Murray, who voices one of the pack of pooches in Anderson’s first animated feature since 2009’s “Fantastic Mr Fox”, picked up the award for Anderson. “I never thought that I would go to work as a dog and come home with a bear,” he quipped. “Ich bin ein Berliner Hund (I am a Berlin dog),” he added, riffing on John F. Kennedy famous speech. In a big night for female filmmakers, the runner-up Grand Jury Prize went to Polish social satire “Mug” by Malgorzata Szumowska. The feature tells the story of a man who is shunned by his community when he has a face transplant after a horrific accident, in a plot examining tensions over identity and exclusion in eastern Europe. “This film which is so important reflected problems not only in my own country but in whole Europe and whole world,” Szumowska said. “I am so happy that I am a female director, yeah!” she added.—AFP ■

Fans gather outside Sridevi’s house, mortal remains to arrive tonight

MUMBAI — The air outside Sridevi’s residence is heavy with grief as fans of the veteran actress continue to queue up to catch one last glimpse of their ‘Chandni’.

Sridevi, 54, died late at Saturday night reportedly due to cardiac arrest in Dubai, where she had gone to attend her nephew Mohit Marwah’s wedding.

Ever since the news broke out, Sridevi’s Lokhandwala home — where she used to live with her husband Boney Kapoor and two daughters Janhvi and Khushi — witnessed a steady stream of ardent fans assembling outside her house to pay their respects.

According to an Airports Authority of India source, a private jet is being flown to Dubai to carry the late actor’s mortal remains.

The aircraft which will bring Sridevi’s body is likely to depart



Veteran actress Sridevi. PHOTO: PTI

from Mumbai around 1 pm and will arrive in Dubai at 4 pm. It is expected to reach Mumbai around 8 pm.

Meanwhile, no celebrity has visited her residence yet.

Two police vans have been stationed and the security, too, has been beefed up to avoid any

commotion outside her residence.

The actor, who started off her career down South as a child artiste, became a prominent Bollywood star in the early ‘80s with box-office hits such as “Mawaali” (1983), “Tohfa” (1984), “Mr India” (1987) and “Chandni” (1989)

among others to her credit.

Her outings in “Sadma” (1983), “ChaalBaaz” (1989), “Lamhe” (1991), and “Gumrah” (1993) earned her critical acclaim, establishing her as one of the most sought after actors of her era.

Sridevi went on a hiatus for 15 years after starring in home production — “Judaai” — co-starring with her brother-in-law actor Anil Kapoor and Urmila Matondkar.

It was director Gauri Shinde’s “English Vinglish” in 2012 that marked her comeback to the silver screen.

Sridevi was last seen in revenge-drama — “Mom” — alongside Nawazuddin Siddiqui and Akshaye Khanna. She shot for a special appearance in superstar Shah Rukh Khan’s upcoming film — “Zero” — which releases in December. —PTI ■

Jennifer Lawrence had dropped out of school to pursue acting

LOS ANGELES — Actor Jennifer Lawrence has said that she had dropped out of school when she was 14 to pursue acting.

In an interview with 60 Minutes Bill Whitaker, a sneak peak of which was released recently, the “Hunger Games” actor said she was not a “very smart” student during her school days and nev-

er fit in back home in Louisville, Kentucky.

“I struggled through school. I never felt very smart. And when I’m reading this script, and I feel like I know exactly what it would look like if somebody felt that way. That was a whole part of my brain that I didn’t even know existed — something that I could

be confident in, and I didn’t want to let it go,” Lawrence said.

“I dropped out of middle school. I don’t technically have a GED or a diploma. I am self-educated,” Lawrence said.

The 27-year-old actor next plays a Russian intelligence officer who makes heartbreaking sacrifices at a young age in

the new spy thriller Red Sparrow.

Asked whether she regrets her decision, Lawrence said, “No. I really don’t. I wanted to forge my own path. I found what I wanted to do and I didn’t want anything getting in the way of it. Even friends, for many years, were not as important to me as my career.—PTI ■

Gov't to dispatch A-bomb storytellers in Japan, abroad

HIROSHIMA — The Japanese government will fund from April the travel costs of storytellers, both within Japan and abroad, who will share the testimonies given by aging victims of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The two cities, devastated by the 1945 US atomic bombings in the final phase of World War II, began training such storytellers in fiscal 2012 and 2014, respectively, and have dispatched them to other areas in Japan with recipient entities covering the costs.

To alleviate the financial burden, the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry has earmarked 30 million yen (\$280,000) in the draft fiscal 2018 budget to fund the programme. The government will also conduct English lessons for the messengers ahead of overseas trips.

About 100 people — mostly local residents, who have been

trained to pass on the experiences of the world's sole nuclear attacks in war — have been assigned by the two cities to give talks in places such as Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum.

According to the two museums, there were some 180 requests in fiscal 2016 for talks by A-bomb storytellers at such locations as universities or schools. Around 30 per cent came from outside of Hiroshima or Nagasaki prefectures, including Fukushima and Akita in north-eastern Japan.

But due to the heavy burden of covering transportation and accommodation fees, one local government was forced to give up its plan to receive a storyteller.

Sakuko Sasaki, who is set to become a Hiroshima city's "A-bomb legacy successor" in April, said, "I want to inherit the activities of the atomic bomb



Photo taken in Hiroshima, western Japan on 8 February, 2018, shows Sakuko Sasaki (L) preparing with atomic bomb survivors to become a storyteller of survivors' experiences. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

victims, who have continued to share (their experiences) with the next generations while suffering" at the same time.

"I am determined to go anywhere if I am requested," said the 67-year-old resident in the western Japan city.

The National Peace Memorial Halls for the Atomic Bomb

Victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki will serve as contact points and receive requests for the storytellers' dispatch from 1 March.

An estimated 140,000 people died from the US atomic bombing on 6 August, 1945, on Hiroshima by the end of that year. A second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki three days later, with

the attack believed to have killed 74,000 people by the end of the year in the southwestern Japan city.

The combined number of "hibakusha," people who survived either bombing, stood at 164,621 as of March last year. Their average age was 81.41, according to the ministry. —Kyodo News ■

Hunting for the woman in the 'African Mona Lisa'

LONDON— She's been described as "the African Mona Lisa", the subject of a long-lost series of three paintings by the artist considered the father of Nigerian modernism.

But like Leonardo da Vinci's most famous portrait, finding out more about the woman in Ben Enwonwu's "Tutu" has so far been elusive, even for her extensive extended family.

One of the missing works, which was discovered in a north London flat, goes on sale in the British capital on Wednesday and is expected to fetch 250,000 pounds (\$347,000, 282,000 euros).

Enwonwu was professor of fine arts at the university in Ile-Ife, the cradle of the Yoruba people in southwest Nigeria, when he met Adetutu Ademiluyi and painted her in 1973 and 1974. The painting of the Yoruba princess by an ethnic Igbo artist became a symbol of national reconciliation at a delicate time in Nigeria's history.

A brutal civil war had ended just four years earlier between federal forces and Biafran separatists wanting an Igbo homeland



Ben Enwonwu's painting of a Yoruba princess became a symbol of national reconciliation at a delicate time in Nigeria's history. **PHOTO: AFP**

in the southeast.

Royal stock

What is known about "Tutu" is that she was the granddaughter of the traditional ruler, Ademiluyi Ajagun, the Ooni (king) of Ife, who died in 1930.

He is said to have married up to 47 times, had many mistresses and, unsurprisingly, many children.

Surviving relatives in Ife said they remember an Adetutu in the family.

"Adetutu was... one of the daughters of Kabiyesi (king) Ademiluyi," said Olori (queen) Anifowoshe, who added that she was the only surviving wife of the former monarch.

But Anifowoshe, who is said to be more than 100, couldn't recall if Adetutu married or had children and told AFP: "She died many years ago."

Cecilia Ayoka is another centenarian and was married to Prince Okero Ademiluyi, a son of the former king.

"I used to know Adetutu in those days but for some years now I haven't heard anything about her," she added.

"Not many people knew Adetutu because Ademiluyi is such a large family.

"My husband who happened to be one of the direct children was over 120 years before he died and he had more than 40 wives," she said. "Only three of us are still alive."

'I can't believe she's alive'

Giles Peppiatt, the head of modern and contemporary African art at Bonhams auction house who found what he describes as "the mythical picture", has been in Nigeria doing his own detective work. Last week, he travelled the 200 kilometres (125 miles) from Lagos to Ife and said the older women in the family may have been referring to an Adetutu of a different generation.

He said family members told him a younger Adetutu was alive, in her late 60s and living in Lagos, which would tally with her being aged in her late teens when she sat for Enwonwu. "Tutu is one of about 300 (children). That's why

it's actually quite difficult to find her," he said.

He added: "It's amazing. I can't believe she's alive."

Enwonwu — famous for creating a bronze sculpture of Queen Elizabeth II — died in 1994 and appears not to have left any clues about his subject. At his studio in Lagos, the artist's son, Oliver, said he can't recall his father ever discussing it and doesn't know where the remaining two paintings are. But the 42-year-old, who is president of the Society of Nigerian Artists, said he was pleased about the increasing recognition his father was getting. "It's a thing of joy that several decades after his death my father's works are being appreciated globally," he added. Peppiatt said although he was hopeful of finding the real Tutu after so long, it had no bearing on the painting's worth as art.

"I will say, either way, I think it's... just a beguiling picture, it's an amazing portrait and whether we find her or not doesn't really affect the value of the work.

"The value of the work is what he painted in 1973, not whether we find the sitter in 2018." —AFP ■

Sithu Aung's goal secures win for Yadanabon vs GFA

IN one of the MPT Myanmar National League Week-7 matches, Yadanabon FC played against GFA FC yesterday at Mandalay Thiri Football Stadium in Mandalay yesterday.

The win was mostly dependent on the single goal scored by Si Thu Aung, making another win after two consecutive losses for Yadanabon.

Yadanabon lined up with keeper Chan NyeinKyaw, Ye Yin-tAung, Captain Ye KoOo, Shine Thuya, football star Si Thu Aung, ThetNaing, Hlaing Bo Bo, Aung-WunnaSoe, Hein Nay San, Myat-KaungKhant and Nay MyoAung.

Zwekapin United FC lined up with Keeper NaingZayarTun, PhyoMaungMaungSwe, ThetLwin Win, MaungMaungWi, BunzePoulo Cesar, Puyone Cho, Zin Min Tun, Anderson Son Ebimo West, Matsumoto Ken, NyiNyi-Tunand ThanHtetAung.

Yadanabon made in with both speedy and skillful play starting from the kickoff, although, Yadanabon could not convert every opportunities to goals as Zwekapin defenders were very adamant in blocking throughout the match.



Yadanabon Star player relay the ball away from the GFA player in yesterday's MNL match at Mandalay Thiri Stadium. **PHOTO:MNL**

The single goal of the match, and the winning goal for Yadanabon, was scored by star player Si Thu Aung at the 37 minute

mark over the support of young and active player Shine Thuya.

There were no other goals for both teams, with to and fro

play across the second half.

The win was sure for Yadanabon with its stable play till the final whistle.—KyawZin Lin ■

Myanmar selects AFF Women's Championship team roster

MYANMAR has selected players to participate in the 2018 AFF Women's Championship which will be hosted in Indonesia from 21 June to 4 July, 2018. Thirty-two players were selected from various teams in the KBZ Bank Women's League. Obviously, officials selected nine brilliant players from Sports & Education FC including star Yi Yi Oo, eight players from Myawady FC with various Myanmar women star, eleven bright and young players from Thitsar Arman FC, two players from Zwe Kapin FC, one player from YREO and another one from ISPE. The team will be headed by head coach U Win Thu Moe, assistant coaches U Khin Maung Htwe and Daw Zin Mar Wan and goal coach U Mya Ko Min, said an official. The AFF Women's Championship is the competition in women's football organized by the ASEAN Football Federation, and contested by the national teams of Southeast Asian nations. The official tournament started in 2004, hosted by Vietnam and was won by Myanmar. The 2018 AFF Women's Championship is the 9th edition of the AFF Women's Championship, an international women's football tournament organized by the ASEAN Football Federation (AFF).—KyawZin Lin ■

Woods says 69 gives him a shot at Honda Classic

MIAMI — Tiger Woods fired a one-under par 69 in the third round of the Honda Classic on Saturday, and said the first sub-70 round of his comeback gives him a shot at leader Luke List.

List carded a four-under par 66 at PGA National for a seven-under par total of 203.

Woods, seven shots back on even par 210, insisted he wasn't out of the running on the demanding course in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

"I put myself where I've got a shot going into tomorrow," Woods said. "I'm going to have to shoot something under par for sure. If I can go ahead and post a number early, you just never know."

The 14-time major champion notched his first score in the 60s in nine rounds this year.

In fact, it's his first score in the 60s on the US PGA Tour since he carded a 68 in the third round of the 2015 Wyndham Championship. Since then, debilitating back trouble had seen Woods largely sidelined. He missed all of 2016 before an abortive comeback bid in 2017 ended with spinal fusion surgery last April. So far in his latest comeback he's finished tied for 23rd at Torrey Pines and missed the cut last week in Los Angeles. But Saturday's round had him feeling optimistic. "That's probably the highest score I could have shot

today," Woods said. "I really hit it good." Woods who hit nine of 14 fairways and 13 of 18 greens in regulation. "The hard part has been trying to get the ball to go in the hole," Woods said. "These greens are a little tricky."

Woods made his first birdie at the eighth, where he was in the fairway off the tee and struck his approach within six feet. The birdie putt him just three shots off the lead.

- List birdies the last -

After he was unable to convert birdie chances at 10 and 11, he rolled in a 20-footer to save par at the 12th.

He drained a 14-footer for



Tiger Woods, seven shots back on even par 210, insisted he wasn't out of the running on the demanding course in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. **PHOTO: AFP**

birdie at 13, but was in the rough off the tee at the par-three 15th and was unable to get up and down for par after his chip caught the fringe. He missed the green en route to a bogey at 17, but rebounded with a birdie on the par-five 18th despite finding a fairway bunker off the tee. List seized

sole possession of the lead with a birdie from a greenside bunker at the par-five 18th — rebounding from a bogey at 17.

His second straight 66 put him one stroke in front of reigning PGA Champion Justin Thomas and former US Open winner Webb Simpson.—AFP ■