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Commander in Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects troops yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Military parade to mark 73rd Anniversary of Armed Forces Day held in Nay Pyi Taw

Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Senior General Maha Thayay Sithu Min Aung Hlaing attended the 73rd Anniversary of the Armed Forces Day military parade held on the Nay Pyi Taw parade ground yesterday morning.

At the parade, he received the salute of the parading forces

and delivered a speech.

At 5 a.m. yesterday morning, Tatmadaw (army, navy, air force) personnel, the Tatmadaw (army) women parade company, Tatmadaw Navy Seals, women special force members, the Myanmar Police Force and the Myanmar Police Force women

parade company took up their respective positions at the Thit-tat Parade Ground and marched towards the parade ground.

Along the route towards the parade ground, Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services; Daw Than Than Nwe, wife of Deputy Com-

mander-in-Chief of Defence Services; wives of Tatmadaw senior officers; officers; soldiers and families from the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief's Office and Nay Pyi Taw Command honored the marching troops with flower garlands.

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Development of Mandalay Myotha Industrial Park

THE Mandalay Myotha Garden City Project (MMGC) is being launched in Ngazun Township, Mandalay Region, a project jointly implemented by the Mandalay Region Government and Myotha Industrial Development (MMID), whose mission includes corporate social responsibility (CSR).

The Mandalay Myotha Garden City Project, which began in 2013, is a master plan development that includes foreign experts and consultants and is aimed at boosting social and economic cohesion by increasing employment opportunities, living standards of the local people, public-private investment, and sustainable social economic and environmental development that will be helpful for conservation and ecosystems that can maintain environmental balance.

SEE PAGE-4**LOCAL SPORTS**

Maungtaw hosts first Lethwei event

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'BEST BANK IN MYANMAR'

Awarded by EUROMONEY 2017

Army, navy, air force families honour retired military officers

Families of the Army, Navy and Air Force paid respects to retired senior military officers who attended the 73rd Anniversary of Armed Forces Day at a ceremony held in Zeyathiri Beikman, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Thirty-one retired senior military officers and 12 wives attended the ceremony where Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win and wife, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe and wife, Lt-Gen Sein Win and wife, Lt-Gen Ye Aung and wife, high ranking Tatmadaw officers from the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief's office and their wives paid respects on behalf of the families of the Army, the Navy and Air force, according to Myanmar tradition.

On behalf of the retired

senior military officers, Maj-Gen Thura Saw Phyu (retired), Maj-Gen Maung Maung (retired) and Lt-Gen Tun Kyi (retired) delivered speeches of guidance.

Afterwards, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief respectfully presented gifts of honour to retired senior military officers.

Later, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief, wife and party went to Bayintnaung guest house, where retired military officers who attended the 73rd anniversary Armed Forces Day were staying and personally paid respects to all the officers.

Afterwards, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief presented gifts to 20 Independence Mawgun Award winners who attended the Armed Forces Day military parade. Among the 20 was 97-year-old U Nyunt Tin (also known as "Crooked-arm Nyunt Tin"), who served in the Burma Independence Army (BIA), achieving the Independ-



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays respect to retired military officers at the 73rd anniversary of Armed Forces Day in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

ence Mawgun Award First Prize and continuing service in the traffic police assigned to Hledan

junction and other places. He is beloved and respected by the public and is living in retirement

in North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region, it is learnt. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Artistes, volunteers honoured for starring in 73rd Armed Forces Day movies

A CEREMONY was held to honour the actors who worked in the Burmese film "I fought because I hate war," as well as the award winners of competitions dedicated to the Armed Forces Day, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. At the ceremony, General Mya Tun Oo, chief of general staff (Army, Navy, Air), delivered the opening speech.

Lt-Col San Oo, chairman of the Committee for Psychological Affairs and Public Relations, conferred the honorary awards for the film to Director Major Tin Aung Soe, who is also the writer of the novel the film is based on; co-directors Captain Banyar Aung and Ma Yoon; actors Nyo Min Lwin, Nay Min, Htoo Khant Kyaw, Htoo Aung and the wives of soldiers who had lived in war zones and portrayed themselves in the film.

Lt-Gen Maung Maung Aye, chairman of the Armed Forces Day Preparation Committee, presented the honorary awards to actors Kyaw Htet Aung, Academy Soe Myat Thuzar, Academy Soe Myat Nandar, Academy Soe Pyae Thazin, Khine Hnin Wai, Ei Chaw Poe, Htun Sett, Saung Wutyl May and

Yin Let, as well as to the wives of soldiers who had lived in war zones and portrayed themselves in the film.

Later, Maj-Gen Myint Maw, chairman of the Armed Forces Day holding Committee, awarded honorary certificates to U Wai Lin (Wai Lin-Fine Arts), the first prize winner of the 73rd Armed Forces Day military cadence; Daw Khin Sandi Seint (Alingar May), the first prize winner in the song composition category; and U Tint Tun-(Tint Tun Chauk), the first prize winner in the short poem composition category.

Maj-Gen Htun Htun Nyi, chairman of the Manuscript Competition Committee, then conferred honorary awards to U Kyaw Aye (Pwint Thit Oo-Kalaywa), the first prize winner in the long poem composition category; Lt-Col Myint Tun (Ankel Pyinnyar), the first prize winner in the short novel composition category; and Sergeant Htun Htun (Yein New Lian), the first prize winner in the long novel composition category.

General Mya Tun Oo then treated the guests with tea. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Over 400 farmers get land compensation in Shwegyin Tsp

A ceremony to present compensation to the farmers was held at the meeting room of the General Administration Department in Shwegyin Township, Bago Region yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, Bago Region Minister for Electricity and Road Transport U Than Win made an opening speech. Afterwards, Bago Region Minister for Kayin Ethnic Affairs Daw Naw Pwal Sae explained matters re-

lating to land compensation before a local farmer spoke words of thanks.

The Department of Hydropower Implementation under the Ministry of Electricity and Energy asked for compensation from the Union Government in the fiscal year 2017-2018 for local people whose farmlands were confiscated when construction of Shwegyin Dam began in 2002. During the ceremony, Ks.

1211.053 million of compensation for more than 2,681 acres of farmland were given to 439 people from 115 households from two villages.

The ceremony was also attended by the lawmakers, the Deputy Director General from the Department of Hydropower Implementation, township level departmental officials, guests and local people.—Myanmar Digital News ■

73rd Anti-Fascist Day celebrated at NLD HQ

A ceremony to mark the 73rd anniversary of Anti-Fascist Day was held at the headquarters of the National League for Democracy in Bahan Township.

At the ceremony, Secretary of NLD central executive committee member U Han Tha Myint delivered an opening speech. Afterwards, NLD central executive committee member Dr. Myo Nyunt read out a seven-point Declaration of 73rd Anti-Fascist Day and recorded the messages from the political comrades as well as organisations.

The ceremony was attended by NLD's patron U Tin Oo, NLD central executive committee members, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U



The NLD celebrates 73rd Anti-Fascist Day at the party's headquarters in Bahan Township, Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Tin Maung Tun, Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Hluttaw representatives, officials from Embassy and invited guests.

Anti-Fascist Day is the precursor to Armed Forces Day, which was renamed by General Ne Win in 1962.—Zaw Gyi ■

Dinner to mark 73rd Anniversary of Armed Forces Day

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Maha Tharay Sithu Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla hosted a dinner to mark the 73rd Anniversary of Armed Forces Day on the lawn of the Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Among those attending the dinner were senior military

officers, Union Ministers, delegations from the ethnic armed groups who have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, diplomats, delegates from the University for Development of National Races, University Training Corps members, and winners of the competitions marking armed forces day.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife greeting senior military officers and attendees at the dinner to mark the 73rd Anniversary of Armed Forces Day. **PHOTO: MNA**

Awards presented to military columns participating in Armed Forces Day parade

SOME of the military columns that participated in the 2018 73rd anniversary of the Armed Forces Day military parades were presented with awards in various categories at the Thittat Parade Ground after the conclusion of the military parade yesterday morning.

At the awards ceremony, Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Maung Maung Aye, organising committee chairman of the the 73rd anniversary Armed Forces Day, presented the parade awards to the company representing the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and the company representing the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Air). The special force award was given to the

women special force company, military band award to the central military band, flag bearer award to Tatmadaw (Army) flag bearing platoon, cavalry award to the horse cavalry platoon, police force band award to the Myanmar Police Force band, best flag bearer award to the flag bearer group representing the Bayintnaung column and the best military band award to the band representing the Anawrahta column.

The third prizes for the best camp, best marching song, best discipline and parade were presented to the company representing the central command, the company representing the Eastern Command, the company

representing the Directorate of Ordnance Services and the company representing the Directorate of Electrical & Mechanical Engineers respectively.

The second prizes for the above categories were presented to the company representing the Office of Chief of Air Defence Force, the company (1) representing the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Air), the company representing the Directorate of Armoured Force and the company representing the Directorate of Artillery Force respectively. The second prizes for the Myanmar Police Force (women) parade, Myanmar Police Force (men) parade and the Tatmadaw (army) women's

parade were presented to the Myanmar Police Force (women) guard of honour, Myanmar Police Force (men) company (2) and Tatmadaw (Army) women's guard of honour respectively.

The first prizes for the Myanmar Police Force (women) parade, Myanmar Police Force (men) parade and the Tatmadaw (army) women's parade were presented to the Myanmar Police Force (women) company (1), Myanmar Police Force (men) company (3) and Tatmadaw (Army) women's company (1) respectively.

The first prizes for best camp, best marching song, best discipline and best parade were presented to the company representing the Office of Com-

mander-in-Chief (Navy), the company representing the Directorate of Supply and Transport, the company representing the office of the chief of defence industries and the company representing the Directorate of Signals respectively.

Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) General Mya Tun Oo delivered a speech after presenting the model company third, second and first prizes to the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Air) guard of honour, the company representing the office of the chief of Defence industries and the company representing the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Navy). —Myanmar News Agency ■



Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) General Mya Tun Oo presents third prize to the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Air) guard of honour. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) General Mya Tun Oo presents second prize to the model company representing the office of the Director of Military Engineers. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) General Mya Tun Oo presents first prize to the the company representing the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Navy). **PHOTO: MNA**

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Drinking water project to benefit 700 villagers

THE Township Rural Development Department has implemented the earthen lake construction project to supply drinking water to some 125 households in the summer.

The project will directly benefit some 700 residents in Hsihsongon Village, Taungtha Township, Mandalay Region, which is located in the central arid zone and faces water shortage annually, especially in the

summer season.

The department spent Ks8 million for the project, funded by the Mandalay Region government from its 2017-2018 financial year's budget.

U Aung Kyi Myint, head of the department, said the 100x6 feet wide earthen lake is expected to augment the water supply for humans and animals in the village and nearby areas.—Min Myintmo ■



Development of Mandalay Myohta Industrial Park

FROM PAGE-1

Plans are underway to develop industrial parks, warehouses, logistical and residential development, roads and transportation, green open spaces, bodies of water, commercial public facilities and public utilities and amenities.

For this project, a survey is being conducted to create job opportunities for local people from 21 villages in the project area.

According to U Min Lwin Oo, who is in charge of EHSS, there are many sector-wide projects such as Job Creation, Village Development, Community Development, Social Works, Health Care Service, Education and Religion, which are to be carried out for the benefit of local residents.

Officials from the company go to the villages so that they can distribute job application forms to the local people.

Currently, efforts are being made to collect data from the villages in order to improve their living standards, including street paving, access to electricity and water, school building construction, mobile health clinics, first aid and an English teaching programme.

According to the census of early March conducted in 13 villages of Ngazun township and 8 villages of Myingyan township, out of 1,200 residents – 432 men and 768 women – 83 people are graduates, 362 have passed the matriculation examination, 277 people have passed their junior high school examinations, 456

have passed the grade five examination and 22 have passed their primary school exams.

This project that covers 12,000 acres is now in operation with foreign investments or foreign joint investments.

Moreover, an industrial zone project with an estimated at \$US500 million in investments as of the second week of January is anticipated to open over 100 factories within a period of three years.

MMID Managing Director U Tun Tun Aung said that arrangements are currently being made to employ some 200-300 workers at a shoe factory.

At present, five factories, including an animal feed plant, a sawmill, a concrete plant and a snow cookie plant opened us-

ing investments from Indonesia, Denmark, Thailand, China and Hong Kong are operational.

For the creation of employment opportunities, the company has contributed financial assistance to local residents totaling Ks13,592 lakhs, including Ks3,765 lakhs for an electricity project, Ks2,552 lakhs for electricity for 56 villages from Myingyan Township, and Ks74 lakhs for social, educational and health care sectors. Due to international investment, many factories are still under constructions and the project is expected to create numerous job opportunities for the locals as well as reduce logistics costs for trading by providing easy access to the waterway along the Ayeyarwady River.—Khaing Sat Wai ■

New City Development Public Company gets MIC nod

The Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) has permitted the New City Development Public Company to implement the small and industrial gardens and rental services project, according to a report in Myawady

Daily yesterday.

The project will be executed on more than 660 acres in Hlegu Township.

Moreover, the MIC has also permitted beer production, motor vehicle assembly

production, manufacture and distribution of glass and its accessories, telecommunications, and construction of communication network towers, as well as the Myanmar traditional and Tuangtaman rural resort, dur-

ing the MIC meeting (4/2018) held on the evening of 22 March.

Local and foreign investments that have been permitted by the MIC have created some 1,044 job opportunities for local people.—GNLM ■

Ayeyawady Region development project to be launched this year

PHASE 1 of the Ayeyawady Region development project will be implemented by the end of this year, according to a report in Myawady Daily on Tuesday.

U Ye Linn, executive committee member of Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs

Federation, said the project would be implemented in a region that is a two-hour drive from commercial hub Yangon.

In the initial stage, a new highway plan will be executed in the project area later this year, and phase 1 is expected to be

finalised before 2020.

The development projects will include a smart city, an international airport, economic zones, housing complexes and industrial facilities. Negotiations are on with local and foreign companies before implementing the project.

For the time being, the feasibility study of the highway project is being conducted by a South Korean company, and it is some 70 per cent complete.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be more than US\$200 billion.—GNLM ■

Agricultural exports by private sector up by \$171 million

The export of agro products by the private sector in the current fiscal year (FY) topped US\$2.929 billion, recording an increase of \$171 million compared with the same period last FY, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The public sector did not export similar products this FY.

In the seven export categories, the trade value of only the forestry sector decreased. Between last April and this May, the overall exports amounted to \$11.425 billion, increasing \$2.49 billion against last FY.

According to official figures this FY, the country exported animal products worth \$51 million, marine products worth \$666 million, minerals worth \$1.701 billion, forest products worth \$201 million, manufactured goods worth \$6.297 billion and other



Farmers harvest paddy at a field in Kangyidauk, Ayeyawady.
PHOTO: GNLM/ PHOE KHWAH

products at an estimated value of \$2 billion.

The government is making sustained efforts to enhance the country's exports in each sector, as part of its plan to pro-

mote the economy. Myanmar conducts trade with ASEAN member states, East Asian countries, some European nations and African states. —Swe Nyein ■

Border exports to Bangladesh increase by \$17 million

THE value of Myanmar-Bangladesh border exports before the end of this fiscal year (FY) reached US\$26.641 million, registering an increase of \$16.746 million, as against last FY, according to the Commerce Ministry's latest report.

The total bilateral border trade, as of 16 March, reached \$27.328 million, with exports exceeding imports by \$25.954 million.

Myanmar conducts border trade with Bangladesh main-

ly through the Sittway and Maungdaw trade stations. Since last April, exports through Maungdaw brought in \$13.134 million, while exports through the Sittway border point were valued at \$13.507 million.

At the Myanmar-Bangladesh border gates, ginger, peanuts, mung beans, dried plums, garlic, rice, saltwater prawns, as well as fish, bamboo, blankets, candy, plum jam and footwear, are among the country's main export items.

The country's international trade by sea accounted for 80 per cent of the total trade, while the remaining was conducted via the border gates. The country carries out border trade with neighbouring countries via 16 cross-border points of entry, including Muse, Lweijel, Kanpikete, Chinshwehaw, Kengtung, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung, Tamu and Reed border gates. —Shwe Khine ■

Myanmar to take part in 8th Coffee Expo Seoul next month

A member entrepreneur of the Myanmar Coffee Association (MCA) will take part in the 8th Coffee Expo Seoul next month, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organisation (Myantrade).

The event is due to take place from 5 April (Thursday) to 8 April (Sunday) at Coex Hall A & B in Seoul in the Republic of Korea. It aims to bring together industries dealing with coffee and its related products

together under one roof.

Since its launch in 2012, Coffee Expo Seoul has attracted more than 40,000 visitors and buyers, as well as 150 exhibitors worldwide. The organisers expect the new latest edition to attract more than 45,000 visitors, exhibitors and buyers.

Myanmar's coffee is a precious crop among its agricultural products. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation said it expected to

increase the coffee acreage to 200,000 and export some 60,000 tonnes by 2030.

Domestic exporters are making concerted efforts to penetrate the international market with quality speciality coffee.

Currently, Myanmar coffee is exported to Switzerland, China, Thailand, America, South Korea, Japan, Germany and Hong Kong, among others. —Swe Nyein ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့တိုင်း **"Sunday Special"** အချက် (၈) မျက်နှာပါဝင်သော The Global New Light of Myanmar နေ့စဉ်ထုတ် သတင်းစာကို အောက်ပါမြို့များတွင် ဖတ်ရှုနိုင်ပါပြီ

Independent journalists visit troubled areas in Maungdaw

Three dead, one hurt in IED explosion in Maungdaw Tsp

"Sunday Special" အချက် (၈) မျက်နှာပါဝင်သည်

နေပြည်တော်
ပြန်ကြားရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ရုံးအမှတ် (၇) နေပြည်တော်၊ သတင်းနှင့်စာနယ်ဇင်းလုပ်ငန်း (ရုံးချုပ်)၊ စီမံခန့်ခွဲမှုဌာန၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၆၇၄၁၂၁၀၈

နေပြည်တော်
နေပြည်တော်သတင်းစာတိုက် (တပ်ကုန်း)၊ ဝေယျာသီရိမြို့နယ်၊ ခရိုင်လမ်းမ၊ နေပြည်တော်၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၆၇၃၆၁၄၈၊ ၀၆၇၃၆၁၂၉

ရန်ကုန်
The Global New Light of Myanmar သတင်းစာတိုက်၊ အမှတ် ၁၅၀၊ ငါးထပ်ကြီးဘုရားလမ်း၊ ဗဟန်းမြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၁၀၆၀၄၅၃၂၊ ၀၉၉၇၄၄၂၄၁၁၄

မန္တလေး
လမ်း (၂၀ x ၂၁) ကြား၊ (၁၂ x ၁၃) လမ်းကြား၊ ပုလဲခရိုင်၊ ရောင်ချမ်းမန္တလေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၂၃၂၂၉၂၊ ၀၂၃၂၅၅၁

အောက်ကြီး
ရုံးကြီးလမ်း၊ သစ်တောရပ်ကွက်၊ တောင်ကြီးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၈၁၂၁၁၁၆၄၊ ၀၉၅၂၁၄၄၅၇

မကွေး
နတ်မောက်လမ်း၊ တပ်မ (၈၈) တပ်နယ်စု၊ အနီး၊ မကွေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၆၃၂၃၇၁၂

ကချင်ပြည်
မြို့ပေါ် (၃-၈)၊ အမှတ် (၁) လမ်းသွယ်၊ မြို့ပတ်လမ်း၊ ကချင်တိုင်း၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၈၄၂၂၄၉၂

ကလေး
အောင်ယုရပ်ကွက်၊ မြို့နယ်အားကစားကွင်းအနီး၊ ကလေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၇၃၂၂၁၃၃

မြန်မာပြည်
အမှတ် (၄၁)၊ ရေစက်ကွက်၊ အောင်ဆန်းလမ်း၊ မြန်မာပြည်၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၇၄၂၂၄၆၂

စစ်တွေ
ရေမောက်လမ်းနှင့် တက္ကသိုလ်ရိပ်သာလမ်း၊ မီးစက်ကြီးအနီး၊ မန်ကျည်းမြိုင်ရပ်ကွက်၊ စစ်တွေမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၄၃၂၃၀၆၈

လားရှိုး
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Military parade to mark 73rd Anniversary of Armed Forces Day held in Nay Pyi Taw

FROM PAGE-1

Some 12,434 troops from the Tatmadaw and the Myanmar Police Force marched and took up positions at the parade ground.

The parade was attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Union Ministers, Chief of General Staff (army, navy, air force) General Zeya Kyaw Htin Mya Tun Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Zeya Kyaw Htin Tin Aung San, Commander-in-Chief (Air force) General Zeya Kyaw Htin Maung Maung Kyaw and Tatmadaw senior officers, as well as Independence Mawgun Award winners, retired Tatmadaw senior officers, the Hluttaw committees chairmen, the Hluttaws representatives of Tatmadaw, 2017 military gallantry award winners and families, representatives of ethnic armed organizations that have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, People's Militia and Frontier Force commanding group, military attaches, officials from the Myanmar Police Force, fire brigade, Myanmar Red Cross, veterans' organizations, students from University for the Development of National Races, University Training Corps personnel, members of Myanmar Press Council, artistes, winners of military songs, poems, short and long story composing/writing competitions, administrators and trainers of naval and air youth programmes, and trainees and invited guests.

After the marching columns have taken up their respective positions on the parade ground, Senior General Maha Thayay Sithu Min Aung Hlaing entered the parade ground, accompanied by horse riding escorts and took up his position on the dais and received the salute of the Tatmadaw and the Myanmar Police Force personnel.

The Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief then inspected the troops on the parade ground, after which Myanmar's national flag was given the salute, while the national anthem was played by the central military band.

The fallen soldiers were also

saluted and the Tatmadaw and the Myanmar Police Force personnel assembled at the parade ground took the four oaths.

Following this, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief delivered a speech.

It is necessary to be a strong, capable, modern and patriotic Tatmadaw to protect the country well, so as not our independence and sovereignty to be violated. As the saying goes, "Only when the Tatmadaw is strong, will the Nation be strong", we must build our Tatmadaw to have combat power and combat prowess, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Today, our country is marching as the modern and developed democracy one. Democracy is a negotiation of different views from multiple directions and it is the way to live cohesively with the same attitudes. Whichever policies have been pursued in the country, there shall be laws, rules and regulations promulgated. In democracy, there is freedom of speech in line with democracy norms but these must also be in accordance with the rules and regulations ratified and accountability as well. Discipline is the road map of development. Baseless speech leads to animosity and degrades the prestige of our country, hindering the nation building, he added.

He continued to say that in the advanced communication networks of today, information seems to abundantly burst so our military personnel need to think analytically through perception. Soon after the independence, the stooges of political parties, to win elections, could be observed to have instigated the Tatmadaw through various ways, with the aim of exploiting the Tatmadaw in their power tug of war. Thus, baseless speech to disintegrate the Tatmadaw and to lower her prestige will have to be reacted with care and consciousness.

For many years, over 130 ethnic groups had coexisted peacefully in Myanmar. Among ethnic groups, some are up to hundred-thousands but some are just handful by population.

However, population is not the main matter and rights are equitable for all kinds of ethnics as the Constitution states. Al-



The military parade marches past the three giant statues of Myanmar's historic kings. PHOTO: MNA

though the majority believes in Buddhism there has also been freedom of worship for other religions. Thus, speech causing illusion must be restrained in relation to religion, said Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Soon after the independence, disparity in ideology, ethnicity, and religion came up due to divided rules of the British imperialist during their terms and the armed conflicts have been still remaining to date. To get peace, successive governments convened peace talks. And now, in our country translating multiparty democracy into practice, we must find solutions through political means as claims with arms are not necessary. With this meet, it is obligatory to carry out based on the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA route that can practically meet the voices of the entire people, said the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

The Tatmadaw has signed the NCA and been cooperating to stabilize and firmly establish the current political process in accord with the provisions of NCA.

In the continuation of the mechanisms of perpetual peace via NCA for the entire people to enjoy the fruitfulness of stability, peace and development in the quickest time, the reunification processes for security affairs are to be developed. During the peace talks, it will be more practical to negotiate about probable things, in view of long-term benefit instead of claiming the impossible ones and procrastinating time. As the armed conflicts broke out, bringing instability, the country lagged behind the ASE-

AN community without having development. Therefore, to catch up with the others, we need to quicken our pace. In this respect, all the people should bear in mind "Myanmar Spirit" without racial and religious discrimination, and to strive for the country's development in cohesive union. Instead of pointing to the past and finding faults, it is now a high time to learn the lessons from the past and to conduct for the country's development.

The main task of Tatmadaw is the National Defence which will be conducted by joining hands with the entire people. In defining the term 'Defence', it varies depending on historical background of the states, he said.

Whoever the government is, whatever the political system is, the main task of Tatmadaw is to serve for national defence and national politics. I would also like to stress that the main duties of the Tatmadaw are to safeguard Our Three Main National Causes, the State Constitution, the lives and property of the people with her adornment and the works contributing to State's interest and Public interest together with national awareness.

In conclusion, he urged the members of the Tatmadaw to continue Tatmadaw's traditions of national politics that have been successively preserved in delegate manner as the following objectives of 73rd Anniversary Armed forces Day have specified:

- To help the successful establishment of State's peace and prosperity, development, and unity through cohesive nation of the entire people.

- To uphold the continuation of Tatmadaw's endeavour to steadfastly walk on the path of multi party democratic system as the Union based on democratic and federal system, with the adornment of Our Three Main National Causes.

- To cooperate in the upright deals of political means, for the internal armed conflict resolution attaining nationwide perpetual peace, in accordance with the law.

- To carry out the sustainable development enhancing three capabilities, for the Tatmadaw to become a Standard Army, in line with the Tatmadaw's mechanism, "Study, Practise, Comply".

After the speech, the assembled troops marched in formation to salute the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and marched out of the parade ground. Tatmadaw Navy Seals and the Women Special Force members rappelled off hovering helicopters above the marching formations and joined the troops marching out of the parade ground. As the troops marched, the Tatmadaw (Air) helicopters displaying flags flew overhead, followed by the various Tatmadaw (Air) fighters, attack helicopters, trainers, jet trainers, multi-purpose jet fighters and interceptors conducting a fly-by.

After the troops have marched out, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief greeted the guests attending the parade and left the parade ground after concluding the 2018 73rd Anniversary of the Armed Forces Day military parade.—Myanmar News Agency ■

North Korean leader Kim visits China: Reports

BEIJING — Speculation is rife that Kim Jong Un made a surprise visit to China after media reports that a special train believed to be carrying the North Korean dictator arrived here.

Speculation is rife that Kim Jong Un made a surprise visit to China after media reports about arrival of a special train believed to be carrying the North Korean dictator.

Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying, however, said at a media briefing that she had “no information for the moment” about reports that Kim visited China. “The information will be published in due

course,” she said.

If confirmed, it would be Kim’s first overseas trip since he took over power in 2011 after his father’s death.

Japan’s Kyodo news agency, citing unidentified sources, reported that a high-ranking North Korean official had arrived in the Chinese capital on Monday afternoon.

Japanese broadcaster Nippon TV showed footage of a train — similar to the one used for foreign visits by Kim’s late father Kim Jong Il — at a Beijing station.

There were also reports about heavy security on the Chi-

na-North Korea border and later at a guesthouse where prominent North Koreans have stayed in the past.

Hong Kong-based ‘South China Morning Post’ reported that while it is yet to be confirmed if the person is Kim himself, the security arrangements suggest it is someone of great significance.

Historically, the visits of North Korean leaders to China, the country’s neighbour and closest ally, were always shrouded in secrecy.

Kim’s late father Kim Jong-il too used to visit China secretly.

Tensions temporarily abated in the Korean Peninsula recent-



Kim Jong Un . PHOTO: PTI

ly over North Korea’s nuclear programme after US President Donald Trump agreed for a summit meeting with Kim.

Though North Korea has remained a long-standing ally of China, relations between the two countries have been strained after Beijing beefed up UN sanc-

tions by blocking essential supplies like oil and coal following pressure from Trump.

Observers say the severity of sanctions made Kim to tone down his rhetoric on acquiring nuclear weapons and consider the option for talks with US. —PTI ■

Ultra-thin sun shield could protect Great Barrier Reef

SYDNEY — An ultra-fine biodegradable film some 50,000 times thinner than a human hair could be enlisted to protect the Great Barrier Reef from environmental degradation, researchers said on Tuesday.

The World Heritage-listed site, which attracts millions of tourists each year, is reeling from significant bouts of coral bleaching due to warming sea temperatures linked to climate change.

Scientists from the Australian Institute of Marine Biology have been buoyed by test results of a floating “sun shield” made of

calcium carbonate that has been shown to protect the reef from the effects of bleaching.

“It’s designed to sit on the surface of the water above the corals, rather than directly on the corals, to provide an effective barrier against the sun,” Great Barrier Reef Foundation managing director Anna Marsden said.

The trials on seven different coral types found that the protective layer decreased bleaching of most species, cutting off sunlight by up to 30 per cent.

“It (the project) created an opportunity to test the idea that by reducing the amount of sun-

light from reaching the corals in the first place, we can prevent them from becoming stressed which leads to bleaching,” Marsden said.

Researchers from a breadth of disciplines contributed to the project, which was headed by the scientist who developed the country’s polymer bank notes.

“In this case, we had chemical engineers and experts in polymer science working with marine ecologists and coral experts to bring this innovation to life,” Marsden said.

With its heavy use of coal-fired power and relatively small

population, Australia is considered one of the world’s worst per capita greenhouse gas polluters, with advocates urging Canberra to do more to protect the environment.

The reef is also under threat from predatory coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish, as well as farming run off.

Marsden said it was impractical to suggest that the “sun shield” — made from the same material found in coral skeletons — could cover the entire 348,000 square-kilometre (216,000 square-mile) reef.

“But it could be deployed on a smaller, local level to protect high-value or high-risk areas of reef,” she added.

“The concept needs more work and testing before it gets to that stage, but it’s an exciting development at a time when we need to explore all possible options to ensure we have a Great Barrier Reef for future generations.”

Hard corals, also called reef-building corals, produce a rock-like skeleton made of the same material as classroom chalk — calcium carbonate. Soft corals produce smaller amounts of calcium carbonate.

A report last year from Deloitte Access Economics valued the Great Barrier Reef as an asset worth Aus\$56 billion (US\$43 billion), which included its tourism revenues and indirect value for people who have not yet visited the site but know it exists. —AFP ■

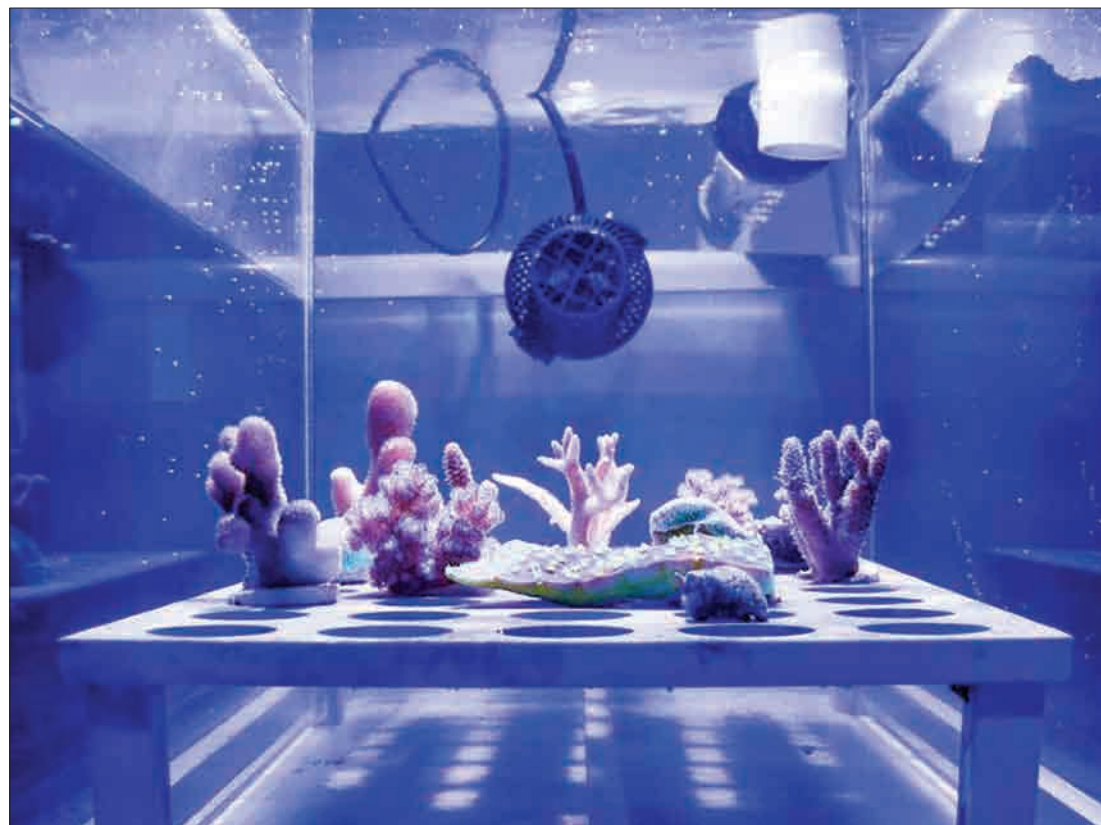
China-ASEAN Expo-Cambodia exhibition to kick off in Phnom Penh

PHNOM PENH — The China-ASEAN Expo-Cambodia Exhibition will be held here for the first time from 30 March to 1 April, organizers said on Tuesday.

Chen Min, deputy director of the liaison department of the China-ASEAN Expo Secretariat, said some 290 companies will be taking part in the 3-day event at the Diamond Island Exhibition Center, displaying their products and services at 440 booths.

“This is the first exhibition that the China-ASEAN Expo Secretariat organizes in Cambodia,” she said in a press conference here. “It is also the largest exhibition that the China-ASEAN Expo Secretariat holds outside China.”

Seang Thay, director general of the Trade Promotion General Department of the Cambodian Ministry of Commerce, said the exhibition was aimed at celebrating the 15th anniversary of the China-ASEAN strategic partnership and the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Cambodia and China. “The exhibition is an important event that will help strengthen and promote economic and trade cooperation, diplomatic relations, and cultural ties between Cambodia and China in particular, and between China and ASEAN in general,” he said in the press conference. Apart from the exhibition, there will also be forums on trade, investment, and technology, he said. —Xinhua ■



A floating “sun shield” made of calcium carbonate has been shown to protect coral from the effects of bleaching. PHOTO: AFP

Follow precautions to avoid danger of UV rays

THE ultraviolet index reaches extreme and highly dangerous levels in the summer season, which begins in mid-March and ends in May.

In the summer season, people must take precautions. The Health Department has warned of health risks caused by ultraviolet (UV) rays and urges residents to take precautions against the hazardous rays.

The department has advised the people across the country to stay indoors unless required, avoid direct sunlight between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., seek shade and wear headwear and long-sleeved clothing at all times.

While a UV index reading between 0 and 2 poses little danger, an index between 6 and 7 poses considerable health risks, with severe damage to the eyes and skin possible if they are unprotected. Any index measurement above 11 means extreme risk of harm from unprotected sun exposure, with skin and eyes burning within minutes.

The country sees an increase in sun-related skin conditions and other heat-related health problems in the summer as the temperature rise.

The UV index is an international standard measurement of the strength of ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun at a particular place and time.

Small amounts of UV radiation can be beneficial. It is essential for the production of Vitamin D, and under medical supervision can be used to treat a number of diseases, including rickets, psoriasis, eczema and jaundice, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

However, at high levels, UV radiation can damage the skin and eyes over time. Worldwide, some 12 to 15 million people become blind annually from cataracts, of which up to 20 per cent may be caused or exacerbated by sun exposure, according to the WHO.

Over the past two years, Yangon has seen summertime UV readings reach 13.

Summer in Myanmar, which lasts from March to May, is entering its hottest weeks. Special advice goes to revelers who will enjoy the Thingyan water festival, which coincides with the hottest weather in mid-April.

Because of heavy traffic due to the queuing of cars that are waiting to get doused with water at the numerous pandals, revelers have more exposure to sun and should pay particular attention to protecting themselves against the sun.

The country sees an increase in sun-related skin conditions and other heat-related health problems in the summer as the temperature rise.

Aged people and children are advised to take shelter under shady places and in places with good ventilation.

People are advised to avoid working under the sun. Experts urge residents to use sunblock and apply it every four hours. Clothing and cover is essential to shade yourself from the sun.

Experts say “thanaka”, the ancient traditional cosmetic paste made from the bark of the “thanaka” tree can also be used, as it can act as a barrier from the sun, absorb oil and cool the skin. ■

Widening gap between the rich and poor in Myanmar society

The gap between the rich and poor in Myanmar rural and urban society is unbelievably getting wider and wider. Some wealthy men living in Yangon and Mandalay have their homes of their own worth millions; several luxurious cars belong to their families. Contrarily, people with a hand-to-mouth existence have to live in a hut with a thatch roof and walk to and fro between their huts and rice fields. While the wealthy families send their sons and daughters abroad for further studies, rural kids don't have a chance to finish their primary level education. The rich enjoy their meals in restaurants and the rural poor have to dig in with broken rice and shrimp-paste sauce, putting Myanmar society in disarray and unbalanced.

Wealthy Myanmar people including government servants flush with much money usually go shopping abroad, put up in luxurious hotels and eat meals in expensive restaurants. They buy expensive goods and order food in restaurants more than they need. They never try to finish the meals up, leaving a lot of leftovers. They are all too much complacent about their behavior; it is really a shameful deed!

Try to economize as much as one can

By Maung Thaung Win (Ex-diplomat)



My personal experience

While working abroad, I sometimes went to eat out with my family. I found many foreigners especially European tourists highly disciplined in restaurants. They order the meals according to their needs. They try to finish their meals with nothing left on the plates. My Myanmar guests were shown round shopping malls and fed them in restaurants which usually charge in dollars. Unfortunately they never tried to finish their meals ; their ways of thinking are different from those of Europeans.

The same thing happens in our country now. Some people order expensive meals more than their needs; they never finish them up. The leftover meals are finally thrown into dustbins. They should have ordered in accordance with their needs. If they need some more, they can order again. Suffice it to say that these people have committed a wasteful use of our national resources. During my young days, when a grain of boiled rice fell off the plate, I was asked by my parents to pick it up. They explained to me how peasants toiled in the fields. These days, when rich men ask “where does the rice come from”? The simple answer would be “from the rice pot”. In this connection I would like to advise authorities concerned to form ‘monitor teams’ in restaurants and hotels across the country. The guests have to finish up the meals that they have ordered or else they must be fined. At this juncture these teams must be completely without bias and fairly justified.

A waste of everything everywhere

I should say Myanmar people tend to waste everything besides meals: waste of documents, electricity and water in offices. The worst is the waste of time. Government servants sit idly by at a tea shop by putting a bet on fixtures of football teams. Some spend their time in parks and cinema halls. Most people keep on using iphones, by wasting a valuable time, leading to the slow generation of their mental acuties.

We must economize

The prices of basic commodities are climbing at full speed, putting our country in great debt. The increase in salaries of government servants cannot be expected in the foreseeable future. That is why each and every one should avoid wasting money on unnecessary things.

Similarly wealthy men should restrict on their reckless use of money at the expense of natural resources of the country. It would be just right to economize as much as one can.

Concerning with contents in this article, one might ask” We use what we have earned. What of it?” That would be contrary to what I wanted to point out in the article. What I mean is to buy and use according to one’s needs to be a dutiful Myanmar citizen. Contrarily, ordering meals in restaurants more than one’s needs and leaving a lot of leftovers would mean mere waste of national resources. So the people of Myanmar are respectfully advised to economize as much as they can on the use of national resources. ■

Translated by Arakan Sein

IFC Invests in Thilawa River Port to Develop One of Myanmar’s First Bulk Terminal, Boost Trade and Competitiveness

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is providing long-term financing of \$15 million to the International Bulk Terminal (Thilawa) Company Limited to develop and operate a greenfield bulk terminal at Thilawa, one of the first bulk terminals for Myanmar.

With an effective capacity of more than one million metric tons, the bulk terminal will reduce transport and logistics costs, support trade and increase competitiveness of the country’s supply chains, creating new markets and jobs. The current lack of specialized and efficient bulk facilities forces producers and traders to containerize bulk commodities, which involves high handling costs.

IFC’s long-term funding for the Thilawa River Port builds on its prior investments in Myanmar’s transport sector. The cost of this project is estimated at \$65 million, which will be partly covered by Lluvia, a Myanmar’s leading agri processing company and Japan’s leading integrated logistics company Kamigumi, both jointly set up the International Bulk Terminal (Thilawa) Company

“We greatly appreciate IFC’s commitment to Myanmar and IFC’s long-term debt financing — a necessity for infrastructure projects,” said U Ko Gyi, Managing Director of Lluvia. “We also look forward to benefiting from IFC’s technical knowledge and global experience.”

With Myanmar’s strategic geographic location, a port expansion program could help the country to develop as a regional trans-shipment hub. IFC’s investment will also help create a market for the bulk movement of agricultural commodities. In the near future, the port will be able to facilitate trade flows of wheat, animal feed, and rice, and also have the capacity to handle other non-agricultural commodities.

“As one of the first providers of specialized bulk cargo handling, this project contributes to the diversification of port services in Myanmar. It also supports the government’s ongoing plan to increase private sector participation in port, logistics and transportation services to drive economic growth,” said Vikram Kumar, IFC Country Manager for Myanmar.—GNLM ■

Children’s Literature Festival to be held in Hinthada

WITH the joint cooperation of Ayeeyarwaddy Regional government, Ministry of Information and Basic Education Department, a Children Literature Festival will be held on 30 and 31 March at No.3 Basic Education High School in Hinthada.

During the children’s literature festival, discussions and speeches will be conducted with authors, the title of this forum is Getting Education and Knowledge. Also included are exhibitions of children’s literature, famous author Minn Thu Wun’s books and Kayin ethnic people’s cultural utensils and musical instruments.

“The purpose of the children’s literature festival aims at developing a child’s intelligence, promoting creative thinking and oratory skills and nurturing a love of reading for children who will be leaders of the future” said an official from the Information and Public Relations Department in the Ayeeyarwaddy Region.—MDN

“The purpose of the children’s literature festival aims at developing a child’s intelligence, promoting creative thinking and oratory skills and nurturing a love of reading for children who will be leaders of the future” said an official from the Information and Public Relations Department in the Ayeeyarwaddy Region.—MDN

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ကလေးစာပေပွဲ

(ဟင်္သာတမြို့)

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Russia blames US pressure on allies for expulsions

TASHKENT, (Uzbekistan) — Moscow on Tuesday charged Washington had put “colossal pressure” on allies to expel scores of Russian diplomats, and vowed to retaliate.

“This is the result of colossal pressure, colossal blackmail which is the main instrument of Washington on the international arena,” Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in Uzbekistan.

“We’ll respond, have no doubt! No one wants to put up with such loutish behaviour and we won’t.”

At least 116 alleged agents working under diplomatic cover were ordered out by 22 governments on Monday, dwarfing similar measures in even the most notorious Cold War spying disputes.

The expulsions were a response to the poisoning of Russian double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia with a nerve agent in the English city



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov . PHOTO: AFP

of Salisbury on 4 March.

Expulsions of Russian diplomats were ordered by the United States Canada and Australia as

well as a number of European Union countries, Albania and Ukraine. The row has plunged Russia’s relations with the West to

new lows amid ongoing tensions over Ukraine and Syria.

Speaking on the sidelines of a conference on Afghanistan in

Uzbekistan’s capital Tashkent, Lavrov said the expulsions justified Russia’s view that there are “few independent countries” remaining in Europe.

Comments by British Prime Minister Theresa May blaming Russia for the poisoning were “simply an affront to the system of Anglo-Saxon justice system,” Lavrov added.

Britain had urged allies to take strong action in response to the attack that left former Russian spy Skripal and his daughter in critical condition.

The United States responded particularly strongly, ordering 60 Russians to leave embassies and consulates and shutting down the Russian consulate general in Seattle. Australia also joined in the coordinated diplomatic move, expelling two Russian diplomats on Tuesday that Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said were “undeclared intelligence officers”. —AFP ■

UK MPs demand Zuckerberg testify on data row after he offers deputy

LONDON, (United Kingdom) — British MPs renewed a demand on Tuesday to interview Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg personally over a data privacy row, after he responded to an earlier request by offering to send one of his deputies.

Damian Collins, the chairman of the House of Commons digital, culture and media committee, said that the seriousness of the allegations meant it was “appropriate” for Zuckerberg to offer an explanation himself, whether in person or via videolink.

In a letter published by the committee on Tuesday, a senior British Facebook executive offered to send chief technology office Mike Schroepfer or chief product officer Chris Cox to London next month.

“We’d be very happy to invite Mr Cox to give evidence,” Collins said at the start of a committee hearing on Tuesday.

“However we would still

like to hear from Mr Zuckerberg as well.

“We will seek to clarify with Facebook whether he is available to give evidence or not, because that wasn’t clear from our correspondence, and if he is available to give evidence then we would be happy to do that either in person or via video link if that would be more convenient for him.”

In the letter to Collins, Rebecca Stimson, head of public policy for Facebook UK, wrote: “Facebook fully recognizes the level of public and parliamentary interest in these issues and support your belief that these issues must be addressed at the most senior levels of the company by those in an authoritative position to answer your questions.

“As such Mr Zuckerberg has personally asked one of his deputies to make themselves available to give evidence in person to the committee.”

She said either Schroepfer or Cox could attend “straight

after the Easter parliamentary recess”, meaning April 16 at the earliest.

The committee’s request to Facebook followed allegations that data from up to 50 million users was harvested by a British company, Cambridge Analytica, for use in election campaigns, namely that of US President Donald Trump in 2016.

The social media giant said it did not know the data was being used in a political campaign, although it did allow an academic researcher to create an app that picked up the information from users and their friends.

In the letter, Stimson revealed that Facebook was working with regulators around the world to assess how many people in each country were affected.

“We can now confirm that around one percent of the global downloads of the app came from users in the EU, including the UK,” she wrote—AFP ■

Father of Orlando nightclub attacker was FBI informer

MIAMI — The father of Omar Mateen, who killed 49 people in a 2016 attack on an Orlando nightclub, was a long-time confidential informant for the FBI, according to court documents.

Seddique Mateen’s past as a source for federal law enforcement emerged at the trial in Orlando of Noor Salman, 31, Omar Mateen’s widow, who prosecutors allege had prior knowledge of her husband’s plans.

Omar Mateen died in the 12 June, 2016 mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub, which he claimed to have carried out on behalf of the Islamic State group. Defence attorneys, in documents filed with the court over the weekend, called for a mistrial in Salman’s case following the revelation that her father-in-law had served as an FBI informant. But US District Judge Paul Byron rejected the request on Monday, the Orlando Sentinel newspaper reported.

According to Salman’s lawyers, the US Attorney’s office acknowledged in an email over the weekend that Seddique Mateen was an “FBI confidential human source at various points in time between January 2005 and June 2016.” In addition, it said, Seddique Mateen was the subject of an in-

vestigation for money transfers he had made to Turkey and Afghanistan.

The FBI also said it had received a tip that Seddique Mateen was engaged in fund-raising that may have been intended to contribute to “an attack against the government of Pakistan.”

The defence attorneys said the government’s failure to disclose the information violated Salman’s “right to a fair trial” and called for the charges against her to be thrown out.

“If the government had provided this information, the defence would have investigated whether a tie existed between Seddique Mateen and his son, specifically whether Mateen’s father was involved in or had foreknowledge of the Pulse attack,” the defence said. Seddique Mateen, who is originally from Afghanistan, was on the government’s initial witness list but was finally not called to testify. Judge Byron dismissed the request for a mistrial. “This trial is not about Seddique Mateen,” the Orlando Sentinel quoted the judge as saying. “It’s about Noor Salman.” Salman is facing charges of providing support to a foreign terrorist organization and obstructing justice.—AFP ■

German court keeps ex-Catalan leader Puigdemont in custody

NEUMUNSTER, GERMANY — A German court has kept former Catalan president Carles Puigdemont in custody pending possible extradition to Spain to face “rebellion” charges, as fresh demonstrations blocked several main roads in the Spanish region on Tuesday.

Puigdemont will “remain in detention for the time being, until a decision is made concerning the extradition procedure,” the regional court in Kiel, northern Germany, announced Monday, a day after Puigdemont was arrested.

The ex-leader’s detention in Germany has sparked angry protests in Catalonia and demonstrators blocked several major roads in the region on Tuesday, including briefly the two main access roads into Barcelona.

Puigdemont’s arrest comes five months after he went on the run as Spanish prosecutors sought to charge him with sedition and rebellion in the wake of Catalonia’s failed independence bid in October last year.

He was detained on Sunday after crossing the border into Germany from Denmark, under a European warrant issued by Spain.

According to his lawyer Jaume Alonso-Cuevillas, Puigdemont was on his way back to Belgium, where he lived in self-imposed exile after Spanish authorities moved to impose direct rule over Catalonia.

The court in northern Germany turned down a request from Puigdemont’s legal team for his release pending the extradition decision by German authorities.

The ruling must normally be made within 60 days under Ger-



A banner outside the building where former Catalan president Carles Puigdemont is being held in northern Germany. **PHOTO: AFP**

man law. A spokeswoman for the German prosecutor’s office told AFP it would “probably not come this week” ahead of the four-day Easter holiday.

Protest in Barcelona

The ousted president’s detention marks the latest chapter in a secession saga that has bitterly divided Catalans and triggered Spain’s worst political crisis in decades.

Demonstrations on Tuesday closed the A7 motorway near the French border, as well as the national N340 that links Catalonia with Spain’s southeastern coast.

The blockades followed protests in Barcelona on Sunday, when Catalan riot police shoved and hit demonstrators with batons to keep the crowd from advancing on the Spanish government’s representative office.

Officers fired warning shots

in the air to try to contain the demonstrators, who pushed large recycling containers towards police. Some people threw glass bottles, cans and eggs at police.

About 90 people were slightly injured during the protests, including 22 police officers, emergency services said.

‘Solution can be found’

The case lands a diplomatic hot potato in German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s lap less than two weeks after her new government was sworn in.

Her spokesman insisted on Monday that the decision on Puigdemont’s extradition rested solely in the hands of the German regional justice authorities.

Spain’s deputy prime minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria welcomed the arrest as “good news”, saying: “No one can make a mockery of the courts forever”.

Protesters in Barcelona saw the move as a provocation, while Catalan parliament speaker Roger Torrent appealed for calm in an address broadcast on regional television.

Aside from Puigdemont, nine other Catalan separatist leaders are in jail in Spain over the wealthy northeastern region’s failed breakaway attempt.

His arrest came two days after Spain’s supreme court issued international arrest warrants for 13 Catalan separatists including Puigdemont and his nominated successor Jordi Turull.

The court said they would be prosecuted for “rebellion”, a charge which carries a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison.

Twelve more face less serious charges such as disobedience.

Issuing the warrant for Puigdemont on Friday, Judge Pab-

lo Llarena accused the ousted Catalan leader of organising an independence referendum in October last year despite a ban from Madrid and the risk of violence.

That vote had been swiftly followed by the Catalan parliament’s declaration of independence on 27 October.

‘Revenge and repression’

Puigdemont had been visiting Finland since Thursday, but slipped out of the country before Finnish police could detain him.

In Geneva, the UN Human Rights Committee said it had registered a complaint from Puigdemont, which his lawyer has earlier said concerned Madrid violating Puigdemont’s right to be elected and his freedom of expression and association.

Elsa Artadi, a lawmaker with Puigdemont’s Together for Catalonia party, said he should fight his extradition.

“Spain does not guarantee a fair trial; only revenge and repression,” she wrote on Twitter.

While separatist parties won Catalonia’s regional elections which were called by Madrid in December, they have been unable to elect a president and form a government as they have picked candidates who are now either in exile, in jail or facing prosecution.

After Puigdemont was forced to withdraw his bid for the presidency as he could not return to Spain without facing arrest, another pro-independence leader Jordi Sanchez followed suit when a judge refused to let him out of jail to be sworn in. The third candidate, Turull, was placed in custody on Friday.

Fresh regional elections will be triggered if a new leader is not elected by 22 May.—AFP ■

UAE says Qatar fighter jets intercept civilian flights

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates —The United Arab Emirates said two Qatari fighter jets “dangerously approached” two UAE passenger flights on Monday, sparking a swift denial by Doha in the third such incident between the Gulf rivals.

Qatar and the Emirates have rowed repeatedly over alleged airspace violations this year, as a diplomatic crisis in the Gulf enters its 10th month.

The UAE General Civil Aviation Authority condemned the “reckless manner in which two

Qatari fighter jets dangerously approached two UAE-registered commercial aircraft while flying over Bahraini airspace today, in a flagrant and serious threat to civil aviation and air navigation safety”.

One of the aircraft was forced to “do an emergency manoeuvre to avoid colliding with the Qatari jets”, the aviation authority said in a statement published by the official WAM news agency.

Qatar “categorically” denied the accusation in a state-

ment released by its civil aviation authority.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt cut all ties with Qatar in June over Qatar’s alleged ties to Islamist extremists and Shiite Iran.

Qatar, which denies the accusations, is barred from using the airspace of the four states, although UAE airlines are not technically banned from operating flights through Qatari airspace. Abu Dhabi is now looking at rerouting flights to Bahrain to avoid Qatari airspace.—AFP ■



Qatari fighter jets “dangerously approached” two passenger flights. **PHOTO: AFP**

Russia to increase flight range of upgraded Tu-160 bomber

SAMARA — The efficiency of the new engine for the upgraded Tupolev Tu-160 missile-carrying bomber will be increased by about 10%, which will allow the aircraft to fly a thousand kilometres farther, Russian Deputy Defence Minister Yuri Borisov said on 21 Wednesday March.

As part of a check of state defence plan fulfillment, Borisov visited the Samara-based Kuznetsov Company, which is a leading Russian enterprise for developing, producing, providing maintenance for and repairing gas turbine aviation and liquid-propellant rocket engines, and also gas turbine installations for use in the gas sector and power engineering.

The enterprise repairs engines for long-range aircraft - the Tu-160 (NK-32), the Tu-95 (NK-25) and the Tu-22M3 (NK-12) and is creating a new version of the NK-32 engine for the upgraded Tu-160M2 supersonic strategic missile-carrying bomber.

"In its upgraded version, it [the engine] will be 10% more efficient, which will make it possible to increase the flight range of the strategic bomber by about 1,000 km," Borisov said during his visit to the Kuznetsov Enterprise.

As the defence official noted, in 2014 the Samara-based Kuznetsov Enterprise was set the task to reproduce the engine and improve its characteristics.

"We are holding jointly with

the Industry and Trade Ministry a regular meeting of the inter-departmental commission, which oversees the pace of work on the upgrade of the Tu-160. The work is proceeding, by and large, according to schedule so far. As for the engine, this is the basic unit, which will determine the per-

formance characteristics of the new plane," the deputy defence minister said.

The Tu-160 is the biggest plane with a variable-sweep wing and one of the most powerful combat aircraft in the world. In 2015, a decision was announced to restart the production of the

strategic bomber at the Kazan Aviation Enterprise. On 16 November, 2017, the new plane was delivered from the final assembly workshop to the flight testing station. Thanks to its upgrade, the efficiency of the Tu-160 bomber is expected to increase by 60%. — Tass ■



Tu-160M bomber. PHOTO: TASS

Mexico, US tout cooperation as homeland security secretary visits

MEXICO CITY — The United States and Mexico sought to play up their cooperation on security issues on Monday as US Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen visited Mexico City at a time of strained ties.

In her first visit to Mexico as homeland security chief, Nielsen met with the country's foreign and interior ministers and oversaw the signing of three deals to work more closely together on customs and border issues.

"No one should underestimate the strength and commitment of the United States to the United States-Mexican partnership," she said, adding in thickly accented Spanish: "We are neighbors, we are allies, we are friends."

Mexico has been stung by President Donald Trump's verbal attacks on Mexican immigrants, his insistence on renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and his vow to make the country pay for his planned border wall.

The latter subject has twice caused Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto to cancel trips to Washington after heated

phone calls with Trump.

In the wake of the second cancellation, Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner visited Mexico, and Nielsen is now the latest high-level US envoy to visit in what appears to be an effort to smooth over ties.

The strain has raised fears over the future of the two countries' close cooperation on issues like migration, drug trafficking and other border security matters.

But Nielsen was upbeat on bilateral ties.

Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray acknowledged the tension, but said the countries were trying to find common ground.

"It's true, there are issues on which we have different opinions. We don't agree on everything. But we are determined not to let our differences define our relations," he told a press conference.

"The focus of our work is on the areas where we agree and the things we can do together."

The newly signed agreements are three of more than 20 that are currently in the works, Nielsen said. — AFP ■

Brexit campaigners breached UK vote rules, lawyers say

LONDON — Brexit campaigners breached UK law to channel more funds to a data analysis firm ahead of the EU referendum, according to evidence outlined on Monday by whistleblowers' lawyers.

"There is a prima facie case that the following electoral offences were committed by Vote Leave in the EU referendum campaign," said a 50-page document presented by London law firm Bindmans.

The case centres on a £625,000 (\$889,300, 714,150 euros) donation by Vote Leave to the smaller pro-Brexit group BeLeave, which lawyers argue was made by the lead campaign group to mask a payment to Canadian data firm AIQ.

"There are strong grounds to infer that Vote Leave was involved in the decision by which the AIQ payment were made," said the legal opinion, written by three independent barristers at Bindmans' request.

Shahmir Sanni, who worked for BeLeave, earlier told British media of the campaign's close ties to Vote Leave, "in effect they used BeLeave to over-spend, and not just by a small amount".

"They say that it wasn't co-ordinated, but it was. And so the



Lawyers argue a £625,000 (\$889,300, 714,150 euros) donation by Vote Leave to the smaller pro-Brexit group BeLeave was made by the lead campaign group to mask a payment to Canadian data firm AIQ. PHOTO: AFP

idea that... the campaign was legitimate is false," he told Channel 4 News.

Vote Leave ultimately declared campaign costs of just over £6.7 million — under the £7 million legal limit — of which nearly £2.7 million was spent on services by AIQ. Lawyers argue witness statements by three people close to the two campaigns demonstrate their "extremely close relationship", including staff from the two groups sharing an office.

The case requires "urgent investigation" to decide whether

to refer it to state prosecutors, they said. The overspending accusation comes as the role of data analysis companies in political campaigns come under greater scrutiny, following allegations that British consulting group Cambridge Analytica harvested data on tens of millions of Facebook users. Christopher Wylie, who worked for Cambridge Analytica, blew the whistle on the scandal and appeared at the Bindmans press conference where he said there should be a second Brexit referendum. — AFP ■

Abe gov't submits bills to ratify TPP trade pact after US pullout

TOKYO — The government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe submitted a set of bills to parliament on Tuesday to ratify the successor to the Trans-Pacific Partnership, moving a step closer to implementing the long-promised multilateral free trade pact amid fears of rising US protectionism.

Japan and the 10 other countries taking part in the deal, renamed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership after the United States' withdrawal, aim to put the pact into force possibly by the end of this year.

"With Japan taking the lead towards early enactment, we hope to further build momentum for the 10 other countries



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (C) and his Cabinet hold a meeting in Tokyo on 27 March, 2018. The Cabinet approved bills to ratify the successor to the Trans-Pacific Partnership, bringing the long-promised multilateral trade pact closer to enforcement. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

to implement the pact," Toshimitsu Motegi, Japanese minister in charge of the TPP, told a press conference. "Each country has expectations for Japan to become the first country to complete domestic procedures."

But Diet deliberations over the TPP bills may not

go smoothly with lawmakers focused on favoritism allegations leveled at Abe, involving the heavily discounted sale of state land to a school operator with ties to his wife Akie. The current Diet session runs through 20 June.

"Considering the current situation in the

Diet, it is hard to say when deliberations on the bills presented will start," a senior government source said. "I can only ask for the start of deliberations as soon as possible."

The pact, signed in Chile earlier this month, covers 13 per cent of the world's gross domestic

product and a population of some 500 million. The agreement will enter into force 60 days after at least six countries complete domestic procedures.

To bring the CPTPP into force in Japan, a total of 10 laws need to be revised to include new rules and protections against

changes to be brought by the free trade accord.

But the changes are minor — such as fixing the implementation date or including the new name of the pact — as the laws for the original TPP were enacted in December 2016 following the signing of the accord by 12 countries, including the United States.

When the new bills are enacted, copyrights and trademarks, for example, will be preserved for 70 years after the creators die, longer than the current 50 years in Japan. The government will also seek to help domestic livestock farmers by compensating them for sales they may lose due to cheaper products being imported from foreign competitors.—Kyodo News ■

World bank estimates Indonesian economy to expand 5.3 this year

JAKARTA — Indonesia's economy will grow 5.3 per cent this year supported by export and consumption, World Bank said here on Tuesday. Country Director World Bank for Indonesia Rodrigo A. Chaves said Indonesia's economy expanded significantly in the second half of last year. "We projected that the significant growth will continue this year, and the growth target (of 5.3 percent) will be achieved," he said at the Indonesian economic quarterly forum.

However, the director warned that the growth forecast faces risks if global trade weakens along with a weakened growth of domestic private consumption, which account for over half of the country's gross domestic product growth.

Besides, rising domestic demand on imported products would also erode the contribution of exports to the economic growth amid a weakening rupiah, he added.—Xinhua ■

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MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(6/ 2018)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats and United States Dollars.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	DMP/L-001(18-19)	Spares for Garbarino Pump (6) Items	Ks
(2)	DMP/L-002(18-19)	Rig A Lite Lighting Fixture Complete Set (50) Sets	Ks
(3)	DMP/L-003(18-19)	Spares for 30 Ton Kato Rough Terrain Crane (71) Items	Ks
(4)	DMP/L-004(18-19)	Spares for SK 50P-6 Kobelco Excavator (69) Items	Ks
(5)	DMP/L-005(18-19)	Spares for MI-2 Tracked Dozer (56) Items	Ks
(6)	DMP/L-006(18-19))	Spares for Volvo Tractor (45) Items	Ks
(7)	DMP/L-007(18-19)	Spares for MWM D226-4 Lighting Set Engine Ex MTBN-5 River Craft (27) Items	Ks
(8)	DMP/L-008(18-19)	2 7/8" & 2 3/8" EUE Tubing (3) Items	Ks
(9)	DMP/L-009(18-19)	Water Transfer Pump with Engine (300 GPM x 150 FT HD) 48 HP (10) Sets	Ks
(10)	DMP/L-010(18-19)	Water Transfer Pump with Motor (100 GPM x 150 FT HD) 11 KW (4) Sets	Ks
(11)	DMP/L-011(18-19)	Crude Transfer Pump with Motor (100 GPM x 150 FT HD) 11 KW (1) Set	Ks
(12)	DMP/L-012(18-19)	Air Compressor (Reciprocating) with (15-18 HP) Diesel Engine (2) Sets	Ks
(13)	DMP/L-013(18-19)	Portable Fire Pump with Engine and Accessories (16) Sets	Ks
(14)	DMP/L-014(18-19)	50 KG Fire Extinguisher (ABCE), Wheel Type (25) Nos	Ks
(15)	DMP/L-015(18-19)	Gas Cutting Tournch Assembly (6) Sets	Ks
(16)	DMP/L-016(18-19)	Electrical Materials & Accessories (3) Groups	Ks
(17)	DMP/L-017(18-19)	Storage Server (1) Lot	Ks
(18)	DMP/L-018(18-19)	HP A0 Scanner, Printer, Copy & Copier (A3) (2) Items	Ks
(19)	IFB/001(18-19)	Interpretation Workstation & Data Processing Center (1) Lot	US\$

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moee.gov.mm) as from 28 March 2018. Tender forms will not be sold.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **16:30 pm** on **23 April 2018**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time- 23-4-2018, 16:30 pm

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Fifty years on, Yuri Gagarin's death still shrouded in mystery

MOSCOW — Yuri Gagarin, fêted as a Soviet national hero for being the first man in space, was killed in a plane crash 50 years ago but the details of his death remain shrouded in mystery.

On 27 March, 1968, at 10:18 am, Gagarin was preparing for a training flight in his MiG-15 plane at the Chkalovsky aerodrome near Moscow, his former cosmonaut colleague Vladimir Aksyonov recalls.

"Yuri and I consulted the same doctors and listened to the same weather forecasts, my takeoff was due an hour after his," the 84-year-old tells AFP.

But Aksyonov's flight was cancelled. At 10:30 am, when he returned to his base, Gagarin and his co-pilot Vladimir Seryogin were no longer responding to radio calls.

At 2:50 pm, helicopter crews searching for the plane said they found parts of the wreckage 65 kilometres (40 miles) from the aerodrome.

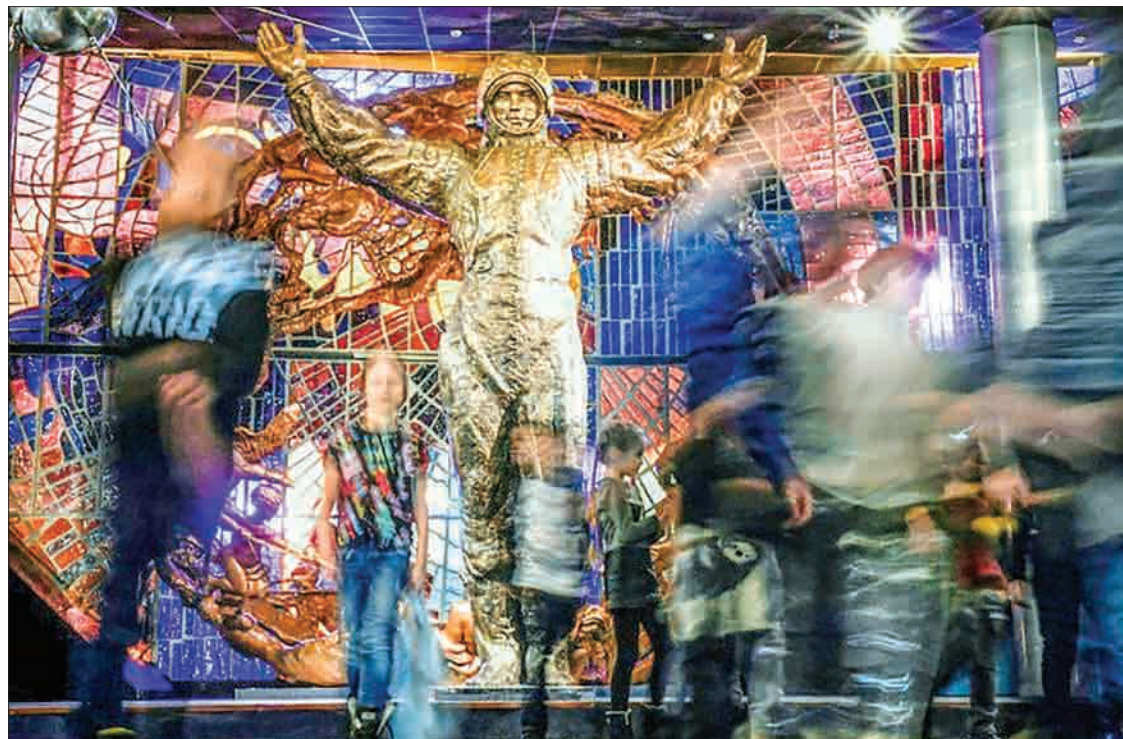
Gagarin's body was found the next day. He was 34.

'Gagarin is dead!'

Sergei Kravchinsky, 74, remembers learning of Gagarin's death when he was a young space engineer and had just finished a gymnastics class. "We heard a scream in the corridor: 'Guys, Gagarin is dead!'"

"It was a shock, all the women were crying," he recalls.

For the first time in Soviet history, a day of national mourning was declared for someone



The details of Yuri Gagarin's death — the first man in space — in a plane crash 50 years ago remain shrouded in mystery. PHOTO: AFP

who was not a head of state.

The engineers knew Gagarin was training on a MiG and that he had already experienced landing problems. When they heard the investigation commission give its conclusions, they were perplexed.

According to the official version, the plane's crew had to make a sudden manoeuvre because of a "change in the situation in the air", which led to the crash.

"The report of the official commission, which was 29 volumes, was never published," Alexander Glushko, a historian studying the Soviet space industry, told AFP.

"This pushed colleagues and experts to start their own research."

Rumours

At the time, wild rumours surrounding Gagarin's death were circulating around the Soviet Union: that he was killed by the Kremlin, drunk in the cockpit or kidnapped by aliens were just some popular theories.

In 2011, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Gagarin's historic 1961 flight into space, the Kremlin released some fresh information on his death. Newly declassified documents said "one of the probable reasons" for the crash was a sharp manoeuvre made to avoid

a weather balloon after which Gagarin and Seryogin lost control of the aircraft.

"One of the probable reasons! This wording does not mean anything. None of the documents from the 29 volumes of the investigation was published in full," said historian Glushko.

He believes that the secrecy around Gagarin's death was retained to hide "the flaws in the organisation and the functioning of the Soviet space sector," a symbol of the USSR's might.

"In the absence of the truth, rumours are multiplying and continue to circulate to this day," he added.

The second plane theory

"My parents always assured me that Gagarin died because he was drunk," says Alexander Volodko, a policeman from the Siberian city of Novokuznetsk, on a recent visit to Moscow's Museum of Cosmonautics.

Volodko tells AFP that he would like "the truth to be finally revealed".

He said he personally believed the version put forward by legendary cosmonaut Alexei Leonov — the first ever to go on a spacewalk — after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.

According to Leonov, who was a member of the 1968 investigation commission, a Sukhoi plane approached Gagarin's planned route, passing less than 20 metres from his plane. This would have caused Gagarin's aircraft to spin and crash.

In June last year, 83-year-old Leonov repeated this version: "I saw a declassified document of the investigation that confirmed (this)," he told state news agency RIA Novosti. Leonov believes the commission covered up the truth to protect the Sukhoi plane's pilot, whose name he refuses to reveal but describes as "quite famous" and currently "old and sick".

"This is no longer a secret: it is about negligence and a violation of aviation rules," he insists.

But until the investigation's official documents are made public, said historian Glushko, "this claim is just a hypothesis".—AFP ■

Angelina Jolie secretly dating real estate agent

LOS ANGELES — Hollywood star Angelina Jolie is reportedly dating a real estate agent.

According to Entertainment Tonight, Jolie's ex Brad Pitt, who she has yet to finalise her divorce with after a 2016 split, is also quietly dating around.

"It's not serious. Brad and Angie are both very secretive about their dating life. Angie has told some friends she isn't ready to date, but she has been seeing a handsome, older-looking man who is a real estate agent.

He isn't a celebrity or high profile in any way," a source said. The source also said that a 'Brangelina' reconciliation is not happening, "People talk about them reuniting, but it will



Hollywood star Angelina Jolie . PHOTO: PTI

never happen.

Things between Brad and Angie really ended poorly, and while they've attempted therapy with the (six) children, they can barely be in the same room together."

And while Jolie, 42, has started to become comfortable

on her own, Pitt, 54, has become a changed man, going out more and enjoying time with close friends, an additional source told the publication.

"He has made changes in his life since the split.

When they first split, he spent a lot of time at home and was often very down about what was going on.

He was a homebody for many months, but in the last month or two, he's been going out more. He enjoys going out to eat with close friends.

"He's very private about who he's seeing, but he does continue to casually date. The women he sees are not in the public eye," the source said.—PTI ■

'Handmaid's Tale' back for 'gut-wrenching' second run

LOS ANGELES — Dystopian sci-fi series "The Handmaid's Tale" returns in a month for its second season, promising more "gut-wrenching" television as it moves beyond the events of Margaret Atwood's foundational feminist novel.

The producers of the awards juggernaut, which became Hulu's flagship show last year, are promising new locations, characters and plot twists — but the same old dread that permeates the nightmarish hellscape of Gilead.

"I have been saying about the opening scene of season two that, whatever you think it's going to be, just throw it out,"

the show's award-winning star Elisabeth Moss told US cable network Bravo ahead of its 25 April release. "It's gone in a completely different way that I never would have expected."

Published in 1985, Atwood's bestseller is required reading in schools, often mentioned in the same breath as George Orwell's "1984," Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World" and other works of speculative fiction. It has spawned a movie, a graphic novel, an opera and a ballet, not to mention the first season of Hulu's hit show that has eight Emmys, three Critics Choice Awards and two Golden Globes.—AFP ■

Bronze coins from Jewish revolt against Rome Empire discovered near Temple Mount

JERUSALEM — Bronze coins, the last remnants of a four-year Jewish revolt against the Roman Empire were found near the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, sources from the Hebrew University said on Monday.

These bronze coins were discovered by Hebrew University archaeologist Dr Eilat Mazar during renewed excavations at the Ophel, located below the Temple Mount's southern wall.

These 1.5-centimetre bronze coins were left behind by Jewish

residents who hid in a large cave for four years from the Roman siege of Jerusalem, up until the destruction of the Second Temple and the city of Jerusalem, said the Hebrew University archaeologist.

While several of the coins date to the early years of the revolt, the great majority are from its final year, otherwise known as, "Year Four" (69-70 CE), said Mazar.

Significantly, during the final year, the Hebrew inscription on the coins was changed from

"For the Freedom of Zion" to "For the Redemption of Zion," a shift which reflects the change of the rebels during this period of horror and famine, said Mazar.

In addition to Hebrew inscriptions, the coins were decorated with Jewish symbols, such as the four biblical plant species: palm, myrtle, citron and willow, and a picture of the goblet that was used in the Temple service.

Many broken pottery vessels, including jars and cooking pots, were also found in the cave, said

the sources.

According to Mazar, it is remarkable that this cave was never discovered by subsequent residents of Jerusalem nor used again after the Second Temple period. In this way, the cave acts as a veritable time capsule of life in Jerusalem under the siege and during the four-year revolt against the Roman Empire.

These findings all date back to the time of the rebellion and were found in the Ophel Cave directly above a Hasmonean Period

layer that was situated at the base of the cave. The coins were well preserved, probably because they were in use for a short time, noted Mazar.

A similar number of "Year Four" coins were found near Robinson's Arch, near the Western Wall, by Professor Benjamin Mazar, Eilat Mazar's grandfather, said the sources. He conducted the Temple Mount excavations right after Israel's Six Day War, on behalf of Hebrew University's Institute of Archaeology.—Xinhua ■

Japanese author Kadono wins 2018 Andersen award for writing

TOKYO — Japanese author Eiko Kadono, known for her novel "Kiki's Delivery Service," has won the 2018 Hans Christian Andersen Award, considered the Nobel prize in children's literature, the Swiss-based award organizer said.

"Kadono's books are always surprising, engaging, and empowering. And almost always fun. And always life affirming," the International Board on Books for Young People said on its website.

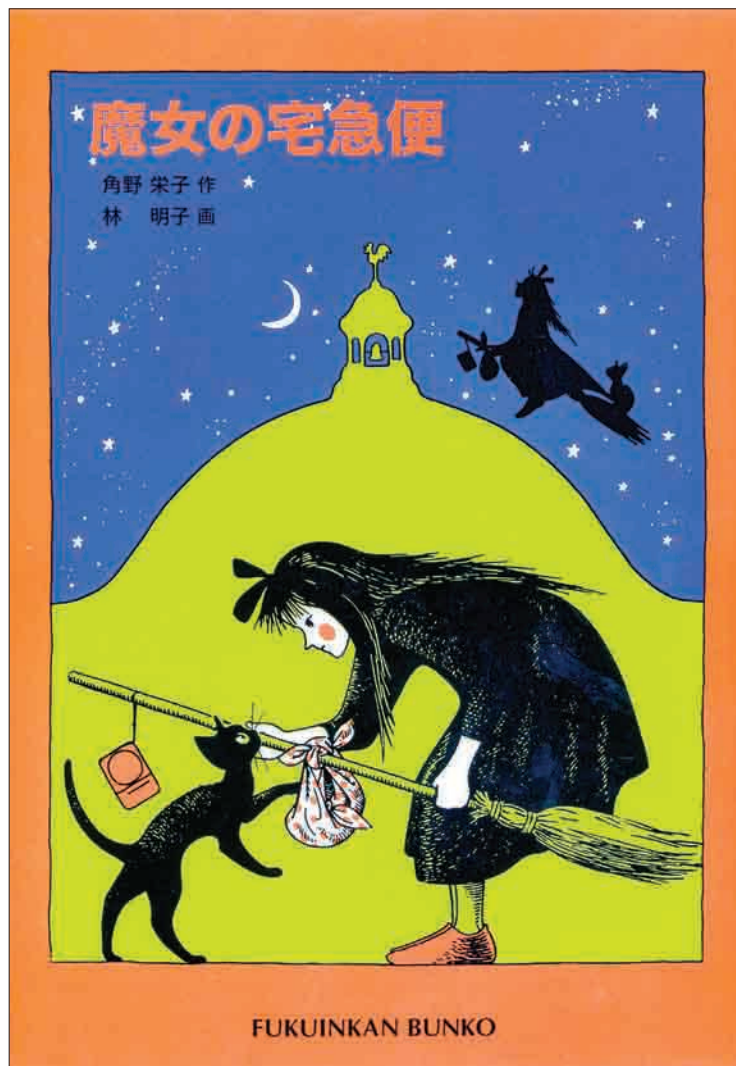
Kadono, 83, is the third Japanese to receive the award, following Michio Mado in 1994 and Nahoko Uehashi in 2014.

"I am really honored to receive the award named after Andersen, whom I have loved since my childhood," said Kadono.

Kadono has produced a number of picture books and novels, including one about a girl named Kiki who in following her mother to become a witch must live by herself in a town and survive by using her powers.

"The language in her picture books is notable for its playfulness and use of onomatopoeia. And of course, the beautiful, but simple language in her novels makes them extremely readable," the organizer said.

The board also picked Igor Oleynikov from Russia as the winner of this year's illustration prize, saying, "His versions of the classics are always original and surprising, never obvious or what one might expect. He is equally brilliant with Andersen, Grimm, the Old Testament, and



Undated file photo shows the Japanese children's book "Kiki's Delivery Service." Its author Eiko Kadono was named winner of the Hans Christian Andersen Award for writing on 27 March, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Lear."

An award ceremony will be held on 30 August in Athens.

The Hans Christian Andersen Award is given every other year to an author and an illustrator whose works have made an important and lasting contribution to children's literature. The author's award has been given

since 1956 and the illustrator's award since 1966.

The award winners are picked by an international jury of children's literature specialists. The selection criteria include aesthetic and literary qualities as well as the ability to see things from a child's point of view.—Kyodo News ■

2,500-year-old Egyptian mummy found at Sydney university

SYDNEY — Staff at the University of Sydney's Nicholson Museum in Australia were shocked to find a 2,500-year-old Egyptian mummy inside a coffin that was thought to be empty.

"The coffin was originally bought from an antiquity market in Egypt back in 1858, by Sir Charles Nicholson, one of the first chancellors here at the University of Sydney," archaeologist and investigation lead Dr Jamie Fraser told Xinhua on Tuesday.

"One of the curators in 1940 published a catalogue saying that the coffin was empty so we had this perceived wisdom that there wasn't very much there."

But recently, when Fraser decided to take some photographs of the underside of the coffin for the museum's records, staff thought they better know what was inside before they moved it onto scaffolding.

"Our records said that either it was empty or there was mixed debris in it," Fraser said.

"We expected a few bandages or maybe a couple of bones, but when we took the lid off we were just astonished by what we had found."

Although it's not known who the person was or how they got to be inside the coffin, investigators have discovered a few helpful clues that might help solve the ancient mystery.

"The coffin was made for a lady called Mer-neith-ites and we know that she lived in Egypt around 600 BC due to the style of the coffin," Fraser said.

"We also know she worked in the temple of the goddess Se-

khmet because it tells us that on the coffin as well."

"What we don't know is if the remains inside the coffin are Mer-neith-ites herself because many coffins that were bought in the mid 19th century from the antiquities markets would have coffins and mummies sold as an ensemble but they did not necessarily fit together."

Researchers believe that due to the mummy's very bad condition, the coffin was almost certainly a target of tomb robbers.

"They tore the mummy apart to try and get all the jewels and amulets," Fraser said.

"Then the coffin was transported to the dealership shop and then moved by Nicholson to London and then onto Sydney, so there is a mixture of many bones, bandages and beads."

Although the body is not entirely intact, Fraser believes it presents a very unique opportunity for further study.

"When you have a complete mummy, you have an ethical responsibility to treat these people as they intended to be treated, we don't want to unwrap them, we want to preserve them," he said.

"Although we can use digital tools to scan a complete mummy, we don't ever actually get to handle the bones, so now the next step is for a forensic archaeologist to lay the bones out and perform an analysis on what they ate, what their lifestyle was like and how they died." "These answers lie in the pathology of the bones."—Xinhua ■



Saw Ba Oo fights against Thway Thit Win Hlaing during 60-kilo Lethwei event in Maungtaw. **PHOTO: AYE MIN THU**

Maungtaw hosts first Lethwei event

THE first traditional lethwei challenge in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, was held yesterday with men's and women's matches in a variety of weight classes.

In the 60-kilo division, in which the matches last five rounds and can be won only by knockout, Ko Ko Aung (Shwe Aung Myay) faced off against Suu Mike (Shwe Mea Myay), while Saw Ba Oo (Taung Kalay) clashed with Thway Thit Win Hlaing (Adventure). Both fights ended in a draw amid enthusiastic support from the audience.

In the 62-kilo division, in which matches lasted four rounds and could be won only by knockout, Tun Tun (Shwe Aung Myay) faced Than Zaw Htay (Maungtaw), where Than Zaw Htay incapacitated Tun Tun in the first round. The second bout had Kyaw Kyar (Taung Kalay) facing Saw Zarni (Adventure). The fight ended in a draw.

In the women's division, in which the bouts lasted three rounds and could be won only by knockout, Linn Yon May (Shwe Linn Yon) and Nan Cho Cho Win Maung (Kayah)

squared off. After a barrage of punches and kicks from Linn Yon May, her opponent was defeated in the first round.

The rest of the lethwei event saw many spirited combatants dueling in knockout-only fights where some ended in draws while some were swiftly defeated.

The Myanmar Traditional Lethwei Challenge was held in collaboration with the Myanmar Traditional Boxing Federation and the National Development Company to honour the 73rd anniversary of Armed Forces Day. — Kyaw Thu Win ■

Former Brazilian footballer Edmilson teaches basics in Yangon

EDMILSON, a former footballer of the Brazilian national team and a member of the 2002 World Cup winning squad, will hold a CBF camp to teach football basics to youngsters in Yangon on 28 and 29 March.

Some 160 youth footballers are attending the two-day short course, including 120 participants aged between 12 and 13 years from the National Football Academy (Yangon), and 40 external participants. A handpicked team from the CBF camp and the MFF U-13 team will hold a friendly match at 4.30 pm on 29 March.

In a press conference at Novotel Hotel on 27 March, Edmilson told reporters that he initiated the CBF camp to realise the dreams of aspiring young footballers. "I faced a lot of difficulties in my youth too, so now, I have established four centres in four countries to help aspiring young players," Edmilson told the media. "You have to work really hard to become a great player. Even though I only have two days,

I will give young Myanmar players the inspiration and discipline they need to become successful footballers one day," he added.

Hirayama, representative director of the Asian Young Football Development Association, delivered the opening speech at the press conference, followed by Edmilson and former Kawasaki Front Turn player Tadashi Hayashi explaining the CBF camp to the media. Next, U Ko Ko Thein, general manager of Myanmar Football Federation, delivered a speech, and then he, Edmilson and Hayashi answered questions posed by reporters. Finally, Hiroyuki Naka, managing director of Genyu-Ko, delivered the closing speech.

Edmilson played as defensive midfielder or a central defender for Brazil from 2000 to 2007 and was part of the Brazil team that won the 2002 World Cup. He has also played for prominent teams such as Barcelona, Lyon, São Paulo, and Villarreal.—Shine Htet Zaw ■



Former Brazilian star player Edmilson, centre, and the team of coaches. **PHOTO: SOE NYUNT**

Facial recognition tech to make Olympic debut at 2020 Tokyo Games



Facial recognition machines at Narita airport. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

TOKYO—The 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics are set to be the first games in history to use facial recognition technology, according to the organizing committee's security plan guidelines revealed to Kyodo News.

After submitting photographs to a database, athletes and games staff will be issued identification cards containing IC chips which will allow facial recognition technology to automatically verify the identity of those entering the venues.

In addition to increasing security and preventing terrorism, the plan is also expected

to facilitate movement of the anticipated 300,000-400,000 personnel.

The advanced technological measures aim to prevent entry using borrowed, stolen or counterfeit ID cards, while the reduced waiting time is expected to lower athlete stress and avoid possible heatstroke or heat exhaustion during the humid summer months. Facial recognition will not be used for spectators, but X-ray and metal detectors will be employed to check for weapons and hazardous materials.

Each venue will also be sur-

rounded by a fence 2.5-3 metres high, and infrared sensors and surveillance cameras will monitor for suspicious activity 24 hours a day. New high-performance cameras are also being considered.

Other measures include using machines to determine if tickets are valid for the day of entry or forged, as well as strict inspection of vehicles entering the venues. The 2020 Tokyo Olympics are scheduled to be held between 24 July and 9 August, followed by the Paralympics from 25 August to 6 September.—Kyodo News ■