

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IV, No. 346, 13th Waxing of Tagu 1379 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Thursday, 29 March 2018

U Win Myint wins Pyidaungsu Hluttaw elects new President

THE Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw elected U Win Myint as the next President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar yesterday morning in a vote by Members of Parliament in Nay Pyi Taw.

The result was 403 votes for Vice President U Win Myint, 66, who was previously nominated by elected Pyithu Hluttaw MPs, 211 votes for Vice President U Myint Swe, nominated by Tatmadaw MPs, and 18 votes for Vice President U Henry Van Thio, nominated by Amyotha Hluttaw MPs, with four votes rejected.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker then officially announced the election of U Win Myint as President, and U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio as Vice Presidents.

Of the 656 Hluttaw MPs, 636 were present, while 20 were absent.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced the commencement of the Presidential election at 10am yesterday, explaining that the President would be elected from among the three Vice Presidents in a secret ballot observed by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker and all Pyidaungsu Hluttaw MPs. The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker also explained about the voting process, the ballots and reasons why votes might be rejected.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw MPs then proceeded to vote for the next President by secret ballot.

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Former Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint elected as the next President.
PHOTO: GNLM



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'BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017'

Awarded by Financial Times (The Banker)

Chinese President Xi Jinping sends congratulatory message to newly elected President U Win Myint

PRESIDENT Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China sent a message of congratulations to U Win Myint, who was elected as the President of Myanmar yesterday.

In his message, President Xi Jinping extended his warm congratulations and best wishes to U Win Myint for being elected as President of the Republic of

the Union of Myanmar. President Xi Jinping said he believed that the Myanmar government and people would make new achievements in maintaining political stability, developing economy, promoting national peace process and expanding international exchanges and cooperation under Your Excellency's leadership.

"China and Myanmar are tra-

ditionally good neighbour countries and enjoy a long-standing Pauk-Phaw friendship. In recent years, the high-level contacts between our two countries are frequent, practical cooperation has been expanding, people-to-people exchanges are active and multilateral coordination are close, bringing tangible benefits to the two peoples and making positive

contributions to the peace and prosperity of the region", President Xi Jinping said.

"I attach great importance to the development of China-Myanmar relations and would like to work closely with Your Excellency to consolidate the traditional friendship and deepen the mutually beneficial cooperation, promoting the China-Myanmar Com-

prehensive Strategic Cooperation Partnership to a new height and bringing more benefits to the two countries as well as two peoples," said President Xi Jinping.

He also wishes President U Win Myint good health and success, and hopes Myanmar and its people enjoy prosperity and happiness.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Minister of the State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin welcomes Chinese Vice-Chairman Mr. Edmund Ho Hau Wah and his party at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference arrives in Nay Pyi Taw

A DELEGATION led by the Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Former Chief Executive of the Macau Special

Administrative Region Mr. Edmund Ho Hau Wah arrived in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

They were welcomed by Union Minister for International

Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Hong Liang along with officials at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw elects new President

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After the voting, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced the tallying of the votes and the ballots issued, and the election of the President and Vice Presidents, in accordance with the law. The votes received by each candidate were counted in front of a vote monitoring group consisting of one MP from each of the three hluttaws, and one representative MP each from the National League for Democracy, Union Solidarity Development Party, Arakan National Party, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy and the Tatmadaw.

Attending the event were State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Henry

Van Thio, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of Myanmar, the Union Election Commission Chairman, Union Ministers, the Union Attorney General, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, the Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman, the Myanmar Human Rights Commission Chairman, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Chairman and members and invited guests.

The event ended after it was announced that the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw seventh regular session 21st-day meeting was scheduled to be held on the afternoon of 29 March.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Central Committee meeting held to develop and implement national crime prevention strategy

A CENTRAL Committee meeting to develop and implement a national crime prevention strategy was held yesterday afternoon in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Union Minister office assembly hall. The meeting was attended by the chairman of the central Committee to develop and implement a national crime prevention strategy, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe; Deputy Ministers for the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Border Affairs; permanent secretaries and directors general from the Ministry of

Transport and Communications, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Health and Sports, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Anti-Corruption Commission; officials from Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association; Myanmar Police Chief, Deputy Chief and senior police officers.

At the meeting, Lt-Gen

Kyaw Swe delivered the opening speech, while the central Committee secretary, Myanmar Police Chief, explained the draft strategy drawn up and central Committee members, Deputy Ministers and officials discussed and provided suggestions.

The national-level national crime prevention strategy (draft) includes the main causes of crime, implementing ministries, organisations and entities, and long-term and immediate works. Detailed discussions were held to develop a final draft by May 2018, drawing up detailed work



Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe delivers the opening speech at the meeting to develop and implement a national crime prevention strategy in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

processes by states and regions and implementing them. Later, Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe delivered a

concluding speech and the meeting came to a close.—Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrives Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to observe the Presidential Election yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor observes Presidential Election at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi observed the Presidential Election of the 2nd Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall, yesterday morning.

First, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than declared the commencement of the Presidential Election and explained about the voting process, ballots and why votes might be rejected. He then announced the election of U Win Myint as President, nominated by the elected Pyithu Hluttaw MPs group, and U Myint Swe nominated by the Tatmadaw MPs group and U Henry Van Thio nominated by the Amyotha Hluttaw MPs group

as Vice Presidents.

Together with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, Union Election Commission Chairman, Union Ministers, Union Attorney-General, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman, Myanmar Human Rights Commission Chairman, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Chairman and members and invited guests attended and observed the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Presidential Election event.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Second coordination meeting of Steering Committee to hold CONSAL XVII

A second coordination meeting of the Steering Committee for holding the 17th Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL XVII) was held yesterday morning in the Yinky Yadana (Cultured Gem) Hall, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Nay Pyi Taw. Vice President U Myint Swe, who is Chairman of the Steering Committee, delivered a speech at the meeting.

The meeting was attended by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Thura U Aung Ko and U Thant Sin Maung, Deputy Ministers Maj-Gen Aung Soe and U Set Aung, Steering Committee members, work committee members, sub-committee members and departmental officials.

During the meeting, Vice President U Myint Swe said that Myanmar would be hosting the CONSAL XVII meeting for the first time in May 2018. This was the second coordination meeting to successfully host the Congress and associated meetings, such as CONSAL's third Executive Board meeting and the 26th Conference of Directors of National Libraries

in Asia and Oceania (CDNLAO).

The Office of the President had formed the steering committee and work committee for the successful hosting of CONSAL XVII with its Notification No. 61/2017 dated 11 July 2017. The steering committee was composed of 13 members, led by Vice President U Myint Swe and the work committee composed of 14 members, which is led by the Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture. Fifteen sub committees were also formed to carry out the four tasks of the work committee.

The Steering Committee's first meeting was held on 18 August 2017, in which 18 decisions were made, of which almost all have been implemented. It is believed that after this second meeting, all works will be completed.

As a pre-congress activity, a workshop on school libraries in the ASEAN region will be held in Nay Pyi Taw. The Ministry of Education was working to develop school libraries, so this workshop will be beneficial for the country,



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the second coordination meeting of Steering Committee in Yinky Yadana (Cultured Gem) Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

noted the Vice President.

The work committee and 15 sub committees were urged to coordinate and work together to fulfill their responsibilities without difficulty throughout the opening, closing and paper reading sessions of the congress. 229 papers were received for the paper reading session, out of which 94 were chosen for presentation. Much thanks was owed to members of the Myanmar Library Association, who gave their time to help choose the papers.

The congress is held once every two years in one of the 10 ASEAN countries, so it will be another twenty years before Myanmar's turn will come again. This has become a great opportunity to provide information about the current situation in Myanmar, as

well as its culture and traditions, to visitors attending the CONSAL XVII and related meetings.

It was noted that the work committee and subcommittees were conducting coordination meetings, detailed discussions and works for the successful holding of CONSAL XVII and related meetings. Furthermore, in today's meeting, while works completed by relevant subcommittees are discussed, difficulties and requirements are to be openly reviewed, said the Vice President.

Also, the Chairman of the work committee to hold the CONSAL XVII Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko explained about arrangements made to hold CONSAL XVII.

Next, work committee secretary Permanent Secretary U Tun Ohn of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture explained about those works completed and future works to be conducted.

This was followed by each subcommittee discussing and explaining about their completed works and follow-up works. Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe and U Thant Sin Maung, who were members of the Steering Committee, and other meeting attendees, also joined in the discussions.

Matters discussed were coordinated by the Vice President, and the meeting came to a close after the Vice President delivered the concluding remarks.—Myanmar News Agency ■

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marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the Global New
Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at
No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan
Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light
of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No.
00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com
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Rare species of the Myanmar roofed turtle at the Yadanabon Zoological Garden. Photo: WCS

Rare species of Myanmar roofed turtles reared at Yadanabon Gardens in Mdy

A rare species of the Myanmar roofed turtle is being reared for the first time at the Yadanabon Zoological Gardens in the Mandalay Region, according to U Thein Min Aung, a zoo official.

There are some 100 animal species among the 1,100 animals housed in the Yadanabon Zoological Gardens, and arrangements are being made to preserve and increase the number of Myanmar roofed turtles, in accordance with wildlife rules and regulations.

The Yadanabon Zoological Gardens is the only place where such Myanmar roofed turtles can be bred and reared across the country. Currently, some 160 Myanmar roofed tur-

tles are being bred here.

The rare Myanmar roofed turtles can be found along the Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers. According to the research report, the Myanmar roofed turtles were found in Lin Phar village, some 20 miles away from Khamti Township. They are being reared separately at the Yadanabon Zoological Garden and Lakananda Garden.

According to Dr. Paul P Call, the research group came to Myanmar to examine the health conditions of the Myanmar roofed turtles and to find a good environment for them to survive. The Yadanabon Zoological Gardens is considered a suitable place to breed and

rear the turtles. Arrangements have been made to ensure the Myanmar roofed turtles are in good health, so they can grow and survive before they are set free into the river.

According to the Wildlife Conservation Society report, some 11 kinds of Myanmar roofed turtle species, such as Myanmar soft-shell turtle, Myanmar leaf turtle, Myanmar peacock soft-shell turtle, Myanmar roofed turtle, Myanmar narrow headed soft-shell turtle, Myanmar star tortoise, Myanmar flap-shell turtle, Myanmar eye turtle, Arakan forest turtle, Myanmar black turtle and Myanmar box turtle can be found only in Myanmar.—Khaing Sat Wai ■

Construction of Yangon-Dala bridge to start in May

The construction of the Yangon-Dala cross-river bridge, which will link Yangon's downtown area to the underdeveloped satellite town, will start in May, said MP U Tun Yin of Dala Township Constituency (1).

"We have already evicted all the land owners or squatters from the project area. We will start our construction project in May, and hold the groundbreaking ceremony in the first week of May," he added.

The project will be a four-lane bridge, which is 49 metres high and 6,144 feet long. The construction will start in May 2018 and is expected to be completed in 2021, according to the Ministry of Construction.

The project is expected to cost US\$168.173 million. Out of this, \$137.833 million will be funded through a loan from Korea's Economic Development Cooperation Fund, while the Ministry of Construction will incur the remaining expenses amounting to \$30.341 million.

The Yangon-Dala River crossing bridge will be built with the aim of enabling the local people in Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu and Kungyangon and the Ayeyawady Region to travel smoothly and quickly through their regions.

Upon completion, the bridge will contribute to the socio-economic development of the local people from Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu and Kungyangon and the Ayeyawady Region.—GNLM ■

New bus line begins to Computer University

People's Friend bus line launched the No.94 bus line with 50 buses from Yangon Central Railway station to the University of Computer Studies, Yangon (UCSY) on 24 March. The bus is meant to assist commuters, as the train route has been temporarily suspended because of the upgrading of the railway station, according to officials.

The No. 94 bus fare will be Ks 300 from Yangon Central Railway station to the University of Computer Studies, Yangon. "We have received instruc-

tions to run buses along that route for the convenience of teachers and students of the university. So, we launched the bus service with 50 buses", said Ko Tayoke Lay, Operation Director of the People's Friend bus line. The bus line will run from the UCSY through No. 4 Highway, Danyingon Junction, Insein Park, Bhaho road, Hanthawady road, Thakhin Mya Park, Bogyoke Aung San road to Yangon Central Railway station. The bus line will offer service from 5 am to 8 pm, he added.—GNLM ■

Yangon Region to get more transformers

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy plans to instal new 150-MVA transformers at the sub-power stations of Hlaingthaya, Kanaung and Myaungiagar to provide a more steady supply of electricity, according to a report in Myawady Daily.

Once the new transformers are installed at the sub-power stations, the electricity voltage will increase two-fold. Preparations have already been made to instal the transformers at the

sub-power stations.

The transformers will arrive from abroad by the end of this month. One such transformer is already being installed in Hlawga. Three more are yet to arrive. As these transformers will be an addition to the existing ones at the sub-power stations, more electricity can be produced," said U Myo Naing, Deputy Director General of the Electricity Supply Enterprise, operating under the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.—GNLM ■

Officials from Gov't and private hold forum to discuss Magway Region agriculture and trade sector

By May Thet Hnin

OFFICIALS from the government and the private sector held a forum on 25 March, as they sought to resolve the difficulties faced by Magway Region agriculture and the trade sector.

The forum was attended by Commerce Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo and the Minister from the Magway Region government, along with officials from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), along with Magway Region body of chambers of Commerce and Industry and regional entrepreneurs, traders and farmers. "At the forum, they discussed helping the variety of pulse cultivators who are faced with many difficulties due to the India Pulse Import Policy, to reduce Aflatoxin, high humidity and fungus on beans and edible sesame crops, to manufacture by promoting value and the quality of export products, and to work smoothly and quickly between Sino and Myanmar trade," said U Aung Kyi Soe, General Secretary of the UMFCCI.

"We mainly discussed the use of good agricultural practices, which can control the standard of agricultural products by reducing chemical residue in Magway Region agricultural products. Then, we discussed setting floor prices for pigeon peas. The Magway Region has also exported sheep and goats. So, we discussed establishing

wholesale centres by looking at the demand for sheep and goats," he added. UMFCCI General Secretary U Aung Kyi Soe also urged Magway Region traders, commodities and traders to use proper agricultural practices to develop a contract farming system to provide information about foreign trade regulations for local farmers.

"Local farmers and traders need to change their mindsets. If crop farming, which has been growing for an entire year, is not successful it can impact not only local farmers, but also the supply chain. To overcome those difficulties, traders have responsibilities to distribute market information. The local farmers also need to be aware, so they can cultivate the right seeds and use fertilizers and pesticides, he added. Also, Magway Region association of chambers of commerce and industry executive member and Pakokku Trader Association secretary U Sein Lwin noted, "The Pakokku Trader Association has provided training courses to local farmers about crops which are entering into the market and other information concerning crops. Now, we have received the trust of local farmers." "Magway Region is also facing water shortage problems. Therefore, we have discussed using drip irrigation systems next season as a pilot project," said U Sein Lwin.

The Magway Region mainly grows sesame, bean, pigeon and gram beans, as well as a variety of pulses. ■



Participants pose for the documentary photo at the 5th Meeting of the OECD-Southeast Asia Corporate Governance Initiative in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

The Fifth Meeting of OECD-Southeast Asia Corporate Governance Initiative

THE Fifth Meeting of OECD-Southeast Asia Corporate Governance Initiative was held at Pan Pacific Yangon Hotel yesterday with the collaboration of the Directorate of Investment & Company Administration, Ministry of Planning & Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM), OECD and the Government of Japan.

The objective of the meeting is to discuss the steps taken by the governments of Myanmar, Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Cambodia towards the development and improvement of sound corporate governance framework, to foster improved corporate governance, to spur capital market development and to enhance the countries' attractiveness to foreign investment.

It was attended by 100 participants including Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win, Experts from OECD, Finance

Watch SokSiphana & Associates Transparency International Cambodia, Japan, Italy, New Zealand, the Netherlands, India, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, representatives from relevant Ministries, public listed companies, public companies, the companies which have the potential to become public companies, SECM and DICA.

At the meeting, U Maung Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Planning & Finance delivered opening remarks and the panel discussion was continued with the title, "the ASEAN Economic Community: corporate governance challenges and opportunities". In the panel, Ms. Fianna Jurdant, Senior Policy Analyst of OECD served as moderator and Mr. Ismet AI Bakri from Malaysia Securities Commission, Mr. John Lim, Former Chair-

man of Singapore Institute of Directors, Ms. ADA Ingawanij, Deputy CEO of Thai Institute of Director Association and Mr. Le Duy Binh, MD of Economica Vietnam served as panelists. Then, U Aung Naing Oo, Director General of DICA, made a presentation on the current corporate governance developments in Myanmar. Moreover, during the meeting, representatives from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam explained about the recent corporate governance developments of their countries respectively. After that, the meeting was concluded in the evening, giving closing remarks by Director General U Aung Naing Oo and Senior Policy Analyst Ms. Fianna Jurdant.

On 29th March 2018, the event on launch of the OECD — Myanmar Corporate Governance Reform Programme will be held at the same place.—GNLM ■

Wholesale center for agricultural crops opens in Bago Region

By May Thet Hnin

A wholesale centre for agricultural crops opened in Bago Region on 28 March.

"The wholesale centre will mainly sell rice and a variety of pulses. The wholesale centre for agricultural crops was formed with 31 members from rice-mill entrepreneurs and rice traders," noted U Kyi Tun, chairman of the Bago Commodity.

The wholesale centre for agricultural crops was opened between Bago and Thanatpin towns. The centre will operate from 7 am to 12 pm.

"There are many farmers in Bago Region. There are also many farm lands which can grow rice. Therefore, we opened the wholesale centre for agricultural crops, which will benefit local farmers," said U Kyi Tun.

"Previously, the rice which was grown in Bago Region was exported to foreign markets through the Yangon Region. After opening the wholesale center, we have received orders from foreign countries," he added.

The Bago Commodity will distribute information about the market to local farmers. Bago Commodity will also organize to prevent fraud, which has oc-

curred in other commodities.

"Myanmar needs a lot of wholesale centres for rice and agricultural commodities, as they can serve as the marketplace for farmers and traders. Through wholesale centres, market information will be known more widely and will reduce the risk of speculation and volatility. The Myanmar Rice Federation is also supporting the

set-up of rice wholesale centres in order to improve standards and specification, as well as the adoption of proper contractual engagement between sellers and buyers, said U Ye Min Aung, General Secretary of MRF.

There are over 650,000 acres of rice cultivation in Bago Region. Most local farmers grow Export-25 mark rice in the summer and rain seasons. ■

Stakeholders hold workshop on ensuring access to information for hearing-impaired

STAKEHOLDERS Consultative Workshop was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday for ensuring rights to Access to Information for deaf and hearing impaired people.

At the event held at Thingaha Hotel, Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun said that according to the 2014 census, of the 4 million people with disabilities, there are 670,000 hearing-impaired people, which is more than 1.3 per cent of the total population. The hearing-impaired have fewer job opportunities and face many difficulties with regard to livelihood, and in the social, education and health sectors. Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) had sent six staff to attend a one-year sign language course conducted by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in 2013 and 2016 and began using sign languages in the daily 8 p.m. news program from 1 September 2015.

The Deputy Minister said that on 15 March, an awareness-raising discussion was held in Thingaha Hotel regarding today's workshop, where he became aware of the usefulness of sign languages and the difficulties faced with regard to these languages. Sign language is the first language for the hearing-impaired. In Myanmar, there are three types of sign languages—Yangon Sign Language, Mandalay and Standard Sign Languages—which are taught in three sign language schools. It is interesting to note that in the entire country, only some 70 people know sign languages. This



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun delivers the address at the Stakeholders Consultative Workshop in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

figure of 70 out of 670,000 shows that we still have a long way to go.

Sharing some of the suggestions made at the awareness-raising discussion, the Deputy Minister said the sign languages taught in schools were found to be totally inadequate. New sign languages need to be formulated for non-routine circumstances. A person learning sign languages needs to study and learn them continuously. Laws, rules and policies related to the media should include provisions for sign languages, said the Deputy Minister.

Guests in attendance were made aware of the difficulties and requirements and then discussed the way ahead. The Ministry of Information will fully cooperate with all organisations to provide rights to the hearing-impaired, said the Deputy Minister. Next, programme director U Kyaw Kyaw of the Myanmar Deaf Community Development Association explained the aim of the workshop and programme manager U Salai David explained the outcome of the awareness-raising

discussion and the suggestions made.

Later, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement school for the hearing impaired (Mandalay) headmistress Daw Thet Thet Mar Soe Shwe explained the works conducted for the hearing-impaired to be able to access information.

Following this, U Kyaw Myo Win of MRTV explained the sign language used for presenting news on television and DVB Multimedia Group Senior Broadcast Journalist U Aye Naing explained how the DVB Multimedia Group presented the news using sign language. In the afternoon, U Kyaw Kyaw discussed future works to be conducted for the hearing-impaired to be able to access news and information.

U Salai David then conducted a concluding discussion on the suggestions made by the workshop attendees. After U Kyaw Yu delivered a speech of thanks, officials from MRTV and Department of Rehabilitation delivered concluding speeches. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Announcement 1/2018 12 Waxing of Tagu 1379 ME 28th March, 2018 **Election of President**

The Presidential Electoral College comprising representatives of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw hereby announce that U Win Myint, who was elected as a Vice President for presidential candidate by the representatives of the Pyithu Hluttaw group, has been elected as the President of Myanmar at the Presidential Election on 28 March 2018 in accordance with the Rules of Procedure 46 for the election of the President and Vice Presidents.

Sd/-
(Mahn Win Khaing Than)
Speaker

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Announcement 2/2018 12 Waxing of Tagu 1379 ME 28th March, 2018 **Election of Vice Presidents**

The Presidential Electoral College comprising representatives of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw hereby announce that the following two persons have been elected as Vice Presidents depending on the electoral votes they received at the Presidential Election on 28 March 2018 in accordance with the Rules of Procedure 46 for the election of the President and Vice Presidents.

Name	Position	Hluttaw Representative group which elected Vice President
1. U Myint Swe	Vice President-1	Tatmadaw Representatives Group
2. U Henry Van Thio	Vice President-2	Amyotha Hluttaw Representatives Group

Sd/-
(Mahn Win Khaing Than)
Speaker

MRTV refutes Academy Award winner's statements



Director-General of MRTV U Myint Htwe refutes the statements made by pianist Tin Win Hlaing at the press conference in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

MYANMA Radio and Television held a press conference yesterday in Yangon to refute statements made by pianist Sandayar Tin Win Hlaing on state-run television. At the press conference, Director-General of MRTV U Myint Htwe described the statements made by the prominent pianist at the Myanmar Academy Awards Presentation Ceremony for 2017 in Yangon on 23 March as categorically false. The Information Team of the Ministry of Information released a statement on Tuesday and staff of the MRTV also sent an open letter to U Tin Win Hlaing. Sandayar Tin Win Hlaing, in meeting with reporters after the Myanmar

Academy Awards, alleged that his programme "Chay Chay Myit Myit Nhit Nhit Kar Kar" had not been broadcast in over a year, and that "not a single RCA stylus (is) left in hand", referring to the record players used by Myanmar Radio. RCA record players and cassette players were operated in the presence of journalists yesterday to refute the false statement. In an open letter published in the 27 March edition of the Global New Light of Myanmar, the staff of MRTV said that reruns of Sandayar Tin Win Hlaing's programme "Chay Chay Myit Myit Nhit Nhit Kar Kar" are broadcast every Tuesday at 4:30pm.—GNLM ■

Chick pea sales brisk in Mandalay

THE sales of chick peas in Mandalay markets these days is brisk following the higher volume purchases by bean and pulse vendors in order to stockpile them with the intention to resell them for big profits later. They especially purchase chick peas categorized as the V2 and Taiwan beans.

The price of the V2 typed chick pea was Ks.115,000 for a bag in March last year. However, the current market price on 28 March this year is only Ks.70, 000. But, vendors buy chick peas now and expect bigger profits later, said U Soe Win Myint, a wholesaler in Mandalay.

“Although there are no orders from foreign countries at the moment, vendors from Mandalay and Yangon Regions buy them every day. More than 10,000 bags of chick peas enter Mandalay markets on a daily basis” he said.

Currently, the sales of different types of chick peas are booming in Mandalay because it is the season of holding donation ceremonies. So, almost all the peeling and grinding mills in Mandalay are running now. Chick peas are a winter crop, and mostly grown in Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions.—MDN ■

1,340 yaba tablets seized in Dawei

THE police arrested two men for carrying and selling yaba tablets on 27 March, according to the Dawei Myoma police station.

A police unit was patrolling Dawei town, when it intercepted a man identified as Myo Thein, alias Ko Aung, riding a motorbike at midnight on the U Kyaw Yin junction. The police conducted a search and seized 80 yaba tablets and a mobile phone from him.

The police then proceeded to search Myo Thein's house. They found 1,260 yaba tablets, weighing 134 grams and worth Ks6.7 million. During interrogation, Myo Thein admitted his partner, identified as Aung Kyaw Myint, gave him the tablets on 20 March to sell them.

The police have filed charges against the offenders under Section-19(A)/21 of the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—GNLM ■



Commemoration preparations of 800th anniversary of Mogok city

A COMMEMORATION of the 800th anniversary of Mogok city will be held on 29 to 31 March at the Mhone Field in Mogok city.

One of the intentions of the anniversary celebration is to develop the gem industry and tourism as well as highlighting the beauty of Mogok city and the traditional culture of ethnic people in Mogok city. Organizers of the event hope that foreign tourists will visit the anniversary celebration and share their experiences with

friends and families in their own countries. At the commemoration, sports competitions, music entertainment and festivities will be included. Burmese, Lisu, Shan and Palaung ethnic people reside in Mogok city which produces world-famous rubies and other precious gem stones. In addition, Mogok city is surrounded by a large number of mountains and it has a fairly temperate climate. The city has many historical temples and pagodas.—MDN ■



Visitors seen at the commemoration preparation of 800th anniversary of Mogok City. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Temporary border market to be opened in Mese Town

IN an attempt to strengthen friendship between Myanmar and Thailand, a temporary market will be opened in Mese, a border town in Kayah State.

Loikaw, the capital of Kayah State and Mae Hong Son Province of Thailand have already signed a sister city deal to foster cooperation between the

two countries. The temporary market will be opened twice a month in Mese, Kayah State and Khun Yuam in Mae Hong Son Province in Thailand on a rotational basis.

Construction of stalls, toilet, bathrooms and availability of electricity and water will be systematically carried out by

using Ks. 13 million allocated by Kayah State Government. The temporary market is scheduled to be opened by the end of April after the water festival (Thingyan), said Mese Township Administrator U Myo Thant.

Except restricted goods, local products, personal items

and foodstuff will be sold at the temporary market by local merchants from both countries, he added. Deputy Commissioner of Mae Hong Son Mr. Suebsak Eaimvijarn and party looked into preparations being made to open the temporary border market in Mese yesterday evening.—MDN ■

MR to resume Ye-Yangon-Dawei direct route during Thingyan

THE Myanma Railways (MR) is planning to operate the Ye-Yangon-Dawei direct route during the water festival on a regular basis, said U Maung Maung Myint, a station master from Ye railway station.

Recently, many people

flocked to a popular beach resort in Ye Township and the arrival of both domestic and foreign travellers has increased significantly compared to previous periods. Last year, around 600 people used Ye-Yangon-Dawei route daily. Now the number of

railway passengers increased to nearly 750 on a daily basis, he added.

“Travelling by train is very convenient when compared to the past. Seats and public toilets are much more clean and hygienic now. Travelling by train

is comfortable and more suitable for passengers, especially for the elderly,” said Ma Kathy Win, one of the railway commuters from Theinzayet Town. Train ticket prices are similar to previous ticket fares, according to the Myanma Railways.—MDN ■

Highway linking Myanmar, Thailand will speed up Dawei SEZ

WITH the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s legislative permission to procure a 4.5 billion Thai baht loan from Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency (NEDA) of Thailand, the Dawei Special Economic Zone project will now gain speed in its implementation.

The NEDA offers government-to-government loans with low interest rates.

As per the loan terms, the Ministry of Construction is responsible to implement the two-lane road work and the Dawei Special Economic Zone management committee will systematically amend the concession agreement signed with the Italian-Thai Company Group and re-sign it with the Ministry of Construction.

The highway linking Myanmar and Thailand is part of the original project started in 2008, which also includes developing a port, industrial zones, office buildings, residential buildings and other infrastructure. However, the project never took off due to the large scale of the project.

With the Ministry of Construction taking over the responsibility of constructing this road, it will be a government-owned road that the public can use at a fair rate.

The road project will support the development of other projects and related regions, Dawei Special Economic Zone, Taninthayi Region, the country’s economy and the image of the government.

NEDA was an organisation operating under the Ministry of Finance of Thailand, which cooperates in financial matters with neighbouring countries. The loan period is for a total of 30 years, of which 10 years is the grace period. The repayment period is 20 years.

The interest per annum is 0.1 per cent, while the interest must be paid twice a year, totalling 60 times. The principal has to be repaid twice a year, totalling 40 times. Fifty per cent of the loan is to be spent on services and products from Thailand.

The Dawei Special Economic Zone Management Committee, which was formed in October 2016 with members of the Special Economic Zone Central management Committee and foreign experts, convened in August 2015 and March 2016 and agreed to allow Italian-Thai Plc. and other related companies to begin working on the area for a deep sea port. The deep sea port measures 27 square kilometers, while the total project area is 196 square kilometers.

The highway that is part of the project would link Dawei with Bangkok and the Greater Mekong Subregion, while the deep-sea port would link Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam with India, the Middle East, Europe and Africa, significantly shortening transportation time and eliminating the need to navigate around Singapore through the Malacca Straits.

The Dawei SEZ project is expected to bring thousands of jobs along the Myanmar-Thailand border. ■

The ASEAN Committee for Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI), Myanmar

By Hnin Myat Thu (Culture)

Introduction

The Association of South East Asia Nation (ASEAN) is trying to promote mutual cooperation in the region with the spirit of equality and partnership that focus on the peace, progress and prosperity. Meanwhile one of the main bodies of the Association is trying to promote the cooperation to build an ASEAN identity which reinforces the mutual understanding between ASEAN People.

This body in ASEAN cooperation is the “**ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN - COCI)**” which was established on 4th October 1978 and the first ASEAN-COCI meeting was held on 4th-6th October, 1978 in Manila. The ASEAN culture fund (ACF) was established on 2nd December, 1978. In 1985 COCI was operated through four working groups, Literary and ASEAN Studies, Visual and Performing Arts, Radio/TV and Films/Video Print and Interpersonal Media.

In 1999 the operation mode for ASEAN-COCI was changed to operate through two subcommittees:

- ASEAN Sub-Committee on Culture
- ASEAN Sub-Committee on Information

The sub-committees plan, implement and monitor the projects which are approved and funded by the ASEAN-COCI as well as “the ASEAN culture fund”. At the same time, the ASEAN National COCIs in the ASEAN Member States oversee the coordination and implementation of ASEAN-COCI projects and activities. The ASEAN National COCIs comprise representatives from the ministries of Culture, Information, National Radio and Television Networks, Heritage Boards, Museums, Archives and Libraries of ASEAN member states.

ASEAN Vision 2020 also provides COCI with an objective of ASEAN, “**A community conscious of its ties of history, aware of its cultural heritage and bound by a common regional identity**”.

Aims and Objectives

The following are aims and objectives of ASEAN-COCI:

- to promote effective cooperation in the fields of culture and information for the purpose of enhancing mutual understanding and solidarity among the people of ASEAN as well as in furthering regional development.
- to achieve excellence in all aspects of cooperation in the ASEAN Community, further regional development and effectively project ASEAN within and outside the region.

Moreover, Bali Concord II (2003) reinforces ASEAN-COCI’s objective by stating that “**Community shall nurture talent and promote interaction among ASEAN scholars, writers, artists**



and media practitioners to help preserve and promote ASEAN’s diverse cultural heritage, while fostering regional identity as well as cultivating people’s awareness of ASEAN”

ASEAN Sub Committee on Culture

Various activities in the area of culture include the protection, conservation and preservation of cultural heritage, cultural promotion and the production of cultural, Arts Exhibition as well as workshop and seminars were implemented. Moreover, ASEAN cultural officials have been working on issues such as human resource development in the culture sector and small and medium-sized cultural industries.

ASEAN Sub Committee on Information

Various projects and activities, ranging from an ASEAN Youth Camp to news exchanges among ASEAN media, are conducted each year. There are also workshops and other activities to nurture talent and promote interaction among ASEAN scholars, writers, artists and media practitioners as well as film festival and ASEAN Quiz, an activity that has been doing to educate the people about ASEAN’s diverse cultures.

In Myanmar, the focal Ministry of ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) and Sub Committee of Culture (SCC) is Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, while Sub Committee of Information (SCI) is responsible by

Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture of Myanmar will try hard the best to build the future cooperation for the betterment of our ASEAN countries by welcoming 53rd Meeting of ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI), in the year 2018.

Ministry of Information.

ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI), Myanmar

The activities under the Culture and information sector in Myanmar involves implementing communications projects aimed at raising ASEAN awareness and to generate a positive perception of ASEAN.

Moreover, culture and information in Myanmar covers the arts, visual, performing, literary, musical and other art forms, whether traditional, contemporary, or modern, cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible), information and the mass media. The projects and activities involve not only government officials, but also creative artists, writers, journalists and members of the academe.

The ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN - COCI) Myanmar is the body principally responsible for the formulation, implementation and review of projects in the Cultural and Information related fields subject to the approval of the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives.

ASEAN COCI, Myanmar tries to get a stronger regional identity which is in line with the ASCC Blue print 2025 “**A dynamic and harmonious community that is aware and proud of its identity, culture, and heritage with the strengthened ability to innovate and proac-**

tively contribute to the global community”.

ASEAN Leaders accordingly tasked all three ASEAN Community Councils to communicate their efforts to relevant sectors, people and stakeholders through traditional, mainstream and new media which will contribute to create a sense of belonging, consolidating unity and diversity as well as deepening mutual understanding of cultures, histories, religions and civilizations.

ASEAN-COCI of Myanmar and its two sub-committees had played a key role in raising awareness of ASEAN over the years. The goal is to connect ASEAN people beyond the borders, link cultural gaps and articulate the benefits of regional integration.

The annual meeting of the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) is held once a year as well as Sub Committee on Culture (SCC) and Sub Committee on Information (SCI). Myanmar is grateful and honored to accept the chairman ship of 53rd Meeting of ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) in 2018, so that we have to witness tremendous progress in Culture and Information sector for our beloved country, Myanmar. With regards to this trust, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture of Myanmar will try hard the best to build the future cooperation for the betterment of our ASEAN countries by welcoming 53rd Meeting of ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI), in the year 2018. ■

Building resilience to natural hazards and investing in social protection systems critical to achieving 2030 Agenda in Asia-Pacific

COUNTRIES in Asia and the Pacific must build resilience to natural hazards and invest in social protection systems if the region is to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, according to a joint report launched today by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) at a forum in Bangkok.

The report, titled Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies in Asia and the Pacific, highlights that to build resilience against recurrent shocks such as flooding, pollution, and commodity price volatility, societies need to focus on four types of resilience capacities—anticipatory, absorptive, adaptive, and transformative.

The report notes that many countries are already beginning to build resilience capacities against various shocks through, for example, setting up early warning systems to anticipate natural disasters, mainstreaming climate change in national planning, and investing in social protection systems to promote income and health security. However, much more needs to be done to identify and implement policy responses that will help strengthen countries’ resilience and transform vulnerable human systems into more sustainable ones.

“Building effective resilience frameworks for the future must be backed by anticipatory, absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities to deal with the multiple risks we face,” said UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr. Shamshad Akhtar. “Effectively implemented, this strategic approach will strengthen prevention mechanisms, increase mitigation solutions and offer opportunities for human systems to bounce back.”

Asia and the Pacific has gone through a rapid transformation over the last few decades, with issues like aging, urbanization, increasing demand for natural resources, globalization, and technological progress continuing to reshape the region. However, the impacts of these trends often fall disproportionately on the most marginalized groups and communities, according to the report, exacerbated by the fact that Asia and the Pacific is considered one of the most vulnerable regions in the world to various environmental and financial shocks. For example, over 40 million people in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal were affected by intense monsoon rains in August 2017. Effects of air pollution, meanwhile, have cost the subregions of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific an estimated 7.5 per cent of regional gross domestic product, while oil price slumps in 2014 brought about severe economic and financial consequences in Central Asia, with Azerbaijan alone experiencing a 3 per cent drop in economic growth.

“There is a challenge everywhere we look, but there are also opportunities that can help us make progress on the SDGs,” said ADB Vice-President for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development Bambang Susantono. We have pledged to scale up our financing for climate action to \$6 billion a year by 2020, and double climate finance to Pacific developing member countries to \$500 million between 2017 and 2020.”

“At UNDP, we believe that innovation will power dramatic change that can break through the toughest development challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, and transform societies,” said Haoliang Xu, UN Assistant Secretary General and Director of UNDP’s Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.

ESCAP, ADB, and UNDP launched the report at the 5th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) held in Bangkok from 28-30 March as part of their joint efforts to track SDG progress and support countries in the region to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The conclusions and recommendations from the forum will inform global-level discussions of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to be held in New York in July 2018.—ESCAP ■

Trump says 'good chance' Kim will give up nukes

WASHINGTON, (United States) — US President Donald Trump, who has agreed to meet with Kim Jong Un, said on Wednesday there is a now a good chance the North Korean leader will give up his country's nuclear weapons.

"For years and through many administrations, everyone said that peace and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula was not even a small possibility," Trump wrote in an early morning tweet.

"Now there is a good chance that Kim Jong Un will do what is right for his people and for humanity. Look forward to our meeting!" Trump added.

His comments came as Kim completed a secretive and unprecedented visit to Beijing on Wednesday as the two countries seek to repair frayed ties before Pyongyang's landmark summits with Washington and earlier with South Korea.

On his first trip abroad since taking power, Kim and his wife



US President Donald Trump. PHOTO: AFP

were greeted by an honor guard and a banquet hosted by President Xi Jinping, according to state media, which confirmed the three-day visit on Wednesday only after Kim had returned by train to North Korea.

The two men held talks at

the Great Hall of the People and Kim pledged he was "committed to denuclearization" on the Korean peninsula, according to China's Xinhua news agency.

Kim also expressed willingness to hold the summits with Trump and South Korean Pres-

ident Moon Jae-in, it said.

Analysts said Xi likely wanted to see Kim in order to ensure North Korea does not cut a deal with Trump that hurts Chinese interests during their summit, expected to be held in May. —AFP ■

Poland buys US Patriot anti-missile system for \$4.8 bn

WARSAW — Poland signed on Wednesday a \$4.75 billion (3.8-billion-euro) contract to purchase a US-made Patriot anti-missile system, a move that is likely to irk Russia as East-West tensions rise.

"We are signing today a contract to deliver a modern system that has proven itself in numerous countries and

thanks to which we are joining an elite group of states which have an efficient weapon that guarantees security," said Polish Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak.

The first deliveries are expected in 2022. The Patriot is a mobile air-defence system made by US defence firm Raytheon and designed to inter-

cept tactical ballistic missiles, low-flying cruise missiles and aircraft.

Moscow was reported to have deployed nuclear-capable Iskander missiles for exercises in its Kaliningrad exclave in 2016, rattling nearby NATO members. Tensions with Moscow have been high since the Ukraine crisis and Kremlin's an-

nexation of Crimea in 2014 and the current diplomatic spat over the nerve agent attack on a former Russian spy in Britain has done nothing to calm matters. Russia has complained about the prospect of the deployment of Patriot anti-missile systems in Poland and Romania, which it says violates a 1987 arms treaty.—AFP ■

German politicians reject calls for World Cup boycott over ex-spy poisoning

BERLIN — Leading German politicians rejected international calls on Wednesday to boycott the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia in reaction to the poisoning of ex-spy Sergei Skripal in Britain.

"I am against a political boycott of the football world cup in Russia," Norbert Roettgen, president of the parliamentary foreign policy committee, told German magazine Der Spiegel.

Roettgen said that there had already been a "strong international reaction" to the alleged poisoning of Skripal and that Western governments should

now refrain from further "escalation."

He said sports should always be a final resort in the "catalogue of consequences" because of its importance for intercultural dialogue.

Juergen Hardt, a senior lawmaker in Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrat party, told Der Spiegel on Wednesday that boycotts of international sports events were not a "smart instrument of diplomacy."

Free Democratic Party foreign policy spokesperson Bi-

jan Djir-Sarai similarly warned against the risk of a "spiral of escalations."

Earlier, Berlin had joined 23 other Western countries, including the United States and 16 European Union (EU) member states, in ordering a total of 137 Russian diplomats to return to their home country. The government was subsequently criticized by politicians from across the political spectrum for having made the unprecedented decision prior to the conclusion of an independent investigation into the Skripal case.

German Social Democrat politician and former EU Commissioner Guenter Verheugen said in the newspaper "Augsburger Allgemeine" that Berlin's decision had been made on the basis of assumptions rather than facts.

"The argumentation in the Skripal case reminds me of a court verdict in which the defendant is found guilty not because his guilt could be proven, but merely because the crime which he is accused of is believed to fit his character," Verheugen said.—Xinhua ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Germania airline plane collides with Israel's El Al plane in on-ground accident

JERUSALEM — A Germania airline plane collided Wednesday with an El Al plane in an on-ground accident in Ben Gurion Airport outside Tel Aviv.

A spokesman for the Israel Airports Authority said no injuries were reported. The passengers were evacuated through the regular stairs back to the terminal, he said.

The Berlin-bound Germania Boeing 737 was pushed back from its position near the terminal ahead of launch when it collided with the tail of Rome-bound El Al 767.

Damage was caused to the planes and they were both grounded. Both flights took off after hours' delay, the airport said.

An investigation was opened into the circumstances of the accident, the spokesman said, adding that according to initial estimates the clash was caused by the driver who pulled the German plane.—Xinhua ■

Israel's Netanyahu discharged from hospital after tests

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was discharged from hospital in Jerusalem on Tuesday after being admitted with a case of "high fever", his office said.

The 68-year-old premier, who underwent tests in the Hadassah hospital, was also suffering from a "cough", the office said in a statement.

He was able to return to his residence in Jerusalem after the examinations "which revealed a benign viral disease of the airways".

"The doctors recommended him to rest and undergo medical treatment," his office said in a statement, without giving details.

An earlier statement said Netanyahu's personal physician, Zvi Herman Berkowitz, believed he had not rested enough following an illness contracted two weeks ago, causing his symptoms to worsen.—AFP ■

Solar seeks its place under Spanish sun

MADRID — Sun-drenched Spain should be a natural for solar energy, and it is here that the technology is making an effort to stand on its feet financially without subsidies.

Investors are now betting again on solar power generation in Spain, which for a decade was in the shadows as the country cut subsidies for the clean but expensive source of energy.

A plunge in the price of solar panels and lower construction costs has changed the maths, and new projects are moving forward again.

Iberdrola, Spain's largest power company, this month launched a so-



Spain was one of the pioneers of solar power-generation but the financial crisis broke its momentum. **PHOTO: AFP**

lar project with a capacity of 425 megawatts.

And last week Spanish renewable energy firm Cox Energy signed a deal for the construction of 495 megawatts of capacity in

Spain, and another 165 megawatts in neighbouring Portugal, in a 400-million-euro (\$490 million) investment.

Companies have sought authorisation

for solar power projects across Spain with a total capacity of 24,000 megawatts, according to the director general of Spanish solar power lobby UNEF, Jose Donoso.

Subsidies stumble

That is the equivalent of 14 of the latest generation nuclear power plants that France hopes to launch later this year, after a decade of costly construction. Spain was one of the pioneers of solar power-generation. Subsidies in the form of a high purchase price for solar power lured investors and homeowners to install solar panels, triggering an installation boom in 2008 that saw Spain's installed capacity jump five times to 3,355 megawatts.

But the global financial crisis, which ravaged Spain via a collapse of the property market, led to a bust in new projects and the cash-strapped govern-

ment was quickly forced to abandon the subsidies.

Just 49 megawatts was added in 2015, and 55 megawatts in 2016, before picking up to 135 megawatts in 2017, according to UNEF figures. However in Germany, which kept up its subsidies, solar power swelled by six times although the country does not receive as much sun as Spain, meaning each panel produces less electricity. The country now has more than 40,000 megawatts of solar power, compared with 5,400 in Spain at the end of 2015. But the sector has undergone "a complete reversal in less than six months", according to Donoso.—AFP ■

France bids farewell to hero policeman killed by jihadist

PARIS — French President Emmanuel Macron will lead a national ceremony on Wednesday honouring a heroic policeman who died offering himself as a hostage in a jihadist attack.

Lieutenant-Colonel Arnaud Beltrame, 44, was the fourth and final victim in the shooting spree last Friday in the southwestern towns of Carcassonne and nearby Trebes.

"In giving his life to bring to an end the deadly actions of a jihadist terrorist, he died a hero," Macron said ahead of the ceremony.

The senior policeman had taken the place of a woman held as a final hostage in a supermarket by 25-year-old gunman Radouane Lakdim, who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group.

France has lost more than 240 lives to jihadists over the past three years, and the attack is the country's worst since Macron became president last May.

Around 200 of Beltrame's colleagues from the gendarmerie, a national police force which is part of the military, will attend the ceremony in Paris from

1030 GMT.

Macron will give the eulogy at Les Invalides, a historic complex which is home to France's army museum and a veterans' retirement centre.

Across the country, police stations will pause for a minute's silence at 0800 GMT.

The coffin of Beltrame, who was married, was flown in from Carcassonne on Tuesday, draped in the French flag with his military cap laid upon it.

Along with the police officer, Lakdim shot dead the passenger of a car he hijacked in Carcassonne and two people in the supermarket he had besieged in Trebes.

Beltrame took the place of the woman Lakdim was using as a human shield, hoping to negotiate once the terrified shoppers and supermarket staff were out of the way.

But Lakdim shot Beltrame and slit his throat, leading police to intervene and shoot the attacker dead.

The attacker wounded four other people, including the driver of the hijacked car and a policeman shot while out jogging.

Pressure on government

Beltrame has been hailed as a national hero, with family members saying it was typical of him to put others first.

"You behaved in your last moments just as you behaved throughout your whole life: as a patriot, as a good man, as a man with a big heart," his brother Damien wrote on Facebook.

Macron's government has meanwhile come under criticism from rightwing opponents who allege that the attack could have been prevented.

Lakdim, who had previous convictions for drug use and handling a banned weapon, had been on a list of suspected extremists since 2014 and was being monitored.

A police source told AFP that Lakdim had been summoned by anti-terror police for questioning earlier this month.

Far-right leader Marine Le Pen accused the government of exploiting the grief over Beltrame to "escape from its own incompetence and cowardice" in failing to tackle Islamic extremism.—AFP ■

Transferring Distributor for Registered Products

Distribution of following pesticides registered by Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Singapore) is transferring from Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Myanmar Branch) to **Uni Crop Co., Ltd.** Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, West Gyogone, Insein within 14days.

Sr	Trade Name	A.I	Type of Registration	Reg No
1	Diligent 0.3 GR	Fipronil 3g/kg	Prov	2014 - 2172
2	Endow	Imidacloprid 20% + Metalaxyl 20% WP	Prov	2014 - 1882
3	Restore 500 SC	Iprodione 50% g/l	Prov	2014 - 2165

Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Myanmar Branch),
Rangoun Business Center, Room 209, No.97, West Shwe Gon Daing Road.
Tele :01-8603042, 09-5145328

Ministry of Construction Department of Rural Road Development Invitation for Open Tender

- The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a grant from Federal Republic of Germany (KfW Bank) through its Department of Rural Road Development (DRRD) under Ministry of Construction towards the cost of Rural Road Rehabilitation Programme (RRRP) in Kalay township.
- The DRRD invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following separated Bridge work contracts;

	Contract	Description	Location
1	Lot 1 (ShaeGji Bridge)	- Standard Concrete Bridge; single carriageway of 6 Meter width. - Total length is 150 Meter.	Kalay township of Sagaing Region.
2	Lot 2 (Nat ta khar Bridge)	- Standard Concrete Bridge; single carriageway of 6 Meter width. - Total length is 130 Meter.	Kalay township of Sagaing Region.

- Procurement will be conducted through International Competitive Bidding Procedures and under the laws and regulations governing public procurement within the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and following the KfW Guidelines for Procurement of Goods, Works and Associated Services in Financial Cooperation with Partner Countries (KfW procurement guidelines-August 2016).
- Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 2pm, May 15, 2018
- This invitation is open to all bidders and bidders have the option to Bid for any one or both lots.
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information complete bidding document from:
Rural Road Rehabilitation Programme (RRRP),
Department of Rural Road Development, Ministry of Construction ,
Northern of (200)Bedded Hospital, Yan Aung (2) Quarter, Pyinmana, Myanmar,
Phone:+95 67 24821, Email:ruralroad.drrd@gmail.com , rbbdrrd@gmail.com

Diplomat: No reply from UK, US to Russia's request for information over 'Skripal handout'

MOSCOW — Moscow has received no reply from London and Washington to its request to provide printed materials on the incident with the alleged poisoning of former Russian military intelligence officer Sergei Skripal in Salisbury, the UK, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Tuesday.

US Ambassador to Russia Jon Huntsman said on Monday that the British side had circulated a certain handout on Skripal's poisoning at a briefing for foreign diplomats in Moscow.

"These printed materials, a certain document, a certain list of topics or maybe rather London's explanations of what happened in Salisbury have



Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova. PHOTO: TASS

never reached the media. Journalists tried to obtain this document. We also tried and sent a corresponding inquiries to our British and American colleagues, and did it publicly

to receive zero information in reply," Zakharova said in an interview with the NTV television channel.

On 4 March, former Russian military intelligence officer Sergei

Skripal, 66, who had been convicted in Russia of spying for Great Britain and exchanged for Russian intelligence officers, and his 33-year-old daughter Yulia were found uncon-

scious on a bench near the Maltings shopping center in Salisbury. Police said they had allegedly been exposed to a nerve agent. Both are in the hospital in a critical condition.

London immediately accused Russia of being involved, but failed to produce any evidence. UK Prime Minister Theresa May blamed Russia for "unlawful use of force" against her country. She identified the alleged substance used in the attack as the Novichok nerve agent, developed in the former Soviet Union. The UK expelled 23 Russian diplomats and announced other restrictive measures against Moscow.

Russia has flatly rejected these allegations pointing out that neither

the Soviet Union nor Russia had any programs to develop that substance. In response, Moscow expelled the same number of British diplomats from Russia and ordering to close the British Consulate-General in St. Petersburg and shut down the British Council's offices in Russia.

In a show of solidarity with the UK, a number of European countries, including France, Germany, Poland, the Baltic states, and Ukraine, as well as the United States and Canada announced on Monday their decision to expel about 100 Russian diplomats.

The Russian foreign ministry said in turn this unfriendly step would not go unanswered.—Tass ■

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In respect of **Class 12**: Vehicles for locomotion by land, air, water or rail; aircraft; drones; space vehicles; spacecraft; launch vehicles; air balloons; helicopters; rotorcraft; airplane components included in this class, namely structural parts of aircraft namely wings, fins, fuselage, wing root, vanes, tailplane, landing gear wheels, landing gear; aeronautical apparatus namely remote control airplanes (other than toys); military vehicles, namely aircraft; seat covers for vehicles; aeronautical machines; sun-visors for vehicles.

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For AIRBUS S.A.S

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Email address: myanmar@tilleke.com

Dated: 29th March 2018.

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Loan/Credit No. : EDCF-MYA-7

1. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received Loan from the Export-Import Bank of Korea from the resources of the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) of the Republic of Korea for the Design, Supply and Installation for 500kV Taungoo-Kamanat Transmission Line.
2. The Project Executing Agency now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for **Design, Supply and Installation for 500kV Taungoo-Kamanat Transmission Line on turnkey basis**. The eligible bidders shall be Korea Company by the EDCF Guide Lines.
3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the tender Office or the Website (<http://www.moee.gov.mm>) in the head office of below address and inspect the bidding documents during office hour exclusive of public holidays.
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by any interested Bidder on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of non - refundable fee of **US\$ 1,000**.
5. Bids must be delivered to the address below between **13:00 to 14:00 (Local Time) on 18th May, 2018**.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of not less than one million one hundred thousand US Dollars (USD 1,100,000). Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the address below after 14:00 (Local Time) on 18th May, 2018. Address: Meeting Room, Material Planning Department, Department of Power Transmission and System Control, Building No.27, MOEE, Nay Pyi Taw.

Tender Committee
Department of Power Transmission and System Control
Ministry of Electricity and Energy, office No.27,
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Telephone : 067- 3410282, 3410209

Trade Mark: 09-251022355

Greek media squeezed as banks pull plug on loans

ATHENS — On the side of a buzzing Athens highway, a group of middle-aged men huddle in the dark beside a tarpaulin-covered van, outside the offices of one of Greece's wealthiest families. Smoking cigarettes and drinking cheap wine, these TV veterans with a combined century of work experience are among the remnants of Mega Channel, once Greece's most influential station. Like hundreds of journalists, technicians and administrative staff hit by a new purge of Greece's long-suffering

media sector, they have not been paid for more than a year. The latest jobs cull has come during a hand-over of power in three of the country's top media groups after a decision by under-pressure banks to pull the plug on a long history of bad loans. "We are unpaid by a business that is still operating—and earning income that more than covers the payroll. And this makes us mad," says 56-year-old head cinematographer Grigoris Farmakas, who has worked at Mega for nearly three decades.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO.

(KHAD 0093N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0093N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 29-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

South Korea repatriates remains of 20 Chinese soldiers

SEOUL — Seoul repatriated the remains of 20 Chinese soldiers killed during the Korean War on Wednesday, its defence ministry said, reflecting warming ties between the former Cold War foes.

South Korean soldiers handed over lacquered wooden caskets covered with red Chinese flags to Chinese honour guards at Incheon airport, west of Seoul, where they were loaded onto a Chinese air force cargo plane.

The transfer brought

the total number of Chinese remains repatriated since a 2013 agreement to 589.

The repatriations took place ahead of China's annual Qingming — tomb-sweeping — festival, when many people visit and clean the graves of their ancestors.

An estimated three million Communist Chinese troops played a crucial role in support of the North during the 1950-53 conflict, known in China as the War to Resist US

Aggression and Aid Korea.

They saved the North from defeat as US-led United Nations forces drove Kim Il Sung's army back towards the Chinese frontier in late 1950, before the two sides ended up in a stalemate along what is now the Demilitarized Zone dividing the peninsula. Casualty figures remain disputed but Western estimates commonly cite a figure of 400,000 Chinese deaths, while Chinese sources give a death toll of about 180,000.—AFP ■



Chinese ambassador to South Korea, Qiu Guohong, places a flag on a casket containing the remains of Chinese soldiers from the Korean War at Incheon airport. PHOTO: AFP

Transferring Distributor for Registered Products

Distribution of following pesticides registered by Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Singapore) is transferring from Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Myanmar Branch) to Farm Link Co., Ltd. Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, West Gyogone, Insein Township within (14) days.

Sr.	Trade Name	A I	Type of Registration	Reg. No
1	Activar 25 EC	Oxadiazon 25% EC	Prov	2013 - 1665
2	Adecko 240 EC	Oxyfluorfen 24% EC	Prov	2014 - 2168
3	Agrimil 63.5 MZ	Metalaxyl 75%+ Mancozeb 5.6% MZ	Full	F 2009 - 683
4	Agrithane M-46	Mancozeb 80%WP	Full	F 2009 - 251
5	Alfa 5 EC	Alpha Cypermethrin 5%EC	Full	F 2014 - 501
6	Confidence 250 EC	Imidacloprid 5% + Chlorpyrifos 20% EC	Full	F 2018 - 1583
7	Dart 25 SL	Fomesafen 25% SL	Prov	2015 - 1584
8	Eminent 5 WDG	Emamectin Benzoate 5% WDG	Prov	2014 - 2171
9	Energy 80 WDG	Sulfur 80% WDG	Full	F 2018 - 1586
10	Gain 20 WP	Imidacloprid 20% WP	Full	F 2017 - 1362
11	Gain 70 WP	Imidacloprid 70% WP	Prov	2014 - 2164
12	Grace 250 EC	Propiconazole 25% EC	Full	F 2010 - 716
13	Malanon 50 EC	Malathion 50% EC	Full	F 2011 - 321
14	Maxcin 2 SL	Kasugamycin 2% SL	Prov	2014 - 2167
15	Optima 75 SP	Acephate 75% SP	Full	F 2017 - 1358
16	Oxy 77 WP	Copper Hydroxide 77% WP	Prov	2013 - 1664
17	Precise 50 EC	Profenofos 50% EC	Full	F 2017 - 1363
18	Prosper 25 WP	Metalaxyl 25% WP	Full	F 2017 - 1539
19	Rid Weed RP	Glyphosate 48% SL	Full	F 2011 - 431
20	Scope 50 WP	Captan 50% WP	Full	F 2009 - 684
21	Select Plus	Profenofos 30% + Lambda cyhalothrin 3% EC	Full	F 2018 - 1597
22	Sonic10 SC	Bispyribac sodium 10% SC	Prov	2014 - 2170
23	STA 1.8 EC	Abamectin 1.8% EC	Full	F 2017 - 1360
24	Stop 25 EC	Fluazifop-p-Butyl 25% EC	Prov	2015 - 1595
25	Tackle 720 SL	2,4, D Amine 72% SL	Full	F 2018 - 1587
26	Valid 2.5 EC	Deltamethrin 2.5% EC	Full	F 2009 - 594
27	Vigor 33 EC	Pendimethalin 33% EC	Prov	2014 - 1880
28	Visan 50 EC	Phenthoate 50% EC	Full	F 2011 - 428
29	Vitabaryl 85 WP	Carbaryl 85% WP	Full	F 2014 - 497
30	Vitafuran 3 G	Carbofuran 3% GR	Full	F 2011 - 430
31	Vitagro 50 EC	BPMC (Fenobucarb 50%) EC	Full	F 2014 - 499
32	Vitamethrin 10 EC	Cypermethrin 10% EC	Full	F 2009 - 160
33	Vitamyl 50 WP	Benomyl 50% WP	Full	F 2014 - 500
34	Vitaquat 24 SL	Paraquat Dichloride 24% SL	Full	F 2018 - 1582
35	Vitaram 80 WP	Thiram 80% WP	Full	F 2009 - 616
36	Vitashield 20 EC	Chlorpyrifos 20% EC	Full	F 2009 - 617
37	Vitashield 40 EC	Chlorpyrifos 40% EC	Full	F 2011 - 429
38	Vitoate 40 EC	Dimethoate 40% EC	Full	F 2010 - 381

Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Myanmar Branch)
Rangoun Business Center, Room 209, No. 97, West Shwe Gon Daing Road,
Tele ; 01 8603042, 09 5145328

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR 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 Torch 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

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206
+95 67 411212

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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Spy drama 'The Americans' takes final bow, timed to USSR's demise

NEW YORK — As hit TV drama "The Americans" prepares for its final jaw-dropping season, set against the backdrop of the fall of the Soviet Union, the Cold War-era spy thriller has never felt more topical.

The show's creator, former CIA officer Joe Weisberg, recalls with amusement the question he was asked when he first presented his idea back in 2012: "Who really cares about US-Russia relations?"

Since then, Russia went to war with Ukraine, annexed Crimea, backed America's foe Bashar al-Assad in Syria and, according to US intelligence

agencies, interfered in the 2016 presidential election with the aim of helping Donald Trump win.

The sixth and final season, set to air from Wednesday on FX, finds Soviet sleeper agents Elizabeth and Philip Jennings still posing as an average American couple in the suburbs, with two kids and jobs at a travel agency.

Philip — whose commitment to the KGB has wavered over the years — has left the game of spycraft, but Elizabeth — the idealistic Russian patriot — is all in, and their daughter Paige is along for the ride.

Elizabeth is desperate to



Matthew Rhys et Keri Russell — the stars of "The Americans" — attend the premiere of the final season in New York. **PHOTO: AFP**

gather intelligence on the INF treaty that saw the United States and Soviet Union eliminate part of their nuclear arsenals in 1987.

And their marriage is as chilly as the Cold War standoff

between Washington and Moscow. "Being a girl and getting to play this character is pretty cool. She's so fierce and single-minded," Russell told Variety magazine's "Remote Controlled"

podcast, calling her work on the show "by far my most fun role."

"Everything at home that Elizabeth is fighting for is falling apart, is in complete anxiety and turmoil."—AFP ■

Upbeat reviews as Trump-voting 'Roseanne' returns to TV

NEW YORK — Hit working-class sitcom "Roseanne" returned to US television screens on Tuesday after a two-decade hiatus, winning generally positive reviews in a sharply polarized America with a title character who is now a pill-popping, Trump-voting grandma. ABC aired the first two episodes of the award-winning show's 10th season — back for the first time in 21 years with actress Roseanne Barr in fine fettle as the eponymous blue-collar matriarch of the Conner clan.

Roseanne and husband Dan, played by John Goodman, are getting on in years, and are on a long roster of medication, which they share to save on cost.

"If you're not happy, I have no chance of being happy," quips Dan, handing the anti-depressants to Roseanne.

Daughter Darlene is back at home as an unemployed, single mom of a gender-fluid son and a bratty teenage girl. Son DJ is home from Syria, but with a wife still serving in the military overseas. Daughter Becky, 43, is a widowed restaurant worker wanting to become a surrogate mom in exchange for \$50,000, desperate to pay off credit cards, buy



Roseanne Barr — star and series creator of 'Roseanne' — attends the premiere of her revived hit sitcom on 23 March at Walt Disney Studios in Burbank, California; so far, it's earning generally positive reviews. **PHOTO: AFP**

a car and put down a deposit on a home. But it's the politics that's grabbed the press attention.

Depictions of working-class life are rare on US television, and Hollywood has largely ignored the half of the country that voted for Donald Trump.

Roseanne's sister Jackie (multiple Emmy winner Laurie Metcalf) sports a "Nasty Woman" T-shirt and pink pussy hat of the type worn at women's marches against the Republican president's administration.

"What's up, deplorable?" she greets a feuding Roseanne, adopting Hillary Clinton's now in-

famous epithet for Trump voters.

The sisters' bickering covers the economy, the 2016 election and health care, but Roseanne is portrayed as neither a racist or a bigot — stereotypes of Trump voters often seen in the media.

She treasures her black grandchild and defends gender-fluid Mark on his first day at his new school, telling his classmates her grandson's on his way to becoming a famous fashion designer. "This just feels like me. I like colors that pop," Mark tells her of his penchant for girls' clothes, before she grabs him in a bear hug.—AFP ■

Court upholds Jean-Marie Le Pen fine for Holocaust comment

PARIS — France's top appeals court upheld a 30,000-euro fine on Tuesday against former far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen for dismissing the Nazi gas chambers as a "detail" of history.

Le Pen, 89, had been found guilty twice by lower courts of denying crimes against humanity over the 2015 remark and had taken his case to the final court of appeal.

"It doesn't surprise me, coming from these crooks," Le Pen told AFP in response to the verdict, blasting what he said was "collusion" against him in the court system.

The court upheld a fine of 30,003 euros (\$37,200) to be paid to three anti-racism groups, and another 4,000 euros in legal costs.

His daughter, current National Front (FN) leader Marine Le Pen, booted him from the party he co-founded over the comment, as part of her attempts to rid the party of a reputation for anti-Semitism.

In April 2015, a television journalist had asked Jean-Marie Le Pen if he regretted having previously expressed the same view in 1987.

"Not at all," Le Pen replied. "What I said corresponded to my belief that the gas chambers were a detail of the history of the war."

Le Pen already had a string of hate speech convictions, including against Muslims and Roma people.

He was fined twice in the 1990s for making similar comments about the World War II gas chambers.

Marine Le Pen, who has been embroiled in a bitter and highly public row with her father for years, stripped him of his National Front membership after his 2015 repetition of his views.

But he remained in his role as the FN's honorary president until this month, when she was finally able to change the party statutes to kick him out once and for all.—AFP ■

Camel power turns sesame into precious oil in Afghanistan

KABUL — Old Afghan men looking to soothe their aching joints or enrich their rice dishes stand around a tiny shop where they are lulled by a camel's steady steps as sesame oil flows into a plastic bucket.

The traditional industry in northern Afghanistan is the domain of ethnic Turkmen, though its origins seem unclear. The sesame are pressed not by hand but by camel power to extract their precious oil.

Two of the animals take turns every couple of hours walking around in circles in the cramped space, a pack on their shoulders supporting a mast that drives the wooden press, a patch covering one eye to narrow their gaze.

Chari Amini has taken over the business started by his father and his 12-year-old son is already helping him as he prepares to become the next generation of sesame oil producers.

Amini buys sesame at the local market, which are grown between rows of wheat, hashish and poppies in the fertile soil of Balkh province, which borders Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

If the seeds are of good quality, one kilogramme can produce half a litre of oil.

"We are about 35 producers

in Mazar-i-Sharif, all Turkmen, and we all know each other," says Amini, his bald head covered with a turban, referring to the capital of Balkh.

"We are honest — it's the key to business," he explains. "We never stopped during the wars."

Amini also presses sesame for farmers who bring their harvest to him, charging 100 Afghanis (\$1.50) per ser, a traditional unit of weight that is equal to seven kilogrammes.

Dark chunks of residue are collected and used as fuel in homes.

This modest trade brings Amini 20,000 Afghanis per month — not as lucrative as opium poppy used to produce heroin, but better than the income of a soldier. And it is enough to support his five children.

His shop is one of several facing a wide road in Mazar-i-Sharif, the front entirely open to customers.

Every two hours, his employee Alokozai pours 11 kilograms (24 pounds) of seeds into the press and takes the reins of the camel to guide him around the circle. Alokozai never considered doing anything else with his life, he says, surprised by the question.



A traditional sesame oil press powered by camel in Mazar-i-Sharif. PHOTO: AFP

'Healthier and sweeter'

Each camel works for 10 hours a day. Amini keeps the animals for 18 months and then resells them "for a profit" once they are muscular.

Roughly 300,000 litres of sesame oil are produced using the traditional method each year in Balkh, according to Zabihullah Zubin, a director at the provincial Department of Agriculture. That provides a livelihood for about 50 producers.

About 300 farmers produce sesame but they prefer to sell on the regional market for a higher price — 120 Afghanis per kilo against 90 Afghanis in the Mazar-i-Sharif bazaar, explains Zubin.

This method of producing

sesame oil is competing with more efficient industrial presses, of which Mazar-i-Sharif has three.

"They have the food technology, they know how to process, to clean the seeds, do the packaging... the small manual production would need investment and technical support" to access the overseas market, said Zubin.

Joseph Nezam, an Afghan-French businessman, is trying to develop local sesame oil production with the support of the American development agency USAID so they can sell directly into markets abroad.

"Afghanistan has a very good quality sesame but people prefer to sell to neighboring countries that serve as an intermediary

to the international market, and help them to produce at European standards," Nezam says.

Old customers of Amini swear that the camel-pressed sesame oil they use to flavour their traditional Afghan rice dish kabuli palau is "totally organic, healthier, and sweeter" than industrial presses that "burn" seeds by crushing them.

"It's better than any tablet or medicine," says Hajji Abdul Ghani Rahmani, a traditional doctor who stops by Amini's shop to stock up on sesame oil to use at his clinic.

"You can use it and feel better very soon," he adds, as he massages the knee and leg of an elderly man sitting inside the shop.—AFP ■

Australian indigenous languages have common source: study

SYDNEY — All indigenous languages in Australia descend from a single common tongue, a study revealed on Wednesday in findings that shed new light on the country's cultural history.

More than 250 languages were spoken at the time of British settlement in 1788 and after three years investigating their origins, researchers said they had finally proven a long-held theory that they all derive from so-called Proto-Australian.

The existence of a common parent language gives further weight to the idea that all Aboriginal Australians descend from a single group that landed on the continent at least 65,000 years ago, and spread out over the following millennia, becoming ethnically and linguistically distinct.

The project used a standard method in historical linguistics



Aboriginal Australians are thought to have lived on the continent for at least 65,000 years. PHOTO: AFP

to establish whether similarity between languages was due to inheritance from a common ancestor, as opposed to transfer from one language to another through human contact. Western Sydney University chief investigator Robert Mailhammer said the findings

repeatedly revealed similarities between languages that were not in contact. "We discovered that the sounds of words we compared showed recurrent systematic differences and similarities across a set of languages that are spread out in a geographically discontin-

uous way," he said.

"This makes it very unlikely that they are the result of chance or language contact."

He added that the findings pointed to Proto-Australian being spoken about 12,000 years ago.

"This raises more questions around how the languages spread and how the linguistic findings connect to the genetic findings," he said. University of Newcastle historical linguist Mark Harvey said he hoped the research, published in the linguistics journal *Diachronica*, would enhance the understanding of Australian and human history. "Until now, it was speculated that Australia was significantly more linguistically diverse than somewhere like Europe, because it had not been proven that all Australian languages actually stemmed from the same lineage," he said. "This

is the first demonstration that all Australian languages are part of the same language family."

He said this language likely spread across Australia from a small area in the country's north that was first populated thousands of years ago.

"This spread is likely to have been carried out by at least some population movement whose material and genetic traces have remained somewhat elusive," he added. "However, with further interdisciplinary research, this new linguistic evidence is likely to give us a more precise reconstruction of Australian prehistory from what is currently known."

Only around 120 of the original 250 tongues are still spoken today, with many at risk of being lost as elders die off without passing on the language to younger generations.—AFP ■

Elimination matches conclude in MFF Futsal tourney

THE knock-out matches of the MFF Futsal Open Cup 2018 were completed yesterday at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon, resulting in the advancement of four teams to the quarterfinal stage.

A total of four matches including GV Athletic Vs Shwe Kayan, RDZ Vs Winner, Shwe Myawady Vs Zombie and VUC Vs UPT played for fighting the Quarter-final stage.

In yesterday's matches, GV Athletic trounced Shwe Khayan by a score of 10-1, while RDZ beat Winner 6-5, Shwe Myawady

eliminated Zombie by a score of 7-4 and VUC beat UPT by a score of 3-1.

Officials recognised the standout play of individual players from each game.

The players of the match performance awards were garnered by Kaung Chit Thu from GV Athletic, Aung Myo Htun from RDZ, Thura Aung from Shwe Myawady and Nyein Min Soe from VUC.

The winning teams advance to the quarter-finals that will be played on 31 March at the same stadium.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■



Shwe Myawady (yellow) and Zombie (blue) vie for the ball in yesterday's knock-out match at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon. **PHOTO:MFF-FUTSAL**



Real Madrid midfielder Isco scored a hat-trick as Spain thrashed Argentina. **PHOTO:AFP**

Isco nets hat-trick as Spain hit Argentina for six

MADRID — Spain blew Argentina away on Tuesday but coach Julen Lopetegui insists they can take nothing for granted at this summer's World Cup.

A 6-1 demolition, which included an Isco hat-trick at the Wanda Metropolitano, underlined Spain's credentials as one of the tournament favourites in Russia, while exposing Argentina, who were without the injured Lionel Messi. Diego Costa was back in Spain's starting line-up for the first time in eight international matches and he marked his return with the opening goal.

Isco then scored twice either side of what proved to be no more than a consolation from Argentina's Nicolas Otamendi, before Thiago Alcantara, substitute Iago Aspas and Isco's third completed the rout. "I am very satisfied with a win against the

finalists of the previous World Cup," Lopetegui said. "It is an opponent that has a fantastic history, but nothing else, it does not change anything, we have to start the World Cup with zero points (in the group stage)."

As irresistible as Spain were going forward, Argentina were lamentable at the back and coach Jorge Sampaoli will have questions to answer with the World Cup less than three months away.

"I have to take responsibility," Sampaoli said.

He might cling to the hope of Messi, whose hamstring strain meant he was not even in the squad, instead left to watch on from the stands.

"Leo trained with us, he had a very good week of workouts but still had some discomfort in his leg," Sampaoli said.—AFP ■

Sport & Education football team trounces YREO in women's league

THE Sport & Education team notched a big win over YREO by a score of 6-1 yesterday at Aung San Stadium in Yangon in one of the KBZ Bank Women's League football matches.

Sport and Education's big win was due in large part to the four goals scored by its star Yee Yee Oo.

Sport & Education, considered one of the best in the women's league, lived up to its reputation, as all the players executed great tactics, tackling, and stable football handling as they dominated the first half with

frequent scores in the early minutes.

At the six-minute mark, Yee Yee Oo scored Sport & Education's first goal. Their second goal was scored by Khin Malar Tun score at the eight-minute mark.

As a point when the defence line of YREO was found to be scattered, Yee Yee Oo scored Sport & Education's third goal at the 15-minute mark.

To their credit, YREO did not give up, and scored a goal at 30 minutes by May Thawe Ko.

The match heated up in the

second half due to smarter play by YREO, which changed tactics and playing style.

But at the 52-minute mark, capitalising on a YREO defender's error, Kay Zin Myint scored the fourth goal for Sport & Edu.

There were no easy scores for Sport and Education for the rest of the match, as five or six defenders along with massive midfielders carefully blocked the ball.

Despite the defence, Yee Yee Oo scored the fifth and sixth goal at the 71 and 84-minute marks for her team.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■



A girl from YREO attempts to carry the ball against three competitors in yesterday's KBZ Bank Women's League match at Aung San Stadium in Yangon. **PHOTO:MWL**