

NATIONAL

Union minister, chief minister inspect hydroelectric project, sub-station in Rakhine

PAGE-2

**BUSINESS**

Gold traders preparing for import/export businesses

PAGE-5

NATIONAL

Mon concludes political dialogue, pledges to build federal union

PAGE-3



THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Tuesday, 8 May 2018

Myanmar nationals return from Thailand voluntarily

A GROUP of 73 Myanmar nationals in Thailand returned voluntarily to Myanmar and were received at Kyauk Lone Gyi reception centre in Myawady Town, Kayin State, at 2 p.m. yesterday.

Of the 73 Myanmar nationals, 24 men and 28 women are from Kayin State, four men and four women are from the Yangon Region, four men and four women are from the Sagaing Region, and two men and three women are from the Bago Region.

The returnees and Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand U Myo Myint Than Oo were welcomed by Kayin State Minister for Bamar Ethnic Affairs U Tayza Htut Hlaing Htwe and other officials at the friendship bridge No (1) in Myawady. The returnees were later given words of encouragement by Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nan Khin Htwe Myint and state ministers at the reception centre.

The Kayin State Chief Minister expressed her gratitude to the Thai authorities, who helped transport the returnees back home. She then told the returnees that the current situation in Myanmar was different from when they had left for Thailand. She requested the returnees to stand together with the people during this transitional period and

SEE PAGE-6

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives Japanese Ambassador

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received Japanese Ambassador H.E. Mr. Ichiro Maruyama at the Hluttaw Building, Nay Pyi Taw, at 11.30 a.m. yesterday morning. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations, development matters, the peace process and cooperation between the Parliaments of Myanmar and Japan.— Myanmar News Agency ■

Kachin State villagers safely moved

About 150 villagers were transported to safe places in two days

THE authorities are coordinating with the Tatmadaw to move the people, and with the cooperation of the regional military command headquarters and a working team formed by the Kachin State Government, consisting of many departments, the villagers

from Kamine Township, Manwel Village, were transported to Chaungwa Village, Mohnyin Township.

Some 23 persons, including 18 men and 5 women, on 6 May, and some 125 persons, including 56 men and 69 women, on

7 May were moved to Chaungwa Village, Mohnyin Township, in motor boats and cars. Five persons from two households remain in Kamine Township, Manwel Village, as they do not want to move. The Tatmadaw personnel were reported to be

in Manwel Village.

The 148 persons who were in Chaungwa Village, Mohnyin Township, were then transported to their relatives' homes or their places of origin yesterday afternoon.

SEE PAGE-6

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

Union Minister for Planning and Finance attends 51st ADB annual, related meetings

PAGE-2**NATIONAL**

Aid provided to returning ethnic nationals in Meise Town

PAGE-6**LOCAL NEWS**

Mandalay fruits traders expect to export over 10 tonnes of fruits in 2018-2019 FY

PAGE-4

Union minister, chief minister inspect hydroelectric project, sub-station in Rakhine

UNION MINISTER for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu visited the Thuhtay hydro-electric project, implemented by No. 4 Construction, Hydropower Implementation Department, located some 12 miles north east of Thandwe Town, Thandwe District, Rakhine State, on Saturday and inspected the status of the works conducted, according to the Rakhine State government.

The union minister first inspected the miniature model of the project, while officials explained the project to him. The union minister then gave the necessary instructions.

Next, the union minister visited the tunnel and inspected the earth digging and concrete works conducted for the inlet to the No. 2 diversion tunnel and the tunnel water control gate, strengthening works on the tunnel and the concrete work of the outlet tunnel.

The union minister then inspected the construction status



Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing and officials inspect the construction of No.2 diversion tunnel in Thandwe Township, Rakhine State on 5 May. **PHOTO: MNA**

of No. 1 diversion tunnel.

Later, the union minister observed the status of the work completed at the project site, and commented on it and provided

instructions, while the officials explained the project.

The Thuhtay hydroelectric project is constructing a dam and a 111-MW power station on

Thuhtay River. After the power station is completed, it will generate 386 KWh of electricity annually for distribution to regions in Rakhine State. The project

is now 47.77 per cent complete.

On the morning of 6 May, the union minister inspected the Thandwe 66 KV 10 MVA Nanchaung Substation. At the (substation) briefing hall, Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Electricity Supply Enterprise Managing Director U Saw Win Maung explained the reception, transmission and distribution status of the substation, the status of distributing electricity to Rakhine State and the additional requirements when Kyaukpadaung Special Economic Zone will be implemented. An official from Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise (Thandwe) explained the status of the transport, reception and distribution of petroleum products. Deputy Minister Dr. Tun Naing provided additional explanations, and the union minister and the chief minister discussed and raised questions. Later, the union minister and chief minister met and encouraged the staff and then inspected the switchyard in the substation. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Minister for Planning and Finance attends 51st ADB annual, related meetings

UNION MINISTER for Planning and Finance U Kyaw Win attended the 51st Asian Development Bank (ADB) Annual Meeting and related meetings in Manila, the Philippines, from 3 to 6 May.

On 4 May, the union minister attended the ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting and discussed the global and regional economic outlook, reflection on the countries and the risks faced by the global economy, selection of policies and arrangements to reduce their effect, ways to maintain stability and promote growth over the medium to long term. Discussions were also held on the ASEAN+3 financial cooperation report that included a report of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) and Asian Bond Markets Initiative (ABMI). Views were exchanged by finance ministers and central bank governors on



Representatives pose for the documentary photo together with dignitaries at the 51st Asian Development Bank (ADB) Annual Meeting in Manila, the Philippines. **PHOTO: MNA**

the works conducted by each country and a discussion held to conclude the 21st ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting joint statement.

In addition to this, a discussion on Cambodia, Laos and My-

anmar establishing a regional catastrophe risk insurance pool under the Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility with support from Japan, was held, and a joint statement was issued over it.

On 5 May, member countries

discussed the ADB strategy set to 2030. The 2017 annual report, modified rules and regulations, 2018 budget, financial resources of the bank, audit report, net profit allocation, and the work process of the committee for the 2018-2019 financial year were

discussed, and the chair and vice chair of the Board of Governor for the 2018-2019 financial year were selected during the business session.

ADB's President Takehiko Nakao attended and delivered an opening speech at the opening ceremony of the 51st ADB Annual Meeting.

The union minister met separately with World Bank Vice President for East Asia and the Pacific Victoria Kwakwa on 4 May, Japan Bank for International Cooperation Senior Managing Director Nobumitsu Hayashi and ADB's President Takehiko Nakao on 6 May and discussed matters related to providing assistance for the development of Myanmar's agriculture sector and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), areas of future cooperation and continuing assistance on priority works, implemented in accordance with Myanmar's economic policy. — Myanmar News Agency ■



I would firstly like to address the three branches of the sovereign power of the State, who have been entrusted with power according to the Constitution, to exercise mutual respect, understanding, and trust as they collaborate for the good of the people. Additionally, I wish to urge the media sector, which serve as the ears and eyes of the public, to understand the seriousness of their duties and to hold in high regard the public sector that they serve.

(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)



May we all be able to build the peaceful, modern, prosperous and genuine Democratic Federal Republic which is the dream of the fathers of our independence and which is what our people desire.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1st April 2018)

Mon concludes political dialogue, pledges to build federal union

THE ethnic Mon people concluded their National-Level Political Dialogue in Ye, yesterday, pledging that they will participate in the establishment of a federal union based on democracy, equality and self-determination rights, and will follow the path of peaceful resolution to political problems through political means.

Following the third-day session and the closing ceremony of the political dialogue, they released a statement.

The statement said the basic principles in the political, economic, social, and land and environment sectors were discussed according to the framework set up by the UPDJC, and agreements and disagreements were collected through sector wise discussions.

The representatives of Mon attending the National-Level Political Dialogue for the ethnic Mon people discussed openly and freely the political, economic, social, and land and environment sectors to establish a federal union., said the statement.

In the morning, a collection of the two-day sector wise discussions and views of the representatives on the political, economic,



Committee Chairman Nai Banyar Lae delivers the concluding speech at the closing ceremony of the National-level Political Dialogue for ethnic Mon people in Mon State yesterday. PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY

social, and land and environment sectors were distributed to the representatives by the leaders, and additional suggestions and comments were sought from the representatives. In the afternoon, sector wise opinion papers were read by the leaders and submitted to the chairpersons of the meetings.

A closing ceremony of the National-Level Political Dialogue for the ethnic Mon people was then held, where the approved sector wise papers obtained from the dialogue were presented to Mon State National-level Political Dialogue management committee by Organising Committee Chairman Nai Banyar

Lae. Management Committee Secretary (Mon) State Minister for Pa-O Ethnic Affairs Nan San Wint Khaing accepted the papers and delivered a speech of thanks. Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) secretariat member U Aung Soe then explained the conducting of the national-level political dialogue

for ethnic people, followed by Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan and Nai Banyar Lae delivering speeches of appreciation. The ceremony came to a close with the singing of the Mon national song by all attendees after New Mon State Party Chairman Nai Htaw Mon delivered a closing remark.

The three-day National-Level Political Dialogue for the ethnic Mon people held from 5 to 7 May was organised by the New Mon State Party, All Mon Region Democracy Party and the Mon National Party. The closing ceremony was attended by Mon Sayadaw and sanghas, officials from National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, Peace Commission and UPDJC, Mon State Chief Minister and members of the state government, Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Daw Lei Lei Maw and members of the region government, members of the Mon State National-Level Political Dialogue management committee, representatives of the ethnic armed organisations, political parties, Mon people and Mon regions-based organisations, Mon women, youth and other learned persons and invited guests. — State (IPRD) ■

KIA attacks team sent by Kachin State Government to collect household data

A TEAM sent by Kachin State Government to collect household data on displaced persons from the Aung Lawd region, Tanai Township, and to provide assistance, was attacked by KIA on the afternoon of 5 May.

A car from Myittashin Funeral Assistance Association was hit but no one was hurt.

A five-car team of Tanai Township head of General-Administration Department, personnel from state immigration

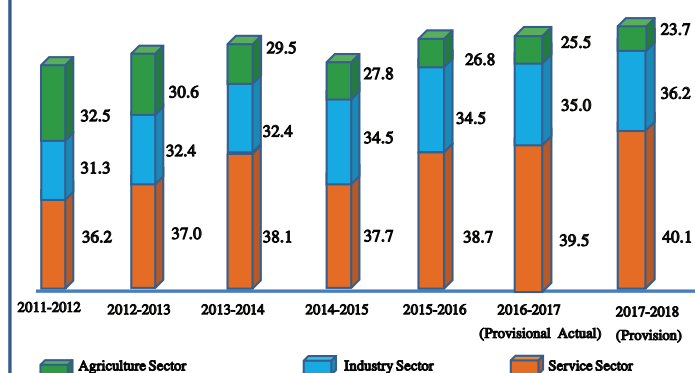
and population department, government departments and civil society organisations left Tanai Town on the afternoon of 5 May, and on reaching some 6 miles southeast of Myoma Police Station, a force of some five KIA armed personnel shot at the cars. The front tyre of the last car in the Myittashin Funeral Assistance Association in the five-car team was hit but no one was hurt. The Tatmadaw personnel responsible for road security

returned fire and drove away the attackers. The five-car team was able to continue its journey after changing the damaged tyre.

The team sent to Aung Lawd region inspected the houses in the village and found no damage or destruction, but no villagers were present in the village, except some more than 50 cows, chickens and pigs. The team then returned to Tanai Town, reaching at 6.30 p.m. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Sectors

at Current Price (Percent)



Source: Planning Department
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

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Union-level institutions to hold press conference on performance in 2nd year in office

Union-level institutions and ministries will give press conference on their performance in 2nd year in office in accordance with schedules at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw.

Office of the Union Attorney-General, Ministry of Border Affairs and Ministry of Electricity and Energy will hold their press conference on 11 May; Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Construction, and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and

Irrigation on 15 May; Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Health and Sports, and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement on 17 May; Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and Ministry of Education on

21 May; Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor; Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Industry and Office of the Auditor-General on 23 May; Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and Ministry of Ethnic Affairs on 25 May; Ministry of Defense, the Central Bank of Myanmar and Nay Pyi Taw Council on 29 May; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of International

Cooperation, Ministry of Union Attorney-General Office, and Ministry of Union Civil Service Board on 31 May respectively.

Independent media personnel who wish to attend the press conference are requested to contact the Information and Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw, email ir.pso.moi2015@gmail.com. —Myanmar News Agency ■



A farmer waters patches of watermelon in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE**

Mandalay fruits traders expect to export over 10 tonnes of fruits in 2018-2019 FY

MANDALAY fruits traders are expecting to export more than 10 tonnes of fruits in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, according to Mandalay fruit traders.

Recently, Myanmar fruits were exported to China through the Muse border. Traders also exported Myanmar fruits to Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, England and Saudi Arabia via the sea and air routes. The volume of annual export has increased this year.

"Local fruits such as wa-

termelons, muskmelons and mangoes are mainly exported to China. China buys fruits that are of good quality and free from chemical fertilisers or pesticides," said Ko Myat Tun Maw, a trader at the Mandalay-Muse fruit depot.

In the 2015-2016 FY, Myanmar earned more than US\$60 million from the export of more than 560,000 tonnes of fruits. In the 2016-2017 FY, it earned more than \$61 million by exporting more than 600,000 tonnes and in the 2017-2018 FY,

it earned more than \$66 million through the export of more than 680,000 tonnes of fruits.

The fruits sector has been incorporated into the national export strategy. Authorities will cooperate to conduct a government-to-government system, seek market information and implement a fruits zone.

Agricultural experts have suggested that local mango cultivators refrain from using chemicals on mangoes to ripen them artificially.—Myat Thu (AMIA) ■

Over 80 cases of fire outbreaks reported in Sagaing Region

SOME 83 cases of fire outbreaks were reported in the Sagaing Region in the first four months of 2018. An estimated Ks 1.7 billion worth of properties were damaged in the fire outbreaks, according to a report in Myawady Daily yesterday.

"Damage to the properties will retard development. Most of the fire outbreaks were due to negligence. Many tried to douse the fire themselves initially and reported to the Fire Service Department only when it went out of control. Therefore, the damages incurred were high. People need to follow the knowledge they have acquired during the awareness campaigns provided by the department," said an official from the Sagaing Region Fire Service Department. The Sagaing Region Fire Service Department registered some 180 cases of fire outbreaks in 2016, with losses to properties pegged at Ks135 million, and 193 cases in 2017, with losses worth Ks114 million. This year, the department has recorded 83 cases of fire outbreaks in four months with more than Ks 1.7 billion worth of damages reported.—GNLM ■

Myanmar to build sluice gate at mouth of Panhlaing River with aid of Dutch gov't

WITH the assistance of the Dutch government, a project to construct a sluice gate at the mouth of Yangon's Panhlaing River was officially launched on Saturday morning.

Upon completion of the sluice gate construction project, it will help provide water security and store fresh water in the river to be supplied to agricultural lands located on both

sides of the river. In addition, it is expected to distribute drinking water if the city extension of Yangon is implemented within the area between the river and the Twante Canal. Also, it will be able to supply an adequate amount of water to the Hline-thaya industrial zone.

Under the project, a feasibility study, an environmental impact assessment, a social im-

pact assessment and designing of the sluice gate will be conducted with the assistance of the Dutch government.

As part of the Panhlaing River integrated development project, Mezali sluice gate No. 2 was previously built in Ayeyawady Region with budgets allotted by the government to protect farmlands from floodwater and assist farmers in

cultivation.

The launch ceremony was held at the office of the Irrigation and Water Utilising Management Department in Yankin Township on 5 April, where Dr Zaw Lwin Tun, Deputy Director-General of the department, and Mr. Huub Buise, deputy ambassador of the Netherlands to Myanmar, gave opening speeches.—Thi Thi Min ■

Gold transactions decline as academic year approaches

THE gold market has been cool with the academic year approaching in Myanmar.

U Ohn Myaing, secretary of Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs Association, further noted that farmers were busy preparing for the monsoon harvest.

Gold transactions rose last February because of the Chinese New Year and the wedding season. Thereafter, trading was on the lower side.

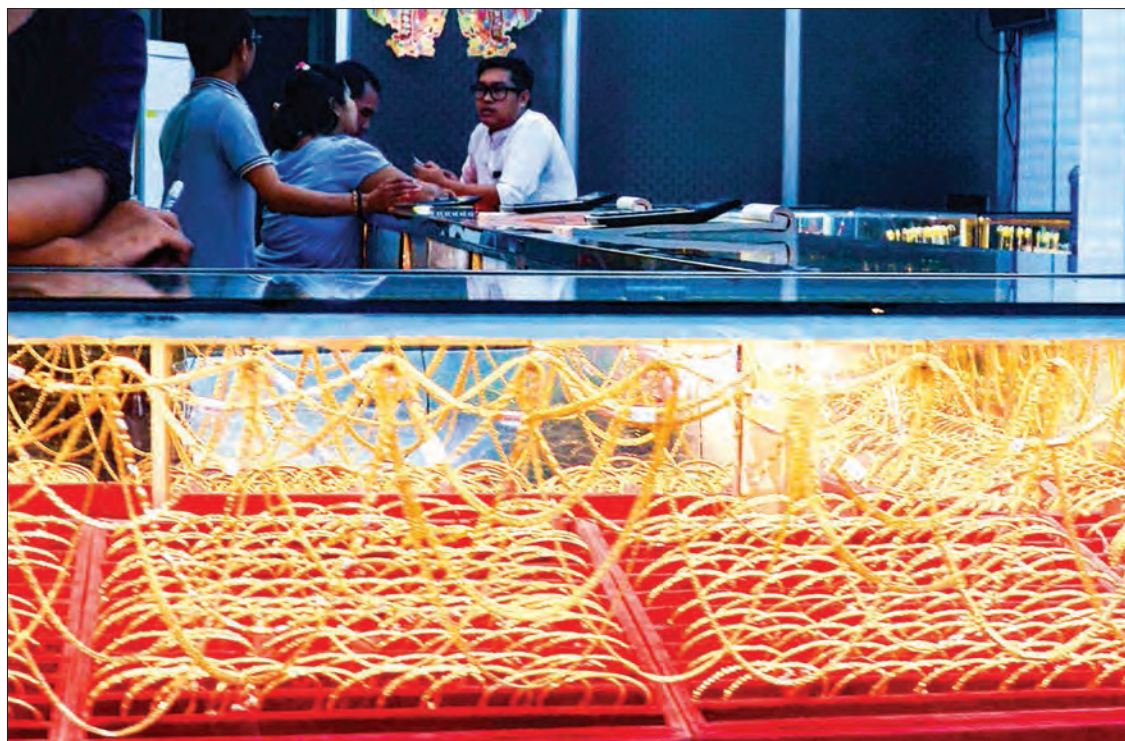
U Aye Cho, public relations officer of Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association, pointed out that the gold market this year is cooler than that

of last year.

The market price of gold is US\$1,317 per ounce in the global market, while Myanmar's pure gold price fetches more than Ks939,000 per tical (0.578 ounce). Domestic gold slightly decreases from Ks948,000 per tical.

This year, the gold price was fluctuating above Ks930,000 and reached above Ks940,000 in mid-February. Gold price hit a high of Ks950,000 in the last week of January and a two-month record high price of Ks956,000 per tical on 25 January.

The global gold price is likely to remain stable for a while un-



Gold jewellery seen at shop in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

less there is significant change in the political climate. The domestic gold price has been cool as in the previous years with the academic year approaching. The market will possibly recover a bit in July.

The US dollar exchange rate was on the high side last year on account of global political changes and instability. The global gold market has been fluctuating. Myanmar's gold market was on the high side the

whole year.

During September last year, the local gold price reached an all-time record high of Ks958,000 per tical, while the global gold price was US\$1,348 per ounce. — May Thet Hnin ■

Gold traders preparing for import/export businesses

By May Thet Hnin

GOLD entrepreneurs are preparing to start a gold export/import start-up.

This will be their first attempt after the commerce ministry's announcement on 22 January that gold and jewellery products would be allowed to be exported and imported.

"We are negotiating with the related departments. This is to gain practical experience," said U Kyaw Win, chairperson of Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

Gold entrepreneurs are seeking export/import authorisation from the officials concerned. On receiving the approval, traders will start the export/import of pure gold, having the international gold weight measurement standard of fine gold (99.99 per cent) and gold bar with slightly lower standard than pure gold.

Domestic gold entrepreneurs will link with traders from Thailand and China. They will start trading on a small scale, said U Ohn Myaing, secretary of Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

"We may run into difficulties while seeking practical solutions.

We will submit our difficulties to the officials and share our practical experience with fellow traders," said U Ohn Myaing.

At the moment, 15 per cent of the custom duty burden is on the entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs from Yangon and Mandalay regions have expressed their interest in external gold trading. The gold price may fluctuate within hours, and so, the trading process must avoid delays, said the gold entrepreneurs.

"Illegal import businesses will continue unless there is relaxation on rules and regulations. If the taxation is not reasonable, people will adopt illegal trade channels," said U Ohn Myaing.

The gold export/import permit aims to eradicate illegal trading in the market and earn revenue for the government. Also, it helps to maintain the market's stability. Myanmar's gold products will be able to penetrate the global gold market, according to the commerce ministry's announcement. The export and import of gold and jewellery products are valid for sea route, border trade and air route. International buyers can make payments through letter

of credit (L/C) or telegraphic transfers system regulated by the Central Bank of Myanmar.

It is obligatory for importers and exporters to seek import/export licences and ensure registration and evaluation of the price, value, quality and volume of gold.

Registration requires a certificate from the Myanmar Gems Enterprise and the Department of Mines or a business permit from the Yangon City Development Committee. A committee to observe and control the market, including officials from the planning and finance ministry, commerce ministry, natural resources and environmental conservation ministry, education ministry, research and representatives from the Myanmar Central Gold Committee, will appraise the quality, value, price and volume of gold and jewellery products and give approval over the import and export of the products. If unscrupulous activities are detected, the scammers will be issued a warning the first time. The import/export licences of repeat offenders will be revoked and action will be taken against them under the existing laws. ■

Foreign buyers prefer quality ginger from southern Shan State

GINGER produced in southern Shan State is favoured by foreign buyers owing to its high quality compared with that produced on the flat lands of Myanmar, according to a recent report in Myanmar Alinn.

Ginger produced in southern Shan State has a firm flesh and a strong fragrance, said an exporter.

Ginger exports are worth more than US\$3 million every year. Countries buying ginger from Myanmar offer it a good price. However, they prefer ginger from Shan State. Japan and Canada have already placed orders for Myanmar's ginger, he added.

Myanmar's ginger is primarily exported to Pakistan, Japan, the United States, Malaysia, the Netherlands, India, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada and Singapore. Pakistan is the main buyer of Myanmar's

ginger, which accounts for 16.7 per cent of its ginger exports. Japan stands second with 13.67 per cent, while the United States buys 13.59 per cent of the ginger exports, according to the commerce ministry.

Ginger is cultivated across the country. It is mostly found in Aungban, Pinlaung and Kalaw townships and sent to Yangon, Sittway, Mandalay and other markets. Kyaukse Township has several ginger and turmeric cultivation lands. Its ginger is of fine quality, said U Sai Khin Mang, a merchant.

Myanmar's ginger is cultivated in May and June after the land treatment in March and April. Some 17,800 acres of ginger are cultivated in Myanmar, producing 71,100 tonnes. The local consumption is some 51,350 tonnes, while the remaining is sent to foreign countries.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA)■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Kachin State villagers safely moved

FROM PAGE-1

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye met the displaced persons in their temporary shelters to encourage and provide assistance on 5 and 6 May.

The Union Minister arrived in Myitkyina on 5 May to move persons facing difficulties owing to the security situation in Kachin State to a safe place.

The Union Minister met Kachin State Chief Minister Dr. Khet Aung and youth lead-

ers, who were rallying in Myitkyina for persons wishing to move.

The union minister promised to provide food, clothing, shelter, health, education and social aid to the people who left their homes. The government, he said, was working towards achieving eternal peace and good results through round-table discussions. It will listen to the voices of the displaced persons and look after their requirements. All the people should join hands with the government. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Villagers gather at the temporary camp in Kachin State to receive aid and medical care. **PHOTO: MNA**

Local media personnel gather news in Maungtaw

LOCAL media personnel arrived in Sittway by Myanmar National Airlines yesterday morning to check the ground situation for stability, peace, security and development, as well as observe the reception of displaced persons in the Maungtaw region of Rakhine State.

Media personnel from MRTV, MITV, DVB, Mizzama, Choon news agency and Shwezarmani news agency participated in the trip.

They went to Khainggyi Village in the Maungtaw Town-

ship and collected news from the local people regarding their living standards, employment opportunities, population of the village and regional development.

The Yangon Region government has donated 56 houses and the Bago Region government has donated 64 houses to the local people. The media persons then spoke to the person in-charge at the Hindu temporary camps. Later, they went to the Hla Pho Khaung Transit Centre to collect news. — Myo Myint ■



Journalists interview an official at the Hla Poe Khaung Transit Centre in Rakhine State. **PHOTO: THET LWIN SOE (DISTRICT IPRD)**

Myanmar nationals return from Thailand voluntarily



Myanmar nationals who voluntarily returned are seen at Kyauk Lone Gyi reception centre. **PHOTO: MNA**

FROM PAGE-1

promised them that the government would support them in all matters related to their livelihoods. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement provided every returnee with Ks100,000 each; Ks300,000 for families with three members and above and a box of supplies. The Myanmar Red Cross Society supported each returnee with Ks100,000, while the Ministry of Border Affairs has pro-

vided Ks15,000 to each returnee. So far, 34 returnees have been transported back to their homes. Present at the reception centre yesterday were the Kayin State chief minister, the Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand, Deputy Director-General U Than Htut Swe of the Department of Disaster Management under the MSWRR, State Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Saw Myint Oo, State Minister for Electricity and Industry

U Soe Hlaing, the minister for Barmar Ethnic Affairs, Minister for Pa-O Ethnic Affairs U Khun Myo Tint, State Hluttaw MPs and other officials.

This is the second time such Myanmar nationals who voluntarily returned to Myanmar yesterday have been accepted. The first such occasion took place on 26 October 2016, when 65 returnees were accepted. —Maung Sein Lwin, Htein Lin Aung (District IPRD) ■

Aid provided to returning ethnic nationals in Meise Town

Myanmar nationals who returned from Thailand voluntarily were welcomed in Meise Town (Kayah State) yesterday.

At the ceremony, a Pyithu Hluttaw representative and relevant departments provided cash and other assistance after the (Kayah) State Minister for

Security and Border Affairs Col. Myint Wai delivered a speech.

Of the 20 ethnic nationals who were already assessed with regard to their nationality, four were from Meise Township, eight from Dimawhso Township and eight from Loikaw Township. They were provided

with rice, cooking oil, drinking water from the Kayah State government, from the Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department, construction materials for houses, and travelling cost assistance from the Disaster Management Department. — MNA ■

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives Japanese Ambassador

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Japanese Ambassador Mr. Ichiro Maruyama at Bayintnaung Guest House, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning. During the meeting, they discussed matters related to promoting education

among the two Tatmadaws, stability of Rakhine State, measures on Japanese assistance in the development of Rakhine State, the internal peace process of Myanmar and bilateral cooperation in development matters between the two countries. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with Japanese Ambassador Mr. Ichiro Maruyama at Bayintnaung Guest House in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Inter-parliamentary Budget Oversight Workshop held



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker Chairman U Aye Tha Aung and attendees pose for the documentary photo at the Inter-parliamentary Budget Oversight Workshop in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

AN Inter-parliamentary Budget Oversight Workshop jointly organized by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee and International IDEA group under the European Union's My Governance Project was held at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Thabin Hall, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. The workshop was held to share the budget assessment experience of the public accounts committees of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and state/region Hluttaws and to find a solution for the challenges faced.

In his opening speech delivered at the workshop, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Public Accounts Committee Chairman U Aye Tha Aung said the workshop is a budget related study and assessment. A study and assessment of a budget is important for a country.

Assessments need to be made of whether incomes and expenditures of a country are used for the benefit of the people and whether the project and budget are in line. For a country's economy to development and to

raise the living standard, it is important to use the country's fund systematically and effectively in conducting the projects. Public Accounts Committees in the Hluttaws need to assess that the government is systematically and effectively conducting the project and using the budget and funds. Budget is an account showing the monetary amount used by a government department or organization for a stated sector. The work of budgeting is jointly conducted by the government and the Hluttaw. Hluttaw emphasizes on enacting a law. Assessment of a budget is a work conducted on behalf of the people.

U Aye Tha Aung spoke of assessing the public fund with laws, rules and financial regulations. Next, Joint Public Accounts Committee Vice Chairman (2) U Aung Min explained about the background history and the aim of the workshop. Mr Johann Hesse, Head of Cooperation of European Union then delivered a speech. Afterwards, budget assessment committees of state/

region Hluttaws discussed about challenges faced in studying and assessing budget and project laws while Ministry of Planning and Finance Budget Department Director General Daw Nwe Nwe Win provided an explanation on conducting an overview of implementing a budget.

The workshop was attended by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee Vice Chairmen, secretaries and members, Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Public Accounts Committees members, deputy speakers of State/Region Hluttaws, public account committee chairmen and members of state/region Hluttaws, Mr. Mark McDowell of IDEA Myanmar, EU/GOPA, member of Belgian Chamber of Representative Mr. Hendrik Bogaert, invited representatives of local and foreign organizations, officials from Ministry of Planning and Finance and officials from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw and the workshop will be held until 9 May. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Ministry of Border Affairs delivers aid to displaced persons in Kachin State

A FORMAL ceremony was held in Sha-Wor Village in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State to present humanitarian aid to the 227 displaced persons who fled their homes after a security response in Kachin State occurred.

Present at the ceremony were Director U Aung Kyaw Htoo of the Kachin State Development Administration Office, officials from Myitkyina District's General Administration Department, departmental organizations and the displaced persons.

At the ceremony, Director U Aung Kyaw Htoo presented the humanitarian aid on behalf of the Ministry of Border Affairs to the displaced persons to which the DPs expressed their thanks.

The humanitarian aid included a month's worth of rations (estimated to be Ks 3,164,200), 82 bags of rice, 140

viss of edible oil, 211 viss of lentils (approx. 759.6 lbs), and 35 viss of salt (approx. 126 lbs).

The Ministry of Border Affairs has supplied humanitarian aid to 2,380 displaced persons in Kachin State. The total humanitarian aids supplied are 883 sacks of rice, 1,390 viss of edible oil, 2,337 viss of lentils (approx. 8,413.2 lbs), 450 viss of salt (approx. 1,620 lbs), 162 blankets and 82 mosquito nets.

The humanitarian aid has been distributed with the help of the regional military force to Manwe Village in Phakant Township, Tanphe Village in Myitkyina Township, Namti Town in Mogaung Township, and Aung Lawd Village in Tanai Township.

Future plans for distributing medicine, providing healthcare and nutritional supplement to children are underway. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Officials from Ministry of Border Affairs hand over aid to displaced persons in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

Time to work hard for Dawei Special Economic Zone

MYANMAR and Thailand have signed a memorandum of understanding to permit the Italian-Thai Development public company (ITD) to begin work on the Dawei deep sea port infrastructure project in 2018.

The original project started in 2008 and was set to build and develop a port, a highway to and from Myanmar and Thailand, industrial zones, office buildings, residential buildings and other infrastructure. However, the project never took off due to its large scale.

The Taninthayi region is abundant in natural resources, fishery businesses, rubber plantations, oil palm and mineral production. However, it does not have the electricity to produce high-end finished products yet. The SEZ is aimed at boosting the economy and creating jobs.

The Myanmar Government did its best to fulfil requirements, giving priority to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA), which are a bit complicated and difficult.

Today, the EIA and SIA are nearly complete.

Local people and environmentalists have voiced fears about the environmental and social impacts of the SEZ project, urging the authorities concerned to give transparent information on the advantages and disadvantages of the project to prevent further damages. It was obvious the natural environment was being damaged in the past, and no EIA or SIA were conducted before.

Now, the democratic government has ensured that the projects are more transparent, with the vision to reduce as much harm to the environment and to the society as possible.

Today, all the projects related to the SEZ have submitted their EIA and SIA to the Union Government.

It will take three to five years to complete the construction of roads, basic infrastructure and to supply electricity to the area. Once these are completed, more investments can be expected due to Myanmar's Generalized System of Preferences opportunities as it is a least developed country (LDC).

Myanmar will build infrastructure on some 6,000 acres of land during the 2018 to 2030 period, and once they are completed, foreign investments are expected to pour in.

The Dawei SEZ project that could result in thousands of jobs along the Myanmar-Thailand border is back on track after years of fits and starts.

To bring success to the national-level project, political stability, national integrity, and active and in-depth participation are expected from all stakeholders involved in the project. ■

By Ma Kyi Pyar

MYANMAR'S sein ta lone mangoes are internationally renowned and are even given as a precious gift by people to each other. Also known as the diamond solitaire mango, it is one of many mango varieties in Myanmar and is regarded by many to be the best mango in Myanmar because of its delightful aroma, sweetness, juiciness, its non-fibrous nature, and its ability to be kept out at room temperature longer than its kin.

The preferred method for propagating mango trees is by grafting, whereby a piece of mature, bearing tree or scion is transferred to a separate seedling called a rootstock. These small sized trees are just the right height for people living in the hilly regions to cultivate their fruits. There are five varieties of the Sein Ta Lone mango and prior to 1983 they were locally consumed and cultivated solely in upper Myanmar. Not long after, it was listed as an item with fine export quality and then shipped to China and overseas as whole mangoes or as jam. A 2017 report from the Department of Agriculture shows that there are 250,000 acres used for mango plantation throughout Myanmar. The Mandalay Region has 35,000 mango plantation acres and of these, 17,000 acres are used for planting the sein ta lone mango trees.

Successful plantations

China is the top buyer of Myanmar's mango and is also the most innovative. Up till 1990-1991 China could not grow good quality mangoes. However, after



inviting experts from America to work on mango cultivation, China successfully began establishing mango plantations, especially in Hainan, the southernmost province of China consisting of various islands. They have even established agricultural schools that use the same technology to plant apples, pears, nashi pears, and seedless grapes. The majority of China can be too cold for the plants such as the QiQuan district which is 14 degrees below optimal temperature. Some farmers cover the plants with plastic for insulation.

China's innovations have produced seedless fruits and flowers with boosted fragrances that Myanmar purchases. Mango varieties from Viet Nam, Laos, the Hainan Islands, and Myanmar enter the Chinese market but the sein ta lone mango is said to be the best specimen albeit with the worst packaging.



“The people who artificially ripen the fruits are well aware that the fruit may look edible yet its taste and nutritional value has been destroyed.”

flowers with boosted fragrances that Myanmar purchases. Mango varieties from Viet Nam, Laos, the Hainan Islands, and Myanmar enter the Chinese market but the sein ta lone mango is said to be the best specimen albeit with the worst packaging.

Learning to improve

Many businesses in Myanmar have little to no awareness of the importance of proper product packaging. Good packaging will prevent the items inside from being damaged during transportation and a package's design is crucial for attracting people to the product. Even during the ripening phase, the mangoes must be given proper care such as covering individual mangoes in a paper bag when they are about the size of a fist to prevent insect infestation and from other harm.

Dos and don'ts

It is important to avoid plucking the mangoes before they are ripe and sending them into the market as this will surely cause you to lose your market share. Of course, this applies to all fruits, not just mangoes.

In the Mandalay Region, strong winds usually blow between the months of Tagu and Kason before the Thingyan Festival. These winds can knock down entire tree branches and damage the fruits, resulting in great losses to the cultivators. Coincidentally, the time the strong winds set in is usually just the right time for the mangoes to be plucked at their best quality. This is why even if they were plucked before the strong winds set in to reduce losses, it will still result in low-quality mangoes entering

the market.

People should also be wary of buying fruits before peak season as there had been stories of someone buying ripe sein ta lone mangoes to offer as a gift but later the mangoes turned out to be unripe and sour. So how could mangoes look ripe if it's not their peak season yet? The answer is that there are chemicals for sale that artificially ripen fruits but with negative side effects. Some of these chemicals are as cheap as Ks 500 per package and as little as a few drops applied with a cotton bud on the stalk of a fruit can alter its appearance in a few days to one of a ripened fruit.

Just a drop of harm

Even though the aforementioned chemicals were not produced in Myanmar; nevertheless, using them on the fruits that will

be distributed to both the domestic and foreign markets is detrimental to the economy of the country. If just one drop can alter the appearance of an entire fruit then imagine how it will affect a person who has consumed said fruit.

Seasoned buyers can differentiate between naturally ripened fruits and artificially ripened fruits. When these artificially ripened fruits are presented in foreign markets, it can destroy relations between the buyer and seller which can lead to lowered purchasing prices or outright refusal for purchasing. This all stems from picking the fruits too early before their proper time. Both cultivators who use chemicals are feeding the market for artificially ripened fruits that keep bringing negative side effects to the country.

How shall we raise awareness?

The people who artificially ripen the fruits are well aware that the fruit may look edible yet its taste and nutritional value has been destroyed. But until proper action can be taken against them, they will continue their dastardly businesses uninhibited.

The agricultural wholesale vendor at the 105-mile checkpoint has issued an announcement that warns cultivators not to sell their produce before the 15th of April. The intention is to prevent the market from being contaminated with the artificial mangoes and losing buyers. The sein ta lone mangoes naturally ripen in the month of May.

Currently, the biggest buyer of Myanmar mangoes is China and the sein ta lone mango is particularly popular in Yunnan Province. However, to prevent the biggest consumer shying away from the market due to inferior products, I would like to request the cultivators to only pluck the mangoes during their natural ripening time and refrain from using chemicals to sweeten the deal. ■

Translated by Chris

Steadily improving economic performance provides a valuable opportunity to mobilize financing for development: UN report

MOBILIZING financing for development remains a fundamental priority in the Asia-Pacific region. The robust growth registered by the region in 2017 and promising prospects for this year provides the opportunity to meet this objective, according to a major United Nations report launched in Bangkok on Monday. Taking advantage of the current favorable economic conditions, economies need to address vulnerabilities and enhance their resilience, inclusiveness and sustainability. Implementation of several policy initiatives to achieve this transformation will require mobilizing domestic public financial resources and leveraging private capital, the report noted.

According to the annual Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, developing economies are estimated to have sustained a relatively high economic growth rate of 5.8 per cent in 2017 compared with 5.4 per cent in 2016. About two thirds of the regional economies, accounting for more than 80 per cent of the region's GDP, achieved faster economic growth in 2017 than in the previous year.

The recent recovery in global manufacturing, investment and trade is providing a tailwind to the already steady expansion of economic output in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition to robust consumption, investment expenditures and trade volumes, which showed lukewarm growth in recent years, showed signs of recovery in 2017.

The report points out that due to robust domestic demand and improved global economic prospects, developing economies in the region are projected to grow by 5.5 per cent in both 2018 and 2019, with a slight moderation in China offset by a recovery in India and steady performance in the rest of the region.

However this diagnostic does not imply that there are no risks or challenges. Potential financial vulnerabilities along with high private and corporate debt, particularly in China and some countries in South-East Asia, declining or low foreign exchange reserves in a few South Asian economies and uncertainty concerning trends in oil prices must be closely monitored.

“With regard to the medium-term outlook, potential economic growth is on a downward trend in several countries owing to population ageing, slower capital accumulation and modest productivity growth,” said United Nations Under-Secretary-General and ESCAP Executive Secretary Dr. Shamshad Akhtar during the launch of Survey 2018.

To address these risks and challenges, monetary and financial policies should be focused on ensuring macroeconomic and financial stability and tackling systemic risks in the financial system through appropriate macroprudential measures.

The Survey argues that lifting productivity will require a “whole-of-Government approach” for fostering science, technology and innovation and investments in relevant skills and infrastructure.

Additionally, strengthening tax revenues remains a high priority for several economies in the region, and this can be improved in several ways. It is estimated that if Asia-Pacific countries have the same tax administration efficiency than OECD countries, revenue impact could be as high as 8 per cent of GDP in such countries as Myanmar or Tajikistan; and about 3 to 4 per cent of GDP in larger countries, such as China, India or Indonesia.—*ESCAP News* ■

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their works to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Real name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar news office

Britain to Trump: don't ditch Iran nuclear deal

WASHINGTON— Britain has appealed to US President Donald Trump not to abandon the Iran nuclear deal as a key deadline approaches, saying that while it is not perfect there is no better alternative.

The call came in an op-ed piece in The New York Times that was signed by Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, ahead of a meeting with officials from the US administration in Washington on Monday. Trump has threatened to withdraw from the agreement when it comes up for renewal on 12 May, demanding his country's European allies "fix the terrible flaws" in it or he will re-impose sanctions on Iran that were eased under the historic accord.

The nuclear deal was struck in 2015 among Iran and Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States, then led by Barack Obama. Under the pact, sanc-



Britain's Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has travelled to Washington to speak with US officials. **PHOTO: AFP**

tions were eased in return for a commitment from Iran not to pursue a nuclear bomb, but Iran says it is not reaping the rewards despite complying with the deal.

"At this delicate juncture, it would be a mistake to walk away from the nuclear agree-

ment and remove the restraints that it places on Iran," Johnson wrote in the Times piece.

He argued that inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency have been granted extra powers to monitor Iran's nuclear facilities, "increasing the likelihood that they would spot any attempt to build a weapon".

"Now that these handcuffs are in place, I see no possible advantage in casting them aside. Only Iran would gain from abandoning the restrictions on its nuclear program," Johnson wrote.

He added: "I believe that keeping the deal's constraints on Iran's nuclear program will also help counter Tehran's aggressive regional behaviour. I am sure of one thing: every available alternative is worse. The wisest course would be to improve the handcuffs rather than break them."—AFP ■

Editor of renowned Cambodia paper fired by new owners

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA—Crisis gripped Cambodia's last independent newspaper on Monday as the editor-in-chief was fired by its new owner over a front-page article on the sale, while several senior reporters resigned in protest at the apparent attack on editorial integrity.

The 26-year-old Phnom Penh Post was sold to Malaysian investor Sivakumar S Ganapathy over the weekend for an unknown sum.

Since then the newspaper, once respected for its fearless, independent reporting, has gone into meltdown — the latest unravelling of a prominent media organisation under the watch of Cambodia's increasingly authoritarian premier Hun Sen.

Editor Kay Kimsong said he was sacked for signing off on a piece exploring the implications of the sale.

"The new owner fired me today... because I approved today's front-page story," Kimsong told AFP.

"I have done my duty

as editor-in-chief for the newspaper... but the new boss has the right to make the decision."

The story identified the new proprietor as the Malaysian investor, who is also the CEO of Kuala Lumpur-based public relations firm Asia PR, a business the report said "has previously done work" for Hun Sen.

The two reporters who wrote the piece resigned on Monday afternoon and at least one senior editor on the English-language version of paper also quit — all three alleging they were ordered to pull the story.

"I resigned this morning after being told to take down the The Post's story on its sale, which I refused to do," Stuart White, the former managing editor of the English-language paper told AFP.

The story was still available on Monday afternoon on the The Post's website.

A spokesperson for Asia PR declined to make an imme-

diated comment and repeated calls to The Post went unanswered on Monday afternoon.

Media deemed to be critical of Cambodia's government have been eviscerated by hefty tax bills and defamation cases over recent months.

Rights groups say the legal woes are linked to Hun Sen, who is clearing the board of all potential opposition ahead of elections in July.

The Post's chief rival, the Cambodia Daily, was forced to close in August 2017 after it was landed with an unpayable tax bill, announcing its closure the same day authorities arrested opposition leader Kem Sokha on treason charges.

The crackdown also saw dozens of radio stations taken off air and the jailing of two reporters from Radio Free Asia.

Cambodia plunged 10 places in this year's media freedom ranking by Reporters Without Borders.

In recent months local media had reported that the Phnom Penh Post was facing tax troubles.—AFP ■

Germany hunting 'Nazi grandma' as she skips jail

BERLIN, GERMANY—German police are hunting an 89-year-old grandmother convicted on several occasions for Holocaust denial, after she failed to turn herself in to serve her prison sentence.

Ursula Haverbeck, dubbed "Nazi-Oma" (Nazi grandma) by German media, was convicted in October on eight counts of incitement and sentenced to two years in prison.

But she did not report to prison to serve her sentence by the 23 April deadline.

"After the convict failed to report to the relevant penal institution within the deadline, prosecutors in Verden on 4 May, 2018 issued an order to execute the sentence and have charged police with its implementation," prosecutors said in a statement.

"The convict has so far not been arrested," they added.

Haverbeck was once chairwoman of a far-right training centre shut down in 2008 for spreading Nazi propaganda.

She has been sentenced on several occasions to jail for Holocaust denial.

During a trial in 2015, she insisted that Auschwitz was "not historically proven" to be a death camp.

That is "only a belief," said Haverbeck then.

She has also gone on television to declare that "the Holocaust is the biggest and most sustainable lie in history".

Some 1.1 million people, most of them European Jews, perished between 1940 and 1945 in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp before it was liberated by Soviet forces.—AFP ■

Afghan police foil suicide attack on Kabul blood drive

KABUL — A suicide bomber targeting a blood drive for victims of recent attacks blew himself up in Kabul on Monday after being spotted by police, officials said, causing no other casualties.

The foiled attack comes exactly a week after a double bombing in the Afghan capital killed 25 people, including AFP chief photographer Shah Marai and eight other journalists.

The latest suicide bomber detonated himself after being spotted and shot at by police in Shar-e-Naw park in the heart of Kabul, police spokesman Hashmat Stanikzai told AFP.

Stanikzai said the bomber had been trying to reach a temporary blood donation centre that had been set up in the park.

"The attacker was killed. There were no other casualties," he added.

Interior minister Wais Bar-mak, who is facing questioning in parliament over deteriorating security, confirmed police had thwarted the attack.

"The enemy is changing their tactics every day; we are also trying to adapt and change our tactics," Bar-mak told MPs.

The incident came as the death toll from Sunday's explo-

sion inside a voter registration centre in the eastern province of Khost rose to 17 people, a health official told AFP.

Another 36 were wounded, he added.

The bomb had been placed in a tent being used to register voters on the grounds of a mosque, marking the latest attack on preparations for Afghanistan's long-delayed legislative elections.

On 22 April a suicide bomber blew himself up outside a voter registration centre in Kabul, killing 60 people and wounding more than 100. —AFP ■



The foiled attack appeared to target a blood drive for victims of recent attacks, after another suicide bomber blew himself up outside a voter registration centre in Kabul on 22 April 22. PHOTO: AFP

IS claims assassination of Iraq election candidate

BAGHDAD — Gunmen shot dead a parliamentary candidate at his home in northern Iraq on Monday, a local official told AFP in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group.

The candidate was "shot dead" by armed men at dawn "after they forced their way into his home," said Salah al-Juburi, a local official in Qayyarah, 70km (43 miles) south of Mosul city.

The official named the slain candidate as Faruq Zarzur al-Juburi, 45, a Sunni from Shiite Vice President Ayad Allawi's National Alliance list.

National elections are set to take place in the Shiite majority country on Saturday.

In a statement on the messaging app Telegram, IS said Zarzur al-Juburi was killed because he was "an atheist".

IS threatened in late April to attack polling stations, voters and candidates, in a statement by its spokesman Abu Hassan al-Muhajir. "Oh Sunnis... we know that the government of Rafida (a pejorative Arabic term for Shiites) is on the verge of what they call elections," he said.

"Our judgement will apply to those who call for them and participate in them... The voting

centres and those in them are targets for our swords, so stay away from them and do not walk nearby," he added.

In a video posted on Facebook the day before he died, Juburi called on voters to be wary of outgoing candidates "and those who buy votes," in a message featuring him carrying his 6-year-old son Rayan in his arms. In the video, he promised "a strong government — one that will take care of poor, families of martyrs, reconstruction and citizens".

"In a few days, God willing, we will be celebrating victory," he said, sitting on the lawn outside his home. His Facebook page was inundated on Monday with messages deploring the attack.

Sunni extremists like IS, and Al-Qaeda before it, have long targeted Shiites in Iraq.

The 12 May polls are the first to be held since Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared victory over the jihadists in December.

IS, which had launched a sweeping offensive in 2014 and at one point controlled one third of Iraq, still holds pockets of desert along the border with Syria. —AFP ■

First signs go up for US embassy in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM — Workmen on Monday put up street signs to the US embassy due to open in Jerusalem on 14 May, a move hailed as historic by Israel but loathed by Palestinians.

Municipal workers erected signposts reading "US Embassy" in Hebrew, Arabic and English around the site, currently a US consular building, in the city's Arnona neighbourhood.

Breaking with decades of US diplomacy and international consensus President Donald Trump announced on 6 December the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the transfer of the embassy, located until now in Tel Aviv.

The embassy is to get a festive inauguration next Monday, to coincide with the 70th anniversary

of the foundation of the state of Israel.

Small in size, it will initially occupy part of the consular workspace pending planning and construction of a purpose-built embassy, a long-term project according to the US State Department.

Trump's unilateral decision delighted the Israelis and enraged the Palestinians, who want to make the eastern, mainly Palestinian, part of the city the capital of their future state and who say Trump's decision ignores their demands. The question of Jerusalem is one of the thorniest of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Palestinian leaders are refusing to meet Trump's peace negotiators because of the embassy row.—AFP ■

Teens aged 13 and 15 shot in suburb amid London crime spike

LONDON — Two young teenagers were shot in broad daylight in London on Sunday, the day after another teen was fatally gunned down, police said, as the British capital grapples with a surge in violent crime.

London's Metropolitan Police said the pair, aged 13 and 15, were taken to hospitals after officers found them within minutes of each other nursing gunshot wounds at separate nearby locations in the suburb of Harrow.

Both suffered head injuries, with the younger victim wounded by a shotgun pellet, but neither were in a life-threatening condition, according to police.

No firearm has been recovered and there have been no arrests, with officers investigat-

ing whether the incidents were linked, it added.

The incident came just hours after a 17-year-old boy was shot in Southwark, south London, on Saturday evening and died at the scene, it said.

The victim, Rhyhiem Ainsworth Barton, was not in a gang and aspired to be an architect, his mother said.

Meanwhile "a large altercation" between two groups of men in Hackney, in the east of the capital, led to an acid attack that injured three men aged 17, 22 and 27, police said.

"At this early stage it is still to be determined whether the injuries will be life-changing," it added.

London has seen a surge in stabbings and shootings this

year that briefly pushed the murder rate higher than that of once crime-plagued New York—and has even drawn the attention of US President Donald Trump.

During a free-wheeling pro-gun address to the National Rifle Association in Texas on Friday, Trump claimed a "once very prestigious hospital" in London was like a "war zone" because of knife crime.

Knife-related crimes rose by 23 per cent in London last year. Since the start of 2018, more than 60 people have been murdered.

The government unveiled a new multi-million pound violent crime strategy last month, but critics contend its cuts to police numbers and social services have fuelled the crisis.—AFP ■

Putin takes office for second six-year term as Russia's presiden

MOSCOW — Vladimir Putin has officially assumed office as Russia's President, Constitutional Court Chairman Valery Zorkin announced after Putin accepted the presidential emblem and took the presidential oath in the St Andrew Hall at the Grand Kremlin Palace.

This is Putin's fourth term as head of state. His first two terms lasted four years each. The head of state's tenure was extended to six years after the Russian Constitution had been amended. Putin's first six-year term began in 2012, while the second term of office will end on 7 May, 2024. According to

Article 81 of Russia's Constitution, an individual cannot serve as president for more than two consecutive terms.

After winning the presidential race in March 2018, Putin commented on his possible return to the presidency in 2030, dismissing such assumptions as ridiculous.

"What you are saying is a little bit ridiculous," said the 65-year-old head of state answering a reporter's question during his visit to his election headquarters on 18 March. "Let's count... I am supposed to sit here until I am 100 years old? No!"

Putin first assumed office



Vladimir Putin. PHOTO: TASS

as Russia's president in 2000, having served two terms until 2008 when Dmitry Medvedev was elected the nation's head of state. In 2012, he again got

the opportunity to run for the presidency. Putin was the first president whose tenure is six years.

Chairperson of Russia's

Central Election Commission Ella Pamfilova handed the presidential certificate over to Putin for a new term of office on 3 April.—Tass ■

New Zealand sinkhole reveals glimpse into 60,000-year-old volcano

WELLINGTON — A new sinkhole on a North Island farm as deep as four double-decker buses and almost the length of two football fields has grabbed the attention of New Zealand volcanologists. The chasm appeared after heavy rainfall near the town of Rotorua and left a jagged scar on the landscape, exposing rock deposits from 60,000 years ago.

Experts believe rain dissolved underground limestone over thousands of years, eventually causing the ground to collapse and create the canyon.

"This is pretty spectacular, it's a lot bigger than the ones I'd normally see," volcanologist Brad Scott said of the chasm measuring 20 metres (66 foot) deep and 200 metres (660 feet) long.

Scott said the dairy farm where the fissure appeared lay on the crater of a long-dormant volcano. "What I see in the bottom of the hole is the original 60,000-year-old volcanic deposit that came out of this crater," he told TVNZ. Farmer Colin Tremain said the sinkhole appeared overnight last week and was spotted by one of his workers during an early morning round to attend the cows. While such holes were common on the property, this was by far the largest he said, admitting there was little he could do to stop his land disappearing in such dramatic fashion.

"(I'll) put a fence around it and forget about it, waste of time filling it in," he told Radio NZ.—AFP ■



This frame grab from TVNZ video footage taken on 2 May, 2018 and released to AFP on 7 May shows a sinkhole that appeared on a dairy farm near Rotorua on New Zealand's North Island. PHOTO: AFP

US-Philippine war games open under pro-China Duterte

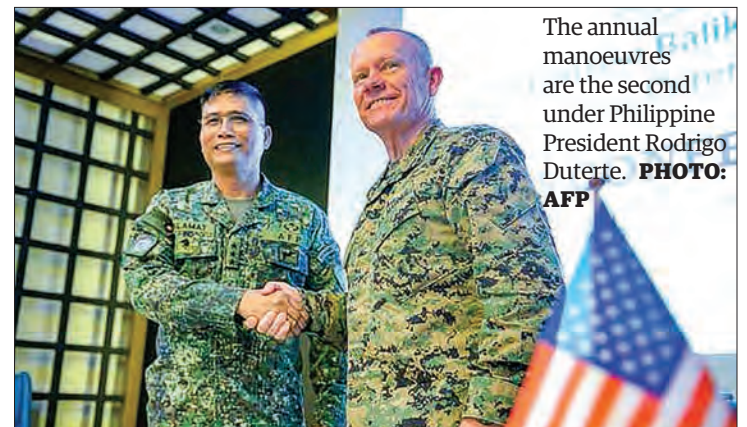
MANILA — The US and Philippine militaries launched major exercises on Monday aimed at fighting global terrorism, while staying mostly quiet on Beijing's reported installation of missiles in the disputed South China Sea.

The annual manoeuvres are the second to be held under Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who has set aside long-simmering friction over competing claims to the waters in order to court Chinese trade and investment.

The 12-day exercises began less than a week after US network CNBC reported that the Chinese military had over the past month installed anti-ship and air-to-air defences on islands also claimed by the Philippines.

"This exercise was scheduled whether those missiles were there or not," US Lieutenant General Lawrence Nicholson told reporters in Manila.

"The exercises really have very little to do with recent developments in the area," said Nicholson, the US director of the "Balikatan" ("shoulder-to-shoulder") manoeuvres. The South China Sea issue has been brewing for years, with Viet Nam, Malaysia and others also staking claims to waters with vital global shipping routes and what are believed to be significant oil and



The annual manoeuvres are the second under Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. PHOTO: AFP

natural gas deposits.

Nicholson's Filipino counterpart, Lieutenant-General Emmanuel Salamat, side-stepped the issue while highlighting the need to improve the capabilities of Filipino forces to fight terrorism. Duterte's predecessor, Benigno Aquino, had used the exercises to boost the Philippine military's capability to deter China, which claims most of the South China Sea. However, Duterte refocused the joint exercises after he was elected in 2016, steering them towards addressing domestic problems. Last year Balikatan focused mainly on honing humanitarian responses to the Philippines' frequent natural disasters.

This year's terror focus comes after Islamic State group supporters seized the southern Philippine city of Marawi in May last year, triggering a five-month

battle with US-backed Filipino troops that killed some 1,200 people. "This is focusing mostly on countering terrorism... that will allow us to respond to a similar scenario in the future," Salamat said.

The US and Australia have pledged to provide more training and assistance to Filipino troops, who struggled in Marawi's urban battleground after decades fighting low-intensity rural-based communist and Muslim insurgencies. Most of the 5,000 Filipino troops and 3,000 US counterparts taking part in the manoeuvres are from special operations units who will train in mock urban terrain to respond to "crises and calamities, either natural or man-made", Salamat said. Australia and Japan are also sending a total of 42 military observers to Balikatan, he added.—AFP ■

BJP wants to promote modern India: PM

BENGALURU— Prime Minister Narendra Modi today hit out at the opposition for opposing technology be it in the form of Aadhaar card or EVMs and said the BJP wants to promote a modern India by giving importance to skill development and innovation.

Addressing BJP yuva morcha workers via the 'Narendra Modi App,' the prime minister also lauded efforts of party workers in maintaining the public

mood in favour of the party despite rumours of a hung assembly in the 12 May elections in Karnataka.

"At 45 degree temperature heat, I have seen the enthusiasm of people...it is rare to witness such level of enthusiasm...I can see that in Karnataka, people themselves are fighting the elections," he said. "People from all walks of the society are in the elections," he added. Modi had yesterday addressed

four rallies in poll bound Karnataka. He will be addressing three rallies in the state tomorrow. Despite disappointing news being spread that there will be a hung assembly, Karnataka BJP workers have played a key role in maintaining the atmosphere of enthusiasm in favour of the party, Modi said. Lauding BJP youth morcha workers for their contribution, the senior BJP leader said, "Youth power is at the forefront

whether it is on line, off line or mass contact. Youth are the biggest asset of BJP."

"On one hand, there are parties that have lagged behind in technology, either they cannot understand or are purposely spreading lies. They have opposed all subjects in technology—EVM, Aadhaar card, mobile phone, every where."

"On the other hand for a modern India, in every field of life we want to give importance to technology,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi. PHOTO: PTI

be it skill development or innovation."

"This the era of artificial intelligence and India cannot lag behind," Modi

said as he appreciated yuva morcha workers for increasing the importance of technology within the organisation.—PTI ■

Singapore likely to host Trump-Kim summit in June: report

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA — US President Donald Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong Un are likely to meet in Singapore next month, reports said on Monday, as anticipation builds for unprecedented talks between the mercurial leaders.

Trump said at the weekend that the two sides had settled on a date and location for the summit — the first between a sitting US president and a North Korean leader — without providing details.

"We'll be announcing it soon," Trump told reporters.

The landmark summit will take place in "mid-June", South Korea's Chosun Ilbo daily reported on Monday, citing diplomatic sources

who quoted Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton.

The newspaper suggested that the possibility of Singapore hosting the landmark meeting had "increased greatly", after a decision by Trump to host South Korean president Moon Jae-in at the White House later this month, without giving further explanation.

Bolton met his South Korean counterpart Chung Eui-yong in Washington late last week to discuss plans for both locations, according to local media reports.

A similar report on the weekend from South Korea's Yonhap news agency also said Singapore was firming as the favoured location for the summit.—AFP ■



MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND FINANCE INTERNAL REVENUE DEPARTMENT

NOTICE FOR FILING RETURN, ANNUAL SALARY RETURN AND FURNISHING COMMERCIAL TAX ANNUAL RETURN

1. Filing Return of Income

- All taxpayers, including companies, partnerships and joint-ventures, cooperative societies, association of collective farming, individuals (excluding salary-earners), associations formed by individuals, organizations or associations registered and formed under existing law, chargeable under Income Tax Law within the financial year from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, are required to file their return of income if they made profit or not in this financial year, properly filled in and signed in accordance with the instructions mentioned in the returns, to the respective Township Revenue Offices or Medium Taxpayers Office (2) and (3) in person or by registered mail. A receipt will be issued by the respective offices in the case of returns are being filed in person.
- Taxpayers who are not registered with the Large Taxpayers Office and Medium Taxpayers Office (1) are also required to submit, together with return, a financial report prepared in connection with taxpayer's books of account kept in accordance with the Income Tax Regulations for the relevant income year.
- Those taxpayers registered with the Large Taxpayers Office and Medium Taxpayers Office (1) are required to make their own tax assessments and file a return of income to the Large Taxpayers Office and Medium Taxpayers Office (1) in person or by registered mail. In filing a return of income, instructions mentioned in the return should be carefully followed and there is no need for filing annual financial statements.
- A penalty not exceeding 10% of the tax due may be charged if there is a failure to file a return of income.

2. Annual Salary Return

- Those taxpayers who earned income from "Salary" within the income year are not required to file a return of income.
- However, employers are required to file the Annual Salary Statement for their employees to the respective Township Revenue Office.

3. Furnishing Commercial Tax Annual Return

- Any persons chargeable under the Commercial Tax Law within the financial year from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, including the economic enterprise of the Union Government, State-owned mills and factories, trading and service enterprises, development committees, cooperative societies, individuals, organizations or associations formed by individuals, companies, partnerships and joint-ventures, carrying out of the following economic activities are required to furnish their annual returns of production or services, properly filled in, signed in accordance with the instructions mentioned in the returns to the respective Township Revenue Offices or Medium Taxpayers Office (1), (2) and (3) or Large Taxpayers Office in person or by registered mail. A receipt will be issued by the respective offices in the case of returns are being filed in person.
 - Domestic Production
 - Import
 - Trading
 - Service
- A penalty of 10% on the tax due shall be charged if there is a failure to furnish the return without a sufficient cause within the stipulated time.

4. Deadline for Filing of Return and Furnishing of Return 2nd July 2018 (Monday)

Notice

According to the relevant Tax Law, the last date for return is 30th June 2018 (Saturday) and that day is gazette holiday. So we define that the deadline for return is 2nd July 2018, according to the Limitation Act.

5. Where to get return forms

The return forms are available free charge at the respective Township Revenue Offices or Medium Taxpayers Office (1), (2) and (3) or Large Taxpayers Office or on the IRD website <http://www.irdmyanmar.gov.mm>.

6. Enquiries

Enquires may be made at the respective Township Revenue Offices or Medium Taxpayers Office (1), (2) and (3) or Large Taxpayers Office or Tax Service Unit (Naypyitaw), Building No (46), Internal Revenue Department (Ph- 067 430533, 067 430522) or Tax Service Unit (Yangon), No.59/61, Ground Floor, Pansodan Street, Kyauktada Township (Ph-01 378370, 01 378372) or Tax Service Unit (Mandalay), 65th Street, between 22nd and 23rd Street, AungMyeTharzan Township (02-30192).

Internal Revenue Department

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MAENAM-1 VOY. NO. (014 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MAENAM-1 VOY. NO. (014 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-5-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

Bollywood star Siddiqui takes 'free speech' hero to Cannes

MUMBAI — When Indian actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui walks the red carpet at Cannes he may take a moment to ponder just how far he has come and where he is headed.

In just over a decade, Siddiqui has gone from a struggling bit-part actor worried about finding food to an acclaimed international star coveted by directors for his versatility across all genres.

"When your film gets selected in a good category, you feel confident that you are on the right track and your choice of films is good," Siddiqui told AFP in an interview.

His latest film sees him play the lead role in "Manto", a biopic about the troubled life of Indian-Pakistani writer Saadat Hasan Manto.

The movie, directed by Nandita Das, has been selected for the Un Certain Regard category of the film festival which opens on Tuesday. "I enjoy Cannes because it is such a big and prestigious platform. It's a whole world revolving around films," said Siddiqui. Manto (1912-1955) is considered to be one of the Indian subcontinent's greatest ever

short story writers.

He was lauded for being bold and progressive and a proponent of free speech, writing truthfully about the brutal violence that followed the partition of British India.

To others he was a subversive troublemaker whose stories featuring pimps and prostitutes broke too many taboos. Manto was charged with obscenity a total of six times by authorities in colonial and independent India. **Breakthrough**

He died from organ failure caused by excessive alcohol consumption aged just 42.

"Manto was an honest man who wrote what he saw. He was transparent and there was no hypocrisy in his life," said Siddiqui, who is 43.

"He thought about things in the 1940s which we fail to see or think about even today. He spoke and wrote the truth, and truth never gets old. To play him you have to be truthful too," he added.

Siddiqui is one of Hindi cinema's great success stories — a poor man, who from humble beginnings in a village in Uttar Pradesh state, defied the odds to make it big in Bollywood after

moving to Mumbai in 2000.

By his own admission the chances were stacked against him: "I'm a five-foot six-inch, dark, ordinary-looking man. People didn't imagine I would make it," he told AFP in 2015.

But after years of playing small parts Siddiqui achieved his breakthrough in 2012 with "Talaash", "Gangs of Wasseypur", "Miss Lovely" and "Bajrangi Bhaijaan". He has not looked back.

"I spent 10-12 years struggling. My lowest point was to find food and survive. Now I can do the work according to my choices," he said at his office, a collection of posters from his biggest hits hanging on a wall behind him.

Siddiqui has held his own with superstars like Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan and also successfully crossed over into Hollywood, appearing in the 2016 hit "Lion".

Playing a Hindu hardliner

He is considered to be one of the few actors who can straddle both commercial Bollywood and independent film genres, putting him in high demand.

After "Manto", Siddiqui will be seen in the Netflix adaptation



"When your film gets selected in a good category, you feel confident that you are on the right track and your choice of films is good," Indian Bollywood actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui told AFP. **PHOTO: AFP**

of Vikram Chandra's novel "Sacred Games". It releases on 6 July and will be the site's first original Indian series.

He is currently shooting for what he describes as his "most difficult" character yet — divisive Mumbai politician Bal Thackeray, who died in 2012.

Thackeray founded and led the Hindu far-right Shiv Sena party, which has campaigned against Muslims and sought to bar migrant "outsiders" from Mumbai. Siddiqui is both.

"Credit goes to the family and the producer who must have realised I could do justice to this complex and difficult role," he said. Siddiqui will be in Cannes from 13-15 May before returning to India to finish shooting "Thac-

keray" which releases in January 2019. He has become a fixture on la Croisette since debuting with "Gangs of Wasseypur" (2012), walking the red carpet more than half a dozen times.

"The Lunchbox" was screened there in 2013 while "Raman Raghav" followed in 2016.

A suit that Siddiqui had made by a Indian tailor for his first visit has been a feature of all of his appearances.

This time, however, he is ditching it for a stylish tuxedo fashioned by one of India's top designers — symbolic perhaps of how far he has come.

"The suit has its own story. But there should be change. We can't hold onto the past," said Siddiqui.—AFP ■

Cannes golden couple Bardem and Cruz return to open festival

MADRID — It was where Javier Bardem memorably declared his love for Penelope Cruz in 2010 — now the golden couple of Spanish cinema will open this year's Cannes film festival together on

Tuesday.

The Oscar-winning actors both star in Iranian master Asghar Farhadi's Spanish psychological thriller "Everybody Knows", which will kick off the

festival and is up for the top Palme d'Or prize.

The fiercely private couple's glowing return to the spotlight in Cannes comes after Bardem emotionally proclaimed his feelings for Cruz there eight years ago as he accepted the best actor award for "Biutiful".

"I share this joy with my friend, my companion, my love, Penelope. I owe you a lot and I love you so much," he said as Cruz blew kisses to him from her seat and her eyes welled with tears.

Cruz has also won at Cannes, sharing the 2006 best actress prize with five other women for their work in acclaimed Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar's drama "Volver".

First Spanish Oscar-winners

Bardem, 49, and Cruz, 44, have two children together and married in 2010 on an island in the Bahamas owned by their friend, US actor Johnny Depp.

They also share a notable

distinction — they are respectively the first Spanish man and woman to win an acting Oscar.

Bardem won his best supporting actor Academy Award in 2008 for his role as a determined murderer in the Coen brothers' "No Country for Old Men".

The following year Cruz took home the best actress Oscar for playing a fiery artist in Woody Allen's "Vicky Cristina Barcelona".

But the couple live discreetly in a Madrid suburb, where they try to keep the spotlight away from their son Leo, seven, and daughter Luna, four.

They have starred in nine films together, including last year's "Loving Pablo", by Spanish director Fernando Leon de Aranoa, in which Bardem plays Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar and Cruz a journalist who falls in love with the infamous narco.

After filming a particularly difficult scene, Bardem joked that Cruz "did not want to see me anymore".

"She told me: 'Get rid of the moustache. Shave and go sleep in the living room'," he recalled in an interview in March.

'Passion for everything'

Bardem was born in 1969 on Spain's Canary Islands off the coast of Africa. His mother, actress Pilar Bardem, raised him after she separated from his father.

Bardem dedicated his Oscar to his mother and her line of the family, which includes many actors.

Cruz was born in 1974 to a modest family in a working class suburb of Madrid.

Her father owned a store and her mother ran a beauty salon, where Cruz said she learnt to act by observing how clients behaved.

Both stars often say that they owe everything to the late Spanish director Bigas Luna, who brought them together for the first time in his 1991 movie "Jamon, Jamon".—AFP ■



Famed Spanish actor couple Javier Bardem and Penelope Cruz will open this year's Cannes film festival. **PHOTO: AFP**

Shichida Right Brain School holds grand opening ceremony



AN opening ceremony of A Shichida Right Brain school was held in Yangon on Saturday. A Shichida Right Brain school moved its headquarters from

Novotal Hotel to Time Link Condo at the corner of Link street and Dhammazaydi street.

The school used Right

Brain Education method and it designed to help children and adults utilize and boost both sides of the brain.

—GNLM ■

NY auction houses get set for an 'extraordinary season'

NEW YORK — Six months after selling a Leonardo da Vinci for half a billion dollars, New York art auction season is back, gearing up to break new records with a magnificent Rockefeller collection and a Modigliani.

The collection was amassed by the late billionaire banker David Rockefeller, who died last year aged 101, and his wife Peggy.

In all, Christie's is selling 1,600 items over three days, with an expected take of \$600 million. The proceeds are going to charity.

The jewel in this collection's crown is Picasso's 1905 masterpiece "Fillette a la corbeille fleurie" ("Young Girl With a Flower Basket"). Its purchase

by Gertrude and Leon Stein, along with two other Rose Period paintings, helped jumpstart the artist's career.

The Picasso alone is valued at \$100 million, but the combined total is expected to smash the previous record for a collection set by that of Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Berge, which fetched \$484 million in 2009.

For the first time, Christie's this year will spread its spring sales over two weeks, twice the traditional length, kicking things off on Tuesday.

This comes after Christie's sold da Vinci's "Salvator Mundi," a 500-year-old depiction of Jesus Christ, for \$450.3 million in November, making it the most expensive work of art ever sold at auction.—AFP ■

Freak out: Telling a fashion life, Gaultier taps Nile Rodgers

WESTPORT (United States) — Deciding how to tell his story as one of fashion's edgiest designers, Jean Paul Gaultier knew there had to be music. And he knew it had to come from Nile Rodgers.

The designer who has brought playful and provocative clothes to the world's runways for four decades is turning the focus to himself with an autobiographical show to open on 2 October in Paris. More than a catwalk and not quite a musical, the genre-blurring "Fashion Freak Show" will bring out Gaultier's iconic designs as well as new outfits and tell his life through actors, models and a live singer.

Spearheading the music will be the creator of "Le Freak" himself — Nile Rodgers, the force behind disco titans Chic and the behind-the-scenes producer for a who's who of stars from Madonna to Diana Ross to Daft Punk.

"Truly, honestly, if there was one person I would think about for the music, it was him," Gaultier told AFP at Rodgers's seafront home in Connecticut, the walls covered with guitars and framed records of the producer's hits by artists including David Bowie and The B-52s.

"He is part of my life," Gault-



Fashion Designer Jean Paul Gaultier, left, and Record Producer Nile Rodgers are collaborating on a genre-blurring "Fashion Freak Show" to open on October 2 in Paris. PHOTO: AFP

ier said. "Everybody loves his songs, has danced to them, has been in love with someone because of his music."

Rodgers — who affectionately calls the 66-year-old Gaultier, five months his senior, "JP" — said that the show would feature both new music and classic songs.

But Rodgers said he plans to rework some of the better-known tracks to serve as underscores during the show, which will take place at the celebrated Folies Bergere cabaret hall.

"When you're dealing with a theatrical piece, you are ab-

solutely dealing with an emotional arc," Rodgers said. "And that emotional arc may not be served properly with the original music. It has to change a bit."

Fashion to advance music

Gaultier has been deeply involved in the music world.

In 1989, he recorded a now-obscure dance track, "How to Do That," his vocals delivered in his rapid-fire, irrepressibly enthusiastic yet heavily accented English.

But his biggest influence in music came through his work with Madonna.—AFP ■

China expected to donate pair of crested ibises to Japan

TOKYO — China is expected to agree to donate a pair of crested ibises to Japan during a summit meeting later this week in the hope that it will mark the two countries' improving ties, bilateral diplomatic sources said on Sunday.

If the donation is agreed on by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Wednesday in Tokyo, it will be China's first provision of the endangered birds to Japan in 11 years.

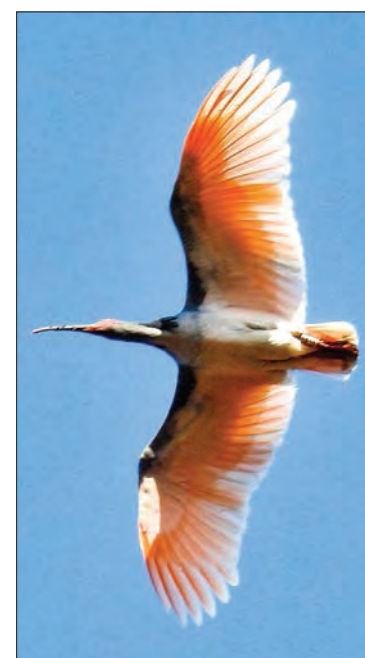
The move is aimed at securing the healthy reproduction of ibises in Japan as inbreeding has raised fears about compromised immune systems. The birds are expected to be delivered to Sado Island in central Japan's Niigata Prefecture. "In order to secure genetic diversity, we have asked for the donation of new ibises from China," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a press conference on Monday.

In 1999, two Chinese crested ibises came to Sado after then Chinese President Jiang Zemin pledged to present the endangered species to Japan. Three more ibises were sent to Japan by 2007.

In 2011, then Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao expressed his intention to donate ibises to Japan but the plan was shelved

amid worsening bilateral ties over a territorial row involving the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, which China claims and calls Diaoyu.

Ibises are designated as a special natural treasure in Japan but Japanese-born ibises became extinct in 2003. Tokyo has been artificially breeding ibises and training them to be reintroduced into the wild. At present, more than 280 ibises are estimated to be living in the wild in Japan.—Kyodo News ■



An ibis flies in Sado in the central Japan prefecture of Niigata on 4 March, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Live broadcast of international friendly match

AN international friendly match between Myanmar National League All Stars team and Leeds United team will be held in Thuwunna Sports Stadium at 6 p.m. 9 May in preparation for Myanmar football team's success in Asian Game Indonesia

and AFF Suzuki Cup 2018.

The international friendly match will be broadcasted live in Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV), MRTV Digital Sports Channel and Myanma Radio it is learnt. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Osaka knocked out in 1st round of Madrid Open

MADRID — Japan's Naomi Osaka was knocked out of the Madrid Open women's singles after losing to China's Zhang Shuai in the first round on Sunday.

The 20-year-old, who was beaten in the third round at last month's Charleston Open, looked underwhelming in the 6-1, 7-5 straight-sets defeat to the No 28 Chinese in a quick 1

hour and 24 minutes at Madrid's Caja Magica.

Osaka, ranked at a career-high No 21 since claiming her first WTA title at Indian Wells in March, said she wasn't angry at the loss and considered it a lesson-learning match in her bid to improve on clay ahead of the 27 May- 10 June French Open, the second Grand Slam of the year.—Kyodo News ■

'Lucky' guy Wenger looks to fresh start after fitting farewell

LONDON — Arsene Wenger said he is looking forward to a fresh start despite his sadness at bidding farewell to Arsenal after 22 years in charge as manager.

Wenger was given a fitting send-off in his final home game at the Emirates on Sunday as Arsenal produced a devastating performance to thrash Burnley 5-0.

On a day dominated by tributes to the Frenchman, Wenger was greeted with a guard of honour before kick-off and presented with a special gold trophy originally given to the club for winning the Premier League without losing a game in 2003/04 under his guidance.

"This stadium I have worked on every single part from your press conference to the technical areas, so it is part of myself," said Wenger, who was given a hero's

reception on a final lap of honour at full-time.

"I can say guys who managed 22 years in a club of that stature, there are not many.

"I have been lucky to have the comfort to work for such a long time in a club of that stature.

"On the other hand, I have to think, I will cherish every minute I had here, but as well it is a new start for me." Wenger, 68, hasn't hidden his desire to continue working in some capacity next season, having also hinted his departure wasn't entirely his own decision. Despite winning three Premier League titles in his first decade in charge, many fans had become frustrated with the Gunners' inability to challenge for the Premier League and Champions League in recent years. Arsenal will finish this season in sixth, as low as

they ever have in Wenger's reign, and defeat to Atletico Madrid in the Europa League semi-finals means for a second straight season Wenger has failed to qualify Arsenal for the Champions League. Nevertheless, there was rightly an atmosphere steeped in nostalgia for the great days Wenger has given the club on Sunday in a 60,000-capacity stadium he helped to deliver and design when the club moved from Highbury in 2006.

"It means that even if they are not always happy, they still respected me and wanted to show at least I gave my total commitment to do well," said Wenger of his ovation from the supporters. "That's how I see it. They know my commitment was genuine, total, with complete integrity, it is of course a big compliment." —AFP ■

Wenger and Guardiola lend support to stricken Ferguson

LONDON — Arsene Wenger and Pep Guardiola both took time out from landmark moments in their own football careers to support Alex Ferguson as the legendary manager remained in intensive care after emergency surgery for a brain haemorrhage.

Considered the most successful manager in the history of British football, Ferguson won 38 major trophies in just over 26 years in charge of Manchester United, including 13 Premier League titles and the UEFA Champions League twice before retiring in 2013.

Wenger and Scottish manager Ferguson battled for supremacy in the Premier League during the Frenchman's first decade of a 22-year stay at Arsenal, which will come to a close at the end of the season.

However, they later became friends and Ferguson, 76, presented Wenger with a memento on his final visit to United's Old Trafford ground as Arsenal manager just last weekend.

"I was with him on the pitch last week. I went to see him in the box after the game and he looked in a perfect shape," said Wenger, who also started his farewell speech in his final home game as Arsenal boss at the Emirates on Sunday with well wishes for

Ferguson.

"He told me he is doing a lot of exercise, and he looked very happy but that kind of accident can happen. We wish him all well and to recover very quickly. He is a strong man and an optimistic man."

Sunday saw runaway winners Manchester City, United's local rivals, receive the Premier League trophy as Guardiola added an English title to the Spanish and German ones he won in charge of Barcelona and Bayern Munich respectively.

"All the Manchester City fans in the stadium, you cannot find one person who does not wish the best for an amazing person," said Guardiola after City lifted the trophy following a goalless draw at home to Huddersfield.

Guardiola then invited a former assistant of Ferguson's, Brian Kidd, who is now a member of City's coaching staff, to pay tribute to Ferguson.

"He's such an iconic person as everybody knows," said Kidd. There was a really sombre mood yesterday evening and this morning.

"You think Sir Alex is really indestructible."

'Not a normal person'

Following Chelsea's 1-0 win

over Liverpool on Sunday, managers Jurgen Klopp and Antonio Conte also sent their best wishes.

"When I heard the news yesterday I really couldn't believe this could happen. He is absolutely the boss," said Klopp. "I wish him the best."

Italian manager Conte added: "I have had the chance to know him and his wife. I understand that this is a special person. Not a normal person."

An ambulance was called to Ferguson's home in Cheadle, near Manchester, at 9:00 am (0800 GMT) Saturday. Concerns for Ferguson's health then started to mount when it was announced his son, Darren, the manager of English third-tier club Doncaster, would miss his side's match against Wigan because of "family reasons".

News of Ferguson's operation was made public by a United statement issued on Saturday.

"Sir Alex Ferguson has undergone emergency surgery today for a brain haemorrhage," it said. "The procedure has gone very well but he needs a period of intensive care to optimise his recovery. His family request privacy in this matter." A brain haemorrhage is bleeding in or around the brain following the rupture of a blood vessel, which

can be caused by elevated blood pressure, aneurysms or physical trauma. Operations to relieve the pressure of excess blood in the brain, as has been the case with Ferguson, are crucial if sufferers are to avoid brain damage or even death.

'Hairdryer'

By 2000 GMT Sunday, no new update on Ferguson's condition had been issued by either United or hospital staff, although the club thanked the "wider football world" for their support via a fresh post on their Twitter account. Meanwhile Bryan Robson, a former United and England captain who played under Ferguson at Old Trafford, said:

"Hopefully they've found the bleed in the brain early enough and it doesn't affect the boss in any way. "Everybody respects him highly for what he did in the game. Everyone thinks it was all this 'hairdryer' but the boss enjoys a good time, really enjoys his racing and is good company when you're around him."

News of Ferguson's condition also had an impact beyond the world of football.

Top American baseball side the Chicago White Sox posted a heartfelt message on their Twitter page weeks after one of their players, Danny Farquhar, recently suffered a brain haemorrhage while sitting in the team dugout.—AFP ■



Former Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson. PHOTO: AFP