

NATIONAL

PRC delegation
visits Myanmar



PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Dawei to get
community
centre



PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Government
working to train
outstanding youth



PAGE-6

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Laiva Dam project that will supply water to Falam Township which has a population over 25,000. PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY

Eco-tourism underway in Chin State

VICE PRESIDENT U Henry Van Thio inspected the development undertakings in Falam and Haka townships of Chin State on 19 May. The vice president was accompanied by Chin State Chief Minister U Salai Lian Lwal, Chin State Hluttaw Speaker U Zo Bwe, Deputy Ministers Rear Admiral Myint Nwe, Maj-Gen Than Htut and U Soe Aung, Chin State cabinet members and other officials.

The vice president and his delegation visited the 200-bed hospital in Falam, where they met patients and provided them with cash assistance.

After viewing the sites for hospital staff quarters and the

nurses training school, the vice president said the upgrade of hospitals and the extension of nurses training schools were being done to ensure effective public health-care. Hence, officials should work systematically to prevent financial wastage.

Later, the vice president inspected the site near Talanzar Village in Falam Township, where the Laiva Dam will be built.

At the briefing hall, the vice president and his delegation heard a report on the lower Dam Laiva project that will supply water to Falam, presented by an official from the Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department. The vice president said special attention must be

The view from Chin State's third highest peak on a sunny day stretches from the northern sector of Chin State to the Sagaing and Magway regions.

given to the project to prevent financial wastage and ensure maximum public benefits.

The feasibility study found that in the area, a dam with a storage capacity between 162 million gallons and 216 million gallons could be built. It can have a 2.5-square-mile watershed area and a 4,820-acre-feet of water annual inflow. The dam can supply up to 800,000 gallons per day for a population over 25,000 residents in the township. The location of the Zeinhmutaung Mountain near the dam paved the way for the development of nature tourism in the area, where visitors can recreate and buy traditional goods, thus generating job opportunities for locals. Director U Win

Naing of the Forest Department of the state explained plans to turn the Zeinhmutaung Mountain area into a national park.

The vice president studied the mountain and gave instructions on conducting field surveys to build a tourism destination, national park, and set up embankments and spillways to store water round the year at Laithili Lake on top of the mountain.

The Zeinhmutaung national park lies on the mountain, which is some 8,600 feet above sea level, and where Haka Township and Thantlang Township, Haka District and Falam Township, Falam District in Chin State meet.

SEE PAGE-3



Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung welcomes Mr. Wang Zhengwei and his good will delegation from China at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport. **PHOTO: KHAING HTOO (IPRD)**

PRC delegation visits Myanmar

A goodwill delegation of the People's Republic of China led by Mr Wang Zhengwei, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference arrived in Nay Pyi Taw at 5.20 pm yesterday

and was welcomed by Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung and officials at the Nay Pyi Taw international airport.

The Myanmar-China Inter Parliamentary Friendship

Association of the Amyotha Hluttaw hosted dinner to Mr Wang Zhengwei and delegation at Horizon Lake View Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw at 6.30 pm the same day. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Dawei to get community centre

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint inspected Dawei District and Thayetchaung Township Information and Public Relations Department offices and libraries after arriving in Dawei by air yesterday afternoon.

Accompanied by his delegation members, the union minister inspected the work of upgrading the Dawei District IPRD office and the library into

a community centre with the help of Daw Khin Kyi Foundation and preparations for the opening ceremony. Then the union minister and delegation looked into the requirements of Thayetchaung Township IPRD office and library.

The union minister and officials presented story books and toys to children coming to the library. —Khaing Htoo (IPRD) ■



Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint views books at the IPRD's library currently undergoing upgrades. **PHOTO: KHAING HTOO (IPRD)**

Cooperation required to meet target oil production

Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing inspected the applied research division of Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) in Mingaladon and the Hlawga mechanical division of the Department of Hydropower Implementation (DHPI) in the Yangon region yesterday.

The union minister and his delegation first visited MOGE's applied research division in Mingaladon Township, where the

managing director of MOGE and officials explained their works.

At the meeting with the officials, the union minister discussed the building of a Data-Base and a Data Share system by combining the individual research results. He also pointed out the importance of dutifulness and cooperation among the staff to meet the targeted oil production of 10,000 barrels per a day in three years. He then inspected

the operating laboratories inside the research division and the Core Sample in the store. The union minister also enquired and instructed the staff about the works. The union minister then visited the Hlawga mechanical division of DHPI in Mingaladon and inspected the machines and vehicles at the construction site and the equipment for the Tha Htay hydropower project. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Constitutional Tribunal member concludes Russia visit

Member of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myint Win and party arrived in St. Petersburg in Russia from 15 to 19 May and attended the 8th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum.

The delegation led by

member of the Constitutional Tribunal U Myint Win arrived back to Yangon International Airport at 5:25 pm and they were welcomed by the officials from the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union, it is learnt.— Myanmar News Agency ■

Hong Kong listed company visits Bago Region for factory construction

Mr. Raymond Lee, Chairman of Lee & Man Manufacturing Co. Ltd, a Hong Kong listed Chinese private papermaking company, and his delegation were welcomed by Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein at the Chief Minister's guest hall in the Bago Region Government's office on 18 May. Mr. Lee and his delegation were here to find suitable area to construct a paper production plant in Bago Region.

At the meeting, Mr. Lee ex-

plained that their company has bamboo-based production plants in China and Viet Nam that do not have wastage, their waste byproducts are not disposed outside, and they do not harm the natural environment.

He said the waste from the production plants are used to fuel the electricity for the plant itself so they will not need to be connected to an external power supply.

He said the production plant

requires 3,400,000 squaremeter and they will adhere to the government's administration. If the permit for the plant construction goes through, the company will send 3,000 local residents of Bago to attend a one-year training course in China and the company will make investment in the project.

The Chief Minister then expressed his gratitude for the foreign investment venture as the lack of job opportunities in



Bago Region Chief Minister discusses construction of a paper production plant with Lee & Man Manufacturing Co. Chairman. **PHOTO: TIN SOE**

the area has resulted in local youths travelling to foreign countries to seek jobs. He said the

government will provide full support in accordance with the law. — Tin Soe (Bago) ■

“Today at this time, we are witnessing the transformation of an era and a system in accordance with democratic principles. This is just the beginning of the democratic transition. To make this transition process smooth and successful, it is very important for our peoples, government employees and civil servants to change their dogmatic mindset and habits. Those government institutions which are lagging behind in the transformation process will need to be put under tight management controls. The country's weak judiciary system would need to be strengthened. More efforts need to be exerted to stamp out corruption. More efforts need to be exerted to prevent human rights violations. More efforts need to be exerted to crack down illegal drug trade. We need to manage public funds properly so that there is no wastage. Measures need to be taken to return confiscated farmland to farmers and to give compensation to farmers for losses they have suffered in accordance with the law. We also need to improve the socio-economic life of farmers, improve the lives of workers and ensure that students gain access to higher education.

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

“We face various kinds of internal and external challenges while we endeavor for political, economic and social development of our country. As we are aware of the importance of our international responsibility, we have adopted a path consistent with the needs and situation of our country respecting at the same time the views and opinions of the international community.

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

Eco-tourism underway in Chin State



Vice President U Henry Van Thio shakes hands with medical staff as he enters Falam General Hospital. **PHOTO: MNA**



Vice President U Henry Van Thio warmly greets local people. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

FROM PAGE-1

The view from Chin State's third highest peak on a sunny day stretches from the northern sector of Chin State to the Sagaing and Magway regions. On the mountain lies Laithili, which is also called a fairy lake. An earth dam will be built to turn Laithili into an all-weather natural lake, and the whole area will be developed into an ecotourism site without harming the natural environment. Laithili will be the first lake in Myanmar that is over

7,600 feet high.

The Forest Department is planning to build a 13.10-squaremile Kyeerey-antaung national park and a 68.12-squaremile Bwaybar-taung national park in Thantlang Township, Haka District, a 31.15-squaremile Zeinhmutaung national park in Haka Township, a 19.30-squaremile Miyepitaung national park in Thantlang Township, a 2.20-squaremile Hmantaung national park in Haka Township, a 44.30-squaremile

Sarhmontaung national park in Thantlang Township, and a 36.66-squaremile Laythataung national park in Tiddim Township, Falam District, in Chin State. Regarding the Haka education college project, officials explained the progress in building the lecture halls and hostels, future programmes and academic matters. The vice president looked into the requirements and visited the worksites of the education college and the midwifery school projects.

He then inspected the building of a multi-purpose disaster shelter, where more than 650 can stay and a four-storey district-level public healthcare office.

The vice president said the facilities built with state funds should be beneficial to the public, adding, every project must be environment-friendly.

At the project site to conduct sports and physical education institute in Haka, the vice president emphasised on the timely completion of the project and the up-

grading of the roads. The project aims to train a new generation of athletes from among the youth talent in Chin State.

The vice president also inspected the work of turning a natural creek into a concrete channel, as a measure to prevent natural disasters; the 200-bed hospital where he visited the patients; the Chin State Hluttaw office project, which is up to 90 per cent complete; and the education college project in Haka. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Japan-Myanmar Joint Committee meeting for promoting securities market

THE third meeting of the Myanmar-Japan Joint Committee, which was formed to promote the securities market, was held at the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) on 19 May.

Present at the meeting were Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance and Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Com-

mission U Maung Maung Win and commission members, the YSX managing director and officials, officials from the Japanese Embassy, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) expert Takafumi Ueda, and officials from Japan's Ministry of Finance, Japan Exchange Group, Department of Financial Services, and

Daiwa Institute of Research Holdings Ltd.

During the meeting, they discussed topics such as forming a special working committee to promote company listing on the YSX by conducting field work for public companies, forming a separate department to provide free consultation for com-

panies that wish to be listed on the YSX, conducting educational workshops, field trips, seminars, exhibitions, and public information relations works for the YSX, the work progress of the Securities and Exchange Commission, results of monthly meetings with securities companies, accepting foreign investments, and short-

term, mid-term and long-term recommendations from the Japanese advisor. The Myanmar-Japan Joint Committee is formed with the Ministry of Planning and Finance, the YSX, Japan Exchange Group, the Department of Financial Services, and Daiwa Institute of Research Holdings Ltd. —Myanmar News Agency ■

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ACTING CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe,
ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR**Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORSZaw Min,
zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com
Win Ko Ko Aung,
kowink2aung@gmail.com**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com**TRANSLATORS**Khaing Thanda Lwin,
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**May Thet Hnin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAMTun Zaw,
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01) 8604529,
Fax — (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
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edited.

Jengkol beans see high demand in domestic market

JENGKOL beans, also known as Danyinthee in the Myanmar language, are selling well in the domestic market, according to wholesalers in Paung Township, Mon State.

Jengkol beans are locally-produced seasonal food that are popular among the Myanmar people, who use the fruits primarily in cooking. The baked or boiled or raw Jengkol beans are served with salty fish sauce and boiled rice.

The production of Jengkol beans decreased this season in Paung Township due to bad weather. However, growers reaped a handsome profit, as the demand for Jengkol beans is high in both the urban and rural markets, said Daw Kin Thi, a retailer in Paung Township.

Depending on their size and freshness, the raw Jengkol beans are sold for Ks15-Ks30 per fruit in the local market, whereas the salted



Women are preparing jengkol beans to sell in the market. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Jengkol bean is sold at Ks40-Ks100 per fruit.

Usually, Jengkol beans can be harvested in early April. The powerful winds that hit the town

this pollinating season triggered a decline in Jengkol bean production, said Ko Tun Zaw, a grower from the same township.

Jengkol beans produced

in Paung Township are mostly sent to the Yangon, Mandalay, Bago and Taninthayi regions, wholesalers said.—Ko Hein (Paung) ■

B4B Insights Forum to be held on 26-27 May in Yangon

A B4B Insights Forum will take place on 26 and 27 May in Yangon to seek innovative business solutions for the development of local businesses.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) will organise the forum at its headquarters on Minyekyawswa Road in Landmadaw Township.

The main objective of the new business forum is to raise collaboration between the government and private businesspersons by seeking solutions to overcome the challenges and difficulties they face.

According to the schedule, the situation of the country's current economy and future expectation, matters related to banking and finance, retail,

construction, services, industry, agribusiness, trading and SMEs will be discussed openly in a panel discussion conducted by private businesspersons from the respective sectors.

In addition to this, legal experts and governmental officials will also share their knowledge and experience with the participants through the forum. Their topics will cov-

er business laws and related rules, bylaws and procedures, the current Myanmar Companies Law, the Union Tax Law 2018 and easing of restrictions on the retail sector.

Enthusiasts may dial 01 2314344~49, Ext: 140 and 118, and 09450200340 of the UMFCCI and send mails to ma@umfcci.com.mm to confirm their participation.—Nyein Nyein ■

Exports of forest products continue to decrease in current FY

MYANMAR'S export of forest products over the first 41 days in the current interim fiscal year reached US\$16.8 million, decreasing by \$8.2 million against the same period last year, the commerce ministry reported.

From 1 April to 11 May this year, the private sector exported \$14.4 million worth of forest-based products to overseas trade partners, which

saw a decrease in value by \$9.9 million against last year.

Despite a decrease in the export of forest products by the private sector, public sector exports of the same products increased to \$2.4 million this year from \$0.705 million last year, the data showed.

The ministry's statistics showed that the country earned some \$992.7 million

from overall exports during the period, including agro products worth \$270.6 million, animal products worth \$20.4 million, marine products worth \$65.3 million, minerals worth \$96.6 million, manufactured goods worth \$409.3 million and miscellaneous goods worth \$113.7 million.

The export of forest products in the last FY reached \$212.1 million, decreasing by

\$34.9 million compared with the previous year's total of \$247 million.

According to the yearly report of the ministry, exports of forest products by the two sectors were \$641.9 million in the 2011-2012 FY, \$595.6 million in the 2012-2013 FY, \$948 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$94.4 million in the 2014-2015 FY and \$212.9 million in the 2015-2016 FY.—Swe Nyein ■



Dried shrimp is an important ingredient of Myanmar dishes. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Dried freshwater shrimps prices rise in local market

THE prices of dried freshwater shrimps have been rising in the domestic market, especially in Pyapon Township and the Ayeyawady Region, this fishing season, according to local fishermen.

Due to the late monsoon, the township saw a decline in the natural production of freshwater shrimps compared with the same period last year, re-

sulting in an increase in the price of dried shrimps in the market. Dried shrimp producers are currently facing some difficulties due to low production.

Depending on their quality and size, dried shrimps were sold for Ks45,000-Ks60,000 per viss (3.6 pounds) on Sunday morning, 20 May, according to retailers.

The surging prices of dried freshwater shrimps are expected to decline in mid-June this year, when the heavy downpour would help raise the region's natural shrimp production.

Marketable dried shrimps are usually exported to China, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, Bangladesh and other countries.—Aung Win (Pyapon)■

Myanmar-India border trade exceeds \$15 million within 41 days

THE bilateral border trade between Myanmar and India totalled US\$15.2 million in the current transitional fiscal year, an increase by \$7.5 million compared with the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 April and 11 May this year, Myanmar exported some \$13.2 million worth of commodities to India, whereas imports from Myanmar's second largest neighbouring country were worth \$1.9 million.

Border trade between the two countries is conducted mainly through the Tamu and Reed cross-border points. However, most bilateral imports and exports are delivered in ships.

The vast South Asian country's imports from My-

anmar include areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves and other fruits and vegetables, besides human hair, fishery and forest products. It largely exports medicines, oil cakes, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials.

Myanmar's total border trade with China, India, Thailand and Bangladesh via the 16 land borders was valued at \$875.7 million, including \$573.5 million in exports and \$302.1 million in imports.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), India's investment in Myanmar at the end of the 2017-2018 FY was \$10.993 million through three investment projects.—Shwe Khine ■



Ginger. Photo: Supplied

Private sector imports increase by \$241mln in current FY

THE total imports by private sector reached US\$1.965 billion in the current transitional financial year, which saw an increase in value by \$241.9 million as against the same period in the last year, the Commerce Ministry reported.

Between 1 April and 11 May this year, the private importers bought three major sorts of products from foreign trade partners, consisting of capital goods worth \$614.5 million, intermediate goods worth \$901.8

million and consumer products worth \$449 million.

The ministry's data showed that the overall imports from both public and private sectors were valued at \$2.232 billion in total, including \$267.4 million worth of goods imported by the government. The public sector imports also rose by \$211 million than that of the similar period in the last year.

Myanmar conducts overseas trade with the world countries involving ASEAN member

states, some European nations, Western countries and those from Asia and Africa, mainly through by sea routes.

The country also has export/import relations with the neighbouring China, India, Thailand and Bangladesh via land border points of entry. During the period, the country's border trade with its neighbours was valued at \$875.7 million, with \$573.5 million in the exports and \$302 million in the imports.—Khine Khant■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Government working to train outstanding youth

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended and delivered an address at the ceremony to honour marine and aviation youth held at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The Senior General said countries were training the youth to help them overcome challenges. The government is working to ensure it can train outstanding youth who can display the national spirit and a strong sense of national duty. Efforts are being made to instil in the youth the importance of developing a human society with strong national unity and ensure constant human resource development to defend the country, he said.

The Senior General presented gifts to the trainees from the marine and aviation training courses and received the gifts presented by the youth. Later, Ma Khin Sabei Aung from the marine youth training course



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing cordially greeting marine and aviation youth. **PHOTO: MNA**

and Ma Pyae Pyae Phyo from the aviation youth training course gave speeches thanking the Senior General.

Before attending the honouring ceremony, youth from the marine and aviation train-

ing courses viewed the weapons produced by the Myanmar military, the uniforms of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air), communication devices, scale model of vessels made by the Tatmadaw (Navy), naval gear, scale models

of planes and helicopters, pilot suits and gear, and the display of flight flying with the simulator. Officials conducted them around the booths.

In the evening, the youth trainees enjoyed a display of

shows put up by the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air Force) at the Defence Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Basic Marine Youth Training and Advanced Training Course No.1/2018 and Basic Aviation Youth Training and Advanced Training Course No.1/2018 were held at the naval headquarters and airbases, respectively, from 23 April to 18 May, 2018. In the last week of training, the camps held competitions and conducted study tours.

The training courses are being conducted since 2014. In 2015, the advanced courses were opened for those who have attended the basic courses. Since its inception, the courses have trained some 1,970 youth, including 1,444 in the basic marine training course and 526 in the advanced course, and 2,196 youth, including 2,036 in the basic aviation training course and 160 in the advanced course. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Foreign trade in midyear an increase from previous FY

As of April 2018, Myanmar's exports have generated US\$ 866 million and imports were at US\$ 1.414 billion; reaching a total of US\$ 2.280 billion in foreign trade. By April of Fiscal Year 2017-2018, Myanmar's foreign trade reached US\$ 1.980 billion; US\$ 863 million in exports and US\$ 1.117 billion in imports. Therefore, compared to last year, exports in Myanmar have increased by US\$ 3 million, imports increased by US\$ 297 million, and foreign trade increased by US\$ 300 million.

A comparison of exports between April of this year and April of FY 2017-2018 in US\$ millions:

No.	Product	2018 (April)	2017-2018 (April)	Comparison (+)/(-)
1	Agricultural Products	233.820	249.988	-16.168
2	Animal products	18.946	1.209	17.737
3	Aquatic products	57.641	47.101	10.540
4	Mineral products	72.724	59.512	13.212
5	Forestry products	15.313	23.599	-8.286
6	Finished industrial products	363.799	330.467	33.332
7	Other products	103.870	150.966	-47.096
	TOTAL	866.113	862.842	3.271

Foreign imports as of April 2018 reached US\$ 1.414 billion, an increase of US\$ 297 million from the previous year's import of US\$ 1.117 billion.

A comparison of imports between April of this year and April of FY 2017-2018 in US\$ millions:

No.	Products	2018 (April)	2017-2018 (April)	Comparison (+)/(-)
1	Investment products	441.062	397.407	43.655
2	Raw materials	674.808	451.367	223.441
3	Consumer products	297.900	267.711	30.189
	TOTAL	1413.770	1116.485	297.285



A volunteer Thai doctor performs a free medical check up on a migrant Myanmar worker. **PHOTO: KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)**

Myanmar workers in Thailand receives free medical check up

BY the provision of the Government of Thailand and RSKS Thai Foundation, Migrant Myanmar workers in Thailand received free medical checkup in Samut Sakhun Province, it is learnt.

The medical checks up include testing and screening

of HIV Virus and other general health testing without any charge. The free medical checking is followed by the talks on health education and social encouragement conducted by the volunteers, according to the Thailand officials.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung) ■

Kyauktawgyi with unique design and murals

KYAUKTAWGYI Pagoda where a large Buddha Image carved from a single alabaster boulder is placed has been an attractive tourism site for years.

Located near the famous teak bridge crossing Taunghaman Lake in Amarapura, Kyauktawgyi Pagoda is a showcase of exotic Myanmar traditional designs and murals.

Its design is a remake of Bagan's renowned Annada Temple whose design according to legend was created by arahants or the perfect persons who have attained Nirvana.

King Bagan and his royal family along with court ministers and regional adminis-

trators enshrined holy objects in the pagoda named "Maha Thetkyaranthi" nearly 170 years ago. At the sacred umbrella hoisting ceremony held the same year, 41 male and female prisoners under death row were pardoned.

The rear archway of the pagoda known mostly as Kyauktawgyi for its large white Buddha Image has two doors. The left-side door is opened when the Image is under renovation, but the right-side door is always closed as it leads to maze.

So come, visit the pagoda and admire its unique architecture and murals. —Nway Nadi (Myitnge) ■



Kyauktawgyi Pagoda is famous for its large Buddha Image. PHOTO: NWAY NADI (MYITNGE)

Myanmar Downhill Junior 2018 cycling contest held in Mandalay

THE Myanmar Downhill Junior 2018, a downhill cycling contest for young riders was held on Mandalay Hill in Mandalay yesterday morning.

A total of more than 30 young cyclists whose age range from 11 to 18 participated in the competition. "Cycling sport mainly relies on new generation. This is the reason why we organize the event," said U Aung Win Tun, Vice-President of the Myanmar Cycling Federation.

The commissaries gave necessary instructions to the participants and the medical teams were ready to provide healthcare services for them.



A cyclist contests in Myanmar Downhill Junior 2018 cycling contest. PHOTO: MDN

The prize winners in the challenge were presented with valuable sports gears by officials. Arrangements are be-

ing made to observe similar events once a month or once every two months.—Ei Moh Moh Khaing ■

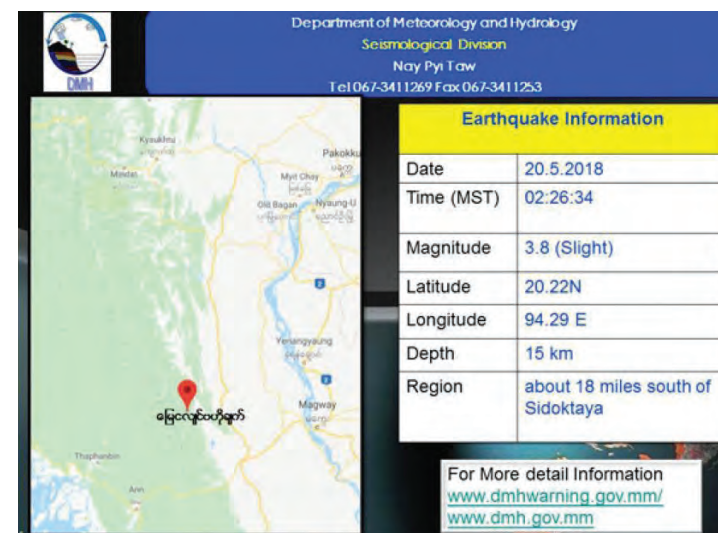
Slight earthquake strikes Sedoktara Township

NO immediate reports of damage or casualties were available following a slight earthquake which was recorded at 2:26 am Myanmar Standard Time today.

The earthquake with the magnitude of 3.8 on the Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar jolted about 18 miles south of Sedoktara Township, Magway Region, latitude 20.22°N, longitude 94.29°E, depth 15 kilometers about 78 miles southwest of NyaungU seismological observatory, ac-

cording to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology.

Approximately 79 earthquakes—twenty six in Bago Region, eighteen in Sagaing Region, seven in Shan State, five in Magway Region, four each in Chin State and Mandalay Region, three each in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Yangon Region and Rakhine State and two in Ayeyawady Region—hit Myanmar during the period from 1 January to 20 May this year.—MDN ■



CRIME NEWS

Police seize guns and drugs in house search

MYANMAR Police Force confiscated guns, bullets, grenade and stimulant tablets from a suspected drug smuggler in Kayin State in the south-east of Myanmar yesterday.

Following a tipoff, the local anti-drug squad together with eye witnesses raided the house of a suspected drug dealer in Naung Hta Lone Village, Hpa-an Township. The suspect identified as Saw Nyunt Thein, 42 years of age, attacked the police conducting an inspection in search of illicit narcotics with gun in his house and attempted to flee the scene but later he was arrested.

The police seized a carbine, a percussion-lock firearm, two bullets, a grenade and 72 stimulant pills from the suspect. Action has been taken



against the suspected drug trafficker by local police.—Tun Tun Htwe (Hpa-an) ■

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Myanmar will rise again

MYANMAR for all its efforts over the years is still lagging behind in national stability, rule of law, market stability, and facing many domestic and foreign challenges. This is why people may hear negative criticism and news of a bleak future for the country.

No matter what challenges or obstacles are present in a country, a definitive way of gauging the country's progress is by looking at its socio-economic situation and job opportunities for the people. International economists reviewed Myanmar as having increased business opportunities despite the hardships it is facing.

This increased growth rate can be contributed to better agricultural production, increased production of end products, and a rising service sector. The Myanmar Kyat is also growing stronger with increased exports and more foreign investments flowing into the country.

The report states that Myanmar's economy had a slow growth rate in Fiscal Year 2016-2017 but has managed to pick up the pace in the current Fiscal Year 2017-2018. This increased growth rate can be contributed to better agricultural production, increased production of end products, and a rising service sector. The Myanmar Kyat is also growing stronger with increased exports and more foreign investments flowing into the country.

Thus, I would like to urge everyone to support each other and work together as Myanmar heads towards better socio-economic development amidst present challenges. ■

management@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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HOTLINE

Tiddim and the Sial Lum Fort

By Kaung Si Thu

CALM and cool Chin State cozily lies in the far away northern part of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar enveloped with fine weather in the midst of beautiful green mountains luring globe trotters to come and enjoy a place to remember.

Tiddim or Tedim is a town in and the administrative seat of Tedim Township, Chin State, in the north-western part of the country. The town's four major boroughs are: Sakollam, Myoma, Lawibual and Leilum.

Due to difficult and skeletal transportation to be there for large crowd of visitors, the landscape of the area remains amazingly and exceptional natural beauty deep rooted with China traditional culture symbolizing and reflecting the awesome characteristic of Chin State.

Tiddim

The beautiful Tiddim Town is the second largest town in Chin State. Going westward from Tiddim, one can stepped into the land of Mizoram State of the Republic of India. Rising up in the sky, the town stands out above 5667 feet above sea level, and a mountain named “Htwan Won Mountain” scaled up to 8871 feet.

Methodically constituted with (130) villages, it has (55) village tracts. During the British rule, Tiddim area had been administered in (3) sub-townships. Interestingly, the early Tiddim Town was first founded in AD 1550 according to the

records.

Believe it or not, Tiddim Township has no flat plain space but forest covered mountains and steep valleys. Among the rivers in the State, the Manipur River is the famous water-course.

The most famous and uniquely shaped like a heart “Rih Lake”, a tourist attraction, is in Tiddim Township. Rih Lake, a natural lake is located in Rihkhawdar village, northwestern Chin State, in Myanmar. It lies at about 3 kilometers from Zokhawthar village at an Indo-Myanmar border. The lake is about one mile (1.6 km) in length and half a mile (0.8km) in width. It is about 3 miles (4.8km) in its circumference and the depth is about 60 feet.

Looking deep into Tiddim Township, it is learnt that direct descendants of local Chin tribes of ruling class, warriors, and royal courts ministers had resided there.

By nature, Tiddim Township is the home for motley assortment of woodland and rain forests mingled with rare species of wild animals.

Fine apples and aromatic tea plants (green tea) are grown in many places of Chin State, and that Tiddim is the trading center for these products. Over the last few years, ground nuts and onions are grown and exported to the Republic of India through border trade centers.

Tiddim and domesticated wild ox

In Tiddim Township, many households raise farm animals such as buffalo, cow, pig, goat, sheep, chicken, duck

and domesticated wild ox from five head counts to fifty head counts. Chin nationals calculated and valued their wealth on the number of ownership for domesticated wild ox. The animal is being termed and valued as wedding gift to local marriage ceremony. Ironically, the domesticated wild animals are not confined in ranch, but released freely in the open wide space just by marking them on the body. The owners went to the valley of grazing grounds to collect their animals back when required for trading or selling. Some time at the collection, they find it difficult to identify the animals and arguments and quarrels cropped up. Eventually, they settled the matters amicably.

The Sial Lum Fort

The visitors who arrived at Tiddim Town never failed to visit the heart shape beautiful Rih Lake and the historical Sial Lum Fort.

The Department of Historical Research and National Archives under the Ministry of Religious and Culture have been undertaking the responsibility of maintenance, care and renovation of ancient and historical sites and structures across the country. The Sial Lum Fort in Tiddim Township is among the list of maintenance and care.

However, the historical sites such as the Fort White in Khaw Sa Village; the historical Residence of local Tribe Chief in Sai Zan Village and the old Air Port are yet to be included in the list for maintenance.

In the language of Siyin Chin dialect, the “Sial” means



the “head of wild ox” and the word “Lum” stands out as “Fort”. Therefore, the word “Sial Lum” could be literally interpreted as “The Fort in the shape of Wild Ox”. The fort is situated in Tiddim Township at above sea level (4000) feet. The British invaded and annexed the upper Myanmar in 1885, and attempted to occupy Chin Hills region. Intense fighting ensued between the invaders and the Chin nationals in many areas and that the Sial Lum Battle was the heaviest. A story about the battle between British invaders and the Siyin Chin people of Myanmar was interesting. The native Siyin (Sizang) fought the British viciously and 28 warriors lost their life.

In 1887, Chindwin Political Officer Captain F. D. Raikes had a discussion with Falam Council Head Bo Sun Pet and other Chin tribe leaders. The discussions involved on the topics such as that the Chin nationals to refrain from attacks on the lands being annexed by the British, and to establish the trade and business route to India from that area.

However, the Chin nationals had suspicions over the intention of British. In March 1888, the Chin nationals at-

tacked the areas namely Inn Dinn (Now called Ann Tan); Kalewa; Kalembo; and Kabaw Valley.

Shwe Gyo Bhyu Prince and the followers were fighting and revolting against the British government and therefore, the Chin nationals provided them with safe shelters. In the year 1888, they revolt and fight against the British.

In February 1889, Sir George White and Major Rakes arrived at Khaw Sa Village belong to Siyan Chin tribes, and established a military brigade in Htoke Hlaing Village. With the intent to fight and crush the British, (37) warriors of Siyan Chin tribe started digging a trench and built a fort at Sial Lum Village, which was later named as “Sial Lum Fort”.

The stronghold had all the required basic structures of warfare such as main fort, trench for the women warriors, pathway around the trench, lower trench, and look-out trench. Moreover, three-foot high sharp spikes were erected around the fort. As for the safe shelters inside the fort, separate spaces for the children and women, for the local tribal chiefs, and for the spiritual lords. As the site of the fort had been chosen at

the edge of a downhill deep valley, the fort remained safe at the rear.

The war fought on 4 May 1889 by the Chin tribes against the British troops at the Sial Lum Fort turned out to be the most daring battle and left many soldiers dead and injured. The war resulted with the death of (28) Chin patriots and warriors including brave women. Total of (11) patriots suffered injuries.

In the year 1965, the renovation of the fort was carried out and the pillar bearing the name of the stronghold was erected. The triumphant and jubilant ceremony to mark the resistance against the British troops by the Chin tribes is held each and every year at Waw Lar Village where over (300) Siyin Chin tribes are residing.

It is our duty-bound honor to maintain and preserve the historical site and structure of Sial Lum Fort in Chin State that stands out for over 120 years where the Chin national resisted against the British colonialists with fiery battle holding the head high with patriotic spirit. ■

Translated by UMT

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

OUR society has been transforming rapidly over the past few decades; and our lives are being over shadowed with work pressure and job related commitments. Under these circumstances, our traditional lifestyle is being impacted significantly. We have to cut corners to accommodate time for our family; hence our cooking time is getting limited and we are getting increasingly dependent on fast foods. This is not good for long term health for us; as well as our family members, friends and colleagues. Time being the biggest limitation to our daily life; it is important to be aware that our health priority is the need of the hour. It is therefore important to build public awareness regarding healthy eating and holistic life style to cope with the pressure of our modern busy life.

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Sunday 20th May, 2018)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and partly cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 21st MAY, 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions and Kayah State and scattered in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3- 6) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of thundery activities in Southern Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st MAY, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st MAY, 2018: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st MAY, 2018: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

African nations vow to recover stolen assets

ABUJA — Former British prime minister David Cameron two years ago was caught talking about an anti-corruption summit and calling Nigeria “fantastically corrupt”.

But meanwhile his country ranks among the top destinations for stolen assets from African countries.

Nigeria and ex-British colonies in Africa hope to change that by working together to repatriate billions of dollars in offshore accounts from London and beyond.

At a regional conference held this week in the Nigerian capital of Abuja, the heads of anti-corruption agencies from around Africa met to discuss strategies to overcome bottlenecks in the recovery of stolen assets.

“Concerned about the heavy losses that Africa suffers as a result of illegal transfers of proceeds of corruption and crime out of Africa,” the anti-corruption representatives vowed on Friday to “strengthen cooperation and partnership in the tracing, recovery and return of assets”.

They further pledged in a joint statement to encourage African countries to commit to greater corporate transparency and called for investment in anti-corruption agencies to “trace, recover and return assets.”

‘Fight this tsunami’

Commonwealth Secretary General Patricia Scotland said Africa is losing tens of billions of dollars annually to corruption, urging the anti-graft tsars to lead the “fight against this tsunami”.

“We all know that the difference between the money we need to deliver the hopes and aspirations (of our people)... and the money we have, is the sum equivalent to that which is egregiously siphoned off by corrupt practices,” Scotland said.

Nigeria, the continent’s largest oil producer, is ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world by anti-graft group Transparency International.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari has promised to continue his war against corruption as part of his 2019 re-election campaign. Buhari’s anti-graft

chief Ibrahim Magu claimed earlier this year that his agency has recovered over 500 billion naira (\$1.3 billion) in illicit funds.

But the government’s fight against corruption has been accused of being politically motivated.

‘Mafia of leaders’

Commonwealth adviser Roger Koranteng told AFP that leaders at the summit want a regional approach to recovery of stolen assets.

“There is strength in unity. If you go as a single country, you will have a problem because the countries outside the African countries are together,” he said.

Sustaining the momentum however may be difficult. Ghana’s independent prosecutor Martin Amidu said the will to tackle graft comes in ebbs and flows on the continent.

“For me, for the past decades, Africa has had a mafia of leaders who speak of corruption as if they are against it but internally didn’t attempt to fight it,” Amidu said.

Still, countries stand to gain

huge amounts of money should they streamline asset recovery.

Nigeria announced in April it received over 300 million dollars from Switzerland as part of money seized from the family of ex-dictator Sani Abacha, who ruled the country from 1993 until 1998. Buhari said the money will be spent on a welfare scheme targeting the “poorest of Nigerians”, in a country where poverty is widespread and unemployment is rampant.

Yet it is difficult to trace how the repatriated money is being spent, with some critics voicing concerns that stolen money gets repatriated to Nigeria only to be looted again.

“There is a need for robust oversight mechanisms as well as continuous monitoring of the use of recovered assets to ensure that they are used properly and efficiently for development outcomes and poverty alleviation,” said Marie Chene of Transparency International in a 2017 report.

‘Global effort’

Greater global attention on the issue is helping reforms, say anti-corruption activists.

“It took the publication of the Panama Papers to expose many government officials with offshore accounts,” said Debo Adeniran of the Coalition Against Corrupt Leaders lobby group.

“The decision to sign mutual legal assistance with several countries is helping the (Nigerian) government in its loot recovery efforts,” Adeniran said.

In January, Nigeria signed a deal with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on asset recovery.

Buhari’s anti-corruption sweep and banking reforms are acting as a deterrent, Adeniran added. “When you steal and cannot keep the money in the banks, you will stop stealing,” he said.—AFP ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Six bodies recovered after east China ship sinking

FUZHOU — Rescuers have found the bodies of six people who went missing after a ship sank in waters off Fujian Province on 16 May, authorities said Sunday.

Early Wednesday morning, a cargo ship with 11 crew members on board sank off the coast of Tangyu Island, near Fuzhou. Five people were rescued, the other six were missing.

As of 9 p.m. Saturday, rescuers have found the bodies of six crew members, according to Fujian Maritime Safety Administration. Investigation into the cause of the accident is underway, and efforts have been taken to prevent pollution from leaking fuel oil.—Xinhua ■

Five killed in house fire in C China

CHANGSHA — Five people died in a residential house fire in central China’s Hunan Province on Sunday, local authorities confirmed.

The fire broke out in Shijiang Town, Dongkou County in the early morning. One person fell from the building and died in hospital due to the injuries. Rescuers found three bodies, and another person died on the way to hospital, according to the county government. The cause of the fire is under investigation.—Xinhua ■

UK to donate 1.35 mln USD to UAE-led fund against rare tropical diseases

DUBAI — Britain has decided to contribute 1 million British pounds (1.35 million U.S. dollars) to a United Arab Emirates (UAE) fund to help contain rare tropical diseases, UAE state news agency WAM reported Saturday.

The announcement to donate to the Reaching the Last Mile Fund was made by visiting British Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt during his meeting with Reem bint Ibrahim Al Hashimy, UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation.—Xinhua ■



African nations have vowed to recover billions of dollars held in off-shore accounts. PHOTO: AFP

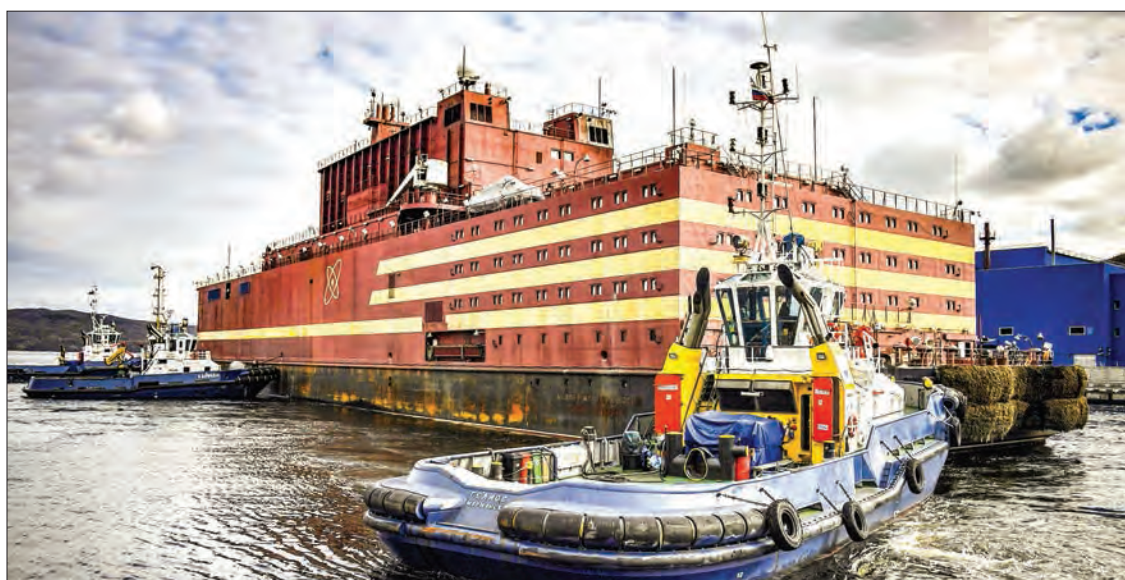
400 mln-year-old marine animal fossil found in SW China

GUIYANG — Scientists from the Chinese Academy of Sciences have recently found a fossilized body piece of an extinct class of marine animal known as Cystoidea or cystoids in southwest China’s Guizhou Province.

The fossil, that dates back some 400 million years, was discovered in Tongzi County while the scientists were studying a geological section in the area, according to the county government.

With an egg-shaped body, cystoids are echinoderms, marine invertebrates that existed during the Pleozoic Era, the Ordovician and Silurian Periods, and became extinct during the Devonian Period.

Guizhou boasts a rich store of prehistoric treasures. Fossils of various extinct invertebrate marine species have been discovered in the area. Tens of thousands of vertebrate fossils have also been found there.—Xinhua ■



Russia unveils the first ever floating nuclear power plant in Murmansk. PHOTO: AFP

World's first floating nuclear barge to power Russia's Arctic oil drive

MURMANSK (RUSSIA) — To meet its growing electricity needs in its drive to develop oil resources in remote Arctic regions, Russia has built a floating nuclear power station, a project that detractors deride as a “Chernobyl on ice”.

Built in Saint Petersburg, the Akademik Lomonosov is currently moored in Murmansk where it is being loaded with nuclear fuel before heading to eastern Siberia.

On Saturday, head of state nuclear power firm Rosatom unveiled the brown-and-mustard-painted facility in the city's estuary as an orchestra played the national anthem.

Rosatom chief Alexei Likhachev hailed the new power station as “a new world first,” which he said “underlines the undoubted leading role of Rosatom and the Russian nuclear energy sector on the global agenda.”

“I hope today will be a symbolic day for the Arctic,” Likhachev said, adding that Rosatom “is setting a trend, a demand for medium-capacity nuclear facilities, mobile facilities, for many decades ahead.”

The 144-by-30-metre (472-by-98-foot) barge holds two reactors with two 35 megawatt nuclear reactors that are similar to those used to power icebreaker ships.

The Akademik Lomonosov will be towed in the summer of 2019 to the port of Pevek in the autonomous Chukotka region in Russia's extreme northeast.

The barge can produce enough electricity to power a town of 200,000 residents, far more than the 5,000 live in Russia's northernmost town.

But Akademik Lomonosov isn't in Pevek to just keep the

lights on in homes. As Russia is forced to push further north into the Arctic in the search for oil and gas, it needs electricity in far-flung locations.

“The idea is to have low-capacity, mobile power plants that can be used in the Russian Arctic where large amounts of electricity aren't needed” and the construction of a conventional power station would be complicated and costly, said Sergei Kondratyev at the Institute for Energy and Finance in Moscow.

“The alternatives are coal, gas and diesel. But diesel is very costly,” he said, while the gas needs to be delivered as liquefied natural gas or LNG.

Vitaly Trutnev, who is in charge of the construction and operation of floating nuclear power stations at Rosatom, said such units would “supply electricity and heat to the most remote regions, supporting also growth and sustainable development.”

He said use of such floating reactors can save 50,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year. The Akademik Lomonosov is set to replace an ageing nuclear reactor and a coal-fired power plant which are both located in Chukotka.

‘Nuclear Titanic’

Trutnev said the barge has “the latest security systems and should be one of the safest nuclear installations in the world.”

Activists at the environmental group Greenpeace are not convinced and call for international monitoring. They fear that the Akademik Lomonosov could become a “nuclear Titanic” or a “Chernobyl on ice” 32 years after the Soviet nuclear disaster. Greenpeace Russia's Rashid Alimov said that accidents are

possible at all nuclear power plants, but that the barge “will be especially sensitive to storms, environmental phenomena and threats such as terrorism.”

He said a shift to more numerous small reactors would pose risks for proliferation of nuclear material.

Greenpeace nuclear expert Jan Haverkamp noted that the Akademik Lomonosov is being fuelled near Murmansk, a city of 300,000, before being towed across the Arctic.

“Its installation in the tough environment of the Russian Arctic will pose a constant threat for residents of the north and the Arctic's pristine nature,” said Haverkamp. The barge had initially been scheduled to be fuelled in Saint Petersburg, but that work was moved to Murmansk instead due to concern in countries along the Baltic Sea.

Kondratyev at the Institute for Energy and Finance in Moscow downplayed safety concerns about the barge, insisting it met the same safety rules as nuclear icebreakers and submarines. “But it is a new piece of equipment. There may be concerns among the general populace, but there are additional risks compared to nuclear power plants,” he said. Rosatom chief Likhachev said Saturday that the corporation hopes to build more such barges and to find Asian clients in need of power in remote regions, giving the examples of Indonesia and Philippines.

“In certain cases a floating nuclear power plant is more cost-effective than other electric power plants ... it has its own niche,” Kondratyev said.

He said China is also building a floating nuclear power plant.—AFP ■

Whale lovers find paradise at Boston Harbor

BOSTON (UNITED STATES) — Take a boat out to sea an hour from Boston and whale lovers are in for a treat.

The vast Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary is one of the best whale-watching spots in the world, with a high concentration of humpback, sei and minke whales, as well as the endangered fin whales.

The humpbacks are the most popular, easily identifiable by their long fins that generate easy maneuverability and see them loved for their acrobatics.

More than 40 feet (12 meters) long and numbering 1,500 to 2,000 in the North Atlantic, visitors can watch them hunt sand eels using a technique known as “bubble netting,” said New England Aquarium spokesman Tony LaCasse.

Two or three humpbacks will work together, encircle a school of sand eels, while one dives to the bottom to blow bubbles. The eels will be fearful

and make a tighter school, and another whale will dive in -- and swallow a giant mouthful of the little fish. Eels that escape are caught by seagulls, who perch on top of the whales, ready to ambush. Harder to spot so close to the coast are sei whales, longer and slimmer than the humpback but no less spectacular. Around 30 of the threatened species were visible in mid-April, a rare concentration so close to the mainland, LaCasse said. Usually, only up to a dozen are spotted each season hunting down copepods, a group of small crustaceans, found in the waters of Cape Cod.

Only the luckiest get to see the right whale, which can weigh up to 70 tonnes. It's an almost extinct species, with only around 430 left in the North Atlantic after decades upon decades of hunting.

Boats are not allowed to approach closer than 500 yards (meters). —AFP ■



A humpback whale exhales a blow and raises its fluke as it prepares to dive while feeding. PHOTO: AFP

Three killed, over 8,000 affected by severe weather in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO — Three people were killed and over 8,000 affected as heavy rains and strong winds lashed out across Sri Lanka since Saturday, prompting disaster management officials to be on alert for possible evacuations, the Disaster Management Center said on Sunday.

The three deaths, caused by lightning, were reported from the Eastern District of Trincomalee and in the lower central hills of Badulla.

At least 252 people had been evacuated to safer locations since last week while over 200 houses were partially or fully damaged due to the severe weather. Sri Lanka is facing its annual southwest monsoons with the Meteorological Department in its latest weather report warning of more rains in several

districts across the country in the coming days.

“The Southwest monsoon conditions are getting established over the island. Very heavy falls, about 150 millimeters can be expected at some places in Sabaragamuwa province while heavy falls, above 100 millimeters can be expected at some places, particularly in Western Central and Uva provinces and in Galle and Matara districts,” the latest weather report said. The Meteorological Department further warned the public to take adequate precautions to minimize damage caused by lightning. Over 200 people were killed and 78 people missing when the southwest monsoons caused severe floods and landslides across Sri Lanka last year. —Xinhua ■

Officers 'did what they could' in Texas killings: chief

SANTA FE (UNITED STATES) — Two officers “did what they could” when a teenager opened fire and killed 10 inside a Texas school, their chief said Saturday, tight-lipped about a probe into the latest US mass shooting.

Friday’s massacre in the rural community of Santa Fe wounded 13 more, including a school police officer who is in critical condition.

Dimitrios Pagourtzis, a 17-year-old student at the same Santa Fe High School, is being held on two charges: aggravated assault to a public servant and capital murder, which means he could face the death penalty.

The FBI raised the number of wounded to 13, from 10 earlier.

Walter Braun, chief of the Santa Fe Independent School District police, told reporters that one of his officers was in a critical but stable condition.

He and another officer had “engaged” the shooter, Braun said.

“We drill all of the time with the students and staff and they’re prepared to go into action. That was reflected by the two officers that engaged him right away,” Braun said, declining to give further details.

“Our officers went in there and did what they could.”

Braun refused to discuss any investigative matters, such as how many rounds his officers may have fired, deferring to the



A family brings flowers to a makeshift memorial at Santa Fe High School in Texas, where the latest US mass shooting occurred. **PHOTO: AFP**

FBI and Texas Rangers, a state-wide law enforcement agency. The two agencies are leading the probe. Galveston County Judge Mark Henry, who found “probable cause” to deny bond for the suspect Friday, told reporters that the wounded school officer “ran toward danger... He’s a hero in my book.”

Henry noted that the suspect “said in his statement he acted alone,” and the case will go before another judge on Monday.

The gunman apparently carried out the attack with a shotgun and a .38 revolver that were legal-

ly owned by his father, according to Governor Greg Abbott.

Early Saturday, FBI agents were seen at a blue trailer home believed to be connected to the suspect.

The school remained sealed by police tape and an official said all campuses in the district will be closed Monday and Tuesday.

Officers escorted students and staff back onto school property, but only to collect valuables, as people stopped to leave flowers outside.

Among the visitors was Allie Sybert, 12, who arrived with her

parents and little sister.

“You just feel so stressed to go to school,” Sybert, of Lake Jackson, Texas, told AFP.

“I just don’t understand why anybody would want to do that to people,” she said, expressing hope schools would consider boosting security.

Grief counselors and comfort dogs were on hand at a local church where the Red Cross opened a family assistance center for those affected by the shooting.

The New York Times cited an affidavit written by one investigator as saying the suspect

had confessed and said he spared “students he did like so he could have his story told.”

- Suspect seemed ‘nice’ -

A survivor, first-year student Evan San Miguel, said he was in art class when the gunman burst in and yelled “Surprise!”

Then the shooting started.

San Miguel and fellow student Bailee Sobnosky were among hundreds at a vigil Friday night in the community near Houston.

Sobnosky said she did not know the shooter, but had seen him around school. “He seemed like a nice kid,” she said, although she believed he did not have many friends. US media have identified all the victims, who included two teachers and an exchange student from Pakistan.

J.J. Watt, a defensive end with the National Football League’s Houston Texans, has told authorities he will pay the funeral expenses of those killed, NFL officials confirmed.

“Right now, this is the time for grief,” Congressman Randy Weber told reporters.

He bristled at suggestions that maybe it would be safer if guns were not so readily available. “Don’t forget what state you’re standing in. There’s more guns in Texas than in any the other states. And if I’ve got my facts right, my district has more concealed handgun licenses than any other,” he said.—AFP ■

German top diplomat favors more intense dialogue with Russia

BERLIN — The dialogue with Russia, including on problem issues, should continue and needs to be intensified, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said in an interview with the Saarbrucker Zeitung newspaper on Saturday.

“We have always said that we want to maintain dialogue with Russia in order to solve major international conflicts,” he said. “To that end, we need to clearly identify problem issues, otherwise no progress will be made.”

Maas visited Moscow in May and met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. The German official said the crisis in Ukraine was among issues raised during the meeting.

“As you can see, our ap-



German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas. **PHOTO: TASS**

proach produces unequivocal results - while some are talking about dialogue, I take care to have it intensified again,” he said. The minister evaded the question on whether he was go-

ing to visit the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, saying that the participation of German goalkeeper Manuel Neuer was more important than his attendance. —Tass ■

Six policemen killed after Naxalite rebels trigger blast in C India

NEW DELHI — At least six policemen were killed and one was wounded Sunday after Naxals triggered an improvised explosive device (IED) blast, targeting their vehicle in central Indian state of Chhattisgarh, police said. The vehicle was blown up at Chalnar Village of Dantewada, about 383 km south of Raipur, the capital city of Chhattisgarh.

“Today a police vehicle moving from Chalnar to Kirandul was targeted with an IED blast by Naxals,” a senior police official P Sunder Raj told media. “The attack left six policemen dead and one wounded.”

According to officials, the blast left five policemen dead on spot, besides wounding two others. However, of the wounded

one more succumbed.

Reports said the wounded policeman has been airlifted to Raipur for treatment.

Following the attack, reinforcements of police and paramilitary were rushed to the area to take on Naxals there, officials said. In March, at least nine paramilitary troopers of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were killed and two others wounded in a similar attack in adjacent Sukma district. New Delhi has deployed several companies of its paramilitary forces to take on Naxals in their strongholds.

The insurgency reportedly has claimed more than 6,000 lives and rendered thousands of poor inhabitants homeless. —Xinhua ■

Cuba plane crash: What we know

HAVANA — This is what we know about the Boeing passenger plane crash that happened in Cuba on Friday, as the aircraft was taking off from Havana to a city on the east of the island nation:

Among the 110 people killed were 99 Cubans, the six-person Mexican crew and five foreign passengers — an Argentine couple, a Mexican woman and two people from Western Sahara, according to Cuba's Transport Minister Adel Yzquierdo. There were five children among the dead.

Three Cuban women survived the crash and are hospitalized in critical condition, according to state media. A medical source told AFP that each of them has undergone at least eight operations.

The aircraft was a Boeing 737-200 leased to Cuba's state airline Cubana de Aviacion by Mexican company Global Air, also known as Aerolineas Damojh. It was a "wet lease," meaning Global Air supplied the plane, its crew



Emergency and rescue personnel work at the site after a Cubana de Aviacion aircraft crashed after taking off from Havana's Jose Marti airport. **PHOTO: AFP**

of two pilots, three flight attendants and a maintenance technician, as well as the insurance.

Built in 1979, according to the Mexican government, the plane last passed inspection in November 2017.

The accident happened at 12:08pm (1608 GMT). The plane crashed in a potato field close to Havana's airport. Witnesses and airport officials told AFP that the aircraft,

which had been headed toward the eastern Cuban city of Holguin 670 kilometers (420 miles) away, plunged as it was making its first turn after take-off.

Almost of what remained of the plane was a mangled carcass of burned metal, according to an AFP journalist at the crash site. It came down just 200 meters (yards) from houses between the Boyeros and Santiago de Las Vegas districts south

of Havana.

National mourning in Cuba was being observed Saturday and Sunday.

After the accident, Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel — who only took power last month — ordered an investigation be started. Mexican civil aviation authorities sent a team of experts to help Cuban officials, and Boeing said it had a technical team on standby to assist too if needed.—AFP ■

US, China agree to abandon trade war

BEIJING — Washington and Beijing have agreed to abandon any trade war and back off from imposing tariffs on each other, Chinese state media reported Sunday.

The announcement came after high-level talks in the US capital and followed months of tensions over what President Donald Trump has blasted as an unfair commercial relationship between the two economic giants.

Vice-Premier Liu He, who led Chinese negotiators in Washington said: "The two sides reached a consensus, will not fight a trade war, and will stop increasing tariffs on each other," state-run news agency Xinhua reported Sunday.

Liu called the agreement a "necessity", but added: "At the same time



Chinese telecom giant ZTE suspended operations after US sanctions were imposed to punish it for exporting sensitive materials to Iran and North Korea. **PHOTO: AFP**

it must be realised that unfreezing the ice cannot be done in a day, solving the structural problems of the economic and trade relations between the two countries will take time."

An earlier joint statement issued in Washington said Beijing would "significantly" increase its purchases of American goods, but offered few details.

The apparent detente comes after months of increasing tensions that have set markets on edge over fears of a damaging trade war.

Trump has repeatedly railed against his country's trade deficit with China, describing it as a danger to US national security and threatening to impose tariffs on billions of dollars'

worth of Chinese goods.

US levies on \$50 billion of Chinese imports could have come into effect as early as next week.

The talks in Washington were between delegations led by US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Liu, who also met Thursday with Trump. The sides had met earlier in Beijing.

"There was a consensus on taking effective measures to substantially reduce the United States trade deficit in goods with China," the joint statement said.

"To meet the growing consumption needs of the Chinese people and the need for high-quality economic development, China will significantly increase purchases of United States goods and services."—AFP ■

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Red carpet looks that dazzled Cannes

CANNES (France) — With two powerful protests by female stars calling for equal pay and treatment, the red carpet at the Cannes film festival — which ends Sunday — was about much more than fashion statements.

But that did not dim the glamour of the gala premieres. We look back on 12 days and nights of glitz, as well as the occasional wardrobe malfunction, on the French Riviera.

The Cannes red carpet has seen a lot in 71 years. But few nights will live longer in the memory than the one when female stars led by jury president Cate Blanchett protested about the festival's epic fail when it comes to women directors. All but 82 films of the near 1,700 shown at Cannes over the years have been by men.

This was also possibly the best-dressed demo in history, with Kristen Stewart rocking a white Chanel trouser suit and many others following #MeToo protests elsewhere by dressing in black. This was a Cannes where women wore the trousers — once frowned upon by the festival's dress code — with Blanchett killing it with a black Givenchy jumpsuit for the premiere of "Ca-

pernaum".

Queen Cate

No one does regal better than Blanchett who made her name playing British monarch Elizabeth I. Her intelligence and poise gave the festival a new sheen, from her speech at the protest to her insistence that the jury will choose the best film, not the one that best fits the political narrative.

Her wardrobe choices were equally impeccable at more than a dozen galas. Two black Armani numbers contrasted with an intricate avant-garde Iris van Herpen dress. And she brought the house down with a spectacular blue Mary Katrantzou ball gown that took six months to make. The dress also delivered the cutest photo of the festival when her daughter hid under her skirts as she left her hotel room.

Black is back

Black and mixed-race French actresses showed how to be angry and elegant in their protest on the red carpet about the shocking discrimination and stereotyping they have suffered. Dressed in Balmain they lit up Cannes on the wettest night of the festival and were clapped up the carpet by jury member Kh-



Cate Blanchett's spectacular blue Mary Katrantzou ball gown that took six months to make. **PHOTO: AFP**

adja Nin. The Burundian singer has given Blanchett a run for her money with some seriously sassy wax print dresses and headwraps while Spike Lee dusted down his Love and Hate knuckleduster rings from "Do the Right Thing" for his "BlacKkKlansman" premiere.

Kicking ass barefoot

After "Heelgate" in 2015 when women were stopped on the red carpet for not wearing high heels, Cannes "sexist" dress code — since revised — took a bit of a kicking this year with jury member Kristen Stewart throwing off her stilettos and walking

barefoot up the steps for "BlacKkKlansman".

A few nights later she ground convention further into the dust with an androgynous black Chanel jacket and leather trousers and loafers. Italian director Alice Rohrwacher, whose quirky "Happy as Lazzaro" is in the running for the Palme d'Or top prize, took gender reversal to a new level by wearing a man's shirt backwards for her press conference.

Butterfly gothic

Indian icon Aishwarya Rai and Iranian actress Marziyeh Rezaei wore two of the most pho-

tographed dresses — for very different reasons. The train of the Bollywood's star's peacock/butterfly Michael Cinco dress was the longest seen on the red carpet for many a year, while Rezaei's was a spectacularly modest shimmering tulle number channelling the most gothic of fairytales.

A slight snag...

And you have to feel sorry for the super chic Japanese actress Erika Karata who had to be rescued not once but twice by her co-stars from "Asako 1 & 2" when she got her heel stuck in her dress on the famous Cannes red carpet. — AFP ■

Childish Gambino: America's new favorite Donald?

LOS ANGELES — Hollywood's latest sensation Donald Glover, eyebrow arched with the detached insouciance of a rockstar but the poise of a chess grandmaster, is trying to guess which surname Google auto-suggests when his first name is typed.

"Trump? Glover? I mean, are we going in order? Trump, Duck and then Glover," he asks.

Whisper it in Alabama, Kentucky or Oklahoma — shout it in his home state of Georgia — but the answer is Glover, not Trump, and entertainment's latest Renaissance man looks pleasantly surprised.

An accomplished actor, Glover is better known to rapt teenagers the world over as US hip hop phenomenon Childish Gambino.

"Oh, wow. I did it," he laughs, practicing the ear-to-ear grin he'll need if he ever adds an Oscar or a Tony to a trophy cabinet already groaning under the weight of Emmys, Golden Globes and a Grammy Award.

It has been quite a week for the 34-year-old actor, writer, producer, director, rapper, singer, DJ and comedian as he sits down with AFP to discuss his role as a young Lando Calrissian in "Solo: A Star Wars Story."

At the time of the interview,

Glover's latest graphic music video "This is America" had racked up 100 million views in a week on YouTube, with its powerful takes on gun violence, racism and police brutality.

Every entertainment publication worth its salt has con-

tributed to the white noise on what the enigmatic Glover could possibly have meant and how to interpret his edgy imagery.

"I haven't been on the internet since last Thursday," the normally prolific Twitterer laughs, adding that he prefers just to enjoy the moment and leave the navel-gazing to others.

Galaxy's sexiest gambler

As the awards roll in, Glover guards against reveling too much in past successes or daydreaming of possible future glories because a showbusiness career is "kind of like surfing."

"You just take that wave and that pulse and you just let it carry you," he says in his phlegmatic, not-quite-Southern drawl.

"Because it's like freestyling in any art form: the second we start thinking, 'Man, I'm really doing it,' you'll start to mess up."

Glover has tried his hand at sketch and stand-up comedy, been a writer on "30 Rock," an actor on "Community" and head

writer, occasional director and star of acclaimed FX comedy "Atlanta."

Previously just a promising actor with small but impactful parts in "The Martian" and "Spider-Man: Homecoming," Glover's turn as the galaxy's sexiest gambler in "Solo" has elevated him to global superstardom.

Next up is another huge, iconic movie role, as Simba in Jon Favreau's live-action version of "The Lion King," not to mention a fourth and final Childish Gambino album.

He has been a fan favorite pretty much from the moment the first "Solo" trailer dropped, and Lucasfilm has said that a standalone Lando movie might happen one day — but not any time soon. Glover — who divides his time between Atlanta, a couch at his studio in Los Angeles and the Hawaiian island of Kauai — was at his brother's house when he got the top secret news that he'd landed the part. — AFP ■



Actor Donald Glover is better known to rapt teenagers the world over as US hip hop phenomenon Childish Gambino. **PHOTO: AFP**

Yangon Alley Garden launched in Pabedan Township

THE Yangon Alley Garden was developed in the back alley between the upper block of 29 street and Shwe Bhone Thar Street Pabedan Township, Yangon.

Officials led by Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe cut the ceremonial ribbon for the opening of the ceremony.

The park will provide a resting place for the public. Many visit the park for recreation.

The flowers and small gardens provide many benefits to the public, said U Maung Maung Soe.

“Earlier, Yangon’s back al-

ley was a dirty place. However, it has been turned into a beautiful recreational space and a game centre for children. We need to conserve this project,” he said.

The opening ceremony was followed with speeches from officials. The project is the second one in Pabedan Township, Yangon.

The first project was also launched in the same township between the middle block of 31st and 32nd Street, Pabedan Township, on 2 July 2017.

Altogether, some five projects were set up.— Aye Min Thu ■



“South Okkalapa Township Artists” is written above the drawing of three apples on a wall in the reclaimed back alley in Pabedan Township, Yangon. **PHOTO: AYE MIN THU**

Over 20,000 enter Myanmar from Tachilek in 9 days

OVER 20,000 tourists entered Myanmar from Tachilek at Myanmar-Thai border in eastern Shan State within 9 days from 9 to 17 this month.

They included 134 foreigners on Mongphyat-Kengtung

tour and other 173 visiting Myanmar under visa.

Most of the visitors coming in from Thailand love visiting Tarlot market, Bayintnaung statue, MahaMyatmuni Pagoda, Wankaung market,

Koemyo-shin Shrine, ShwedagonPagoda, town dhammayon, Ngahnitkaung Monastery, and Kuan Yin Temple in Tarchilek, Buddha’s Footprint, Zedangyi Monastery and Sontaung Pagoda in Mionghpyat and Buddha

park, MahaMyatmuni Pagoda, Hokon temple, Emerald Temple, Kyaingyin Monastery, Wat-Inn Monastery, Kyonsari Pagoda, Yankon temple, Parlian temple, Standing Buddha Image, Single-tree Hill, Kaba Aye Pagoda,

Model Yanlaw village, and Nine-step falls in Kengtung.

During the period from April 1 to May 17, over 100,000 tourists entered Myanmar from Tachilek. — Sai Aung Zaw Lin (IPRD) ■

Slovenia, a land with beekeeping in its genes

MOČNA (Slovenia) — It was a Slovene who wrote the world’s first modern beekeeping manual.

And Slovenia has gone on to lead the way in raising awareness of the plight of bees, as concern has grown over the health of the world’s bee population in recent years.

Beekeeping is a cherished national tradition in Slovenia, with colourful beehives to be found dotted throughout fields, on the edge of forests, in gardens and on city rooftops.

The bee can be spotted as a symbol of industriousness above the doorways of banks and museums, and now even on a special two-euro coin issued by the country’s central bank to mark the first World Bee Day on Sunday, an initiative launched by Slovenia and backed by the United Nations.

“Once you start keeping bees, it’s like an addiction,” Bostjan Noc, head of the Slovenian Beekeepers’ Association tells AFP, adding that his family boasts several generations of apiarists.

“We have beekeeping written in our genes,” Noc says.

‘Farmer’s logic’

Some 10,000 people are estimated to have their own beehives in Slovenia, a nation of just over

two million people.

That’s 10 times more beekeepers per head than in Spain, Europe’s biggest producer of honey.

The Alpine nation’s love affair with the bee stretches back to the 18th century when Slovene Anton Jansa (1734-1773) wrote the first modern beekeeping manual.

At that time much of modern Slovenia made up the Habsburg province of Carniola, and Empress Maria Theresa appointed Jansa as one of the first teachers at the beekeeping school in the imperial capital, Vienna.

“Anton Jansa laid the foundations (of beekeeping) that are still in force today, despite technological advances,” Noc says, lauding Jansa’s “clear farmer’s logic” that has stood the test of time.

And indeed, 20 May was chosen as the date for World Bee Day as it’s Jansa’s birthday.

Jansa was also a painter and contributed to another aspect of Slovenian beekeeping heritage — the decoration of beehive panels with colourful works of folk art depicting an array of themes, from the religious to the everyday, such as the country woman dragging her errant husband back from a cafe.

‘Modest and gentle’

Noc points out that the second most common honeybee in the world — the Carniolan honeybee — owes its name to the region.

“The Carniolan bee is very much like Slovenians used to be: modest and gentle,” 69-year-old beekeeper Karl Vogrincic told AFP in his garden, in the village of Mocna in northeastern Slovenia.

Vogrincic has more than 40 years of beekeeping under his belt and says it’s “a matter of love rather than anything else”.

“Beekeeping means rediscovering knowledge that our ancestors already knew but we’ve forgotten in so-called modern life,” he says, opening a door to one of the hives with no protection to put a stranded bee back into the honeycomb.

Vogrincic’s interest lies not so much in the amount of honey produced but in the possibilities of “apitherapy” — the use of bees and bee products in alternative medicine.

As well as the chance to enjoy a honey massage, visitors are invited into a small wooden cabin to take in bee vibrations, apparently beneficial for lung conditions.

Entering the interior of the



Beekeeping is a cherished national tradition in Slovenia, which has led the way in raising awareness of the plight of bees. **PHOTO: AFP**

cabin, one is engulfed by a dense, soporific buzzing emanating from the more than 20 hives inlaid into one of the walls.

An armchair is on hand in a quiet corner — or you can even take a nap on a bunk on top of the hives.

‘Grounds for optimism’

But even while coming up with new ways of celebrating its beekeeping heritage, Slovenia hasn’t been spared the trends that have led the UN to warn that 40 per cent of invertebrate pollinators — particularly bees and butterflies — risk global extinction.

Bees help pollinate 90 per

cent of the world’s major crops, but in recent years many have been dying off from “colony collapse disorder”, a mysterious scourge blamed partly on pesticides. Bees are also threatened by pollution, diseases and changes to the climate that have reduced spring and autumn, the periods when bees are most active.

“We will have to reduce the use of pesticides. If we build roads, we have to replace the destroyed habitat,” Noc said, but added that the advent of World Bee Day showed that awareness of bees’ importance was increasing. “There are grounds for optimism,” Noc concluded.—AFP ■

Myanmar national women's team play friendly in Taunggyi

IN preparation for the AFF Women's Championship 2018, the national women's football team of Myanmar trained and played friendly matches with the local boys' teams in Shan United Home Stadium in Taunggyi.

The women's team arrived in Taunggyi on 14 May and underwent physical exercises and football training on 15 and 16 May. On 17 May at 4 p.m., they played the first friendly match with the Ho Pong Youth football team at Shan United Home Stadium.

The Myanmar women put in a brilliant performance with a big win over the Ho Pong Youth team.

The friendly match was played in three sessions of 30 minutes each, and during the first session, the Ho Pong Youth team led 1-0; however, during the



Myanmar national women footballers seen at Shan United football Stadium in Taunggyi. PHOTO: MWL

second and third sessions, the Myanmar women's team beat the opponents 2-0 and 1-0.

In the second friendly football match, the Myanmar women's team played a friendly with the Taunggyi new generation

team at 7 p.m. on 19 May.

This match was also played in three sessions, and the Myanmar women's team beat the Taunggyi new generation team with a score of 2-0.

"We are very happy to play

with the Myanmar women's football team. The team possesses a unique style of play with great tactics," said Chan Nyein Aung, a young footballer from the Taunggyi new generation team.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Stevenson draws with Jack to keep light-heavyweight crown

MONTREAL — Haitian-born Canadian Adonis Stevenson retained his World Boxing Council light-heavyweight title on Saturday after fighting Sweden's Badou Jack to a majority draw in which no judge scored him a winner.

Stevenson, a 40-year-old southpaw, kept the title after two judges scored the bout 114-114 and the third saw Jack as a 115-113 winner in the title bout at Toronto. In a fight nobody lost, both fighters saw themselves as winners. "I thought I definitely won the fight," Jack said. "No judge had him winning." Stevenson's record went to 29-1-1 while Jack settled for his third career draw against 22 wins and a lone defeat.

"I feel I win the fight," Stevenson said. "I hurt him in the body. He got slowed down. I keep pressure on him. He moved slick but I touched him more all the time. I think I win this fight."

All three judges awarded Jack the 12th round to lift him into the draw, which could set the stage for a title rematch. "I feel I win this fight but Badou is a good fighter, two-time world champion," Stevenson said. "I can give him a rematch if he needs one."—AFP ■

Yangon United beat GFA in 2nd round of MNL season

YANGON United registered a win in their second round match of the MNL season by beating GFA 4-0 at Thawunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

The big win for Yangon was made possible by the two goals of Kosuke and one goal each from Emmanuel and Sylla.

Yangon United used power play tactics and maintained a

good positioning right from the kick-off.

Yangon made the first goal at the 18th minute with Kosuke scoring after getting support from team stars Mg Mg Lwin and Emmanuel.

Yangon persisted with its counter attacks and managed to score the second goal through Emmanuel with an assist by Syl-

la. Kosuke scored again for his team just before the end of the first half, and Yangon managed to take a 3-0 lead.

Both the teams implemented some tactical changes in the second half. Yangon United, however, did not relent and scored the fourth goal through Sylla, who made a tricky pass to beat the defenders with Min Kyaw Khant

assisting from the right side near the goal area. At the final whistle, Yangon United won 4-0 over GFA.

Yangon United is leading the score table with 29 points from 12 matches, including nine wins, two draws and one loss; Myawady FC sits in the bottom-most place, earning two points with two draws and 10 losses from 12 matches.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



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