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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Cetiyangana turns 100 years

THE Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture conferred titles on Members of the Sangha to mark the 100th anniversary of Shwedagon Cetiyangana religious examination at the Shwedagon pagoda yesterday.

At the ceremony, the Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko presented honorary titles of Zedi Yingana Pawara Thiri Maha Dhamma Guru to Rector Sayadaw of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary Dr. Bhaddanta Nandamalar Bhivamsa, Sayadaw of Maha Vithoddagon Monastery Bhaddanta Thirenda Bhivamsa, Sayadaw of Nyaungdon Monastery Bhaddanta Narada Bhivamsa and Sayadaw of Kalewa Monastery Bhaddanta Zagara Bhivamsa.

The Union Minister donated K5 million to the ceremony and Chairman of the Central Committee for holding the event U Tin Oo accepted the donation on behalf of Chairman of the Pagoda's Board of Trustees.

Following the ceremony, Members of the Sangha took part in Cetiyangana annual monastic examination for Buddhist monks. After the ceremony, the congregation led by the Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko donated dry provisions to Members of the Sangha including 294 monks (from home and abroad) who had passed the religious verbal exam during the past 100 years.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko donates offertory to a Sayadaw at the ceremony to mark 100th anniversary of Shwedagon Cetiyangana examination at Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar's first community radio Khayae FM goes on air

UNION Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint spoke at the inauguration ceremony of the Khayae FM-Htantabin community radio in Htantabin Township, Yangon, yesterday.

This live citizen's radio can now be heard every day from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on 104.8 MHz, and it will be repeated the following morning from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., local time. Khayae FM will broadcast programmes on agriculture, livestock breeding, health, education, entertainment and the daily news in Htantabin Township.

Dr. Pe Myint said that they are working towards transitioning from a state-owned media to community radio services, so that the voice of the people can resonate through them. The government has already launched several radio channels for ethnic people, and there will be more community radios in the future.

To realise freedom of speech and expression, existing laws have to be amended, and some time ago, it would have been against the law to broadcast a radio channel from a remote location such as Khayae FM. However, slowly these laws are being changed, said Dr. Pe Myint. He said that the shows from Khayae radio will express freedom of speech in a systemised manner, thus becoming a model for all other radios to follow.

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'BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017'

Awarded by Financial Times (The Banker)

Tamil Hindu Foundation holds festival of harvest

All Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (Central)-AMTHF held a festival of harvest for 2018 and to honour farmers at Thuwunna Bumi Event Park in Yangon yesterday.

Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Yangon Region Chief

Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Honorary Patron of AMTHF U Aung Hsan, Chairman U Thein Lwin, the general-secretary and executive committee members of AMTHF and Chairman of Shwethanlwin Co Ltd U Kyaw Win formally opened the ceremony.

The ceremony was also attended by members of the AMTHF and the Interfaith Group, invited guests and Tamils. At the ceremony, the attendees were performed with Myanmar and Hindu traditional dances. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko and dignitaries lit the oil lamp to open the festival of harvest. **PHOTO: MNA**

Cash contributed to medical, meal fund for Buddhist Monks

THE ceremony to present the cash collected for the eternal medical fund, meal fund and meal donation was held yesterday morning at the Maha Nayaka Monastery in Yangon.

Firstly, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and the audience recited the five precepts after the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Chairman Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Bhamo Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa.

Then, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadawgyis chanted the Metta Sutta, and the union ministers and the audience presented the Sayadaws with offertories.

For the eternal medical endowment fund, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture donated Ks35 million, while Ab-

hidhajamadhara Sīhasudhamamāṇijotadhara U Myo Set and family donated Ks5 million.

For the eternal meal (soon) endowment fund, Saddhammajotikadhaja Sīrisudhamamāṇijotadhara Dr. Hla Win Aung and family donated Ks1.2 million, while Kyar Ngar Khaing Robe Store and family donated Ks500,000.

For meal (soon) donation, U Thein Maung, Daw Par Par (Sandi herbal medicine) and family, Colonel Thein Htay (retired), Daw Mya Thida and family, Vice Senior General Maung Aye (retired), Daw Mya Mya San and family, as well as other donor families, donated Ks2.7 million each, while U Maung Maung, Daw Khin Myint Myint and family, and other donor families donated Ks2 million. Maha Tharay Sithu Let. Gen. Tin Oo (retired), Daw Khin Than Nwe and family donated

Ks1.5 million, the Mahasi Sasana Nuggaha Organisation and Shwe Than Lwin Co., Ltd. donated Ks1.2 million each, Maha Tharay Sithu Let. Gen. Ye Myint (retired), Dr Tin Lin Myint and family, and Kyaikasan Wailuwan monastery (Shwe Kyin) Sayadaw Saddhammajotikadhaja Bhaddanta Manita donated Ks1 million each, while Daw Pyone and family donated Ks300,000.

Thura U Aung Ko and Director-General U Myint Oo received the donations worth Ks58 million and gave away donor certificates of honour.

Finally, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee member Sayadaw Thanlyin Min Kyaung Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Sandima Bivamsa gave the Anumodana and a libation sermon, made a libation and shared meritorious deeds with other beings. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Minister for Electricity and Energy oversees developmental tasks in Myeik

UNION Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing together with Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region Dr. Le Le Maw, Deputy Minister Dr. Tun Naing, regional ministers, directors-general from the ministry and departmental officials inspected developmental tasks in Myeik on 17 February.

The Union Minister and party looked into construction of Htonkha-Thephyu-Mawtaung road section which is about 70 mile long and is being built by The Myeik Public Corporation through BOT system in Taninthayi Township. The Union Minister was briefed about the work progress by Chairman of The Myeik Public Corporation U Hla Than.

The Union Minister and his entourage then went to construction sites of Taninthayi Bridge on Myeik-Taninthayi-Bokpyin-Kawthoung

Road and Thamok-Lutlut Bridge on Dawei-Myeik Road. The Union Minister was reported about the bridges by U Kyaw Myo Tun, Director (Civil) from Construction Team (4) under the Department of Bridge. The 1444 ft long Taninthayi Bridge and 1287 ft long Thamok-Lutlut Bridge are being constructed with the funds from Taninthayi Regional government. Afterwards, the Union Minister held a meeting with Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region Dr. Le Le Maw, Deputy Minister Dr. Tun Naing, regional ministers, directors-general from the ministry and departmental officials at the meeting room of the Road Department over electricity distribution and construction of sub-power stations in the region, according to a source from the Information and Public Relations Department. — Myanmar Digital News ■



Taninthayi Region Government is upgrading Mingalar Lake in Myeik, Taninthayi Region. **PHOTO: MDN**

Taninthayi Region Gov't funds Ks. 100m for upgrading Mingalar Lake

A ceremony to donate cash for upgrading the Mingalar Lake was held at the office of the working committee for upgrading the lake in Myeik, Taninthayi Region on 16 February.

At the ceremony, Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region Dr. Le Le Maw explained the purpose of donation and Chairman of the working committee U Myat Ko Ko clarified matters relating to upgrading works and greening activities around the lake. Afterwards, the Chief Minister pre-

sented Ks. 100 million through the chairman of the working committee. Works to upgrade the Mingalar Lake are being carried out with the use of 26 dump trucks and 13 excavators. The committee accepted more than Ks. 300 million fund contributed by the local people. Local authorities are cooperating for timely completion of the works, said U Myat Ko Ko.

Mingalar Lake, a 200 years old ancient historic lake is located in Myitnge Ward in Myeik, Taninthayi Region.—MDN ■



German Ambassador Mrs. Dorothee Janetzke-Wenzel extends greetings at launching of Khayae FM. **PHOTO: MNA**



Micahel Karhausen (L), U Kyaw Htay (R), and MRTV Director-General U Myint Htwe sign MoU for Htan Tabin Community Radio. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar's first community radio Khayae FM goes on air

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Dr. Pe Myint said he hoped the radio will stay open long enough to become a sort of training centre for the next emerging community radio.

Next, German Ambassador Mrs. Dorothee Janetzke-Wenzel, Yangon Region Minister for Social Affairs U Naing Ngan Lin, Asia-East Europe DW Akademie Head Mr. Michael Karhausen and U Kyaw Htay, chairman from the local Village Development Committee, addressed the audience in turns. This was followed by Mr Karhausen, U Kyaw Htay and

MRTV Director-General U Myint Htwe signing the memorandum of understanding for the Htan Tabin Community Radio.

The officials then cut the ribbon to open the Khayae FM radio station, and then took a commemorative photograph together. An early proposal for Khayae FM-Htan Tabin was signed between the Ministry of Information, MRTV, DW Akademie and the Village Development Committee on 28 August 2017. Members of the Village Development Committee will volunteer to help run the radio station. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint and dignitaries visit Khayae FM-Htan Tabin Community Radio. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar, Russia celebrate 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations

Organised by the Russia-Myanmar Association for Friendship and Cooperation (RMAFC), a music show called “Russia Melody”, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Russia was held at the National Theatre in Yangon yesterday.

At the event, Russia Ambassador to Myanmar H.E Dr. Nikolay Listopadov delivered the opening speech, followed by speeches from Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe, Vice-Chairman of RMAFC Mr Anatoly Bu-

lachnikov and RMAFC's member Mr. Rudolf Yanson. Russian folk music band Kala Jazz and musical band Ngwe Yaung Turiya Kyo Myar entertained the attendees with Russian melodies, including Russian classic songs “Moscow souvenir” and “Kalinka.”

Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe presented floral baskets to the Russian musical band.

Also, the event exhibited photographs depicting Myanmar-Russian diplomatic relations, Russian historical background, culture, and books translated from Russian litera-



Russian folk music band Kala Jazz and musical band Ngwe Yaung Turiya Kyo Myar entertain the attendees with Russian melodies at the ceremony to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Russia. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

ture by Myanmar writers for the attendees. Attendees at the event were the Russian Ambassador to Myanmar, officials from the

Russian Embassy and National University of Arts and Culture (Yangon), Russian nationals in Myanmar and other invited

guests. A similar event will be celebrated at the National Theatre, Mandalay, on 22 February. —ZawGyi ■

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Magyichaung bridge almost finished

MAGYICHAUNG bridge being constructed in Kyunhla Township, Kanbalu District, Sagaing Region, is nearing completion, according to a project manager.

The project is fully funded by the Kyunhla Township Development Committee that allocated Ks40 million for the project from its extra budget for financial year of 2017-2018. Currently, the bridge construction is 80 per cent complete and it is expected to be finalised during this FY.

Upon completion the project, the reinforced concrete bridge will be 35 feet long, 27 feet wide and 15 feet high. Led by Engineer Daw May Zaw Ko from the committee, the team is putting forth concerted efforts to meet the target time frame.

A project engineer said the new transport facility will help users cut travel time and



The construction site of Magyichaung Bridge, Kyunhla Township, Kanbalu District, Sagaing Region. **PHOTO: MYO WIN NYO**

ensure smooth flow of commodities. The new bridge will provide education, health and transportation benefits to the town,

dwellers say.

As part of its plans to raise socio-economic status of rural community, the government

continues to build more transport and communications infrastructures each fiscal year. —Myo Win Nyo

Charities to offer free cleft lip, palate surgery in Loikaw this month

DUE to arrangements by the Kayah State government, cleft and palate repair surgeries will be performed free of charge in Loikaw to treat facial deformities, targeting residents in Loikaw and nearby regions.

The free surgical care will be organised by the State Public Health Department, with the support of a German-based surgical group, civil society organizations and the Red Cross.

The programme will launch on 19 February and continue until 1 March of this

year, with organizers saying they will carry out both medical and surgical operations on patients with congenital cleft lips and palates during the 11-day period. The new plan will also provide transportation, accommodations and food for the patients.

The free surgery aims to provide a better life to people with congenital facial deformities, and to reduce the treatment gap in the country. Cleft lips and cleft palates are commonly found in children from

low-income families, mostly from the country's remote areas. Cleft lips and palates are facial and oral malformations that occur very early in pregnancies. They are the most common type of birth defect. The condition causes difficulties in eating, breathing and speaking. According to a study, the cleft palate is a congenital defect affecting one in 700 people. More than 170,000 children worldwide are born with cleft lip, palate or both each year.—GNLM

Police hunt for man accused of killing ex-wife

A woman in her early 50s was allegedly murdered by her former husband following a quarrel between them during the wee hours of Sunday, according to a police report.

According to the police, the incident occurred at some 1 a.m. on Thukha Street in Ward-1, Danubyu Township, Maubin District, Ayeyawady region.

The woman's nephew Ko Ye Lin Paing, a key witness in the murder investigation, was present at the scene at the time of the incident. Ko Ye Lin Paing was in a deep slumber when he was awoken by the victim's screams.

He rushed to the aid of his aunt, who had been stabbed on her left breast with a knife, and saw U Win Sein fleeing the scene.

The woman sustained severe wounds and died at some 2.30 a.m. while receiving surgical treatment.

The marriage between the couple had ended in divorce six months ago.

The police are still on the lookout for the suspect, who will face charges under Section 302 of the Penal Code.—Aung Thu Hein (Danubyu)

Fisherman dies in accident at Andaman Sea

A fisherman from a coastal village in Mon State died in an accident while he was out fishing at Andaman Sea on Saturday afternoon, according to the police.

The accident occurred at 2 p.m., some 40 nautical miles west of Hnatpyaw Island in the sea.

Ko Pha Hay Su sustained serious injuries to his head after he fell off the fishing vessel while heaving the fishing net back from the water, along with four other fishermen—U Saw Nay Ge, U Saw, U Tun Zaw and U Maung Zaw.



Fishing is the precarious livelihood of the small coastal village. **PHOTO: HTUT HTUT (YE)**

The fisherman's body was taken to Zeebyutaung Port at 11.50 p.m. on the same day. His family is still awaiting the results of the post-mortem to

determine the exact cause of death.

The case is currently under investigation.—Htut Htut (Ye)



Myanmar pulses are kept on display for sale in a shop at a market. PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT

Myanmar earns \$753 million from pulses exports this FY

MYANMAR'S export of pulses reached Ks753 million in the last 10 months of the current fiscal year (FY), according to the Commerce Ministry.

Mung beans is the main export item among pulses, with an estimated income of some \$326 million, followed by green grams, with an export value of \$198 million and pigeon peas with \$96 million.

The prevailing prices per

tonne in the second week of February were Ks708,000 for mung beans of special quality, Ks558,000 for mung beans of fair and average quality and more than Ks460,000 for pigeon peas. The prices have shown a slight increase compared with last week. However, the current market prices of pulses dropped by nearly half over the last FY.

India is the main buyer of Myanmar's pigeon peas, mung

beans and green grams. The restriction on the import of pulses by India drove down the price of pulses drastically. The sole reliance on a single market has created chaos in the Myanmar pulses industry.

Export earnings from the agricultural sector from 1 April to 9 February this FY were \$2.59 billion, which is an increase of \$203 million compared with last FY. — Ko Khant

Myanmar-Bangladesh border trade increases by \$13 million

THE value of border trade between Myanmar and Bangladesh, as of 9 February, reached US\$22 million, which showed an increase of \$13 million, compared with the same period last fiscal year (FY), the Ministry of Commerce reported.

Border exports between the two countries this FY increased by more than \$21.759 million, compared with last FY, whereas the value of border imports was

\$0.567 million.

Border trade between the two countries is conducted through the Sittway and Maung-taw cross-border trade camps.

From last April until February, trade through the Maung-taw gate reached \$10.928 million, while trade from the Sittway border point was valued at \$10.831 million. At the Myanmar-Bangladesh border gates, ginger, peanuts, mung beans, dried plums,

garlic, rice, saltwater prawns and fish, bamboo, blankets, candy, plum jam and footwear are the main export items. Myanmar's international trade through sea routes accounted for 80 per cent of its total trade, while the remaining trade was conducted via border gates. The country conducts border trade with neighbouring countries via 16 land border gates. —Swe Nyein

Rice export volume exceeds 3 million tons so far

RICE and broken rice export reaches more than 3 million tons as of 9th February this Fiscal Year (FY), earning US\$938 million, according to the Commerce Ministry.

The export volume this FY increases 1.7 million tons more than that of last FY. Export income from rice and broken rice export is up by \$543 million. Myanmar's rice is shipped to more than 60 countries, penetrating 22

new markets this FY.

In the second week of February, prices of Myanmar's rice of low quality range from \$356 to \$430 a ton depending on demand. According to the statistics of Agriculture Department, there were 2.46 million acres of rain and summer paddy. About 2.5 million tons of rice and broken rice were expected to be exported to foreign trade partners.

However, the actual export

volume surpassed the expected target this FY.

Myanmar is registered at the top 10 of world largest rice producing countries. However, the country has many challenges in rice industry; pedigree, high input cost, logistic planning, transportation and transaction high cost, weakness in advanced growing method and agro used machinery and erratic weather problem. —Ko Htet

Capital goods imports by private sector continue to decline

IMPORTS of capital goods by private traders has declined in the current fiscal year, according to the latest statistical report released by the Ministry of Commerce.

From last April to this February, the private sector imported more than US\$5 billion worth of capital goods from overseas traders, which saw a decrease in value of \$210 million, as against the same period in the last FY.

Despite a decrease in private sector imports of capital goods, this FY saw an increase in the value of the imports of capital goods, in comparison with last FY. During the 11 months of this FY, the country's imports of capital goods reached \$5.535 billion, increasing \$76 million

over the last FY. The ministry's data detailed how the Myanmar government imported capital goods with an estimated value of \$585 million, an increase of \$287 million, as against last FY.

In the current FY, the value of imports between Myanmar and its foreign partner traders was set at \$15.915 billion, including \$6.446 billion worth of intermediate goods and \$3.856 billion of consumer products. The total imports figures went up by \$2.031 billion, compared to last year.

Myanmar's trading partner countries include ASEAN members, EU member states, some island nations, Asian and African states, and some western countries.—Shwe Khine



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- Market Place by City Mart (6.5 Mile)
- Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)
- Market Place by City Mart (Junction City)
- City Mart (Aung San Stadium)
- City Mart (47th street)
- City Mart (Yankin)
- City Mart (China Town)
- City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)
- City Mart (FMI)
- City Mart (Junction Square)
- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
- City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
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Sr-Gen Min Aung Hlaing visits Sothon Wararam Temple in Thailand

A delegation led by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited the Sothon Wararam Temple in Bangpakong District yesterday.

The Senior General and delegation left Thailand from the Don Muang Royal Thai Air Force Base (Wing-6) and arrived at Nay Pyi Taw Airport.

During their visit to Thailand, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his delegation, attended a dinner hosted in their honour by Chief of Defence Force of the Royal Thai Armed Forces Gen. Tarnchaiyan Srisuwan and his wife at the Anantara Siam Hotel in Bangkok on Friday.

During the visit, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing introduced four officers, who were awarded best cadets and were part of his delegation, to Gen. Tarnchaiyan Srisuwan.

On 17th February, retired General Tanasak Patimapragorn and wife hosted a dinner in honour of the Myanmar delegation at Dusit Thani Hotel in Bangkok.

When the delegation arrived back Nay Pyi Taw airport yesterday, they were welcomed by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice Senior General Soe Win and senior military officers and their wife. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife pay homage to a Sayadaw as they visit Sothon Wararam Temple. **PHOTO: MNA**

Lineage of Myanmar photographers at exhibition

AN exhibition titled "Burmese Photographers", featuring early colonial era images, was opened to the public yesterday in the east wing of the Secretariat.

The event is organised by the Goethe-Institut and curated by Lukas Birk. Birk's extensive research traces the emergence of an autonomous Burmese imagery. Having searched hidden archives of antique dealers and photography studios, the Austrian curator and photographer has collected more than 10,000 photographs – a mixture of studio photographs, amateur and private pictures, as well as press and advertising materials. The event is part of this year's photography festival.

When asked about his work in assembling the exhibition, Birk said he wanted to preserve the names of undocumented Burmese photographers. Birk is showcasing some 400 photographs out of the thousands he

has amassed. "The photographs inside [the Secretariat] are not just pictures of press conferences, but they are beautiful shots, and some show Bogyoke [Aung San] during a meeting," said Birk.

The photographs on display comprise historical ones captured by an Indian photographer, who was the first photographer to arrive in Myanmar. The exhibition also contains significant pictures by Burmese photographers, of generations of Burmese celebrities and of Bogyoke Aung San on his road to independence.

Ko Win Htet from Goethe-Institut said there were initially few local photographers in 1910, but eventually their numbers grew. He said the exhibition is intended to draw attention to the old photographers, as well as bring out the talent of the current generation. The exhibition will remain open to the public until 11 March from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. —Zaw Gyi ■



Guests walk by the east wing of the Secretariat where the photo exhibition is taking place. **PHOTO: MNA**



Guests read about the history of photography in Myanmar. **PHOTO: MNA**



Photographs of former generations of celebrities on display at the photo exhibition. **PHOTO: MNA**

Restarting talks crucial for solving Korean nuclear issue: Chinese diplomat

MUNICH — China hopes that peace talks can be reopened to solve the most urgent Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, a senior Chinese diplomat said at the ongoing Munich Security Conference here on Saturday.

“There should be negotiated settlements to address the security concerns of all parties,” Fu Ying, chairwoman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People’s Congress, China’s legislature, said during a panel on nuclear security.

A serious lack of trust between the United States and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) made it impossible for any bilateral or multilateral agreement to be implemented and dragged the peninsula into a vicious circle of escalating tensions, Fu said.

China supports the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and agrees that sanctions are necessary, she said, adding that China has fully complied with the UN Security Council resolutions concerning sanctions on the DPRK.

“But in the meantime, China also hopes that peace talks can be initiated, can be reopened,” Fu said. Sanctions only work when the door to negotiation is open, she stressed.

Fu said she noticed that a



Fu Ying, chairwoman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People’s Congress, China’s top legislature, attends a panel discussion on nuclear security during the 54th Munich Security Conference (MSC) in Munich Germany on 17 February, 2018. PHOTO: XINHUA

good opportunity has emerged recently when South Korea and the DPRK use the PyeongChang Winter Olympics as a platform to reach out to each other. She

hoped that the United States could seize the opportunity and restart the talks in order to bring peace back to the region. —Xinhua ■

Red alert cyclone warning issued for Western Australia state

CANBERRA — Authorities have issued a red alert cyclone warning for Western Australia (WA) state.

Tropical cyclone Kelvin made landfall on Sunday morning, bringing with it winds of up to 250 km per hour (kph).

In a warning issued on Sunday, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services told residents of northern WA that they were “in danger and need to act immediately.”

“There is a possible threat to lives and homes as a cyclone is approaching the area,” it said.

Residents of the Pilbara and Kimberley regions were told to remain in the safest parts of their house, away from windows, or stay in evacuation centers.

Further south, a yellow alert was put in place warning of winds up to 150 kph until mid-afternoon on Sunday.

Heavy rainfall was also expected to come with the storm with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) warning that there was a high chance of flooding.

“I think we’ve already seen one of the strongest impacts of this system that Tropical Cy-

clone Kelvin will have — is the rainfall we’ve seen in Broome,” BOM senior forecaster Andrew Burton told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) on Sunday.

“We’ve had 370.6 millimetres up to 9:00 am (Saturday) and that rainfall is continuing, so they look like they’re on track to get to their wettest year ever.”

The deluge has forced the closure of some roads with more to follow, including major arterial roads and highways which are the only way to access some towns by car.

“From a flooding perspective, it’s a bit of a perfect storm,” Main Roads regional manager Andrew Pyke said.

“We’ve got a lot of water sitting on the Roebuck plains area now and a lot of water happened in the last 24 to 48 hours in the Broome area, and there is more water coming down with the passing of this cyclone.”

“It is quite difficult. There’s certainly been significant damages of some roads in the Kimberley with the water that’s flowed over the roads. We are very concerned,” said Pyke. —Xinhua ■

Osaka whale fossil believed to be 1st of its kind

OSAKA — A whale skull discovered just over 50 years ago in Osaka City is now thought to be the world’s first known trace of an Eden’s whale, dating from between 4,000 and 8,800 years ago.

The fossilized remains were reclassified in a study published recently in a paleontology journal by co-authors Yoshihiro Tanaka, curator of the Osaka Museum of Natural History, and Hiroyuki Taruno, a former curator of the same institution.

The skull was originally thought to be of a Minke whale. “The specimen adds a chronologically and geographically new record to the not well-known species” and suggests its modern distribution was established millennia ago, the study says. During the time frame in which the whale is thought to have lived, much of the location of modern-day Osaka City was underwater due to the higher

levels of Osaka Bay and, to its east, a historical feature known as Kawachi Bay.

The fossil of the Eden’s whale (*Balaenoptera edeni*) was found at a depth of roughly 14 meters during underground construction in the eastern part of the city in 1966. Researchers had concluded in 1976 that it came from an ancient Minke whale.

Minke and Eden’s whales are two types of baleen whale still existing around the world today, though the latter are less common.

Japan has only in 12 previous instances been able to confirm a specimen as an Eden’s whale through DNA and other testing, and only half of these cases include bone samples stored by one of the country’s research institutions. Tanaka and Taruno made the reassessment by analyzing the morphology of the skull, in par-

ticular the broad rostrum and the shape of rear cranial bones, and comparing their observations with the results of recent studies on baleen whale taxonomy. In comments to Kyodo News, Tanaka noted that various other whale

fossils have been unearthed in Osaka in past decades.

“We want to shed light on what kinds of whales were swimming in Osaka Bay in ancient times,” he said. —Kyodo News ■

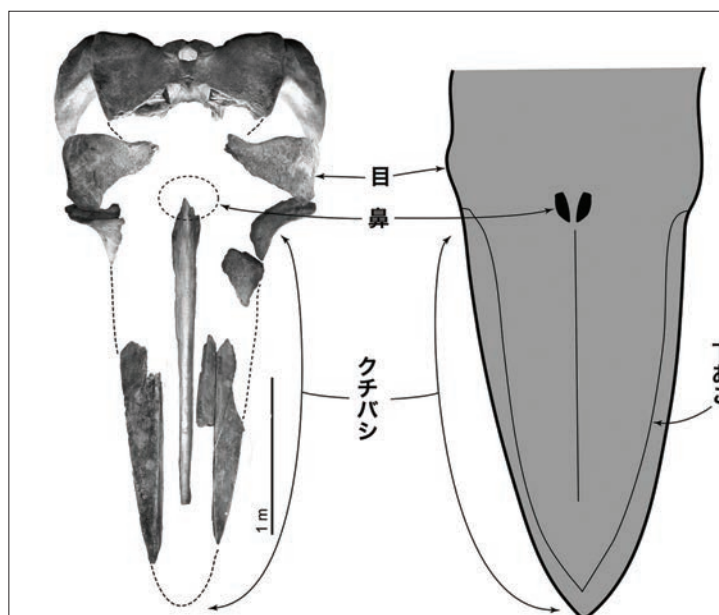


PHOTO: XINHUA

Five soldiers wounded in ambush in southern Philippines

MANILA — A junior army officer and four soldiers were wounded on Sunday in an attack in the southern Philippines, a military spokesman said.

Capt. Arvin Encinas said the troops were aboard a military truck on an “administrative mission” when attacked around 7:30 am in Meta village in Datu Unsay town in Maguindanao province. He said an improvised explosive device went off as the truck approached a bridge.

“They were mobile and as soon as they reached the bridge in barangay meta, they were hit by IED explosion. There was no firefight, it’s merely an IED explosion aimed at our troops,” Encinas said. —Xinhua ■

From transparency to truth

INTERNATIONAL media has quite a different portrayal of the situation in Rakhine. This is not the only example where local and foreign media differ but it's one of the most prominent and one-sided. Myanmar tries to portray the news of both sides of the condition yet most foreign media only scope in on the stories of IDPs and Muslims living in Rakhine, leaving a good chunk of the entire story out. These portrayals weigh down Myanmar in dealing honestly with the international community.

Much of Rakhine has been declared unsafe for travel but the government has allowed foreign delegates, officials from UN, local and foreign media agencies to travel to Buthidaung, Maungtaw and other border areas in Rakhine to meet and talk with locals. Due to safety concerns travel is limited to certain areas only.

Recently, a group of ambassadors and UN officials were escorted into Maungtaw District for a firsthand inspection to garner authentic news of the situation there.

We have shown the international guests that Myanmar is prepared for the repatriation process. Taung Pyo Letwe Reception Centre will receive returnees coming in by land

and Nga Khu Ya Reception Centre will receive returnees coming in by sea or river. Along with the repatriation offices, temporary shelters have been built for returnees while they wait for the process to finish.

Hla Pho Khaung Transit Centre established on more than 120 acres with 640 buildings and can accommodate more than 30,000 people. The camp is ready to provide accommodation, food, drinking water, electricity and health care to returnees. Under the arrangement of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State-UEHRD, more than 500 tents are in reserve ready to be distributed to returnees whenever

necessary.

However, no returnees have attempted to return into Myanmar from the border. Whether this is because the returnees and the other country's government are not ready or if there is another unknown reason is unclear. Regardless, Myanmar will always have its door open for and does not discriminate people based on their religion or the color of their skin.

Now that diplomats, UN officials and both local and foreign media have been allowed to enter Rakhine and see the situation with their own eyes maybe the truth will reach the international community.

Hence, international communities are to cooperate with the authorities as Myanmar is ready to launch the repatriation and resettlement for returnees in accordance with the agreement with Bangladesh. ■

The Domestic Tourism Sector is getting shinier

By Myo Myint Than
(Manset Myay)

ONCE the tourism sector is mentioned in Myanmar, it is usually accepted that tourism industry is concerned with foreign tourists. But when the newly-elected government took power in 2016, domestic tourists paid a visit to festival en masse across the country during holidays-short or long-reflecting in the media as a sign of public interest on domestic tourism. It also symbolizes a relative relief for the basic human needs of the general public.

I don't want to argue that my view is good or bad and right or wrong. Allow me to explain a little to my readers. My uncle reminded me not to write anything which I know a little about. When I start to write an article, I take it seriously not to elude good facts for my readers. Let have a look at our neighbours (eg China) where tourism sectors have gained momentum not only in foreign tourism industry but also in domestic one. Domestic tourists are visibly led by the respective companies which took them around across their country by flying their flags. This is an indicator showing China's economic development, rela-

tive improvement in basic human needs of every household and a great interest in domestic tourism. Domestic tourism industry in India has not improved as much as in China even though there is a little difference in terms of their population and geography.

In the past in Myanmar few domestic tourists went on a pilgrimage or holidays to the whole country. After new government took power in 2016, domestic tourism has increased considerably: people casually paid a visit to famous destinations even on normal short holidays, making hotel rooms full and run short of food and drinks in restaurants. If the numbers of domestic tourists to easily-accessible destinations 2016 are compared with those in 2017, it will be seen an increase of 52% in Inlay, 46% in Kyaikthiyo Pagoda, 42% in Bagan, 16% in Mandalay Region and 28% in Sagaing Region. Even though the number of tourist arrivals to Ngwesaung Beach, those to Chaungtha Beach declined slightly on account of a major upgrade of the Beach facilities.

According to reliable statistics of Domestic Pilgrimage and Tourism Service, it is learnt that there were 7 million tourists in 2016 and 8 million tourists in



Tourists take bullock carts visiting around Bagan. **Photo: Phoe Khwar**

2017 respectively. The numbers of tourist from the Government and private companies are not included in the list. In accordance with comprehensive surveys by World Travel and Tourism Council, the increased revenues from the foreign tourism sector were 62.7% and those from domestic sector

were 37.3% in 2016. The estimate of 3.6% increase in 2017 has shown good progress in domestic tourism and it is indisputable fact.

Ministry of Hotels and Tourism should handle both foreign and domestic tourism sectors on equal footing. The MHT has given the following undertakings on the

tourism sector. With Vice President (2) as Chairman and the Union Minister as secretary, the Central Committee for the Development of the National Tourism Industry started its (1/2017) meeting on domestic tourism on 26 April, 2017. Talks on domestic tourism were held to raise the standards of service to international levels by all-round supports from other related ministries, regions and states.

With active participation in discussions with responsible members from (11) sister groups, the meeting produced positive results. The Committee held its second meeting (2/2017) on 21 December, 2017 to implement the resolutions of the first meeting, with future work programs laid down for the development of the tourism sector. In addition, the Chairman of the Central Committee discussed with members from Hotelier Association on Jan 20, 2018 that the guidelines were laid down on providing enough hotel rooms for incoming tourists and development of growing domestic tourism. More feedback is needed to meet the demands of increasing number of domestic and foreign tourists.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has issued certificates to domestic tour companies since 1 October 2017 to keep them in proper order, good service and security for travellers. There are three requirements to obtain these certificates. Four rules and regulations include life insurance for travellers, putting fire extinguishers and first aid equipment in suitable places and transparency on fares concerning routes and services. These certificates have been issued to as many as 50 pilgrimage tour groups. These groups are recognized as small and medium enterprises and they will appear as an emergent power in the tourism sector. It will be successful only in cooperation with Public Private Partnership.

In accordance with guidelines outlined by the government, the members from the Hotelier Association will have to exert efforts for sustainable development of the Tourism sector. The owners of the houses, hotels or inns should avoid raising the rent of their prosperities without any reasons. The local populace will have to take an active participation in the Tourism sector. ■

Translated by Arakan Sein

It's Time for a More Realistic Approach to Conservation

THE tropics are home to the greatest diversity of plants and animals on Earth. Yet many of these hotspots are in war zones that disregard the rules of democracy and nurture an indefinite influence of corruption.

During the 10 years I've worked in tropical countries, I have seen the human toll on biodiversity both exaggerated and underplayed by scientists and media. Rare road kills of leopards in Sri Lanka have been mistakenly exaggerated as "organized poaching," and the systematic smuggling of reptiles in South America and Africa has been distorted as "random attempts."

Preserving biodiversity in these areas is a real challenge for scientists and conservationists. They collect reliable data, create robust models and project the fate of biodiversity hotspots, but without real access to these locations, practical conservation strategies remain out of reach.

Only an effective network of scientists, local governments and people, conservation groups and honest media can create a clear picture of this biodiversity crisis and work towards a solution.

Can humans and nature coexist?

Instead of spending enormous amounts of money on "absurd research" and conservation-irrelevant work, let's put the dollars towards supporting those living in these bio-diverse hotspots. This would allow them to improve their living conditions and to serve as guardians who keep a watchful eye on poachers.

Already some local governments rely on their villagers to stop wildlife crimes. For example, Tibetan villagers assigned to protect local wildlife have captured poachers.

But elsewhere, local people are being evicted in the name of wildlife conservation. More than 200,000 people are to be relocated so that Kaziranga National Park in India can expand its boundaries to give its tigers and endangered Indian rhinos more space. The government says this will help forest rangers deal with poachers and keep innocent villagers from being caught up in the conflict.

But hard-line approaches like this should be directed towards the poachers—not forest dwellers. For the most part, those who live in wild areas harvest only the resources they require. They look after the forest.

This coexistence between people and land is necessary to conserve nature. Governments shouldn't oust people to conserve nature, but involve them in ecotourism, the conservation decision-making process and proposed management strategies.

Rural Hindus and Buddhists in South Asia consider monkeys sacred and protect them. If not, even the hardy species like macaques and Asian elephants might go extinct.—By Rajesh Rajaselvam/ EcoWatch ■

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



Tourists visit Inle Lake in Shan State. **Photo: Chan Thar**

‘Do not test Israel’, Netanyahu tells Iran, brandishing drone ‘piece’

MUNICH (Germany) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Tehran on Sunday over aggressions by what he called Iran and its “proxies” in Syria, while showing what he claimed was a piece of an Iranian drone shot down in Israeli airspace.

Saying he had “a message to the tyrants of Tehran” during a speech at the Munich Security Conference, he warned: “Do not test Israel’s resolve.”

He brandished a rectangular piece of dark green metal which he called “a piece of that Iranian drone, or what’s left of it, after we shot it down.”

Israel has said it shot down the drone on 10 February after it entered the country from Syria, and responded with a raid on what it said was the Iranian con-

trol systems for the craft in Syria.

It marked the first time Israel publicly acknowledged hitting Iranian targets in Syria since the 2011 start of the civil war there.

During the strikes, one of Israel’s F-16 fighter jets was shot down, believed to be the first loss of an Israeli plane in combat since 1982.

Calling Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif the “smooth-talking mouthpiece of Iran’s regime,” Netanyahu said: “Mr Zarif, do you recognise this? You should, it’s yours.”

Again referring to Zarif, who is scheduled to speak later in Munich, the Israeli leader said: “No doubt Mr Zarif will brazenly deny Iran’s involvement in Syria.”

“He lies with eloquence.”

- ‘Noose of terror’ -

The Israeli military has

claimed the drone was a copy of a US model captured by Iran in 2011, based on an analysis of the drone’s debris.

Tensions between the two countries have been building in recent months, with Israel fearing that Tehran is trying to establish a permanent presence in Syria as part of an effort to become a greater regional power in the Middle East.

At the same time, Syria appears to feel it now has the upper hand in the civil war and is more emboldened to stop Israeli air raids inside the country, analysts say.

But Netanyahu said Sunday that Israel would not let Iran obtain a permanent foothold in its northern neighbour.

“Through its proxies — Shiite militias in Iraq, the Huthis in



Netanyahu said he had “a message to the tyrants of Tehran”, during a speech at the Munich Security Conference. **PHOTO: AFP**

Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza — Iran is devouring huge swathes of the Middle East,” he said.

“Israel will not allow Iran’s regime to put a noose of terror around our neck,” he added.

“We will act without hesitation to defend ourselves. And we will act if necessary not just against Iran’s proxies that are at-

tacking us, but against Iran itself.”

But he stressed that Israel was not the enemy of the Iranian people, and offered his condolences to the families of the 66 people killed in an Iranian plane crash on Sunday.

“We have no quarrel with the people of Iran, only with the regime that torments them,” Netanyahu said.—AFP ■

Trump turns on FBI over school shooting after criticism from survivors

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump said on Saturday the FBI was so caught up in the Russia probe that it failed to heed signs which could have prevented the Parkland school shooting.

His comments came as he faces criticism from survivors of the attack over his ties to the powerful National Rifle Association, and after several thousand rallied in Florida to demand urgent action on gun control.

“Very sad that the FBI missed all of the many signals sent out by the Florida school shooter. This is not acceptable,” he wrote on Twitter.

“They are spending too much time trying to prove Russian collusion with the Trump campaign — there is no collusion. Get back to the basics and make us all proud!”

US authorities have come under mounting scrutiny for failing to act on a series of warning signs ahead of the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in which 17 people were killed.

The FBI admitted Friday it received a chilling warning in January from a tipster who said the gunman Nikolas Cruz could be planning a mass shooting, but that agents failed to follow up.

But the attack, the 18th school

shooting this year alone, has also renewed calls for greater gun control with several survivors leading the charge.

One of them, 18-year-old Emma Gonzalez delivered a fiery address to a crowd of students, parents and residents in Ft Lauderdale.

“To every politician taking donations from the NRA, shame on you!” she thundered, assailing Trump over the multi-million-dollar support his campaign received from the gun lobby. The crowd chanted in turn: “Shame on you!”

“We are going to be the last mass shooting... We are going to change the law,” she vowed —

slamming the fact 19-year-old Cruz was able to legally buy a semi-automatic firearm despite a history of troubling and violent behavior.

“The question on whether or not people should be allowed to own an automatic weapon is not a political one.

It is question of life or death and it needs to stop being a question of politics,” Gonzalez told AFP following her speech. In Washington, the political response has made clear that the powerful NRA pro-gun lobby remains formidable, while Trump himself suggested the root cause of mass shootings was a crisis of mental health — making no

mention of gun control.

“If the president wants to come up to me and tell me to my face that it was a terrible tragedy and... how nothing is going to be done about it, I’m going to happily ask him how much money he received from the National Rifle Association,” Gonzalez said in her impassioned address.

“It doesn’t matter because I already know. Thirty million,” she said, citing the sum spent by the NRA to support Trump’s election bid and defeat Hillary Clinton.

She then ran through a list of the pro-gun lobby’s talking points — for example, that “a good guy with a gun stops a bad guy with a gun,” that no law could ever stop a madman intent on killing — answering each argument with “We call BS.”

The young woman’s powerful address immediately went viral, with her name a top trending topic on Twitter.

- Missed warnings -

In addition to the FBI’s missteps, Cruz was also known to local police after his mother repeatedly reported him for violent outbursts, while records obtained by the South Florida Sun Sentinel show authorities investigated Cruz in 2016 after he cut his arms on messaging app Snapchat and threatened

to buy a gun.

The newspaper, citing Department of Children and Family Services documents, said the investigation came four days after Cruz turned 18 — legally an adult, and thus able to buy a firearm.

Investigators said there were “some implications” for the teen’s safety, but concluded that his “final level of risk is low as (he) resides with his mother, attends school and receives counseling” as an outpatient at a mental health center, the Sun Sentinel said. Cruz later passed a background check, allowing him in February 2017 to buy the AR-15 rifle used in the massacre.

Trump spoke by phone on Saturday with the Parkland mayor, the county commissioner and the principal of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School to express his condolences and offer his support.

He then pivoted to politics late Saturday with his allegations against the FBI — though the federal government’s investigation into allegations of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential race and collusion with the Trump campaign has been led by special prosecutor Robert Mueller since last May.—AFP ■



School shooting survivor Emma Gonzalez delivers a fiery speech at a rally for gun control in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on 17 February 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

Seeking post-Brexit unity, EU leaders find more fights

BRUSSELS — EU leaders face difficult talks this week on the thorny issues of how to plug holes in the post-Brexit budget and choose a successor for European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker.

A special one-day summit in Brussels on Friday of the 27 leaders without Britain is meant to be a key step in the roadmap to a leaner and more unified bloc after Britain leaves in just over a year.

But cracks have already appeared between French President Emmanuel Macron, leading the charge for a reformed Europe, and Juncker with his federalist vision of how top EU officials should be chosen in future.

The row means the EU's attempts to overcome the shock of losing a major member are running into the classic problems that have bedevilled it for its six decades of existence: money and sovereignty. Juncker was picked after European elections in 2014 by a controversial "Spitzenkandidat" system — German for "lead candidate" — under which the political group with the most votes gets to nominate its candidate for the job.

Both the European Parliament and Juncker back a repeat



European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker was picked after European elections in 2014 by a controversial "Spitzenkandidat" system — German for "lead candidate". PHOTO: AFP

after the May 2019 European election, saying it gives the public a direct say in who heads the commission, the EU's powerful executive arm.

- 'Right and obligation' -

European Council President Donald Tusk — who coordinates summits and represents the EU member states — is expected to lay out options at the summit, including whether to continue with the Spitzenkandidat system.

Leaders are expected to say it is their own "right and obligation" to choose the commission chief, while "taking into account"

the views of parliament, as the EU treaties state, an EU source told AFP.

Many national leaders are bitterly opposed to the Spitzenkandidat process, saying it sidelines democratically elected heads of government in favour of a backroom deal by Brussels-based political parties, and also makes the job of commission chief too political.

Macron this week slammed the Brussels establishment as ideologically incoherent and called for a "political revamp" to give the commission a clear mandate, defined by the national

leaders.

Juncker however said earlier this week that the Spitzenkandidat system was "completely logical". He also called for the commission chief's job to be merged with Tusk's.

The row has become particularly fierce after the European Parliament earlier this month dealt Macron a slap by voting against "transnational lists" — which would allow 30 of the 73 seats vacated by Britain to be elected on pan-European tickets, instead of directly to constituencies. "Why should we have Spitzenkandidaten if we have no transnational list for elections?!" Luxembourg Prime Minister Xavier Bettel tweeted.

- Fixing a hole -

Filling the hole that Brexit leaves in the EU's multi-year budget from 2020 threatens to open up even deeper divisions — but this time between member states themselves.

Tusk will ask the leaders at the summit whether they want to increase the budget, decrease it or keep it the same, sources said.

EU Budget Commissioner Guenther Oettinger has said that Britain's exit could leave a hole of as much as between 12 and 15

billion euros (\$15-19 billion) and suggested that contributions be increased to between 1.1 per cent and 1.2 per cent of GDP from the current level of one per cent of GDP in the 2014-2020 budget.

The Netherlands, Denmark, Austria, Sweden and Finland, all net contributors, are said to be against that idea.

Warnings by Oettinger of cuts on agriculture — a bugbear for France — and "cohesion funds" that benefit poorer eastern European states are also likely to go down badly.

But there is little appetite for suggestions that the EU could try to bring countries like Poland and Hungary into line on issues including the rule of law and migration by making cohesion funds "conditional" on good behaviour.

With these tensions in the background it is no surprise that the EU has been stressing the need for unity in Brexit talks with Britain. Tusk is expected to ask leaders on Friday if they want to push ahead next month with issuing negotiating red lines on a post-Brexit future relationship with Britain. Uncertainty over Britain's wishes, and difficulties in negotiations on a post-Brexit transition period, could push that back.—AFP ■

Thirteen killed in Mexican quake zone helicopter crash

SANTIAGO JAMILTEPEC (Mexico) — Thirteen people were killed in southern Mexico when a minister's helicopter crash-landed on its way to the epicenter of a powerful earthquake that rattled the region, officials said on Saturday.

The 7.2 magnitude quake caused only material damage when it struck late Friday, but it triggered a tragedy in the town of Santiago Jamiltepec in Oaxaca state, where the chopper landed on its side, crushing a van. Five women, four men, and three children were killed on the spot, while another person died in hospital, the Oaxaca prosecutor's office said.

On board the UH-60 Black Hawk military helicopter were Interior Minister Alfonso Navarrete and Oaxaca state Governor Alejandro Murat, who were unharmed.—AFP ■

Guantanamo trial of Cole bombing suspect halted

WASHINGTON — The Guantanamo trial of the chief suspect in the deadly 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen was shut down on Friday as defence lawyers refused to return to the case, Pentagon officials said.

Military commissions judge Air Force Colonel Vance Spath halted the case, which could lead to the death penalty for Abdel Rahim al-Nashiri, in frustration that he could not compel Nashiri's main lawyers to show up in court.

"The USS Cole bombing trial ... military judge has abated indefinitely the pre-trial proceedings," Pentagon spokeswoman Commander Sarah Higgins said.

"It is unknown when pre-trial hearings will begin again."

According to a transcript of Friday's hearing, Spath complained that he was unable to enforce his orders on Nashiri's civilian defense attorneys to even join the proceedings by video.

"It's demonstrated lawlessness on their side; they don't follow orders," he said. But he also complained of lack of sup-



Abdel Rahim al-Nashiri is accused of being the mastermind behind the October 12, 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Aden, Yemen. PHOTO: AFP

port overall for the military commissions, which have made little progress in the cases for Guantanamo's remaining prisoners.

Suggesting that the military commissions setup was not functioning generally, Spath said he could not go on without the direction of a superior court.

"We need action. We need somebody to look at this process. We need somebody to give us di-

rection," Spath said.

The problems in the Nashiri trial "tells you how infected the process is and how far it goes within the Department of Defence that owns the process," he said.

The case, the military trial of one of the most high-profile prisoners at Guantanamo, plunged into chaos last year when three of Nashiri's lawyers quit.

They alleged that their supposed privileged conversations with and about their client had been monitored electronically by the government, and that they could not proceed with his defense in that case.

When Brigadier General John Baker, who oversees legal defense teams at Guantanamo, refused to order them back to work, he was charged with contempt of court and sentenced to three weeks' confinement in his Guantanamo trailer.

That left Nashiri's defense to Navy Lieutenant Alaric Piette, who only has six years' experience as a lawyer and none in a death penalty case. Piette has not actively defended Nashiri, admitting he lacks the qualification to do so. Nashiri is accused of being the mastermind behind the 12 October, 2000 bombing of the Cole, a guided missile destroyer that was moored in Aden, Yemen, when it was attacked.

The bombing, claimed by Al-Qaeda, left 17 dead and 39 injured.—AFP ■

Key facts about Russia's Topol intercontinental ballistic missile

MOSCOW — Thirty-five years ago, the RT-2PM (15Zh58) intercontinental ballistic missile of the RS-12M Topol road mobile complex was successfully launched for the first time at the 53rd research and testing range of the USSR Defence Ministry in Plesetsk on 8 February, 1983.

Project's history

A new-generation solid-propellant missile had been under development at the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology since 1975. This research institute specialized in mobile solid-propellant missiles: it was this firm that had earlier developed RT-2S Temp-2S and RSD-10 Pioneer (SS-20) missile systems.

The Soviet military believed that it would be difficult to spot a mobile missile system, which would, therefore, significantly reduce its vulnerability compared to silo-based missiles. The United States and its allies had no mobile ICBMs as they limited their effort only to developing MGM-31C Pershing II medium-range missile complexes.

Trials

The first test launch of the Topol intercontinental ballistic missile was conducted on Octo-



The first test launch of the Topol intercontinental ballistic missile was conducted in 1982. PHOTO: TASS

ber 27, 1982 from the Kapustin Yar practice range and it proved to be a failure.

After that, the development tests were transferred to the 53rd research and test range of the USSR Defence Ministry (Plesetsk) where the second and successful launch was conducted on 8 February, 1983.

The first three launches were conducted from a silo. The fourth trial was held on 10 August,

1983 when the Topol ICBM was test-launched from a self-propelled launcher.

Overall, 17 test launches of Topol ICBMs were held and only four of them failed.

Topol ICBMs enter service with Strategic Missile Force

On 1 December, 1988, the Soviet government issued a resolution on accepting the Topol

ICMB for service.

In 1991, the Soviet Army operated 288 Topol missile systems. After the disintegration of the USSR, three divisions armed with these ICBMs stayed on territory of Belarus and were withdrawn into Russia. In 1993, RT-2PM missile complexes that were in operation reached their maximum number of 369 units. Since 2006, Russia has been replacing Topols with new Topol-M mobile mis-

sile systems. Over 120 test and combat training launches of the RT-2PM Topol missiles were held from 1982 and an overwhelming majority of them were successful.

In the West, the RT-2PM Topol ICBM was dubbed the SS-25 Sickle.

Modifications

The Topol-M is a solid-propellant missile of universal (silo and mobile) basing with a new control system, enhanced accuracy, larger payload, a new ABM-piercing system and other innovations.

The Topol-E is an experimental missile for conducting the trials of new types of ICBM armament.

Design

The RT-2PM is a three-stage solid-propellant ICBM with the sequential arrangement of its stages.

Each of the three stages uses a solid-propellant engine with a fixed nozzle. The first stage is furnished with gas jet and aerodynamic vanes. The ICBM is also equipped with a separate stage for the warhead delivery.

The launcher is mounted on a MAZ-7912/7917 auto chassis.—Tass ■

US gun lovers defend rights amid debate for more restrictions

MIAMI — Pistols, rifles and ammunition are on display at a gun show in Miami, where Mike Vallone is buying an AR-15, a firearm at the centre of debate on gun control as the weapon of choice of several mass shooters.

Why would the 55-year-old, who already owns about 50 guns, want another one?

"Because I choose to own them. I have the constitutional right to own them and I choose to exercise that right," he told AFP on Saturday. Vallone was visiting the gun show three days after a 19-year-old massacred 17 people at his former high school with an AR-15 in Parkland, about an hour north of Miami. The semi-automatic rifle was also used to carry out mass shootings in Las Vegas (58 dead), Sutherland Springs, Texas (26 dead) and Newtown, Connecticut (26 dead).

The media "makes it look like it's evil," Vallone said, holding the \$600 gun he is about to buy. "This does nothing by itself. This takes a human being to take the rifle, point it and shoot someone."



Gun enthusiasts attend a show at the Dade County Youth Fairgrounds in Miami, Florida, on 17 February 2018, three days after a mass shooting at a high school 30 miles (48 km) away left 17 people dead. PHOTO: AFP

Every mass shooting reveals the deep fissures in American society between those who favour fewer restrictions on guns and gun ownership, and those who demand greater controls. The

"right of the people to keep and bear arms" is guaranteed under the US Constitution's Second Amendment, which was adopted in 1791. "The focus on gun control is an error and it won't stop

someone determined to commit crimes," said Vallone, raising a common argument among pro-gun advocates.

"I own guns, I choose to own guns, I choose to carry

guns. That's my choice. It's not for everyone, I absolutely agree with that. Everybody needs a background check, I'm having a background check right now," he said, pointing at the gun vendor who was looking at a laptop.

In the US, adults with a clean criminal record can generally buy a gun, as was the case with Nicolas Cruz in Parkland. Regulatory loopholes also allow for certain gun sales without background checks. The issue is deeply political — on one side, the powerful National Rifle Association (NRA) aggressively lobbies lawmakers to maintain the status quo.

On the other side, advocates for stricter gun controls say a criminal record check is not sufficiently thorough and often misses red flags that don't rise to the level of criminal charges, such as a mental health problems.

The FBI admitted Friday it received a chilling warning in January from a tipster who said Cruz could be planning a mass shooting, but that agents failed to follow up.—AFP ■

Fire hits Jokhang monastery, one of Tibet's most sacred

BEIJING — A fire broke out Saturday at one of the most sacred sites for Tibetan Buddhism, Lhasa's revered Jokhang temple, state media said, but no casualties were reported and the extent of the damage remained unclear.

The official Xinhua news agency said the fire began at 6:40pm but was soon put out at UNESCO World Heritage Site, which has more than 1,300 years of history and lies at the heart of old Lhasa. "The fire was quickly extinguished, there were no casualties and order is normal in the area," said the state-run Tibet Daily, adding that Tibet's top Communist party official Wu Yingjie had rushed to the scene.

Images posted on social media of the blaze showed the eaved roof of a section of the building lit with roaring yellow flames and emitting a haze of smoke.

But on Twitter, which is blocked in China, Tibetans abroad noted that photos and posts about the fire were quickly being



Jokhang houses one of Tibetan Buddhism's most venerated icons, the Jowo Shakyamuni, a statue believed to be one of just three crafted during the Buddha's actual lifetime, depicting him at age 12. **PHOTO: AFP**

censored. Robert Barnett, a London-based Tibetologist, tweeted that sources in Lhasa "claim police have threatened anyone distributing pictures or unofficial news about the fire."

The blaze comes as Tibetans across the country are celebrating Losar, the traditional Tibetan New Year that began on Friday, the same day as the

Chinese lunar new year. The temple, an important pilgrimage site, had been closed to the public on Saturday, Xinhua reported, citing a schedule from local authorities from before the holiday began.

Jokhang houses one of Tibetan Buddhism's most venerated icons — the Jowo Shakyamuni, a statue believed to be one

of just three crafted during the Buddha's actual lifetime, depicting him at age 12.

It is also home to numerous other priceless cultural artifacts, including over 3,000 images of Buddhas, deities and historical figures as well as treasures and manuscripts, according to UNESCO. China has ruled Tibet since the 1950s,

and has been accused of trying to eradicate its Buddhist-based culture through political and religious repression.

Beijing insists that Tibetans enjoy extensive freedoms and argues that it has brought economic growth to the region.

Its officially atheist ruling Communist party views the Tibetan spiritual

leader the Dalai Lama as a dangerous "separatist" campaigning for independence. He says he seeks only greater autonomy.

Foreign journalists are banned from visiting Tibet except on state-sponsored tours, as Beijing seeks to strictly control the narrative about the region, ranked the second least free territory in the world after Syria by US think tank Freedom House.

In 2008, demonstrations by Tibetan monks in Lhasa degenerated into deadly violence targeting Han and the Hui, China's Muslim minority. Later that year, dozens of monks burst into Jokhang temple to interrupt a state-run foreign media press tour intended to showcase the region's harmony and stability in wake of the protests, accusing the government of lying. More than 150 Tibetans have self-immolated in protest against Beijing's presence in Tibet since 2009, according to the International Campaign for Tibet, headquartered in Washington. —AFP ■



A French-made ATR-72 owned by Iran's Aseman Airlines sits on the tarmac at Dubai airport on 29 July, 2008. **PHOTO: AFP**

ATR aircraft of Aseman Airlines crashes in Iran killing all 66 aboard

TEHRAN — An Iranian passenger plane on a domestic flight crashed into the country's Zagros mountains on Sunday killing all 66 people on board, officials said.

The Aseman Airlines flight left Tehran's Mehrabad airport around 0800 (0430 GMT) for the city of Yasuj in Isfahan province, said Mohammad Tabatabai, director of public relations for the airline.

The plane crashed into Dena mountain,

part of the Zagros range, around 23 kilometres (14 miles) from Yasuj, some 500 kilometres south of the capital, he told state broadcaster IRIB. "After searches in the area, unfortunately we were informed that the plane crashed. Unfortunately, all our dear ones lost their lives in this incident," said Tabatabai. The plane was carrying 60 passengers, including one child, as well as six crew, he added.

A helicopter sent by

Iran's national emergency services was unable to land at the site of the accident due to severe weather, its spokesman said.

The Relief and Rescue Organization of Iran's Red Crescent said it had dispatched 12 teams to the region. "Given the fact that the area is mountainous, it is not possible to send ambulances," Mojtaba Khaledi, spokesman for the national emergency services, told ISNA news agency.—AFP ■

"NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF THE CITY GOLF RESORT FOR PAYMENT OF MONTHLY FEES"

1. It is found out that some members (Myanmars/Foreigners) of the City Golf Resort, Yangon City Development Committee, have failed to pay their monthly fees for various reasons.
2. According to paragraph (9) of the rules and regulations of the City Golf Resort, those members (Myanmar/Foreigners) who fail to pay their monthly fees for a period of one year and over shall cease to be a member of the Resort, and so they are intimated to come and clear their outstanding dues by 15-3-2018 at the latest.

**General Manager
City Golf Resort**

DAEWOO PRECIOUS RESOURCES COMPANY LIMITED (In Members Voluntary Winding-up)

Notice of Special Resolutions pursuant to section 206(1)

The following Special Resolutions were unanimously passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the shareholders of DAEWOO Precious Resources Company Limited held on 9th February 2018 at 9:00 am at Building 8, 5th Floor Myanmar Info-Tech (Phase-3), Hlaing University Campus, Hlaing Township, Yangon Region as required under Section 203 (2) of the Myanmar Companies Act:-

Special Resolution No.1
Resolved that the Company be wound up as "Members' Voluntary Winding Up" with effect from 9th February 2018.

Special Resolution No.2
Resolved that U Maung Maung Aung, C.P.A, be hereby appointed as Liquidator of the Company with effect from 9th February 2018, for the purpose of such winding up and is authorized to carry on the business of the Company to such extent and for such period as may be necessary only for the beneficial winding up thereof and is granted such other powers as may be deemed fit and proper and to finally wind up the Company.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

I, the undersigned Liquidator of DAEWOO Precious Resources Company Limited have fixed the period for creditors to submit their claims together with supporting documents, to the undersigned as one month from date of the publication of this notice and that in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved and before the final winding up date.

All persons claiming to be creditors of the above company are therefore requested to submit details of the claims, together with any documentary evidence in their possession, to the Liquidator at the address given below, before the above date.

(U Maung Maung Aung)

Liquidator

DAEWOO Precious Resources Company Limited
(In Members' Voluntary Winding up)

64(B), 1st Floor, Shwegan Plaza,
Komin Kochin Road, Bahan Township, Yangon Region.

Baftas brace for 'blackout' as 'The Shape of Water' dominates

GETTY IMAGES NORTH AMERICA — Frederick M Brown 'The Shape of Water' director Guillermo del Toro (l) and actors Sally Hawkins and Richard Jenkins will be hoping the film scoops more awards at the Baftas, following success at this month's Directors Guild Of America Awards

Guillermo del Toro's fantasy film "The Shape of Water" leads the nominations at Sunday's Baftas, where Hollywood stars will again turn the red carpet black in solidarity with the #Me Too movement.

The Cold War-era movie has 12 nominations, while crime drama "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" and "Darkest Hour", about British wartime leader Winston Churchill, each have nine.

All three are up for the best film award, along with another World War II drama, Christopher Nolan's "Dunkirk", and Luca Guadagnino's coming-of-age romance "Call Me By Your Name".

Del Toro, Guadagnino, Nolan and Martin McDonagh ("Three Billboards") are up for best director alongside Denis Villeneuve for "Blade Runner 2049" — an all-male lineup that has drawn criticism, particularly this year.

With Hollywood still reeling from the fallout of the Harvey Weinstein scandal, actresses look set to wear all-black outfits at London's Albert Hall, just as they did at last month's Golden Globes.



'The Shape of Water' director Guillermo del Toro (l) and actors Sally Hawkins and Richard Jenkins will be hoping the film scoops more awards at the Baftas, following success at this month's Directors Guild Of America Awards. PHOTO: AFP

Bafta nominees Margot Robbie and Allison Janney are among those who say they will repeat the gesture, which was a powerful statement by the A-list against a culture of sexual harassment and abuse.

'Justice and equality fund'

It is not yet clear whether the Duchess of Cambridge will follow suit, however, when she attends with her husband Prince William, president of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (Bafta).

Last year she wore a black Alexander McQueen gown with white flowers, but may be wary of being seen to breach royal protocol by aligning herself with a public protest.

In an open letter published Sunday before the awards, around 200 British stars demanded an end to sexual harassment and abuse.

Signatories, including Kate Winslet, Emma Watson, Emma Thompson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Keira Knightley and Saoirse Ronan, expressed solidarity with the Time's Up movement in the

United States and called for donations to a new "justice and equality fund" for victims.

The letter to The Observer newspaper is addressed to "dear sisters", as was a similar statement by US actresses last month, and calls for an international movement to stamp out a culture of abuse exposed by the Weinstein scandal.

Timed to fall between the Globes and the Oscars, the Baftas' choices often mirror those of its American heavyweights.

"The Shape of Water", a story of love between a mute

cleaning woman and a mystery merman-like creature, is leading the pack just as it has been across the Atlantic.

Aside from the best film and best director nods, Del Toro is up for original screenplay, Sally Hawkins is nominated as leading actress and Octavia Spencer for supporting actress.

The British-produced "Three Billboards" has nominations for best film, director and original screenplay for McDonagh, while Frances McDormand is up for leading actress, and Sam Rockwell and Woody Harrelson for best supporting actors.

Gary Oldman's turn as Churchill in "Darkest Hour" won him a Golden Globe and an Oscar nod, and has also put him in line for a Bafta.

In the leading actor category he is up against Timothee Chalamet ("Call Me by Your Name"), Daniel Day-Lewis ("Phantom Thread"), Daniel Kaluuya ("Get Out") and Jamie Bell ("Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool").

"Darkest Hour" has also been nominated in the best film and outstanding British film categories, while Kristin Scott Thomas is up for supporting actress for her role as Churchill's wife Clementine.

Robbie is nominated for leading actress for "I, Tonya", alongside McDormand, Hawkins, Annette Bening ("Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool") and Saoirse Ronan ("Lady Bird").—AFP ■

British female stars say 'Time's up' ahead of Baftas

LONDON — Actresses Kate Winslet and Emma Watson joined around 200 British stars in demanding an end to sexual harassment and abuse, in an open letter published on Sunday ahead of the Bafta film awards.

Signatories including Emma Thompson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Keira Knightley and Saoirse Ronan, expressed solidarity with the Time's Up movement in the United States and called for donations to a new "justice and equality fund" for victims.

The letter to The Observer newspaper is addressed to "dear sisters", as was a similar statement by US actresses last month, and calls for an international movement to stamp out a culture of abuse exposed by the

Harvey Weinstein scandal.

"In the very near past, we lived in a world where sexual harassment was an uncomfortable joke; an unavoidable, awkward part of being a girl or a woman. It was certainly not to be discussed, let alone addressed," they say.

"In 2018, we seem to have woken up in a world ripe for change. If we truly embrace this moment, a line in the sand will turn to stone."

'Imbalance of power'

The letter was published ahead of the British Academy Film Awards on Sunday night, when some stars are expected to repeat the protest staged at last month's Golden Globes and wear

black in a show of solidarity with victims. "As we approach the Baftas, our industry's time for celebration and acknowledgement, we hope we can celebrate this tremendous moment of solidarity and unity across borders by coming together and making this movement international," the letter says.

It emphasises that revelations about abuse in Hollywood have now spread across the world, saying the movement is about more than just the entertainment industry.

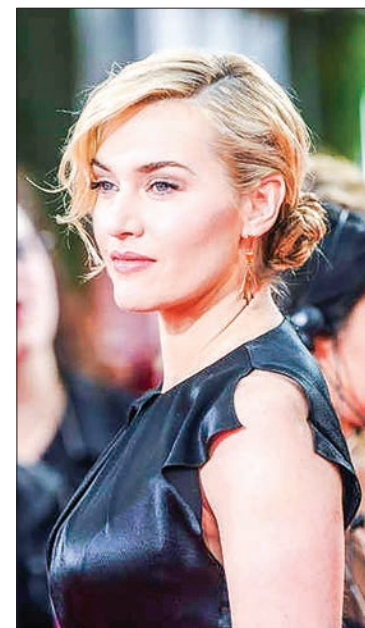
It highlights problems in Britain such as the gender pay gap and the changes to work that make it more insecure.

"This movement is intersectional, with conversations across

race, class, community, ability and work environment, to talk about the imbalance of power," the letter states.

Around 160 activists and academics have signed a sister letter pledging support for the new fund, which aims to make workplaces safe and support victims of abuse.

The signatories thank the high-profile stars for helping "push issues such as sexual harassment and rape into the public consciousness in an unprecedented way". "We believe that this is a moment in time when we can harness our collective energies to dismantle the wall of silence that surrounds violence against women and girls," they say.—AFP ■



Kate Winslet was among some 200 British stars expressing solidarity with the Time's Up movement in the US and calling for donations to a "justice and equality fund" for victims. PHOTO: AFP

Monument to Soviet WW II air pilots to emerge in North Carolina by autumn

NORFOLK /Virginia--A monument to Soviet pilots who underwent training and then took Catalina flying boats to the Soviet Union during World War II will emerge in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, by next autumn, the city's acting mayor, Rick King, told the media on Friday.

King said he hoped the monument would be in place by 1 December. He was speaking at a special ceremony honoring Rus-

sian sailors buried in Norfolk. The monument will be delivered from Russia.

The United States and Russia are in the process of coordinating the details of the monument's handover. The city authorities unanimously supported the idea of the monument King said. The bronze monument will depict a flying boat and three pilots — Soviet, Canadian and American — standing on it.

At a reception following the ceremony on Friday Russian ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov in his speech looked back on the history of US-Russian relations.

"In the history of Russian-US relations there are glorious pages describing the days when during World War II the Soviet Union and the United States were fighting together against Nazi Germany. The lend-

lease program was an important part of our joint struggle," Antonov said.

"In January 1945 one of the planes crashed during tack-off. A memorable plaque will be placed at the site of the pilots' death (at a US Coast Guard base) and a monument, in Elizabeth City (North Carolina), Antonov said.

He thanked the command of the base and the city authorities for cooperation.—Tass ■

Putin congratulates Russian Buddhists on occasions of Lunar New Year

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin has congratulated the Russian Buddhists on the occasion of the Lunar New Year. The congratulatory telegram was published at the Kremlin's official homepage.

"It is important that Russia's Buddhist community is preserving carefully the invaluable ethic and spiritual heritage and self-identical traditions of its ancestors and that is pays relentless attention to the highly demanded educational and charity activities, cares for family values and upbringing of younger generations, promotion of inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue, as well as the consolidation of peace and concord in society," Putin wrote.

The Lunar New Year shifts from one date to another every year, as its start is calculated in accordance with the Lunar

calendar. Most typically, it falls on the end of winter or the very beginning of spring. In 2018, the New Year according to the oriental calendar begins on 16 February. Buddhists in Russia mark the feast in the course a whole

month, which is called the White Month. It symbolizes spiritual purification and new life. In line with tradition, the believers to parties and treat their relatives and friends with dairy products. Most of the 900,000-strong Bud-

dhist population in Russia lives in Kalmykia, which a steppe-land region to the north of North Caucasus, Buryatia in eastern Siberia, the Irkutsk region, Tyva in southern Siberia, and the Trans-Baikal territory.—Tass ■



A cleansing ritual at the Ivolginsky datsan Buddhist temple as part of celebrations of the Lunar New Year of the Dog. PHOTO: TASS

Kyoto revamping crowded bus services amid rise in foreign tourists

KYOTO — As more foreigner travelers visit the former Japanese capital of Kyoto, crowded and delayed city buses have become a headache for local citizens, prompting traffic authorities to take steps to ensure smoother passenger services and encourage the use of subway lines.

In Kyoto, passengers have generally boarded buses through the rear door and paid the fare when getting off from the front door for over 40 years.

But with the city now attracting around 55 million tourists a year, Kyoto City Bus services, whose routes includes popular

tourist attractions, have become constantly crowded, with some tourists carrying large baggage.

As some foreign travelers also often have difficulty in paying the fare promptly with coins at the bus stops, it has become difficult for the city buses to maintain punctuality.

According to the

Nihon Bus Association, the bus industry body, the boarding system for route buses varies by regions, with passengers paying fares when they get on through the front door in flat fare zones in Tokyo and Yokohama and Nagoya.

In the face of complaints from local citi-

zens about delayed bus services, the Kyoto city government's traffic bureau conducted a practical experiment last October to switch doors for boarding and alighting, and making passengers pay the fare when they get on.

Since the test showed that the change in entry and exit doors contribut-

ed to reducing the average stoppage time by 11.5 seconds, the bus operator plans to change its boarding system for the route connecting Kyoto Station and Ginkakuji Temple this fall and eventually introduce the new system on 61 routes where a flat fare system of 230 yen is applied.—Kyodo News ■

In memoriam
Family shares merits gained
Maha Thayay Sithu

Lt-Gen Tin Oo

Prayer on 17th anniversary of his death

In memory of benefactor Phay Phay Gyi Lt-Gen Tin Oo who suddenly left us seventeen years ago, we family members have made donations and offered 'soon' and provisions to members of the Sangha today on 19-2-2018. We family members share with you the merits gained.

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Wife | - Daw Khin Than Nwe |
| Sons and daughters | - U Maung Maung Kyaw + Daw Cho Leh Oo - Phyu Phyu Oo - Dr Myat Noe+ Yin Mar Oo - Zaw Tun Oo+ Khin Thida - Nay Tun Oo |
| Grandchildre | - Hein Htet, - Yin Myat Noe, - Phu Ngon Kyaw, - Thant Thi Han Zaw (Po Thila) |

Famous Chinese painting brought to life with holographic technology

BEIJING — The Palace Museum will bring a famous Chinese painting to "life" using holographic technology, enabling visitors to immerse themselves in the virtual scenes of the painting, according to Shan Jixiang, director of the museum.

The painting, "River-side Scene at Qingming Festival," is a masterpiece by artist Zhang Zeduan from the Northern Song Dynasty (960 to 1127 AD). It reveals the lifestyles people from of all walks of life in the then prosperous capital Bianjing, today's Kaifeng in central China's Henan Province, during the Qing-

ming Festival.

The 360-degree holographic technology and 4D dome screen will make characters of the painting — street vendors, passengers on barges, and customers in shops — more dynamic, Shan said.

"Cultural relics are not just lifeless remains. Armed with technology, the painting can bring the audience back to the Song Dynasty and impress them with the beauty of the art," Shan said. The exhibition will be available in spring and summer. The painting is one of the 1.86 million cultural collections of the Palace Museum.—Xinhua ■

Yangon still making great shape in 2018 MPT MNL Tourney



Players from Yangon United and GFA lunge for the ball in yesterday's match at Yangon United Sport Complex. **PHOTO:MNL**

YANGON United had their big win match when they beat GFA FC 6-0 at their home stadium yesterday. Yangon United's young player Aee Soe scored 2 goals for Yangon.

Yangon played very aggressively right from the kick-off.

Yangon United lined up with its reliable players including AeeSoe, MaungMaungLwin, Kyi Lin, David Htan, SekouSylla and Kosuke Yamazaki.

GFA also used its great player Emmanuel in yesterday's match.

At the 28 minute mark Aee-Soe scored an opening goal for Yangon and the first half just ended with a single goal as defenders from GFA were very firm in their stable style of playing.

In the second half, Emmanuel made the second goal for

Yangon at 53 minute by using his normal speedy play style.

Within the five minute of the second goal, the third goal for Yangon was scored by Kosuke effectively surprising his opponents.

As a big mistake was found in the defensive of GFA, Emmanuel immediately scored another goal for Yangon at 61 minute.

Yangon's old-service player Kyi Lin also garnered a goal at 77 minutes.

Yangon youngster player AeeSoe made the sixth goal for Yangon at 83 minute mark.

Yangon United leads the table in week-6 of Myanmar National League with Shan United and Yadanarbon following Yangon. Yangon will play against Shan United on 23 February.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■

Pogba illness concerns Mourinho ahead of Sevilla trip

LONDON — Jose Mourinho faces an anxious wait to discover whether Paul Pogba can take part in Manchester United's midweek Champions League last 16 trip to Sevilla after he missed their FA Cup victory over Huddersfield Town.

An unspecified illness saw Pogba withdraw on the morning of Saturday's match in Huddersfield, which United won 2-0 thanks to two goals from Romelu Lukaku as they advanced into the quarter-finals.

United manager Mourinho, whose relationship with club-record signing Pogba has been under close scrutiny in recent weeks, insisted he did not even know what the illness was or how long the France midfielder may be unable to play, having planned to play him in a 4-3-3 system that the player considers his favourite.

"I don't know," said Mourinho when asked about the nature of Pogba's illness after Saturday's match.

"When I was told by the doctor this morning that he was not coming, I don't want to know anything else about it — I have

to think who is going to replace him, what I am going to do because we worked hard during the week."

The Portuguese boss added: "Now is the time to think about Paul, to know what happened, why he didn't feel good enough to play, can he play or be available to help us on Wednesday?"

Pogba has reportedly been unhappy in recent weeks at the style Mourinho has adopted, generally playing him alongside Nemanja Matic in a two-man midfield.

But ahead of Saturday's match, Mourinho appeared prepared to meet the wishes of Pogba, who rejoined United from Juventus for £89.3 million (\$123.5 million, 100.5 million euros) in August 2016, by playing him on the left side of a three-man midfield set-up. United still won comfortably, thanks to Lukaku's double, although victory could have been even more emphatic but for video assistant referee (VAR) Neil Swarbrick ruling out a Juan Mata 'goal' late in the first half in an incredibly close offside call.—AFP ■



Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho's relationship with club-record signing Paul Pogba has been under close scrutiny in recent weeks. **PHOTO:AFP**

Two new FAs in Mandalay

THE Football Associations of Amarapura and Chanmyathasi, were formed recently to give a chance at football to youth in Mandalay Region.

Township Football Association working committee chairman U Bunny Tin Aung, Myanmar's golden era players U Khin Maung Lay and U Khin Maung Lwin Lay organized these two associations in the span of one day. Firstly, the Football Association of Amarapura was formed with 15 members and 4 Chairmen. It is the fifth one of Mandalay Region. About 40 persons attended the meeting. The football Association of Chanmyathasi was then formed as the 6th FA of Mandalay Region along with the same officials and about 25 attendees. The Chanmyathasi football association included three chairman and 15 members of football officials.

U Myo Thiha from Chanmyathasi, Mandalay said that associations like these are very good for Mandalay and its neighbor Amarapura. "The youths in Mandalay are very good at playing football and even one of my sons is a champion at his school. So we, Mandalay people are welcoming the associations," said U Myo Thiha.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■

‘Do not test Israel’, Netanyahu tells Iran, brandishing drone ‘piece’

MUNICH (Germany) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Tehran on Sunday over aggressions by what he called Iran and its “proxies” in Syria, while showing what he claimed was a piece of an Iranian drone shot down in Israeli airspace.

Saying he had “a message to the tyrants of Tehran” during a speech at the Munich Security Conference, he warned: “Do not test Israel’s resolve.”

He brandished a rectangular piece of dark green metal which he called “a piece of that Iranian drone, or what’s left of it, after we shot it down.”

Israel has said it shot down the drone on 10 February after it entered the country from Syria, and responded with a raid on what it said was the Iranian con-

trol systems for the craft in Syria.

It marked the first time Israel publicly acknowledged hitting Iranian targets in Syria since the 2011 start of the civil war there.

During the strikes, one of Israel’s F-16 fighter jets was shot down, believed to be the first loss of an Israeli plane in combat since 1982.

Calling Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif the “smooth-talking mouthpiece of Iran’s regime,” Netanyahu said: “Mr Zarif, do you recognise this? You should, it’s yours.”

Again referring to Zarif, who is scheduled to speak later in Munich, the Israeli leader said: “No doubt Mr Zarif will brazenly deny Iran’s involvement in Syria.”

“He lies with eloquence.”

- ‘Noose of terror’ -

The Israeli military has

claimed the drone was a copy of a US model captured by Iran in 2011, based on an analysis of the drone’s debris.

Tensions between the two countries have been building in recent months, with Israel fearing that Tehran is trying to establish a permanent presence in Syria as part of an effort to become a greater regional power in the Middle East.

At the same time, Syria appears to feel it now has the upper hand in the civil war and is more emboldened to stop Israeli air raids inside the country, analysts say.

But Netanyahu said Sunday that Israel would not let Iran obtain a permanent foothold in its northern neighbour.

“Through its proxies — Shiite militias in Iraq, the Huthis in



Netanyahu said he had “a message to the tyrants of Tehran”, during a speech at the Munich Security Conference. **PHOTO: AFP**

Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza — Iran is devouring huge swathes of the Middle East,” he said.

“Israel will not allow Iran’s regime to put a noose of terror around our neck,” he added.

“We will act without hesitation to defend ourselves. And we will act if necessary not just against Iran’s proxies that are at-

tacking us, but against Iran itself.”

But he stressed that Israel was not the enemy of the Iranian people, and offered his condolences to the families of the 66 people killed in an Iranian plane crash on Sunday.

“We have no quarrel with the people of Iran, only with the regime that torments them,” Netanyahu said.—AFP ■

Trump turns on FBI over school shooting after criticism from survivors

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump said on Saturday the FBI was so caught up in the Russia probe that it failed to heed signs which could have prevented the Parkland school shooting.

His comments came as he faces criticism from survivors of the attack over his ties to the powerful National Rifle Association, and after several thousand rallied in Florida to demand urgent action on gun control.

“Very sad that the FBI missed all of the many signals sent out by the Florida school shooter. This is not acceptable,” he wrote on Twitter.

“They are spending too much time trying to prove Russian collusion with the Trump campaign — there is no collusion. Get back to the basics and make us all proud!”

US authorities have come under mounting scrutiny for failing to act on a series of warning signs ahead of the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in which 17 people were killed.

The FBI admitted Friday it received a chilling warning in January from a tipster who said the gunman Nikolas Cruz could be planning a mass shooting, but that agents failed to follow up.

But the attack, the 18th school

shooting this year alone, has also renewed calls for greater gun control with several survivors leading the charge.

One of them, 18-year-old Emma Gonzalez delivered a fiery address to a crowd of students, parents and residents in Ft Lauderdale.

“To every politician taking donations from the NRA, shame on you!” she thundered, assailing Trump over the multi-million-dollar support his campaign received from the gun lobby. The crowd chanted in turn: “Shame on you!”

“We are going to be the last mass shooting... We are going to change the law,” she vowed —

slamming the fact 19-year-old Cruz was able to legally buy a semi-automatic firearm despite a history of troubling and violent behavior.

“The question on whether or not people should be allowed to own an automatic weapon is not a political one.

It is question of life or death and it needs to stop being a question of politics,” Gonzalez told AFP following her speech. In Washington, the political response has made clear that the powerful NRA pro-gun lobby remains formidable, while Trump himself suggested the root cause of mass shootings was a crisis of mental health — making no

mention of gun control.

“If the president wants to come up to me and tell me to my face that it was a terrible tragedy and... how nothing is going to be done about it, I’m going to happily ask him how much money he received from the National Rifle Association,” Gonzalez said in her impassioned address.

“It doesn’t matter because I already know. Thirty million,” she said, citing the sum spent by the NRA to support Trump’s election bid and defeat Hillary Clinton.

She then ran through a list of the pro-gun lobby’s talking points — for example, that “a good guy with a gun stops a bad guy with a gun,” that no law could ever stop a madman intent on killing — answering each argument with “We call BS.”

The young woman’s powerful address immediately went viral, with her name a top trending topic on Twitter.

- Missed warnings -

In addition to the FBI’s missteps, Cruz was also known to local police after his mother repeatedly reported him for violent outbursts, while records obtained by the South Florida Sun Sentinel show authorities investigated Cruz in 2016 after he cut his arms on messaging app Snapchat and threatened

to buy a gun.

The newspaper, citing Department of Children and Family Services documents, said the investigation came four days after Cruz turned 18 — legally an adult, and thus able to buy a firearm.

Investigators said there were “some implications” for the teen’s safety, but concluded that his “final level of risk is low as (he) resides with his mother, attends school and receives counseling” as an outpatient at a mental health center, the Sun Sentinel said. Cruz later passed a background check, allowing him in February 2017 to buy the AR-15 rifle used in the massacre.

Trump spoke by phone on Saturday with the Parkland mayor, the county commissioner and the principal of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School to express his condolences and offer his support.

He then pivoted to politics late Saturday with his allegations against the FBI — though the federal government’s investigation into allegations of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential race and collusion with the Trump campaign has been led by special prosecutor Robert Mueller since last May.—AFP ■



School shooting survivor Emma Gonzalez delivers a fiery speech at a rally for gun control in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on 17 February 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

Seeking post-Brexit unity, EU leaders find more fights

BRUSSELS — EU leaders face difficult talks this week on the thorny issues of how to plug holes in the post-Brexit budget and choose a successor for European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker.

A special one-day summit in Brussels on Friday of the 27 leaders without Britain is meant to be a key step in the roadmap to a leaner and more unified bloc after Britain leaves in just over a year.

But cracks have already appeared between French President Emmanuel Macron, leading the charge for a reformed Europe, and Juncker with his federalist vision of how top EU officials should be chosen in future.

The row means the EU's attempts to overcome the shock of losing a major member are running into the classic problems that have bedevilled it for its six decades of existence: money and sovereignty. Juncker was picked after European elections in 2014 by a controversial "Spitzenkandidat" system — German for "lead candidate" — under which the political group with the most votes gets to nominate its candidate for the job.

Both the European Parliament and Juncker back a repeat



European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker was picked after European elections in 2014 by a controversial "Spitzenkandidat" system — German for "lead candidate". PHOTO: AFP

after the May 2019 European election, saying it gives the public a direct say in who heads the commission, the EU's powerful executive arm.

- 'Right and obligation' -

European Council President Donald Tusk — who coordinates summits and represents the EU member states — is expected to lay out options at the summit, including whether to continue with the Spitzenkandidat system.

Leaders are expected to say it is their own "right and obligation" to choose the commission chief, while "taking into account"

the views of parliament, as the EU treaties state, an EU source told AFP.

Many national leaders are bitterly opposed to the Spitzenkandidat process, saying it sidelines democratically elected heads of government in favour of a backroom deal by Brussels-based political parties, and also makes the job of commission chief too political.

Macron this week slammed the Brussels establishment as ideologically incoherent and called for a "political revamp" to give the commission a clear mandate, defined by the national

leaders.

Juncker however said earlier this week that the Spitzenkandidat system was "completely logical". He also called for the commission chief's job to be merged with Tusk's.

The row has become particularly fierce after the European Parliament earlier this month dealt Macron a slap by voting against "transnational lists" — which would allow 30 of the 73 seats vacated by Britain to be elected on pan-European tickets, instead of directly to constituencies. "Why should we have Spitzenkandidaten if we have no transnational list for elections?!" Luxembourg Prime Minister Xavier Bettel tweeted.

- Fixing a hole -

Filling the hole that Brexit leaves in the EU's multi-year budget from 2020 threatens to open up even deeper divisions — but this time between member states themselves.

Tusk will ask the leaders at the summit whether they want to increase the budget, decrease it or keep it the same, sources said.

EU Budget Commissioner Guenther Oettinger has said that Britain's exit could leave a hole of as much as between 12 and 15

billion euros (\$15-19 billion) and suggested that contributions be increased to between 1.1 per cent and 1.2 per cent of GDP from the current level of one per cent of GDP in the 2014-2020 budget.

The Netherlands, Denmark, Austria, Sweden and Finland, all net contributors, are said to be against that idea.

Warnings by Oettinger of cuts on agriculture — a bugbear for France — and "cohesion funds" that benefit poorer eastern European states are also likely to go down badly.

But there is little appetite for suggestions that the EU could try to bring countries like Poland and Hungary into line on issues including the rule of law and migration by making cohesion funds "conditional" on good behaviour.

With these tensions in the background it is no surprise that the EU has been stressing the need for unity in Brexit talks with Britain. Tusk is expected to ask leaders on Friday if they want to push ahead next month with issuing negotiating red lines on a post-Brexit future relationship with Britain. Uncertainty over Britain's wishes, and difficulties in negotiations on a post-Brexit transition period, could push that back.—AFP ■

Thirteen killed in Mexican quake zone helicopter crash

SANTIAGO JAMILTEPEC (Mexico) — Thirteen people were killed in southern Mexico when a minister's helicopter crash-landed on its way to the epicenter of a powerful earthquake that rattled the region, officials said on Saturday.

The 7.2 magnitude quake caused only material damage when it struck late Friday, but it triggered a tragedy in the town of Santiago Jamiltepec in Oaxaca state, where the chopper landed on its side, crushing a van. Five women, four men, and three children were killed on the spot, while another person died in hospital, the Oaxaca prosecutor's office said.

On board the UH-60 Black Hawk military helicopter were Interior Minister Alfonso Navarrete and Oaxaca state Governor Alejandro Murat, who were unharmed.—AFP ■

Guantanamo trial of Cole bombing suspect halted

WASHINGTON — The Guantanamo trial of the chief suspect in the deadly 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen was shut down on Friday as defence lawyers refused to return to the case, Pentagon officials said.

Military commissions judge Air Force Colonel Vance Spath halted the case, which could lead to the death penalty for Abdel Rahim al-Nashiri, in frustration that he could not compel Nashiri's main lawyers to show up in court.

"The USS Cole bombing trial ... military judge has abated indefinitely the pre-trial proceedings," Pentagon spokeswoman Commander Sarah Higgins said.

"It is unknown when pre-trial hearings will begin again."

According to a transcript of Friday's hearing, Spath complained that he was unable to enforce his orders on Nashiri's civilian defense attorneys to even join the proceedings by video.

"It's demonstrated lawlessness on their side; they don't follow orders," he said. But he also complained of lack of sup-



Abdel Rahim al-Nashiri is accused of being the mastermind behind the October 12, 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Aden, Yemen. PHOTO: AFP

port overall for the military commissions, which have made little progress in the cases for Guantanamo's remaining prisoners.

Suggesting that the military commissions setup was not functioning generally, Spath said he could not go on without the direction of a superior court.

"We need action. We need somebody to look at this process. We need somebody to give us di-

rection," Spath said.

The problems in the Nashiri trial "tells you how infected the process is and how far it goes within the Department of Defence that owns the process," he said.

The case, the military trial of one of the most high-profile prisoners at Guantanamo, plunged into chaos last year when three of Nashiri's lawyers quit.

They alleged that their supposed privileged conversations with and about their client had been monitored electronically by the government, and that they could not proceed with his defense in that case.

When Brigadier General John Baker, who oversees legal defense teams at Guantanamo, refused to order them back to work, he was charged with contempt of court and sentenced to three weeks' confinement in his Guantanamo trailer.

That left Nashiri's defense to Navy Lieutenant Alaric Piette, who only has six years' experience as a lawyer and none in a death penalty case. Piette has not actively defended Nashiri, admitting he lacks the qualification to do so. Nashiri is accused of being the mastermind behind the 12 October, 2000 bombing of the Cole, a guided missile destroyer that was moored in Aden, Yemen, when it was attacked.

The bombing, claimed by Al-Qaeda, left 17 dead and 39 injured.—AFP ■

Key facts about Russia's Topol intercontinental ballistic missile

MOSCOW — Thirty-five years ago, the RT-2PM (15Zh58) intercontinental ballistic missile of the RS-12M Topol road mobile complex was successfully launched for the first time at the 53rd research and testing range of the USSR Defence Ministry in Plesetsk on 8 February, 1983.

Project's history

A new-generation solid-propellant missile had been under development at the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology since 1975. This research institute specialized in mobile solid-propellant missiles: it was this firm that had earlier developed RT-2S Temp-2S and RSD-10 Pioneer (SS-20) missile systems.

The Soviet military believed that it would be difficult to spot a mobile missile system, which would, therefore, significantly reduce its vulnerability compared to silo-based missiles. The United States and its allies had no mobile ICBMs as they limited their effort only to developing MGM-31C Pershing II medium-range missile complexes.

Trials

The first test launch of the Topol intercontinental ballistic missile was conducted on Octo-



The first test launch of the Topol intercontinental ballistic missile was conducted in 1982. PHOTO: TASS

ber 27, 1982 from the Kapustin Yar practice range and it proved to be a failure.

After that, the development tests were transferred to the 53rd research and test range of the USSR Defence Ministry (Plesetsk) where the second and successful launch was conducted on 8 February, 1983.

The first three launches were conducted from a silo. The fourth trial was held on 10 August,

1983 when the Topol ICBM was test-launched from a self-propelled launcher.

Overall, 17 test launches of Topol ICBMs were held and only four of them failed.

Topol ICBMs enter service with Strategic Missile Force

On 1 December, 1988, the Soviet government issued a resolution on accepting the Topol

ICMB for service.

In 1991, the Soviet Army operated 288 Topol missile systems. After the disintegration of the USSR, three divisions armed with these ICBMs stayed on territory of Belarus and were withdrawn into Russia. In 1993, RT-2PM missile complexes that were in operation reached their maximum number of 369 units. Since 2006, Russia has been replacing Topols with new Topol-M mobile mis-

sile systems. Over 120 test and combat training launches of the RT-2PM Topol missiles were held from 1982 and an overwhelming majority of them were successful.

In the West, the RT-2PM Topol ICBM was dubbed the SS-25 Sickle.

Modifications

The Topol-M is a solid-propellant missile of universal (silo and mobile) basing with a new control system, enhanced accuracy, larger payload, a new ABM-piercing system and other innovations.

The Topol-E is an experimental missile for conducting the trials of new types of ICBM armament.

Design

The RT-2PM is a three-stage solid-propellant ICBM with the sequential arrangement of its stages.

Each of the three stages uses a solid-propellant engine with a fixed nozzle. The first stage is furnished with gas jet and aerodynamic vanes. The ICBM is also equipped with a separate stage for the warhead delivery.

The launcher is mounted on a MAZ-7912/7917 auto chassis.—Tass ■

US gun lovers defend rights amid debate for more restrictions

MIAMI — Pistols, rifles and ammunition are on display at a gun show in Miami, where Mike Vallone is buying an AR-15, a firearm at the centre of debate on gun control as the weapon of choice of several mass shooters.

Why would the 55-year-old, who already owns about 50 guns, want another one?

"Because I choose to own them. I have the constitutional right to own them and I choose to exercise that right," he told AFP on Saturday. Vallone was visiting the gun show three days after a 19-year-old massacred 17 people at his former high school with an AR-15 in Parkland, about an hour north of Miami. The semi-automatic rifle was also used to carry out mass shootings in Las Vegas (58 dead), Sutherland Springs, Texas (26 dead) and Newtown, Connecticut (26 dead).

The media "makes it look like it's evil," Vallone said, holding the \$600 gun he is about to buy. "This does nothing by itself. This takes a human being to take the rifle, point it and shoot someone."



Gun enthusiasts attend a show at the Dade County Youth Fairgrounds in Miami, Florida, on 17 February 2018, three days after a mass shooting at a high school 30 miles (48 km) away left 17 people dead. PHOTO: AFP

Every mass shooting reveals the deep fissures in American society between those who favour fewer restrictions on guns and gun ownership, and those who demand greater controls. The

"right of the people to keep and bear arms" is guaranteed under the US Constitution's Second Amendment, which was adopted in 1791. "The focus on gun control is an error and it won't stop

someone determined to commit crimes," said Vallone, raising a common argument among pro-gun advocates.

"I own guns, I choose to own guns, I choose to carry

guns. That's my choice. It's not for everyone, I absolutely agree with that. Everybody needs a background check, I'm having a background check right now," he said, pointing at the gun vendor who was looking at a laptop.

In the US, adults with a clean criminal record can generally buy a gun, as was the case with Nicolas Cruz in Parkland. Regulatory loopholes also allow for certain gun sales without background checks. The issue is deeply political — on one side, the powerful National Rifle Association (NRA) aggressively lobbies lawmakers to maintain the status quo.

On the other side, advocates for stricter gun controls say a criminal record check is not sufficiently thorough and often misses red flags that don't rise to the level of criminal charges, such as a mental health problems.

The FBI admitted Friday it received a chilling warning in January from a tipster who said Cruz could be planning a mass shooting, but that agents failed to follow up.—AFP ■

Fire hits Jokhang monastery, one of Tibet's most sacred

BEIJING — A fire broke out Saturday at one of the most sacred sites for Tibetan Buddhism, Lhasa's revered Jokhang temple, state media said, but no casualties were reported and the extent of the damage remained unclear.

The official Xinhua news agency said the fire began at 6:40pm but was soon put out at UNESCO World Heritage Site, which has more than 1,300 years of history and lies at the heart of old Lhasa. "The fire was quickly extinguished, there were no casualties and order is normal in the area," said the state-run Tibet Daily, adding that Tibet's top Communist party official Wu Yingjie had rushed to the scene.

Images posted on social media of the blaze showed the eaved roof of a section of the building lit with roaring yellow flames and emitting a haze of smoke.

But on Twitter, which is blocked in China, Tibetans abroad noted that photos and posts about the fire were quickly being



Jokhang houses one of Tibetan Buddhism's most venerated icons, the Jowo Shakyamuni, a statue believed to be one of just three crafted during the Buddha's actual lifetime, depicting him at age 12. **PHOTO: AFP**

censored. Robert Barnett, a London-based Tibetologist, tweeted that sources in Lhasa "claim police have threatened anyone distributing pictures or unofficial news about the fire."

The blaze comes as Tibetans across the country are celebrating Losar, the traditional Tibetan New Year that began on Friday, the same day as the

Chinese lunar new year. The temple, an important pilgrimage site, had been closed to the public on Saturday, Xinhua reported, citing a schedule from local authorities from before the holiday began.

Jokhang houses one of Tibetan Buddhism's most venerated icons — the Jowo Shakyamuni, a statue believed to be one

of just three crafted during the Buddha's actual lifetime, depicting him at age 12.

It is also home to numerous other priceless cultural artifacts, including over 3,000 images of Buddhas, deities and historical figures as well as treasures and manuscripts, according to UNESCO. China has ruled Tibet since the 1950s,

and has been accused of trying to eradicate its Buddhist-based culture through political and religious repression.

Beijing insists that Tibetans enjoy extensive freedoms and argues that it has brought economic growth to the region.

Its officially atheist ruling Communist party views the Tibetan spiritual

leader the Dalai Lama as a dangerous "separatist" campaigning for independence. He says he seeks only greater autonomy.

Foreign journalists are banned from visiting Tibet except on state-sponsored tours, as Beijing seeks to strictly control the narrative about the region, ranked the second least free territory in the world after Syria by US think tank Freedom House.

In 2008, demonstrations by Tibetan monks in Lhasa degenerated into deadly violence targeting Han and the Hui, China's Muslim minority. Later that year, dozens of monks burst into Jokhang temple to interrupt a state-run foreign media press tour intended to showcase the region's harmony and stability in wake of the protests, accusing the government of lying. More than 150 Tibetans have self-immolated in protest against Beijing's presence in Tibet since 2009, according to the International Campaign for Tibet, headquartered in Washington. —AFP ■



A French-made ATR-72 owned by Iran's Aseman Airlines sits on the tarmac at Dubai airport on 29 July, 2008. **PHOTO: AFP**

ATR aircraft of Aseman Airlines crashes in Iran killing all 66 aboard

TEHRAN — An Iranian passenger plane on a domestic flight crashed into the country's Zagros mountains on Sunday killing all 66 people on board, officials said.

The Aseman Airlines flight left Tehran's Mehrabad airport around 0800 (0430 GMT) for the city of Yasuj in Isfahan province, said Mohammad Tabatabai, director of public relations for the airline.

The plane crashed into Dena mountain,

part of the Zagros range, around 23 kilometres (14 miles) from Yasuj, some 500 kilometres south of the capital, he told state broadcaster IRIB. "After searches in the area, unfortunately we were informed that the plane crashed. Unfortunately, all our dear ones lost their lives in this incident," said Tabatabai. The plane was carrying 60 passengers, including one child, as well as six crew, he added.

A helicopter sent by

Iran's national emergency services was unable to land at the site of the accident due to severe weather, its spokesman said.

The Relief and Rescue Organization of Iran's Red Crescent said it had dispatched 12 teams to the region. "Given the fact that the area is mountainous, it is not possible to send ambulances," Mojtaba Khaledi, spokesman for the national emergency services, told ISNA news agency.—AFP ■

"NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF THE CITY GOLF RESORT FOR PAYMENT OF MONTHLY FEES"

1. It is found out that some members (Myanmars/Foreigners) of the City Golf Resort, Yangon City Development Committee, have failed to pay their monthly fees for various reasons.
2. According to paragraph (9) of the rules and regulations of the City Golf Resort, those members (Myanmar/Foreigners) who fail to pay their monthly fees for a period of one year and over shall cease to be a member of the Resort, and so they are intimated to come and clear their outstanding dues by 15-3-2018 at the latest.

**General Manager
City Golf Resort**

DAEWOO PRECIOUS RESOURCES COMPANY LIMITED (In Members Voluntary Winding-up)

Notice of Special Resolutions pursuant to section 206(1)

The following Special Resolutions were unanimously passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the shareholders of DAEWOO Precious Resources Company Limited held on 9th February 2018 at 9:00 am at Building 8, 5th Floor Myanmar Info-Tech (Phase-3), Hlaing University Campus, Hlaing Township, Yangon Region as required under Section 203 (2) of the Myanmar Companies Act:-

Special Resolution No.1
Resolved that the Company be wound up as "Members' Voluntary Winding Up" with effect from 9th February 2018.

Special Resolution No.2
Resolved that U Maung Maung Aung, C.P.A, be hereby appointed as Liquidator of the Company with effect from 9th February 2018, for the purpose of such winding up and is authorized to carry on the business of the Company to such extent and for such period as may be necessary only for the beneficial winding up thereof and is granted such other powers as may be deemed fit and proper and to finally wind up the Company.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

I, the undersigned Liquidator of DAEWOO Precious Resources Company Limited have fixed the period for creditors to submit their claims together with supporting documents, to the undersigned as one month from date of the publication of this notice and that in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts are proved and before the final winding up date.

All persons claiming to be creditors of the above company are therefore requested to submit details of the claims, together with any documentary evidence in their possession, to the Liquidator at the address given below, before the above date.

(U Maung Maung Aung)

Liquidator

DAEWOO Precious Resources Company Limited
(In Members' Voluntary Winding up)

64(B), 1st Floor, Shwegan Plaza,
Komin Kochin Road, Bahan Township, Yangon Region.

Baftas brace for 'blackout' as 'The Shape of Water' dominates

GETTY IMAGES NORTH AMERICA — Frederick M Brown 'The Shape of Water' director Guillermo del Toro (l) and actors Sally Hawkins and Richard Jenkins will be hoping the film scoops more awards at the Baftas, following success at this month's Directors Guild Of America Awards

Guillermo del Toro's fantasy film "The Shape of Water" leads the nominations at Sunday's Baftas, where Hollywood stars will again turn the red carpet black in solidarity with the #Me Too movement.

The Cold War-era movie has 12 nominations, while crime drama "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" and "Darkest Hour", about British wartime leader Winston Churchill, each have nine.

All three are up for the best film award, along with another World War II drama, Christopher Nolan's "Dunkirk", and Luca Guadagnino's coming-of-age romance "Call Me By Your Name".

Del Toro, Guadagnino, Nolan and Martin McDonagh ("Three Billboards") are up for best director alongside Denis Villeneuve for "Blade Runner 2049" — an all-male lineup that has drawn criticism, particularly this year.

With Hollywood still reeling from the fallout of the Harvey Weinstein scandal, actresses look set to wear all-black outfits at London's Albert Hall, just as they did at last month's Golden Globes.



'The Shape of Water' director Guillermo del Toro (l) and actors Sally Hawkins and Richard Jenkins will be hoping the film scoops more awards at the Baftas, following success at this month's Directors Guild Of America Awards. PHOTO: AFP

Bafta nominees Margot Robbie and Allison Janney are among those who say they will repeat the gesture, which was a powerful statement by the A-list against a culture of sexual harassment and abuse.

'Justice and equality fund'

It is not yet clear whether the Duchess of Cambridge will follow suit, however, when she attends with her husband Prince William, president of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (Bafta).

Last year she wore a black Alexander McQueen gown with white flowers, but may be wary of being seen to breach royal protocol by aligning herself with a public protest.

In an open letter published Sunday before the awards, around 200 British stars demanded an end to sexual harassment and abuse.

Signatories, including Kate Winslet, Emma Watson, Emma Thompson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Keira Knightley and Saoirse Ronan, expressed solidarity with the Time's Up movement in the

United States and called for donations to a new "justice and equality fund" for victims.

The letter to The Observer newspaper is addressed to "dear sisters", as was a similar statement by US actresses last month, and calls for an international movement to stamp out a culture of abuse exposed by the Weinstein scandal.

Timed to fall between the Globes and the Oscars, the Baftas' choices often mirror those of its American heavyweights.

"The Shape of Water", a story of love between a mute

cleaning woman and a mystery merman-like creature, is leading the pack just as it has been across the Atlantic.

Aside from the best film and best director nods, Del Toro is up for original screenplay, Sally Hawkins is nominated as leading actress and Octavia Spencer for supporting actress.

The British-produced "Three Billboards" has nominations for best film, director and original screenplay for McDonagh, while Frances McDormand is up for leading actress, and Sam Rockwell and Woody Harrelson for best supporting actors.

Gary Oldman's turn as Churchill in "Darkest Hour" won him a Golden Globe and an Oscar nod, and has also put him in line for a Bafta.

In the leading actor category he is up against Timothee Chalamet ("Call Me by Your Name"), Daniel Day-Lewis ("Phantom Thread"), Daniel Kaluuya ("Get Out") and Jamie Bell ("Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool").

"Darkest Hour" has also been nominated in the best film and outstanding British film categories, while Kristin Scott Thomas is up for supporting actress for her role as Churchill's wife Clementine.

Robbie is nominated for leading actress for "I, Tonya", alongside McDormand, Hawkins, Annette Bening ("Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool") and Saoirse Ronan ("Lady Bird").—AFP ■

British female stars say 'Time's up' ahead of Baftas

LONDON — Actresses Kate Winslet and Emma Watson joined around 200 British stars in demanding an end to sexual harassment and abuse, in an open letter published on Sunday ahead of the Bafta film awards.

Signatories including Emma Thompson, Kristin Scott Thomas, Keira Knightley and Saoirse Ronan, expressed solidarity with the Time's Up movement in the United States and called for donations to a new "justice and equality fund" for victims.

The letter to The Observer newspaper is addressed to "dear sisters", as was a similar statement by US actresses last month, and calls for an international movement to stamp out a culture of abuse exposed by the

Harvey Weinstein scandal.

"In the very near past, we lived in a world where sexual harassment was an uncomfortable joke; an unavoidable, awkward part of being a girl or a woman. It was certainly not to be discussed, let alone addressed," they say.

"In 2018, we seem to have woken up in a world ripe for change. If we truly embrace this moment, a line in the sand will turn to stone."

'Imbalance of power'

The letter was published ahead of the British Academy Film Awards on Sunday night, when some stars are expected to repeat the protest staged at last month's Golden Globes and wear

black in a show of solidarity with victims. "As we approach the Baftas, our industry's time for celebration and acknowledgement, we hope we can celebrate this tremendous moment of solidarity and unity across borders by coming together and making this movement international," the letter says.

It emphasises that revelations about abuse in Hollywood have now spread across the world, saying the movement is about more than just the entertainment industry.

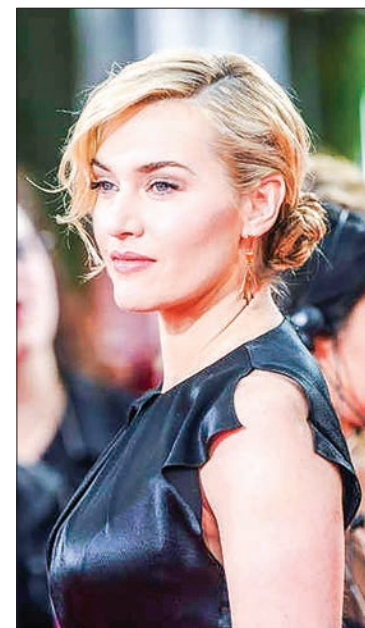
It highlights problems in Britain such as the gender pay gap and the changes to work that make it more insecure.

"This movement is intersectional, with conversations across

race, class, community, ability and work environment, to talk about the imbalance of power," the letter states.

Around 160 activists and academics have signed a sister letter pledging support for the new fund, which aims to make workplaces safe and support victims of abuse.

The signatories thank the high-profile stars for helping "push issues such as sexual harassment and rape into the public consciousness in an unprecedented way". "We believe that this is a moment in time when we can harness our collective energies to dismantle the wall of silence that surrounds violence against women and girls," they say.—AFP ■



Kate Winslet was among some 200 British stars expressing solidarity with the Time's Up movement in the US and calling for donations to a "justice and equality fund" for victims. PHOTO: AFP

Monument to Soviet WW II air pilots to emerge in North Carolina by autumn

NORFOLK /Virginia--A monument to Soviet pilots who underwent training and then took Catalina flying boats to the Soviet Union during World War II will emerge in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, by next autumn, the city's acting mayor, Rick King, told the media on Friday.

King said he hoped the monument would be in place by 1 December. He was speaking at a special ceremony honoring Rus-

sian sailors buried in Norfolk. The monument will be delivered from Russia.

The United States and Russia are in the process of coordinating the details of the monument's handover. The city authorities unanimously supported the idea of the monument King said. The bronze monument will depict a flying boat and three pilots — Soviet, Canadian and American — standing on it.

At a reception following the ceremony on Friday Russian ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov in his speech looked back on the history of US-Russian relations.

"In the history of Russian-US relations there are glorious pages describing the days when during World War II the Soviet Union and the United States were fighting together against Nazi Germany. The lend-

lease program was an important part of our joint struggle," Antonov said.

"In January 1945 one of the planes crashed during tack-off. A memorable plaque will be placed at the site of the pilots' death (at a US Coast Guard base) and a monument, in Elizabeth City (North Carolina), Antonov said.

He thanked the command of the base and the city authorities for cooperation.—Tass ■

Putin congratulates Russian Buddhists on occasions of Lunar New Year

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin has congratulated the Russian Buddhists on the occasion of the Lunar New Year. The congratulatory telegram was published at the Kremlin's official homepage.

"It is important that Russia's Buddhist community is preserving carefully the invaluable ethic and spiritual heritage and self-identical traditions of its ancestors and that is pays relentless attention to the highly demanded educational and charity activities, cares for family values and upbringing of younger generations, promotion of inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogue, as well as the consolidation of peace and concord in society," Putin wrote.

The Lunar New Year shifts from one date to another every year, as its start is calculated in accordance with the Lunar

calendar. Most typically, it falls on the end of winter or the very beginning of spring. In 2018, the New Year according to the oriental calendar begins on 16 February. Buddhists in Russia mark the feast in the course a whole

month, which is called the White Month. It symbolizes spiritual purification and new life. In line with tradition, the believers to parties and treat their relatives and friends with dairy products. Most of the 900,000-strong Bud-

dhist population in Russia lives in Kalmykia, which a steppe-land region to the north of North Caucasus, Buryatia in eastern Siberia, the Irkutsk region, Tyva in southern Siberia, and the Trans-Baikal territory.—Tass ■



A cleansing ritual at the Ivolginsky datsan Buddhist temple as part of celebrations of the Lunar New Year of the Dog. PHOTO: TASS

Kyoto revamping crowded bus services amid rise in foreign tourists

KYOTO — As more foreigner travelers visit the former Japanese capital of Kyoto, crowded and delayed city buses have become a headache for local citizens, prompting traffic authorities to take steps to ensure smoother passenger services and encourage the use of subway lines.

In Kyoto, passengers have generally boarded buses through the rear door and paid the fare when getting off from the front door for over 40 years.

But with the city now attracting around 55 million tourists a year, Kyoto City Bus services, whose routes includes popular

tourist attractions, have become constantly crowded, with some tourists carrying large baggage.

As some foreign travelers also often have difficulty in paying the fare promptly with coins at the bus stops, it has become difficult for the city buses to maintain punctuality.

According to the

Nihon Bus Association, the bus industry body, the boarding system for route buses varies by regions, with passengers paying fares when they get on through the front door in flat fare zones in Tokyo and Yokohama and Nagoya.

In the face of complaints from local citi-

zens about delayed bus services, the Kyoto city government's traffic bureau conducted a practical experiment last October to switch doors for boarding and alighting, and making passengers pay the fare when they get on.

Since the test showed that the change in entry and exit doors contribut-

ed to reducing the average stoppage time by 11.5 seconds, the bus operator plans to change its boarding system for the route connecting Kyoto Station and Ginkakuji Temple this fall and eventually introduce the new system on 61 routes where a flat fare system of 230 yen is applied.—Kyodo News ■

In memoriam
Family shares merits gained
Maha Thayay Sithu

Lt-Gen Tin Oo

Prayer on 17th anniversary of his death

In memory of benefactor Phay Phay Gyi Lt-Gen Tin Oo who suddenly left us seventeen years ago, we family members have made donations and offered 'soon' and provisions to members of the Sangha today on 19-2-2018. We family members share with you the merits gained.

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Wife | - Daw Khin Than Nwe |
| Sons and daughters | - U Maung Maung Kyaw + Daw Cho Leh Oo - Phyu Phyu Oo - Dr Myat Noe+ Yin Mar Oo - Zaw Tun Oo+ Khin Thida - Nay Tun Oo |
| Grandchildre | - Hein Htet, - Yin Myat Noe, - Phu Ngon Kyaw, - Thant Thi Han Zaw (Po Thila) |

Famous Chinese painting brought to life with holographic technology

BEIJING — The Palace Museum will bring a famous Chinese painting to "life" using holographic technology, enabling visitors to immerse themselves in the virtual scenes of the painting, according to Shan Jixiang, director of the museum.

The painting, "River-side Scene at Qingming Festival," is a masterpiece by artist Zhang Zeduan from the Northern Song Dynasty (960 to 1127 AD). It reveals the lifestyles people from of all walks of life in the then prosperous capital Bianjing, today's Kaifeng in central China's Henan Province, during the Qing-

ming Festival.

The 360-degree holographic technology and 4D dome screen will make characters of the painting — street vendors, passengers on barges, and customers in shops — more dynamic, Shan said.

"Cultural relics are not just lifeless remains. Armed with technology, the painting can bring the audience back to the Song Dynasty and impress them with the beauty of the art," Shan said. The exhibition will be available in spring and summer. The painting is one of the 1.86 million cultural collections of the Palace Museum.—Xinhua ■

Yangon still making great shape in 2018 MPT MNL Tourney



Players from Yangon United and GFA lunge for the ball in yesterday's match at Yangon United Sport Complex. **PHOTO:MNL**

YANGON United had their big win match when they beat GFA FC 6-0 at their home stadium yesterday. Yangon United's young player Aee Soe scored 2 goals for Yangon.

Yangon played very aggressively right from the kick-off.

Yangon United lined up with its reliable players including AeeSoe, MaungMaungLwin, Kyi Lin, David Htan, SekouSylla and Kosuke Yamazaki.

GFA also used its great player Emmanuel in yesterday's match.

At the 28 minute mark Aee-Soe scored an opening goal for Yangon and the first half just ended with a single goal as defenders from GFA were very firm in their stable style of playing.

In the second half, Emmanuel made the second goal for

Yangon at 53 minute by using his normal speedy play style.

Within the five minute of the second goal, the third goal for Yangon was scored by Kosuke effectively surprising his opponents.

As a big mistake was found in the defensive of GFA, Emmanuel immediately scored another goal for Yangon at 61 minute.

Yangon's old-service player Kyi Lin also garnered a goal at 77 minutes.

Yangon youngster player AeeSoe made the sixth goal for Yangon at 83 minute mark.

Yangon United leads the table in week-6 of Myanmar National League with Shan United and Yadanarbon following Yangon. Yangon will play against Shan United on 23 February.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■

Pogba illness concerns Mourinho ahead of Sevilla trip

LONDON — Jose Mourinho faces an anxious wait to discover whether Paul Pogba can take part in Manchester United's midweek Champions League last 16 trip to Sevilla after he missed their FA Cup victory over Huddersfield Town.

An unspecified illness saw Pogba withdraw on the morning of Saturday's match in Huddersfield, which United won 2-0 thanks to two goals from Romelu Lukaku as they advanced into the quarter-finals.

United manager Mourinho, whose relationship with club-record signing Pogba has been under close scrutiny in recent weeks, insisted he did not even know what the illness was or how long the France midfielder may be unable to play, having planned to play him in a 4-3-3 system that the player considers his favourite.

"I don't know," said Mourinho when asked about the nature of Pogba's illness after Saturday's match.

"When I was told by the doctor this morning that he was not coming, I don't want to know anything else about it — I have

to think who is going to replace him, what I am going to do because we worked hard during the week."

The Portuguese boss added: "Now is the time to think about Paul, to know what happened, why he didn't feel good enough to play, can he play or be available to help us on Wednesday?"

Pogba has reportedly been unhappy in recent weeks at the style Mourinho has adopted, generally playing him alongside Nemanja Matic in a two-man midfield.

But ahead of Saturday's match, Mourinho appeared prepared to meet the wishes of Pogba, who rejoined United from Juventus for £89.3 million (\$123.5 million, 100.5 million euros) in August 2016, by playing him on the left side of a three-man midfield set-up. United still won comfortably, thanks to Lukaku's double, although victory could have been even more emphatic but for video assistant referee (VAR) Neil Swarbrick ruling out a Juan Mata 'goal' late in the first half in an incredibly close offside call.—AFP ■



Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho's relationship with club-record signing Paul Pogba has been under close scrutiny in recent weeks. **PHOTO:AFP**

Two new FAs in Mandalay

THE Football Associations of Amarapura and Chanmyathasi, were formed recently to give a chance at football to youth in Mandalay Region.

Township Football Association working committee chairman U Bunny Tin Aung, Myanmar's golden era players U Khin Maung Lay and U Khin Maung Lwin Lay organized these two associations in the span of one day. Firstly, the Football Association of Amarapura was formed with 15 members and 4 Chairmen. It is the fifth one of Mandalay Region. About 40 persons attended the meeting. The football Association of Chanmyathasi was then formed as the 6th FA of Mandalay Region along with the same officials and about 25 attendees. The Chanmyathasi football association included three chairman and 15 members of football officials.

U Myo Thiha from Chanmyathasi, Mandalay said that associations like these are very good for Mandalay and its neighbor Amarapura. "The youths in Mandalay are very good at playing football and even one of my sons is a champion at his school. So we, Mandalay people are welcoming the associations," said U Myo Thiha.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■