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SUNDAY SPECIAL



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Kun Chaung Reservoir in Pyu Township is constructed with the aim of preventing floods. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

VP U Myint Swe inspects Kun Chaung reservoir, power station and diversion dam

VICE PRESIDENT U Myint Swe inspected the Kun Chaung reservoir, power station and diversion dam yesterday morning.

U Myint Swe arrived at Kun Chaung reservoir in Pyu Township, Taungoo District, Bago Region, at 8 a.m. and observed the water stored in the reservoir from the briefing hall observation station.

Next, Acting Director General U San Wai of the Department of Hydropower, gave a briefing to the Vice President

about the construction of the dam, storage of water, rainfall, amount of water entering the dam, water supplied for irrigation, location and type of dam, construction of the spillway and diversion dam, hydro-electricity generated, the area supplied with irrigation water and the water collected annually, while Electric Power Supply Enterprise Managing Director U Khin Maung Win explained about the location of the power station, electrical power generation

status, and the annual production and maintenance of the machinery.

The Vice President noted that one must be prepared for possible natural disasters by continuously monitoring the maintenance programme, prevent deforestation in the water basin area of the dam and provide welfare, education, health and social benefits to the power station staff and their families.

Later, the Vice President inspected the machinery in the

power station and observed the generation and distribution of electricity.

The Vice President then visited the Kun Chaung diversion dam project briefing hall in Kyaukdaga Township, where he was briefed about the status of constructing the irrigation water distribution system and the diversion dam by Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department Deputy Director U Aung Myat Moe.

SEE PAGE-2

Journalists report on repatriation readiness in Maungtaw

A delegation of independent media visited villages in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State recently, conducting interviews and collecting information on repatriation readiness.

The delegation comprised of journalists from 13 media organisations visited Taung Pyo Letwe Reception Centre, where Deputy Commissioner of Maungtaw District U Ye Htoo explained the readiness for repatriation of returnees and arrangements for providing humanitarian aid to the displaced people when they returned.

At the meeting, journalists asked authorities about arrangements for resettlement, issuing of National Verification Cards and scrutiny as part of the repatriation process. During the trip, the media delegation visited a bridge between Bangladesh and Myanmar and a gate that will be opened for the returnees. They also visited the border and viewed the situation of the people living near the border.

The journalists also visited Inn-din Village and interviewed villagers about the terrorist attacks of last year. The delegation returned to Yangon in the evening.—Kyaw Thu Htet ■

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Vice President U Myint Swe visits Hydropower Unit at Kun Chaung reservoir in Pyu Township, Taungoo District, Bago Region. **PHOTO: MNA**

VP U Myint Swe inspects Kun Chaung reservoir, power station ...

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The Vice President said sufficient water must be provided to the designated area and local farmers must be organized to use the water effectively to produce cash crops, once the project was completed.

The Kun Chaung multi-purpose dam was constructed with the aim to prevent flooding in the Sittaung river basin, provide irrigation water to farm lands in Kanyutkwin and Penwagon

area, and to generate 60 megawatts of electricity for the national grid. The construction was started in the 2002-2003 fiscal year and was completed in 2011.

Once the Kun Chaung diversion dam and irrigation water distribution system is completed, some 35,000 acres of farm lands in Tawkywein and Penwagon area will be provided with irrigation water. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Complaints to Anti-Corruption Commission given high priority

AT THE Anti-Corruption Commission press conference held yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw, the head of the commission's information committee U Khin Maung Myint said the wish of the person filing the complaint is the key and the commission puts care and emphasis on it.

Complaints received officially are registered and after three groups have checked, the 12-member commission, including the commission chairman, carefully access and review whether the complaint is according to prescribed laws and rules. If action cannot be taken, starting from 1 March, detailed reasons are provided in the reply to the person filing the complaint.

As prescribed in the Anti-corruption law to take action in cooperation with the news media, the commission daily observes the comments and news on anti-corruption that appears

in the news media and follows up accordingly.

Effective actions are being taken and the commission welcomes the public and the media pointing out if there are any weaknesses (and requirements) on the part of the commission. All are urged to cooperate and work together with the commission.

Daw Le Le Thwin, a member of the information committee, explained the status of complaints received, action taken on complaints, complaints transferred to relevant departments and replies made on complaints.

U Khin Maung Myint, member of the information committee, explained about actions taken by the commission on the complaints and the types of complaints received.

Following this, questions raised by reporters were answered by officials.

From 1 January to 30 March,

the commission received 1,781 complaints. Of these, 949 were complaints that the commission is not entitled to take action on, according to the law.

Four-hundred ninety seven were complaints that union-level organisations and states/regions governments need to take action on, 304 complaints were still under review by the complaint assessment committee, the authenticity of 20 complaints were being reviewed. Preliminary investigations are being conducted on 11 complaints by the commission.

For complaints that the anti-corruption commission could not handle as it is not in accordance to the law, replies were being sent to the persons who send such complaints with suggestions on how the complaints should be handled.

The number of such complaints are learnt to be 261.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Member of the information committee of the Anti-Corruption Commission U Khin Maung Myint explains about actions taken by the commission yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Journalists from 13 media organisations visit Taung Pyo Letwe Reception Centre, villages in Mauntaw Township, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MNA (NEWS ON PAGE - 1)**

Labour Minister U Thein Swe visits Thailand

A DELEGATION led by Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe visited Thailand on the invitation of Thailand's Minister for Labour on Wednesday.

During the visit, U Thein Swe, along with Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand, met with civil society organisations (CSOs) looking after the affairs of Myanmar migrant workers. They discussed the problems faced by the CSOs and the forthcoming cooperation with the Ministry of Labour (Thailand) at the meeting.

The union minister and his delegation met with Thailand's Minister for Labour on Thursday and discussed the matter of Myanmar workers' work permits expiring on 31 March. Also, the matter of issuing a

certificate of identity (CI) to Myanmar workers, legally sending workers for employment, labour rights and protection, and the right to return freely to Myanmar during the Thingyan Holiday were discussed openly and cordially during the meeting.

The union minister then, accompanied by Thailand's Minister for Labour and officials, observed the issuing of visa and CI to the workers and enquired about the difficulties faced by the workers. The workers were told about the work processes being conducted for them, and the union minister and his delegation coordinated with Thailand's Minister for Labour on matters raised by the workers.— Myanmar News Agency ■

“Today, our country is still in poverty with necessities in every sector; which is why we need to carry on our struggle and work hard in all sectors. In the international arena, we are facing pressure, criticisms and misunderstandings. The challenges and difficulties our country and our people are facing today are many. Although every issue cannot be solved easily, we will have to make utmost efforts to solve these issues according to each priority sector.

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

“As I continue to state, corruption is the major obstacle for the rule of law and needs to be addressed. Addressing corruption is essential to delivering good governance. It relies on the “tone from the top” and each of you here today must consider yourselves responsible for setting the appropriate tone in a clear and forceful manner and remove opportunities for corruption. Government organizations not only need to cooperate with the Anti-Corruption Commission but also implement E-government functions with great effort. Cleaning up corruption is not a program but a culture. It is a culture that needs collective effort by the government and the public for sustainable development of the country.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the Conference on Justice Sector Coordinating for Rule of Law in Nay Pyi Taw on 7th March, 2018)

Vice President U Henry Van Thio attends GMS-6 in Hanoi, Viet Nam

VICE PRESIDENT U Henry Van Thio, who was in Hanoi, Viet Nam, attended the meeting between leaders of Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) countries and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), as well as the opening ceremony of GMS-6, held at the National Convention Centre (NCC) yesterday morning.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio, accompanied by Union Minister U Kyaw Win, attended the meeting between leaders of GMS countries and the ADB Chairman held at the NCC at 8:45 a.m.

After the meeting, the leaders of GMS countries, the ADB Chairman, the ASEAN Secretary General and the World Bank Managing Director took commemorative group photographs at the NCC meeting hall and viewed the 25th GMS anniversary video file.

The ceremony was attended by Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Cambodia Prime Minister Hun Sen, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Lao-tian Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, the ADB Chairman, the ASEAN Secretary General, the World Bank Managing Director, representatives from GMS member countries, senior officers and other officials.

Chairman of GMS-6 Nguyen Xuan Phuc delivered an opening speech, followed with speeches by leaders of the GMS countries and then the ADB Chairman.

In his speech, U Henry Van Thio commented that the summit theme ‘Leveraging 25 years of cooperation, building an integrated, sustainable and prosperous GMS’ was the most appropriate for the region now.



U Henry Van Thio holds talks with Viet Nam Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc in Hanoi. PHOTO:MNA

In the last 25 years, GMS countries have worked together and cooperated to achieve a truly integrated, sustainable and prosperous area within the GMS and aimed to overcome challenges within and outside it.

Myanmar hosted the fourth GMS Summit in 2011, where the GMS Strategic Framework (2012-2022) was endorsed.

Myanmar welcomes the five-year (2018-2022) action plan endorsed at the 22nd GMS Ministerial Conference held in 2017 and the GMS Regional Investment Framework 2022 that will support it, said U Henry Van Thio.

Myanmar believes that funding can be acquired to implement the 226 investment and technical assistance projects, valued at US\$66.6 billion, which was included in the regional investment framework 2022, he said.

Furthermore, Myanmar also supports the GMS Transport Sector Strategy (2018-2030) with the aim to achieve “seamless, efficient, reliable and sustainable GMS transport system,” he noted.

Myanmar welcomes the

development of the three main economic corridors of GMS that links cities in Myanmar, as well as GMS capital cities, main cities and ports, and the main trading routes. The successes achieved were due to the development partners, especially the financial and technical support of the ADB. Thus, the ADB and international development partners must be thanked for supporting the GMS programme from the start, he said.

Despite the great progress achieved, challenges remain in connectivity, raising competitive capacity and raising the sub-region community. The prospects and opportunities in the sub-region must be availed of through own and shared responsibilities.

“Starting from April 2016, our government is striving towards achieving national reconciliation, peace, and sustainable and all-inclusive economic development. Our main aim is to establish a stable and truly Democratic Federal Republic that guarantees the security, freedom and socio-economic development of the people,” he said.

At the moment, a sustainable development programme for Myanmar with the aim to establish appropriate policies, systems and organizations required for an all-inclusive socio-economic development is being drawn up. The programme will be drawn through discussions with the government, parliament, private sector, international development partners and other relevant entities, he noted.

The Vice President added that implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan will benefit the people of Myanmar, and support the entities in GMS, as well as other regions.

The rapid development of cities, climate change, natural and man-made disasters, cross-border migration, geo-political instability and problems are making the challenges bigger and difficult.

Similarly, acts of terrorism and instability occurring in the world today require better efforts for human security through rule of law, peace and security in the region.

To resolve the challenges

occurring on the new world stage and create new opportunities based on the successes and challenges, priorities need to be reviewed and adjusted with our strategy, he added.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize regional cooperation and open regionalism while implementing complimentary regional initiatives that includes the GMS, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the Belt and Road initiatives, said the Vice President.

In the opening ceremony, GMS cooperation and the result of the Hanoi Action Plan 2018-2022 and report of the GMS Economic Council on the success of the GMS Private Sector were submitted. The Hanoi Action Plan 2012-2018, the Regional Investment Framework 2022 and the 6th GMS Summit Joint Declaration were approved.

At 6:30 p.m. U Henry Van Thio met with the Prime Minister of Viet Nam at the NCC.

Later, U Henry Van Thio attended the Myanmar-China bilateral meeting.

At the bilateral meeting, matters relating to increasing the bilateral relations and friendship, stability of border area, cooperation for security, cooperation in national reconciliation and peace process, cooperating to increase bilateral trade and investments were discussed and views exchanged.

The Vice President was accompanied by Union Minister U Kyaw Win, Myanmar Ambassador to Viet Nam U Kyaw Soe Win, heads of departments and officials, while the representative group from China was led by Foreign Minister Wang Yi. — Myanmar News Agency ■

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Visitors flock to Wanet elephant camp in Pyin Oo Lwin

THE newly opened Wanet elephant camp has become a major draw for visitors, especially during weekends, according to residents.

The Myanma Timber Enterprise, operating under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, officially opened the camp on March 30 near Wanet Village in PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay region. It is situated on 140 acres of Zeebingyi forest reserve. It is part of the government's eco-tourism development plan. The opening of the new elephant camp is aimed at creating a top-class recreation

area surrounded with the natural environment. The services offered at the new camp include short trips, elephant rides and the opportunity to feed elephants between 7 am and 6 pm daily. Visitors can also enjoy traditional Myanmar food at cheaper rates within the camp. Visitors can observe elephants and their habitats, the natural surroundings, as well as obtain related information through a booth that has been opened at the camp. The entry fee has been set at Ks1,000 per visitor, while the service charge for an elephant ride is Ks3,000.—Thiha Ko (Mandalay) ■



Visitors enjoy elephant ride at the Wanet Elephant Camp in Pyin Oo Lwin. **PHOTO: THIHA KO (MANDALAY)**

Bridges along Sittway-Punna Gyun-Yathedaung Road in Maungtaw District to be inaugurated soon

BRIDGES along the Sittway-Punnagyun-Yathedaung-Buthidaung Road will be commissioned into service in the near future, according to local authorities.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lynn inspect-

ed arrangements for official opening of the bridges yesterday.

During the Maungtaw visit, he also inspected construction of roads and bridges in Maungtaw District yesterday. The deputy minister inspected the condition of Maungtaw-Kyikanpyin-Kye-

inchaung-Taung Pyo Letwe Road and completion of Assemble Board Houses at the Taung Pyo Letwe Reception Centre on 30th March.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lynn inspected paving along the Taungpyo Let

We-Maungtaw Road. Agnum-Maungtaw Road is being upgraded with the arrangement of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State-UEHRD.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Toddy palm is versatile but people should consider its future

The older toddy palm trunks are now widely used to build houses and stalls in rural and urban areas. In addition, toddy palm trunks are now popular to use for making furniture.

Recently, toddy palm trunks are used for buildings in restaurants, tea shops and hotels in urban areas as well as country style buildings to lure people from urban areas. In rural areas, toddy palm trunks are substituted for bamboo and wood for making pillars and beams.

All parts of a robust toddy palm tree are useful, from the fruit to the root. The toddy palm trees should be at least 70 years old before they are cut down and used for buildings and furniture.

The older toddy palm trunks are harder and more durable than other kinds of hard wood. The plank will not deteriorate or decay for many years if they are not damp, a carpenter from Myin Kin village said.

"A house that is built using older toddy palm trunks can last

till his grandson's time," said the carpenter who is in his 60s.

"When the price of wood is high, local people substitute wood with toddy palm trunks by cutting older toddy palms. When the demand of the toddy palm is higher, the price also goes up," a local person from Magway Town said.

Previously, a toddy palm was priced around Ks.15,000, but the price can reach Ks.35,000.

There is a large number of toddy palm groves in some villages near Magway Town such as Oat Phoe, Kan Bya and Zee Gyun villages.

"In Magway Region, villagers use the bottom part of the toddy palm for making chairs. The trunk is used in constructing bridges and buildings. Toddy leaves are used for roofs and walls. The stem of toddy leaves are used for making arm chairs," said U Kyi Khaing, a resident from Thae Yin Daw Village.

Steamed toddy palm trunk parquets, which are manufac-

tured by a factory in the industrial zone in Pakokku Town, are displayed at the MSME Regional Products Exhibition. Entrepreneurs of local small and medium sized enterprises from Magway Region and Chin and Rakhine states participated in the exhibition that was held in Magway on 24 March.

U San Win, production manager of Sein Soe San Company Limited's wood factory in Pakokku industrial zone, said: "I worked in the timber industry for 20 years. Now, I arrived at the central Myanmar and got an idea to manufacture value added products by using discarded toddy palm trunks and roots. I manufactured them to export abroad."

The factory manufactures different varieties of furniture from ash trays, vases, wine goblets and chairs to beds couches, doors and living room furniture.

An ash tray, the smallest product of the factory, is priced Ks.3500. The price for a set of liv-

ing room furniture goes for more than Ks.9.4 million, he added.

Meanwhile, villagers in Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions are using toddy palms to build roadside restaurants and huts.

The use of toddy palm to construct buildings is good for those who can't afford wood. However, cutting down massive toddy palms is not a good sign for environmental conservation.

"Manufacturing furniture made of toddy palm is a good idea. The products made of toddy palm trunk are beautiful.

And substituting wood today with palm trunk is cost effective for people who can't afford a large sum of money to construct buildings. But there is a concern for the ecosystem if we cut down large numbers of toddy palms. We need to protect them from being all cut down," a villager who loves the beauty of toddy palm groves and is worried about the ecosystem.—Myanmar Digital News ■

Individual imports from borders top over Ks37 billion this FY

THE value of imports using the individual trading cards (ITCs) at border crossings topped Ks37.286 billion in the current fiscal year (FY), while individual exports exceeded Ks4.721 billion, according to the latest report of the commerce ministry.

Of the country's 15 active border crossings, Myanmar imported a wide variety of goods through 11 border crossings, including Tamu, Muse, Myawady, Tachilek, Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Kanpaiktee, Kawthong, Reed, Mawtaung and Maunglaw.

Among these border points, the individual export was the highest, both in terms of volume and trade, at the Myawady border gate, reaching more than Ks30 billion in value, followed by Kanpaiktee at Ks1.658 billion,

Mawtaung at Ks1.280 billion, Reed at Ks970 million, Kawthong at Ks785 million, Tachilek at Ks626 million and Tamu at Ks423 million.

Trade through the remaining borders points was valued lower than Ks60 million.

According to the ministry, the total individual trade at the 12 border entry points, as of 16 March, was valued at Ks42.007 billion.

The Ministry of Commerce has issued ITCs to border merchants since the 2012-2013 FY. Since the programme was launched, some 1,430 ITC holders are operating at the border crossings. The trade authorities have issued 166 cards to individual traders this FY.—Shwe Khine ■



Furniture being displayed at the Singapore EXPO Convention and Exhibition Centre. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Over 1.1 million employees nationwide have social security numbers

THE number of employees having a social security insurance reached more than 1.1 million nationwide, according to a report in Myawady Daily on Saturday.

U Maung Maung Aye, Director-General of the Social Security Board (SSB), said the authorities are now offering healthcare services to unhealthy individuals with social security numbers through nearly 100 clinics, as well as three workers' hospitals and one traditional medicine hospi-

tal. Mobile medical treatment is also being made available to the employees.

The parliament enacted the new Social Security Law in 2012, which came into force on 1 April 2014. This aims to support the development of the country's economy by helping workers enjoy more security in social life and healthcare, through the collective guaranty of the employer, worker and the country.

Under this law, the SSB is now implementing health and

social care insurance system, family assistance insurance system and invalidity benefit insurance system.

The SSB spends more than Ks1 billion to provide social benefits to workers on a monthly basis.

According to a survey, Shwepyitha, Dagon Seikkan, Dagon Myothit (South) townships and Shwelinban industrial zone in the Yangon region and some towns in Mandalay have a large population of workers. — GNLM ■

Forest product exports continue to decline in current FY

COMPARED with the last financial year, Myanmar has seen a decrease in the value of exports of its forest products in the current FY, according to the statistical report of the Ministry of Commerce.

As of 23 March this year, the export of forest products amounted to US\$201.764 million, recording a decrease of \$27.359 million compared with the same period last FY.

The total import value reached \$12.594 million through the public sector and

\$189.17 million through the private sector. The export of forest products by the government sector saw a slight increase in value at \$8.772 million, compared with last FY, while the private sector exports of the same products declined by more than \$36 million.

This FY, the country earned some \$13.8 billion through the export of agro products, animal products, marine products, minerals, manufactured goods and other products.

Myanmar regularly exports a wide variety of forest products to international buyers, including bamboo and other non-wood products, and is planning to boost the production of bamboo-based products in anticipation of healthy exports.

Currently, domestically-produced bamboos and bamboo-based products are being exported predominately to Bangladesh, Pakistan, South Korea and Singapore.—Swe Nyein ■

Bamboo products to be showcased to celebrate World Wood Day in Mandalay

VARIOUS types of bamboo-based products will be on display to celebrate World Wood Day in Mandalay in early April, according to a report in Myawady Daily on Saturday.

To raise awareness about wood as an eco-friendly, renewable biomaterial and demonstrate its key role in achieving a sustainable future, the World Wood Day is planned to be celebrated from 6 April to 8 April at the City Hall in Mandalay.

Dr Win Myint, chair of Myanmar Bamboo Growers Association, said that besides wood-based products, non-wood products, including bamboo plants, bamboo and bamboo-based crafts, soap, shampoo and furniture will be showcased during the three-day event.

A wide variety of bamboo

species native to Myanmar will also be seen at the event, he added.

The event will share knowledge about bamboo, which is non-polluting and does not have crusts or parts that can be considered waste. As a natural composite material, bamboo is widely used as a construction material for scaffolding, bridges and houses. It also provides human beings with food, clothes and paper.

According to traders, the country has a great future in bamboo-based handicrafts, with demand even exceeding supply sometimes.

According to the trade record, the country earns some US\$5 million yearly through the export of bamboo-based products to overseas countries, such as Singapore and Korea.—GNLM ■

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Chinese state councilor says protectionism one-way street leading nowhere

HANOI — Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Saturday that protectionism harms others without benefiting oneself and it is also a one-way street that leads nowhere.

Wang made the comments here at the ongoing sixth summit of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Cooperation.

Openness has been essential to the development of the subregion, he said, adding that without it, it would be impossible to accomplish so much.

Wang called on the subregion to expand openness to secure greater development in the future.

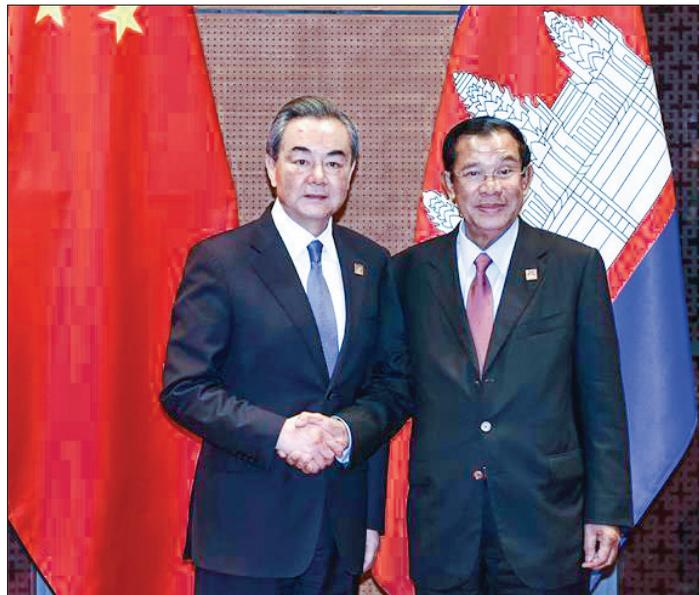
“We must continue to drive trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, support the multilateral trading system and

promote an open, inclusive and balanced economic globalization that benefits all,” he said.

The Chinese state councilor also urged an early conclusion of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations so as to lead the way for the regional free trade architecture.

“We also need to improve the business environment to energize market entities and enable factors of production to flow more smoothly and efficiently,” he said.

Noting that China has long been an advocate of an open world economy, Wang stressed that China is committed to win-win cooperation in opening-up and firmly opposes trade protectionism. “Protectionism harms others without benefiting oneself. It is a one-way street that leads



Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi (L) meets with Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen in Hanoi, Viet Nam on 30 March, 2018. PHOTO: XINHUA

nowhere,” he said, adding that the right approach to addressing trade disputes is to conduct consultation in line with international rules and as equals. — Xinhua ■

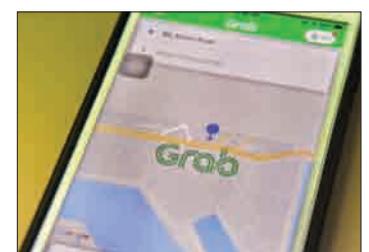
Singapore says Uber-Grab deal may flout competition rules

SINGAPORE — The sale of Uber’s Southeast Asian business to Singapore-based rival Grab may have infringed competition rules, a Singapore watchdog said on Friday, imposing restrictions on the deal while it carries out an investigation.

The sale announced on Monday ended a bruising battle between the ride-hailing behemoths and marked the US firm’s latest retreat from international markets. But the Competition Commission of Singapore (CCS) said both companies would face interim measures as it probes concerns Grab will have a virtual monopoly on the ride-hailing market — the first time such a directive has been issued in the city-state. Under rules which take effect immediately, the companies will not be allowed to integrate their operations until the CCS investigation is finished.

They will have to maintain separate pricing and cannot obtain confidential information from each other like costing or customer and driver details.

This is likely to prove a major stumbling block for the deal, under which Singapore-based Grab is set to take over Uber’s ride-sharing and food delivery operations in the region. In return Uber will receive a 27.5 per cent stake in the business, with chief executive of the California-headquartered company Dara Khosrowshahi joining the Grab board. Singapore has a voluntary merger notification regime and the Commission said it has not received submissions from Uber and Grab as of Friday. Both companies have indicated they intend to file a formal merger notification, the CCS said. Uber and Grab did not immediately comment on the decision. — AFP ■



This photo illustration taken on 26 March, 2018 shows the Grab booking application seen on a smart phone in Singapore. Singapore-based ride-hailing firm Grab announced on 26 March it has bought US rival Uber’s business in Southeast Asia, ending a fierce battle for market share in the region. PHOTO: AFP

Thai magazine sued for ‘blasphemous’ painting of ancient kings

BANGKOK (Thailand) — The governor of Thailand’s Chiang Mai province has sued a local magazine for posting a “blasphemous” painting on Facebook of ancient kings wearing pollution masks as part of a campaign to protest the city’s hazardous smog.

All matters touching on the monarchy are highly sensitive in Thailand, a country where kings have been worshipped as near deities and are protected by one of the world’s harshest royal defamation laws.

The broadly-interpreted crime of lese majeste — which can carry decades-long sentences — has cemented a culture of

self-censorship across the kingdom’s academic, media and arts circles when it comes to royal affairs.

The risks of testing those boundaries were on display on Friday when an English-language magazine faced legal action for posting an image on social media of three statues of ancient kings — a Chiang Mai landmark — in pollution masks. The painting, which was the work of a local high school student, was posted on Citylife Chiang Mai’s Facebook page to promote a rally urging authorities to tackle a toxic haze that plagues the northern city annually. The province’s governor called the

artwork a “blasphemous act” and dispatched an official to file charges against the outlet under Thailand’s Computer Crime Act.

The cyber-crime law, which carries up to five years in prison for uploading false content to the web, is routinely used against perceived critics of the monarchy on social media, though it is not as harsh as the lese majeste law that carries up to 15 years per offence. “I assigned my official to file a complaint with police yesterday that the picture may have violated the Computer Crime Act as it’s inappropriate,” Chiang Mai governor Pawin Chamniprasart told AFP on Saturday.

“The statues of three kings

are very sacred and respected by Chiang Mai residents, they were our ancestors,” he added.

In an official letter to police, the governor said the painting “may affect Chiang Mai’s image and its tourism, causing the city economic instability”.

Chiang Mai is one of Thailand’s largest cities and a major hub for travellers exploring the country’s lush and mountainous north. But it also struggles with dangerous levels of air pollution during crop-burning season.

Police confirmed they were investigating the case, while the magazine announced that its ‘Right to Breathe’ protest had been cancelled. — AFP ■

Oil spill cleanup fire kills two in Indonesia

JAKARATA — At least two people died in a fire as Indonesian authorities tried to cleanup an oil spill off Borneo island on Saturday, an official said.

The blaze was sparked as workers tried to clear the spill in waters near Balikpapan City by burning it.

Two people — believed to be fishermen — were caught in the fire and died, a spokesman of the local search and rescue agency said.

“The fire was quite big, about two kilometres high. It can be seen from Balikpapan city and the smell was all over the place,” said Octavianto, a senior official of East Borneo search and rescue agency, who like many Indonesians go by one name.

Authorities have managed to put out the fire but there was still an oil spill in the waters.

It was not known how much oil was spilled or where it came from. A boat carrying coal was



Two people were killed in the oil spill fire off Balikpapan city in East Borneo. PHOTO: AFP

temporarily stuck near the fire, Octavianto told AFP, but the search and rescue teams successfully evacuated all 20 crew on board.

Indonesia relies heavily on

boats to ferry people and goods around its vast archipelago of about 17,000 islands.

Boat accidents are common, but oil spill cleanup accidents are rare. — AFP ■

Japan whalers return from Antarctic hunt after killing 333 whales

TOKYO, (Japan) — Japanese whaling vessels returned to port on Saturday after catching more than 300 of the mammals in the Antarctic Ocean without facing any protests by anti-whaling groups, officials said.

A fleet of five whalers set sail for the Southern Ocean in November, as Tokyo pursues its “research whaling” in defiance of global criticism.

Three of the vessels, including the fleet’s main ship, the *Nisshin Maru*, arrived in the morning at Shimonoseki port in western Japan, a port official said. The fleet caught 333 minke whales as planned without any interruption by anti-whaling campaigners, the Fisheries Agency said in a statement.

Japanese whalers have in the past clashed at sea with animal rights campaigners, particularly the Sea Shepherd activist group, which last year announced it had no plan to make offshore protests this season. Japan is a signatory to the International Whaling Commission moratorium on hunting, but exploits a loophole that allows whales to be killed for scientific research.

Tokyo says the slaughter is necessary for in-depth knowledge of whale behaviour and biology, but it makes no secret of the fact that whales killed in the hunts often end up on dinner plates.—AFP ■

Tea picking across China



Farmers pick tea leaves at a garden in Luofu Village of Taipingxi Township in Yichang City, central China’s Hubei Province on 30 March, 2018. Farmers are busy in harvesting tea leaves ahead of the Qingming Festival in south China. PHOTO: XINHUA

Flights resume at London Stansted after bus fire

LONDON — Flights resumed at London’s Stansted airport on Saturday after a shuttle bus fire forced the cancellation of flights as the busy Easter long weekend got under way.

The fire outside the terminal entrance started at 4:20pm (1520 GMT) on Friday and was completely extinguished by 5:00pm (1600 GMT). Departures at Britain’s fourth-busiest airport, 30

miles (50 kilometres) northeast of London, were scrapped for the rest of Friday but all flights resumed as normal on Saturday.

The blaze was caused by an electrical fault in the bus engine. The bus was completely destroyed. The driver was the only person on board and nobody was injured.

“In total, around 100 flights were either delayed, diverted or

cancelled,” a Stansted spokesman told AFP. Around half of those were thought to have been cancelled and roughly 10,000 people were thought to have been affected.

“Airlines are looking to put in some additional flights today to make up for some of the ones that were cancelled, in addition to rebooking passengers onto any available seats today and the rest

of the weekend,” the spokesman said. Seen from inside the airport terminal, the blaze looked like a wall of flames, while outside, thick black smoke billowed into the air.

People inside the building were moved airside away from the fire, meaning passengers who had not gone through security were mixed with those who had. Flights were then cancelled.—AFP ■

Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam agree to connect their economies

HANOI — The prime ministers of Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam (CLV) on Saturday endorsed an action plan to connect CLV economies till 2030.

According to the action plan, Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia will focus on connecting their institutions and policies, infrastructure, especially transport and electricity, and human factors involving cooperation on education, training, healthcare and culture, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc told reporters after the 10th CLV Summit on Development Triangle Area in Viet Nam’s capital.

The action plan and the 10th

CLV Summit Joint Declaration will help boost comprehensive cooperation among the three nations, making the CLV an indispensable part of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, and strengthen connectivity among the three economies, the Vietnamese prime minister said.

Better connectivity will help enhance the three countries’ competitiveness, effectively participate in regional and global value chains and better respond to common challenges, he said.

At the summit, the three prime ministers also agreed to gradually expand the development of the triangle area which

currently consists of 13 border provinces of Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam.

They also agreed to beef up cooperation to combat cross-border crimes, make an overall plan for fostering tourism in the development of the triangle area, to perfect a plan on developing the three countries’ rubber industry, and to bolster cooperation on environment protection and natural resource management. The CLV summit was also attended by top and senior officials of the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank and countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).—Xinhua ■



Cambodia’s Prime Minister Hun Sen (L) shakes hands with Vietnam’s Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc (C) as Laos’ Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith looks on during a signing ceremony after the 10th Cambodia-Laos-Viet Nam summit as part of the Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Hanoi on 31 March, 2018. PHOTO: AFP

Digital economy is sine qua non for our sustainable economy

MYANMAR, which has seen a rapid rise in mobile phone services and other digital technologies, has the “unique opportunity” to overcome challenges in its efforts towards financial inclusion.

Communications and technology have direct impact on the operation of governments and humanitarian organizations across the world.

Myanmar's gross domestic product, in relation to its information and communications technology sector, is estimated to increase to US\$6.4 billion by 2030 due to the increasing use of smartphones and the internet.

Mobile infrastructure is important to countries such as Myanmar, where 70 per cent of the population lives in rural areas. As such, the country is drafting the Myanmar Digital Economy Development Master Plan.

To build a digital economy, the country needs to upgrade the various economic sectors, economic infrastructure and human resources, create a better economic environment and attract international investments.

Foreign investment is pivotal to developing the private sector, besides setting rules and guidelines to create competitive markets and prioritizing the profits of the people.

Myanmar recently began implementing the 2022 Development Assistance Framework, and it has not been long since the country has become more transparent and open. Myanmar has implemented new or amended investment

laws, and as such, it has seen better networking through regional to global business ventures.

The country has carried out reforms that are aimed at strengthening the tax system, attracting new foreign investment, and securing the market for macro businesses and enterprises, and have begun drafting the Myanmar Sustainable Development Strategic Plan.

As cheap labour and reliance on natural resources are no longer viable today, countries must find new ways to achieve sustainable development.

Only high quality human resources and technological development can contribute to sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Myanmar's economic policy focuses on developing the private sector, so that job opportunities and SDGs grow along with them.

Basic infrastructure and buildings will be needed for Myanmar to collaborate with other Greater Mekong Sub-region countries.

We are making efforts towards sustainable finance, improved trade and investment, enhancing the nation's role in businesses and services, and developing human resources and capabilities.

Sustainable and inclusive development cannot happen overnight, but we also know that by taking lessons from other countries, we can achieve our goals faster and prevent mistakes made elsewhere. ■

Preventing outbreaks of fire

Advocate Win Kyi
(Sainkaing)

IHAVE been flooded with news about outbreaks of fire in newspapers, journals and on pages of social media covering those in rural and urban areas. Damages in property varied from rural areas to urban ones and were believed to have cost the country in millions of kyats. The reasons for catching fire are different, but the incident was basically negligent of the residents' responsibilities. Lighted mosquito-coils had the houses on fire, engulfing and consuming a whole ward or village. Therefore keeping lighted mosquito-coils through day and night during the summer should be taken cautiously.

The modernization of technology and techniques leads to a large increase in the use of electricity. Electricity supply is available not only in big cities but also in rural areas. People tend to use electrical appliances such as washing-machines, dish-washers and other kitchenware. Electricity can become a friend or foe depending on the type of its use.

In the past, people used firewood or charcoal for cooking rice and curry. Using much electricity naturally leads to the use of firewood and charcoal on the decrease. Then people start to use electric kitchenware such as pressure cookers and pans for cooking meat and vegetables.

They can set fire to flammable materials if they are not properly used. While cooking, overheating electrical board can set fire to flammable materials and if something has to be done in a hurry; all the switches must be turned off because overheating can set fire to things nearby.

Wiring

If the wiring is faulty, it should be replaced as early as possible because the fire can be caused by it. Wiring in buildings should be handled by electricians for suitable voltage for using electrical appliances. If the wires are old and rusty, they must be replaced.

It is advised that rats tend to cut off the wires. Once in a house foul smells kept coming out of it. The house was thoroughly searched but to no avail. The electrician was brought in to conduct a check on the wiring, resulting in finding a dry and rotten rat in the electricity board. When the electricity was turned off, the rat came into the board to cut off the wires; when turned on, the rat was killed by the current. The faulty wire could cause to set fire to nearby pieces of wood, said the electrician.

The old and faulty wires installed at home and factories should be replaced by the qualified electrician. Businessmen who use electricity in their mills and factories should always take care of the electric current. Faulty wiring in these buildings and overusing the electricity may lead to setting fire. If not necessary, electricity should not be used.

When charging a phone, attentions should be taken seriously not to ignite by overheating. Chemical solutions and fuels should be cautiously handled in order not to lead to an explosion.

Dryness

Firewood is gathered and still used in some rural areas; it must be properly used in a systematic manner. In summer it is usually dry and windy; in the daytime, overheating could cause to set fire to because of fuel, firewood and electricity. Raging fire could cause a loss of human lives and as well as damages in property. As the saying goes:

“Thieves left something behind whereas everything is gutted by fire.” Fire is the worst enemy. Human losses and damages in property occur annually with careless use of fire by someone

else. Fire destroys people from all walks of life. Smokers are in the habit of throwing cigarette butts inadvertently at the roadsides. Lighted butts could easily catch fire with flammable materials, thereby spread on the nearby environment. Here comes a proverb: Fire from rubbish spreads through spire-like roof.

The worst excesses

Men are responsible for setting fire to flammable materials, causing a loss of human lives and damages in property annually. Outbreaks of fire usually occur during the summer. Section 285, Criminal Law was promulgated to take against those who have committed arson. In accordance with this Section, tough actions will be taken against those who have committed arson inadvertently or carelessly. They are liable to a heavy fine and could be sentenced to three-year imprisonment for arson.

Those who use fire recklessly or carelessly, thereby setting fire to flammable materials and actions will be taken against them according to Section 285, Criminal Law. Those who use the electricity are responsible for negligence and careless use of electricity, tough actions will be taken against them.

In conclusion, outbreaks of fire could cause the harmful effects of the people concerned and the society in which they live. Tough actions will be taken against them too. According to the motto: “Avoid the danger of fire before being caught by it.” Therefore, people from all walks of life are sincerely urged to avoid the danger of fire by using it cautiously. ■

Translated by Arakan Sein



firefighters are fighting to extinguish the fire at Mingalar Market on 9 January, 2016. PHOTO: ZAW GYI (PANITA)



Southeast Asian countries must scale-up efforts to maintain progress towards the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and UN 2030 Agenda

ASEAN countries will need to accelerate efforts to promote economic, social and environmental advancement towards the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, according to a joint report launched today by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand (MFA), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and the ASEAN Secretariat.

The report titled Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: A Framework for Action underscores that the best way to achieve this is to focus on five complementarities between the two Agendas, namely poverty eradication, infrastructure and connectivity, sustainable management of natural resources, sustainable production and consumption, and resilience. The report identifies seven concrete flagship initiatives that would address gaps and issues under these priorities.

For example, over the past two decades many ASEAN countries have successfully reduced absolute poverty and improved access to food for many households. However, undernourishment in children continues to persist in some areas, and almost 30 million people could still be affected by 2030 if current trends continue. The report recommends a flagship nutrition initiative for mothers and children in order to prevent stunting, and to ensure they can fully participate in education, employment and lead fulfilled lives.

“The Complementarities Report identifies the most critical and potentially the most impactful issues the ASEAN region must address if it is to continue its progress and realize 2030 Agenda and Community Vision 2025,” said UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr. Shamshad Akhtar. “The region has made great progress in reducing extreme poverty from 138 million in 2000 to 44 million in 2015 but there remains much more to do. Poverty eradication is central, however all of the priorities identified in the report are inherently linked and require integrated solutions.”

The report notes that promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns will be key to restructuring provision systems, infrastructure, cities and businesses to maintain economic prosperity and a healthy environment in ASEAN Member States. As Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) account for between 88.8 per cent to 99.9 per cent of all business establishments in ASEAN countries, the report recommends a flagship initiative on sustainable consumption and production in SMEs to ensure that more sustainable goods and services are available and mainstreamed throughout the region. This initiative would improve the capacity of SMEs to use innovation and technology to green their businesses and improve productivity.

“Leaving no one behind” is an integral part of Thailand's sustainable development approach,” said H.E. Don Pramudwinai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. “It is also a fundamental principle behind ASEAN's ongoing efforts to build a people-centered community as well as the international community's commitment to achieving the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development. As ASEAN Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, Thailand is proud to have played a small part in promoting closer engagement between ASEAN and the UN, through this ASEAN-UN ESCAP joint endeavor.” “It is our hope that this report will help serve as an inspiration and a platform to develop additional concrete and feasible initiatives that will maintain strong momentum in sustainable development cooperation, not only between ASEAN and the UN, but between ASEAN and other external parties as well as the international community,” he added. “To this important goal for the region and for humanity, Thailand will continue to lend its full support.”

Managing natural resources responsibly will also be critical for the region in the coming decades, due to increased domestic resource scarcity in some countries, and continuing volatility of world market prices for strategic resources that are increasingly imported from abroad. The report recommends establishing an ASEAN Resources Panel to ensure a realistic framework for resource use policy and legislation, and support development of an ASEAN Roadmap on Sustainable Resources Management. —ESCAP ■

Russian diplomat comments on Aeroflot plane search conducted by UK authorities

MOSCOW — The British authorities have barred the crew of a Russian Aeroflot plane bound for Moscow from being present during the search of their plane, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Friday.

“The British authorities asked the Russian crew, including the captain, to leave the aircraft. The captain suggested the search be conducted in his personal presence as in line with the instructions he cannot leave the plane. As of now, the Britons have begun the search, keeping the captain inside the cockpit, not letting him be present during the search,” she told the Rossiya-24 television channel.

Russian diplomats are in contact with the British authorities over the search of Russia’s Aeroflot jet at London’s Heathrow airport. Moscow urges London to stop provocative actions:

“Officers of the Russian embassy in the United Kingdom are currently on the way to the airport. The Russian diplomatic mission, the Russian ambassa-



Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova. PHOTO:TASS

dor [Alexander Yakovenko] are getting in touch with the local side,” Zakharova stated. “We urge the British authorities to stop provocative actions and get the situation back to the legal framework.” The actions of the British side that searched Russia’s Aeroflot plane in London’s

Heathrow airport run counter to the international practice of plane searching, an Aeroflot spokesman told TASS on Friday.

“The UK police and customs officers searched an Aeroflot jet at London’s airport. Aeroflot is baffled over the fact that no reasons for that were provided. Dur-

ing the search, the British side ordered the crew to leave the plane, letting only the captain to stay. However he was isolated in the cockpit. Such actions on the part of the British side run counter to the international practice of conducting such searches,” he said.—Tass■

Russia says Britain must cut more than 50 diplomats

MOSCOW (Russia) — Britain has to reduce its diplomatic staff in Russia by more than 50 more people, the foreign ministry said on Saturday, following an escalating row over the nerve agent attack on a former double agent.

The new measures are seen as punishment for Britain’s calls on allies to expel Russian diplomats.

“Russia suggested parity. The British side has more than

50 more people,” foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told AFP. On Friday, Moscow summoned British ambassador Laurie Bristow, giving London a month to cut the number of diplomatic staff to the same number Russia has in Britain.

Bristow had been handed a protest note in connection with the “provocative and unfounded actions of the British side which instigated the unwarranted ex-

pulsion of Russian diplomats from a variety of states,” the foreign ministry said on Friday.

In all, more than 150 Russian diplomats have been ordered out of the US, EU members, NATO countries and other nations in solidarity with Britain over the poisoning of former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter on British soil in early March. Earlier this month Russia expelled 23 British diplomats, closed a Brit-

ish consulate in Saint Petersburg and halted the activities of British Council. They came after Britain expelled 23 Russian diplomats and suspended high-level contacts, among other measures. On Friday, Russia expelled diplomats from 23 other countries — most of them EU member states — in retaliation against the West, in the biggest wave of tit-for-tat expulsions in recent memory.—AFP ■

Trump freezes Syria recovery funds: report

WASHINGTON — The White House has instructed the State Department to freeze over \$200 million in funds earmarked for “recovery efforts” in Syria, The Wall Street Journal reported on Friday.

The report — which came a day after Trump declared in a speech that the US would be quitting Syria “very soon” — is another indication the president wants

to disengage from the country.

Officials told AFP that Trump’s aside in his speech was not a slip, but that for several weeks he had been pushing back against the idea of a long or medium term US commitment to stabilizing eastern Syria.

According to The Wall Street Journal, Trump called for the spending freeze after reading a news report that said the US

had committed the funds for recovery efforts in Syria, which has been wracked by a more than seven-year civil war. The US has more than 2,000 military personnel in eastern Syria as part of international efforts to defeat the Islamic State group, an extremist organization that once controlled swathes of Syria and neighbouring Iraq. Speaking in Ohio on Thursday, Trump indi-

cated that with the war against IS winding down, he wants American involvement in Syria to do likewise. “We’ll be coming out of Syria, like, very soon. Let the other people take care of it now,” he promised. Trump did not say who the others were who might take care of Syria, but Russia and Iran have sizable forces in the country to support President Bashar al-Assad’s regime.—AFP ■

Venezuela to compensate relatives of 68 killed in jail fire

CARACAS (Venezuela) — Venezuela’s government said on Friday it will compensate the relatives of scores of prisoners and a couple of visitors who died this week when a fire engulfed an overcrowded police headquarters’ jail.

The statement by the foreign ministry also said authorities have been ordered to probe the blaze that happened on Wednesday in the state police facility in the country’s third-biggest city of Valencia.

A total of 68 people died in the fire — 66 male prisoners and two female visitors.

A prisoners’ rights group, Una Ventana a la Libertad (A Window on Freedom), said the prisoners had set fire to mattresses in an attempt to break out of the jail.

The foreign ministry statement said “means of compensation” had been agreed for the affected families.

Police sources told AFP on Friday that all but eight of the bodies had been claimed by relatives.

The UN’s human rights office in Switzerland had said on Thursday it was “appalled at the horrific deaths” and called for a complete investigation. It had also demanded compensation be paid to the families.

The government of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro rejected the “precipitate and disproportionate” comments of the UN office. It alleged there was “a multi-faceted assault being deployed against our country making rude and vile use of the issue of human rights.”

Venezuela’s prisons suffer from dire overcrowding and a shortage of basic supplies, struggling under the deepening economic crisis that is gripping the once-wealthy oil-producing country. Una Ventana a la Libertad estimates that the temporary detention cells in Venezuela’s police stations are at five times their capacity. They are often used to house overflow convicts from similarly crowded penitentiaries.—AFP ■

Saudi forces say intercept missile fired by Yemen rebels

RIYADH — Saudi air defence forces on Saturday intercepted a ballistic missile fired by Yemen's Huthi rebels at the kingdom's southern city of Najran, state media reported.

State-run Al-Ekhbariya television gave no further details but did not report any casualties or damage from the missile.

Yemen's Saba news agency, run by the Iran-backed Huthis, said the missile had been fired at a Saudi National Guard base in Najran, just over the border from Yemen where a Saudi-led coalition has intervened against the insurgents.

Saba said the attack had caused deaths among Saudi forces but provided no details.

The coalition on Thursday said it intercepted another missile fired by the Huthis at the southern city of Jazan — the latest in a series of such attacks that have drawn widespread condemnation.

The UN Security Council this week condemned "in the



An image grab from a video handed out by Huthi rebels shows what appears to be Huthi military forces launching a ballistic missile. **PHOTO: AFP**

strongest possible terms" multiple missile attacks launched by the Huthis on Saudi territory, saying they posed a threat to regional security.

In one of the biggest such attacks yet, Saudi forces last

weekend said they intercepted seven missiles fired by rebels toward cities including Riyadh, killing one person.

The coalition intervened in Yemen in 2015 to push back the Huthis who captured the capital

Sanaa and forced the government into exile.

Riyadh has accused arch-rival Tehran of providing the missiles and threatened retaliation against Iran. Tehran denies the charge.—AFP ■

Israeli drone crashes in southern Lebanon

JERUSALEM — An Israeli drone has crashed in southern Lebanon due to a technical malfunction, the military said on Saturday, after Hezbollah media labelled it a "spy" device. The Israeli military said that the drone crash in an open area on Friday night posed "no risk of leaked information." It provided no further details. Hezbollah television station Al-Manar reported that the "spy drone" fell between Baraachit and Beit Yahoun in southern Lebanon.

It said that "a second spy plane targeted it with a guided missile, which resulted in it being destroyed."

Israel and Shiite militant group Hezbollah, based in neighbouring Lebanon, fought a devastating war in 2006 and the two remain bitter enemies.—AFP ■

American, British soldiers killed in Syria: Pentagon

BEIRUT, LEBANON — Two members of the US-led anti-jihadist coalition — an American and a Briton — were killed by an improvised explosive device in the northern Syrian city of Manbij, US and British officials said on Friday.

Five other coalition service personnel were wounded, the Pentagon said.

The attack in Manbij happened late Thursday — the day US President Donald Trump said he would pull forces out of Syria "very soon."

"Two coalition personnel were killed and five were wounded by an improvised explosive device in Syria" at around midnight (2100 GMT), the coalition said in a statement which gave no further details about the victims. A Pentagon official, speaking later on condition of anonymity, identified one of them as being American.

Britain's defence ministry confirmed the second fatality came from within its ranks.

"The individual was embedded with US forces on a counter-Daesh operation when the incident occurred," the ministry said, using an Arabic acronym to refer to the Islamic State (IS) group. Since 2014, the coalition has provided weapons, training and other support to forces fighting IS jihadists in Syria and Iraq. This latest incident brings the number of US personnel killed in action during the operation to 14. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

The US-led coalition said it was withholding details on the circumstances of the attack pending further investigation.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, said the attack hit a convoy in the heart of Manbij, also wounding four members of the local council. Manbij used to be a hub for the jihadists when their self-styled "caliphate" was at its peak. It was retaken by Kurdish-led forces

backed by the coalition. More than 2,000 US personnel

Located between the northern city of Aleppo and the western bank of the Euphrates, less than 30 kilometres (18 miles) south of the Turkish border, Manbij lies where several international influence zones meet and risks becoming a new flashpoint.

"We'll be coming out of Syria, like, very soon. Let the other people take care of it now," Trump told industrial workers in Ohio on Thursday.

The United States has more than 2,000 military personnel in eastern Syria, working with local militia groups to defeat IS while trying to keep out of Syria's broader civil war.

Trump's eagerness to quit the conflict contrasts with a new US Syria strategy announced in January by then secretary of state Rex Tillerson — who has since been sacked.—AFP ■

Saudi Arabia arrests 13 Turkish nationals in security-related cases

RIYADH — The Saudi Presidency of State Security announced on Saturday the arrest of 13 Turkish nationals for security-related cases, Ajel online news reported.

The authority, which is responsible for state security cases, announced the news on its website.

It highlighted that 12 Turkish residents were arrested on Sunday, while the 13th was arrested on Tuesday, without stating the nature of their cases.

The authority was formed in July last year to counter terrorism and carry financial probes. The formation was part of a royal order, in which all security institutions are now connected to the new body.

The presidency includes the CID, special security forces, emergency forces and police

aviation.

The order stated the reason for forming the authority to continue developing the security sector to meet challenges and deal with emergencies with efficiency.

The Saudi-Turkey ties are facing tensions, especially after the supporting stand of the later towards Qatar that Saudi Arabia has been boycotting with other Gulf states for almost a year.

Qatar has been accused of supporting terrorism and interfering the internal affairs of other countries.

Turkey since then has been providing military and commercial assistance to Qatar, including various consumer products such as milk and food that used to be imported from neighboring countries.—Xinhua ■

Russia to create robotized multiple launch rocket system to hit helicopters and drones

YEREVAN—Russia's Tecmash Research and Production Group plans to develop a small-caliber multiple launch rocket system with robotic elements capable of striking helicopters and drones, Tecmash Deputy CEO Alexander Kochkin said at the Arm-HiTec-2018 exhibition on Friday.

The new weapon is intended for use in the Airborne Force, marine infantry and Special Forces, the deputy chief executive said.

"We are setting the aim of creating a system capable of hitting both ground and air targets. It will be capable of striking helicopters and drones in the close proximity of 1.5-2 km and at an

altitude of no more than 1 km," Kochkin said.

The company plans to work out technical specifications jointly with the Defence Ministry for the new multiple launch rocket system in the near future, he said.

"I believe that the Airborne Force, marine infantry and Special Forces that operate in separation from the main military contingent will display interest [in the new weapon]. They need fire support from these systems," the Tecmash deputy chief executive said.

According to Kochkin, the new multiple launch rocket sys-



The new weapon will be used by the Airborne Force, marine infantry and Special Forces. PHOTO: TASS

tem will fire specially designed shells and 50-80mm aircraft rockets already accepted for service and will incorporate robotic remote control elements.

The new weapon will also get automated reload and land navigation systems. The robotic multiple launch rocket system will feature an automated multi-

channel guidance and fire control system allowing it to effectively hit targets at night and amid smoke and dustiness on the battlefield.—Tass ■

Argentina's Macri backs minister who keeps his millions abroad



Argentina President Mauricio Macri. PHOTO: AFP

of his \$88 million fortune deposited abroad.

"This has to do with the confidence we have lost in Argentina," Aranguren said on Radio con Vos.

He said most of the investments and savings he held abroad came from "a bonus I received from my former employer (Shell) in shares of that company that were obviously abroad."

At a time when Argentina was enforcing exchange restrictions under Cristina Kirchner's leftist government, "Why am I going to bring it in?" he asked.

"We are working for an Argentina where that does not happen anymore," said the minister. When his interviewer said he kept his own money in the country, Aranguren replied: "You have more confidence in Argentina than I do, I leave you with that virtue."

"I want to work so that everyone in Argentina can recover that confidence."

Treasury Minister Nicolas Dujovne, the head of the Federal Intelligence Agency Gustavo Arribas and Central Bank chief Federico Sturzenegger also said they kept most of their money outside the country.—AFP ■

BUENOS AIRES—Argentina's President Mauricio Macri on Friday backed his under-fire energy minister who admitted keeping his millions outside Argentina because he lacked faith in the economy.

Macri said Juan Jose Aranguren had made financial sacrifices to take on the job of minister in his center-right government in 2015.

Aranguren had resigned as president of Anglo-Dutch oil company Shell in Argentina, "where he was doing very well, to take charge of the biggest mess that the Kirchnerists left behind — that was a country without energy" and with daily power blackouts, Macri told Cadena 3 radio.

The president was responding to questions about his minister's public acknowledgement on Thursday that he kept most

Louisiana police officer who fatally shot black man is fired

WASHINGTON —The officer who shot dead a black man in the southern US state of Louisiana has been fired, the Baton Rouge police chief told journalists on Friday.

News of the disciplinary measures came days after the state's attorney general said officers Blane Salamoni and Howie Lake — both of whom are white — would not face charges in the 2016 shooting death of Alton Sterling.

Salamoni was terminated effective immediately and Lake will be suspended for three days over his involvement in the inci-

dent, Chief Murphy Paul said.

Sterling, 37, was fatally shot in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on 5 July, 2016 in a scuffle with police outside a convenience store where he had been selling CDs. The shooting was captured on cell phone video.

Paul said additional video footage of the incident would be released. Salamoni's firing comes as anger swells over another controversial police shooting that saw the death of an unarmed black man in California's capital city of Sacramento.

The two cases have once again brought concerns over po-

lice misconduct to the fore — fatal shootings of African-American suspects in recent years have fueled a nationwide debate over race and criminal justice.

In explaining the decision not to press charges against the officers, Louisiana attorney general Jeff Landry said Sterling was armed, under the influence of illegal drugs and had resisted arrest efforts.

According to the Louisiana Justice Department report on the shooting, a loaded .38 caliber handgun was found in the right front pocket of Sterling's pants.—AFP ■

Leftist looms large as Mexico presidential race opens

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO—The campaign for Mexico's 1 July presidential election officially opened on Friday, with Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, a veteran leftist promising a sharp break with the past, positioned as the man to beat.

"AMLO," as he is widely known, has a double-digit lead at the start of the race to succeed President Enrique Pena Nieto, whose popularity has been flayed by corruption scandals, a seemingly hopeless war on drug cartels and record-shattering crime that has left a trail of bodies in its wake.

But Lopez Obrador, a sometimes fiery leftist who is making his third presidential bid, has been here before: in 2006, he led

for most of the race, then narrowly lost to Felipe Calderon of the conservative National Action Party (PAN).

Two rivals are meanwhile fighting a no-holds-barred battle for second place.

Ricardo Anaya of the PAN is a youthful ex-lawmaker whose bid to campaign as a fresh face has been blotted by accusations of corruption and strongarming his way to his party's nomination.

Jose Antonio Meade is a respected former finance minister standing for the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) — a long-dominant force in Mexican politics whose popularity is now so low it tapped a non-party member as its candidate.

Running a distant fourth is

independent Margarita Zavala, ex-president Calderon's wife, who quit the PAN in a bitter dispute with Anaya and is now peeling away a potentially crucial part of his vote.

Anaya and Zavala kicked off their campaigns with midnight rallies in Mexico City. Lopez Obrador and Meade are saving their first big rallies for Sunday — Easter, a date charged with symbolism in this still very Catholic country.

All hope to draw mega-crowds that day to boost their momentum.

Anything remains possible in the single-round vote, but AMLO looks ever harder to beat, said Mexican political analyst Jose Antonio Crespo.—AFP ■

Super typhoon may flood one third of central Tokyo: survey

TOKYO, JAPAN — One third of central Tokyo could be left under water and nearly four million people affected if a super typhoon strikes the capital causing storm surges, a new study from local authorities has warned.

The Tokyo metropolitan government unveiled its first estimate of the Japanese capital's vulnerability to damage from typhoon-related high tidal waves Friday, as risks of storm damage continue to increase globally.

According to the report, 212 square kilometres (85 square miles), or one third of the capital's central area, could be inundated to a maximum depth of 10 metres (33 feet) if a super typhoon creates high tidal waves.

A severe event of this type would be estimated to affect as many as 3.95 million people in the city, flooding business and entertainment districts as well as major railway stations, the local government said. Tokyo has a population of 13.7 million people.

In particular, Tokyo's eastern zone near Arakawa river would be flooded for more than a week if rising tidal waves at Tokyo Port break through river levees.—AFP ■

Kim says N Korea to take part in 2020, 2022 Olympics: IOC chief

SEOUL — Kim Jong Un is committed to sending North Korean teams to the Tokyo and Beijing Olympics, IOC chief Thomas Bach said on Saturday after a rare meeting with the leader of the nuclear-armed regime in Pyongyang.

Bach, the president of the International Olympic Committee, also said the IOC will make a proposal for a "potential joint march" and other shared activities between the North and South Korean teams at the 2020 Games in Japan.

Last month's Winter Olympics in South Korea saw competitors from the two countries march together at the opening ceremony and field a joint women's ice hockey team.

The Winter Games triggered a fast-moving rapprochement that will see Kim sit down with the South's President Moon Jae-in in late April, with a US summit with President Donald Trump planned for May. Bach told reporters after landing in Beijing that his talks with Kim on Friday had been "very open



IOC chief Thomas Bach (L) said talks with Kim Jong Un had been 'very open and fruitful'. PHOTO: AFP

and fruitful".

"They announced (to) us that they will definitely participate in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 as well as the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022" and all editions of the Youth Olympic Games, Bach said.

"And this commitment was fully supported by the supreme leader," he said.

North Korea's official KCNA news agency said Kim thanked Bach for helping to bring about a "dramatic thawing" of tensions on the Korean peninsula.

Bach arrived in the country on Thursday and

his visit, which concluded Saturday, was the result of an invitation extended by Pyongyang in January.

The isolated regime rarely hosts foreign dignitaries but recent weeks have seen a flurry of diplomacy, with Kim making his first foreign trip as leader to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping and inviting him to visit Pyongyang.

Kim's Olympic overtures follow Japanese media reports earlier this month of Tokyo exploring the possibility of a meeting between Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the North

Korean leader after the surprise announcement of a proposed summit with Trump.

Tokyo has long maintained a hardline position on negotiations with the North, while Pyongyang in turn has threatened to "sink" Japan into the sea and to turn it into "ashes", sending two missiles flying over the country last year.

'New chapter'

Kim told Bach that the Olympics had "opened a new chapter of concord between the north and the south", KCNA said.

"He said that the once frozen north-south relations greeted a dramatic thawing season with the Olympics as a momentum and it was totally attributable to the efforts of the IOC which offered an opportunity and paved a path for it," the agency reported.

Bach told reporters the IOC "will continue to support the athletes from DPRK to prepare well" for the next Olympic Games.

"The IOC will make a proposal for a potential joint march, for potential other joint activities for Tokyo and maybe also for Beijing, at the appropriate time," he said. "The joint march of the athletes from the two Koreas in Pyeongchang sent a very strong signal of peace from these Olympic Games to the world", he said. The two men also held discussions about the development of sport in the North and attended a women's football match. Bach said the IOC would help North Korea with its preparations for sending a team to Sweden for the world table tennis championships starting next month.—AFP ■

Transferring Distributor for Registered Pesticides

Distribution of pesticides registered by Shandong Welfang Rainbow Chemical Co., Ltd is transferring from Close Friends Co.,Ltd to Rainbow Agrosociences Co.Ltd.Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein within 2 weeks.

No.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration No.
1	Imark 240 SL	Imazapic 240g/L SL	Experimental	E2017-3944
2	Tancap 50 WP	Captan 50% WP	Provisional	P2017-3945
3	Tancap 80 WG	Captan 80% WG	Provisional	P2017-3946
4	Farmozine 80 WP	Atrazine 80% WP	Provisional	P2017-3947
5	Farmozine Plus 90 WG	Atrazine 90% WG	Provisional	P2017-3948
6	Rice Waiter 32 WP	Bensulfuron 4% + Quinclorac 28% WP	Provisional	P2017-3949

Close Friend Co. Ltd
No 827/A Thumingalar Road, 7-Quarter, South Okkalapa Township, Yangon.
Ph - 01 8500424, 09 421032105

Thai junta vows to lift politics ban in June

BANGKOK, Thailand — Thailand's junta will lift a near four-year ban on political activity in June, an official said on Friday, as space for debate slowly expands in the kingdom with polls promised for next year.

Political gatherings of five or more people have been outlawed since Thailand's army grabbed power in a May 2014 coup, booting Yingluck Shinawatra's elected government from power.

The generals, who have repeatedly backtracked on promised returns to democracy, insist an election will be held "no later" than February 2019.

Yet while parties have been allowed to register

in anticipation of the vote, they remain barred from discussing policy or meeting without junta permission.

Politicians have demanded the ban is lifted, while critics accuse the junta of buying time to bolster the chances of new army-linked parties in the upcoming election.

A defence ministry spokesman said the moratorium would soon be lifted, confirming comments the junta's number two made to the local press on Thursday.

"The initial plan is that the ban would be lifted in June so that newly set-up parties are ready," Lieutenant-General Kongcheep Tantravanich told AFP.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MATHU BHUM VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MATHU BHUM VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-4-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
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South Korean musicians arrive in Pyongyang for concerts

SEOUL—K-pop stars led a group of South Korean musicians arriving in Pyongyang on Saturday to take part in the latest set of cross-border cultural performances ahead of next month's rare inter-Korean summit.

The 120-member group including top girlband Red Velvet flew from Seoul's Gimpo airport aboard a chartered civilian flight to Pyongyang via the rarely used direct air route between the two Koreas, as a rapprochement on the peninsula gathers pace.

"This performance in Pyongyang will add momentum to inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation that resumed with the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics" in the South, said Culture Minister Do Jong-hwan, who led the group.

They were greeted on arrival at Pyongyang airport by Do's counterpart Pak Chun-nam as well as Hyon Song-wol, founder of the North's popular all-female Moranbong band, the South's Yonhap agency reported.

Under the theme title



South Korean musicians, including K-pop girlband Red Velvet, will perform in Pyongyang ahead of next month's rare inter-Korean summit. PHOTO: AFP

"Spring is Coming", the South Korean musicians will perform a concert in Pyongyang on Sunday before a joint show with North Korean artists at the capital's 12,000-seat Ryugyong Jong Ju

Yong Gymnasium on Tuesday.

While in Pyongyang, Do said, he will meet with North Korean officials to discuss further cultural and sports exchanges between the two Koreas that have restart-

ed after a decade-long hiatus.

The two rivals on Friday agreed a date for next month's inter-Korean summit — the third ever of its kind following 2000 and 2007 meetings — at Panmunjom

truce village on the heavily-fortified border on 27 April.

Following the meeting between the North's leader Kim Jong Un and the South's president Moon Jae-in, landmark talks are planned between Kim and US President Donald Trump, which could come by the end of May.

The rapid rapprochement was kicked off by last month's Winter Olympics in the South and comes after a year of heightened tensions over the North's nuclear and missile programmes, which saw Kim and Trump engage in a fiery war of words.

Together with athletes and cheerleaders, the North sent musicians led by Hyon Song Wol to the South to celebrate the Games.

The shows in the North — the first of which will take place at the 1,500-seat East Pyongyang Grand Theatre on Sunday — will be taped and edited by a South Korean video crew to be made into a joint TV programme for both countries, Yonhap news agency said.—AFP ■

Animals rights groups scent blood as fashion labels go fur-free

PARIS—Is this the beginning of the end for fur?

With more and more fashion houses going fur-free, San Francisco banning fur sales in the city and British MPs considering outlawing all imports of pelts after Brexit, the signs do not seem good for the industry.

After decades of hard-hitting campaigning against fur, animal rights activists believe they scent victory.

Last week Donna Karan and DKNY became the latest in a flood of luxury brands to say they were planning to go fur free, following similar announcements by Gucci, Versace, Furla, Michael Kors, Armani and Hugo Boss in recent months.

US-based animal rights group PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), which is famous for its spectacular anti-fur protests, declared that "2018 is the year that everyone is saying goodbye to fur."

"Times are changing and the end of fur farming is within reach!" it told its 687,000 Instagram followers.

The British-based Humane Society International said the tide turned when Gucci declared



Models in fake fur take to the catwalk for a Givenchy fashion show in Paris this month. PHOTO: AFP

it was going fur-free in October. Another hammer blow came this month when Donatella Versace said that "I don't want to kill animals to make fashion. It doesn't feel right."

"Such influential brands turning their backs on cruel fur makes the few designers like Fendi and Burberry who are still peddling fur look increasingly out of touch and isolated," said the society's president Kitty Block.

Fendi's Karl Lagerfeld shows little sign of second thoughts, however, and has

said he will use real fur as long as "people eat meat and wear leather".

'Leather is next'

But PETA, which also campaigns for veganism, has warned the leather industry that is also in its sights, saying "You are next..."

And Professor Nathalie Ruelle, of the French Fashion Institute, told AFP that it was telling that the new fur-free brands "did not say anything about exotic leathers (such as crocodile, lizard and snakeskin)." —AFP ■

Film co-productions expected to bring China, US closer: Houston film festival chairman

HOUSTON —Co-production of films between Chinese and US entertainment industries in the next few years will help to bring the two countries closer, WorldFest-Houston Chairman Hunter Todd said on Thursday.

In a news briefing regarding the upcoming film festival, Todd said the WorldFest Focus on China, a unit of the event, will be the largest single focus on Chinese cinema in the festival world.

"WorldFest-Houston's presentation of Chinese films is the largest spotlight on the great cinema of China," he said.

Todd told Xinhua that he considers the WorldFest Focus on China as a platform providing opportunities for emerging Chinese directors.

He also acknowledged a strong business reason behind the project, saying "The film production values of China, the box office attains of China are now No 1 in the world."

In the meantime, Todd announced that his team and a Chinese partner "are moving forward to a multi-mil-

lion-dollar co-production of a new science fiction film" to be produced in both China and the United States.

He said this film will be his first major co-production with a Chinese partner and will be directed by Randal Kleiser, a renowned WorldFest-Houston's alumnus, the list of which includes Steven Spielberg, Ang Lee and David Winning.

The 51st edition of WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival is scheduled for 20-29 April in Houston, the fourth biggest city in the United States and the largest in the state of Texas.

The film festival will showcase 50 new independent feature films and 108 award-winning shorts from over 70 countries and regions across the globe.

As part of the festival, the 4th edition of WorldFest Focus on China will premiere almost 20 feature films as well as several short subjects from China, providing Houston audiences the opportunity to enjoy the emerging Chinese cinema.—Xinhua ■

Alumni honour faculty members of the Dagon University English Department

Ceremony of paying respect to faculty members of the Dagon University English Department by English major alumni and gathering of English major alumni were held for the 12th times at Seinn Lann So Pyay Garden in Yangon yesterday.

After paying their respects, the alumni presented gifts to the faculty members.

Retired English professor Daw Sein Sein Myint and retired English professor Daw Swe Swe Pwint offered words of advice to the alumni.

Daw Phyu Wint Yi on behalf of the alumni spoke words of thanks to the teachers. Later, the

attendees took part in musical entertainment.

The respect paying ceremony to the teacher is called “acariya puja pwe in Pali” and “Asariya Pu Zaw Pwe” in Myanmar language.

The respect paying to the teachers is a Myanmar traditional culture that students pay respect or homage to their teachers in order to show gratitude and reverence, and to ask for forgiveness.

It took place annually from basic education schools to universities in Myanmar. —Ye Htut Tin (New Light of Myanmar) ■



Teachers and alumni pose for documentary photo at the Respect paying ceremony of English major alumni at Seinn Lann So Pyay Garden in Yangon on 31 March, 2018. PHOTO: HTIN AUNG

Family, friends bid farewell to Stephen Hawking



Stephen Hawking, the world-renowned physicist, died on March 14 at the age of 76. PHOTO: AFP

LONDON — Friends, family and colleagues of British scientist Stephen Hawking will gather Saturday to pay their respects at his private funeral in Cambridge, where he spent most of his extraordinary life.

Hawking, who died on 14 March at the age of 76, was famously an atheist but his children Lucy, Robert and Tim have chosen the town's university church, St Mary the Great, to say their farewell.

“Our father's life and work meant many things to many people, both religious and non-religious. So, the service will be both inclusive and traditional, reflecting the breadth and diversity of his life,” they have said.

Tributes poured in from around the world upon Hawking's death, from Queen Elizabeth II to NASA, reflecting his huge impact as a physicist and an inspiration, in his refusal to give up in the face of physical disability.

But the service at St Mary

church — a short distance from Gonville and Caius College where Hawking worked for more than 50 years — will only be open to those who knew him, followed by a private reception at Trinity College.

A wider audience will attend a thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey in London on 15 June, where Hawking's remains will be buried near the grave of another legendary scientist, Isaac Newton.

New photographs revealed

Ahead of the funeral, Gonville and Caius College released new black and white photographs of Hawking taken in 1961 at a summer school for young astrophysicists at a castle in Sussex, southern England, when he was 19.

They showed him playing croquet and in a sailing dinghy, two years before he began experiencing the first symptoms of the motor neurone disease that would later leave him almost

completely paralysed.

Fellow students contacted by the college recalled his left-wing views and his mischievous sense of humour, with one describing how he replaced the Royal Navy flag on the castle flagpole with the Communist hammer and sickle.

Hawking defied predictions that he would only live for a few years, although his rare condition — amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) — gradually robbed him of mobility.

He was confined to a wheelchair, almost completely paralysed and unable to speak except through his trademark voice syn-

thesiser. But the illness did nothing to dull his mind, and Hawking became one of the world's best-known and most inspiring scientists, known for his brilliance and his wit.

His work focused on bringing together relativity — the nature of space and time — and quantum theory — how the smallest particles behave — to explain the creation of the Universe and how it is governed.

But he was also a global star — his 1988 book “A Brief History of Time” was an unlikely worldwide bestseller, and he appeared as himself in TV shows from “The Simpsons” to “Star Trek: The

Next Generation”.

Born on 8 January, 1942 — 300 years to the day after the death of the father of modern science, Galileo Galilei — Hawking died in his home in Cambridge on the 139th anniversary of the birth of Albert Einstein.

After taking his undergraduate degree at the University of Oxford, he moved to Cambridge for his doctorate and stayed there for the rest of his career.

Hawking's family has asked six college porters, many of whom provided support for Hawking when he visited for dinners and other events, to carry his coffin.—AFP ■

Stephen Hawking

- 1942 ● Born January 8 in Oxford, England
- 1962 ● Started to research on cosmology at Cambridge University
- 1963 ● Diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a form of motor neurone disease
- 1965 ● Gained his PhD with his thesis titled *Properties of Expanding Universes*
- 1970 ● Showed that Einstein's general theory of relativity implied space and time would have a beginning in the Big Bang and an end in black holes
- 1979 ● Appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University, a post once held by Isaac Newton
- 1988 ● Published “A Brief History of Time”
- 2001 ● Published “The Universe in a Nutshell”
- 2018 ● Died at age 76

Photo: Hawking speaks to an audience by hologram in Hong Kong, beamed live from his office in Cambridge, England March 24, 2017 (Credit: Anthony Wallace)

Profile of the British physicist Stephen Hawking. PHOTO: AFP

Yangon stays atop by edging Myawady

Kyaw Zin Lin

Well-regarded Yangon United emerged with a narrow 1-0 win over Myawady FC, a team that languishes in the bottom of the league rankings but which played admirably at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday in a week-9 match of the 2018 MPT Myanmar National League.

The win keeps Yangon at the top of the league standings.

Yangon United lined up with goalkeeper Sann Sat Naing, defenders Zarni Htet, Thein Zaw, Pyae Phyo Zaw, Min Kyaw Khant, Midfielders Kyi Lin, Yan Aung Kyaw, Kosuke, Zon Moe Aung and strikers Emmanuel and Sylla.

Two Myanmar National football stars, keeper Kyaw Zin Htet



Myawady's Goalkeeper saves the ball, kicked by the Yangon's striker Emmanuel in yesterday's MNL match at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon. **PHOTO:MNL**

and striker Aee Soe, stayed in the substitution list for Yangon. Yangon put the pressure on

Myawady from the kick-off, but there were no obvious chances for Yangon to score as Myawady

was too tough in the first half.

The first half ended in a scoreless tie as Myawady with-

stood Yangon's attacks with stable defensive and midfield play.

Myawady's power play was significantly better in the second half.

Chances came for Myawady, but some weaknesses of their strikers were evident, and none of the scoring opportunities could be converted.

A single goal was earned by Yangon at the 76-minute mark with the header of Emmanuel over the corner kick support.

The header of Emmanuel was technically scored by Myawady, as the ball changed its direction into the net after hitting Aung Thu of Myawady.

The goal seemed to deflate the spirit of Myawady, who failed to create any further scoring opportunities. ■

Park, Lindberg surge into ANA Inspiration lead

RANCHO MIRAGE, CALIFORNIA—Park Sung-hyun fired an eight-under-par 64 to thrust herself into contention at the top of the leaderboard at the ANA Inspiration on Friday as she chases a second major after a dazzling rookie season.

The 24-year-old star from South Korea shrugged off an opening bogey to card seven birdies and an eagle at Mission Hills in Rancho Mirage, California, to claim a share of the second round lead.

Park, who last year won the US Women's Open at Trump National in her first year on the LPGA Tour, heads into the weekend on 12 under alongside Sweden's Pernilla Lindberg after 36 holes, leading by three from Jessica Korda of the United States on nine under.

Lindberg, the first round leader, followed up her opening 65 with a five-under-par 67 while Korda remained in the hunt with a 68.

But the day belonged to Korea's Park, who made the cut of every event she entered in her rookie LPGA season, and was also the first rookie in history to

make it to world number one in the rankings.

Friday's highlight was an eagle two on the par-four 15th, when she holed out from around 100 yards.

"Today the shots were awesome," Park said afterwards. "I just felt really good about my driver. The shots fell in just as I wanted them to.

"There were a couple things that I missed, but overall just had a great round."

Park, who has made a slow start to 2018, with three finishes outside the top 10 and a missed cut at the Kia Classic last weekend, said she had rediscovered the poise that helped her win her maiden major at the US Open last year.

"I was super focused at the US Open, and felt just as focused for today's round," she said. "It was a bummer to not make the cut last week and I felt pretty disappointed.

But I feel like it was a really good comeback today."

Park's rise has been all the more remarkable for the fact that she remains one of the few players on tour who does not have a permanent coach.

"I really enjoy the time alone to practice alone," Park said. "If it comes to the point where I need a coach, I will consider that. But right now, I just feel really good about my game."

Lindberg meanwhile was happy to be sitting alongside Park after a flawless bogey-free round which saw five birdies.

The 31-year-old said she is thriving after reuniting with caddie Daniel Taylor, who is also her fiancé. "He caddied for me for a good five, almost six years, and then we took a break only on the golf course last year when he caddied for a couple of other players," Lindberg said.

"I felt like it was great for both of us, but I really missed him on the bag. There's no-one that knows me, my game better than him. I just trust him so much. It was really me kind of begging him to come back on my bag this year."

With Korda three back from the lead, a pack of four players — English duo Charley Hull and Jodi Ewart Shadoff, Japan's Ayako Uehara and the USA's Amy Olson — were tied for fourth place on seven under, five adrift of the lead.—AFP ■



Futsal players from VUC celebrates their victory after 6-0 win over UM in yesterday's futsal quarter-final in Thuwunna Indoor Stadium in Yangon. **PHOTO:MFF FUTSAL**

Top teams step up to semi-finals of MFF Futsal tourney

Four teams - MIC, RDZ, Titans XII and VUC - made the semi-finals of the MFF Futsal Open Cup 2018 after the quarter-final stage matches were played at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon yesterday. In yesterday's quarter-final matches, one of the most famous futsal teams, MIC, cut out GV Athletic by a score of 3-1, while RDZ notched a big win over Best Friends by a score of 7-2.

In other quarterfinal matches yesterday, Titans XII beat Shwe Myawaddy by a

score of 8-3 while VUC trounced UM by a score of 6-0.

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

Khin Zaw Lynn from MIC, Hla Myo Oo from RDZ, Htet Wai Nyein Chan from Titans XII and Nyein Min Soe from VUC were recognised as the best players of their respective matches.

The tourney's semifinal matches will begin play at 12:30 pm on 2 April at Thuwunna National Indoor Stadium in Yangon.—Kyaw Zin Lin ■

SUNDAY SPECIAL

The Global New Light of Myanmar

NEXT GENERATION PLATFORM

1 APRIL 2018

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR



Not letting any condition ruin our belief

Naing Oo

WE all know that life is short, but risky. Within this short period of life, we humans have to try and struggle to reach our highest potential and do our utmost as we all tend to possess a care free and perfect life. We all are trying to reach our goal through different methods, doing what we believe. On our way to success, we will have to face challenges, difficulties and problems. Again, we can also be threatened by hidden enemies of today drugs, games and so on. Whatever it is, what is important is that we should not let any condition ruin our life!

It is undeniable that there are so many barriers and obstacles on our way to success. And also, there are so many things that can ruin our belief and then stop us from doing what we believe. At first, we may have inconveniences, problems and challenges in doing what we believe. But we should not give up doing this. Failure is what we will have to encounter in our attempts. Everyone has a failure once in a life time. The difference is "big" or "small". But, if we don't let them ruin our belief, when we keep ourselves walking on, it is sure that success will come one day. Look back into history and we could see that there were so many great and glorious persons who shook the world. They walked on and did what they think is right, although they had no end of hindrances. The only answer is that they didn't let any condition ruin their beliefs. Sometimes, some people will say that it is impossible for us. But we should not believe what they say; as they are only spectators and not "us". We only can know ourselves, the abilities we have, the vision we hold and our perseverance. We should not drop our belief just because they say something is impossible for us. Also, we should not stop doing what we believe while others are blaming on us about a problem.

Because blaming and interference on a problem is never a good solution! It does not do any good to us and can even make our decision uncertain. If we can keep our head up, plus our beliefs when others are blaming on us, then success is at hand. Those who want to stand in the Hall of Fame also need to bear against criticisms of people who are against us. Also, a big challenge which is difficult to overcome is always ready to slow down our enthusiasm and speed to grip on success. But, we need to keep ourselves calm and try to continue our steps towards the end.

We must break the barriers that hold us back from achieving our goals. We must also eliminate limiting belief, negative thoughts, negative emotion and inner conflicts in order to reach our highest potential. This also helps our belief not to be ruined because these emotions are destructive enough to do so. As life is composed of both "Triumph" and "Disaster", we need have a balanced mind which can accept the two conditions properly. All the things which we have might be destroyed within a pitch and toss, but we should not let our belief be ruined. We should try to give feedback, instead of feeling so depressed about this. This is not called "the end" and we have to start it over with perseverance, if necessary. There is a saying which goes, "Rome was not built in one day", and so we need to be in patience. Also, we should not give up what we believe even if there is only 1% of possibility to success. We should not let any condition ruin our belief! Again, we also need to have self control and self discipline not to be influenced by bad habits. We must be aware of hidden enemies of today, especially drugs. They are also ready to ruin young and fresh dreams of youths. These drugs can damage a person both physically and mentally. They can cause serious health damage plus no end of problems. They can also influence our emotions as well as our mind set. As a result, our life, combined with strong belief, will be dragged down and ruined. Therefore, we people must have self control and self discipline as well to stand against those hidden enemies. Failure, barriers and obstacles are indeed the stepping stones if we could face them in composure. We must have tenacity, enthusiasm and innovative mind.

SEE PAGE S-2

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

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P assion



Aung Aung
4th year English

It is said that you won't have to work in life all should you do your passion as a profession. I couldn't agree more with the above statement "now". The reason why I use "now" means that I didn't have the faintest idea about that meaning in the past—I was quite unclear about what I would like to be in my youth. Let alone knew the meaning of "passion".

In Myanmar, most of the children give the answers like "I'd like to be a doctor, I'd like to be an engineer" when their parents ask what they want to be – they don't know the first thing about the meaning of "passion", and perhaps they have heard of only that names.

I wasn't that clever in school—I had no idea about what English was.

All I knew was that English had to be learned by heart; as a result, the subject I hated most in school was English.

Only after I had passed the matriculation exam did I have the chance to study English well. Later I have taken great interest in English.

Every student in Myanmar finds it difficult after the matriculation exam because we won't be permitted to join the university or institution we wish to do provided we don't get the necessary marks in the exam. That's the most difficult time for every Myanmar student who didn't get good marks. What if a student wants to be a doctor and doesn't get high marks enough to attend the University of Medicine? That problem annually occurs in Myanmar.

I was one of them. My desire was to be an

engineer without clearly knowing what it was. All I knew was that an engineer was well paid and my parents were one of the underprivileged in Myanmar. That's why I would like my parents to be prosperous. I, therefore, applied to Technology University; unfortunately, I was unqualified to join that university since my marks were not enough to attend there. Instead, I was accepted by "the University of Computer" in Shwe Pyi Thar, which is 3-hour-drive far from my home. Thus, there was no other way for me except attending the university near to my home.

I felt as if I was lost. I didn't realize what was happening to my life because I knew that there would be no second chance for me to be an engineer. Fortunately, I found out that I was really keen on learning English. From that time. I was able to see my future again.

In my university days, I'm beginning to realize the definition of "passion" little by little as I start to read books. To tell the truth, I didn't know any better about reading in my childhood. Now that I am determined to follow my passion, English, I'm trying to the best of my ability to be able to make it best.

In life we may sometimes lose our passion and way—we don't know what we long to be anymore. At that time, we must do something to which we must devote ourselves. Only then will our passion come out because passion comes to those who are doing something. Follow your passion, which will make your successful and worth living in life. I wish everyone could find out their passions and follow them. Be a go-getter!

Learning from Watching Television



Khin Moh Moh Aung
Yadanabon University

LEARNING can be received from everywhere and every-time. We can learn from books, from the speech of the grandparents, parents, teachers. We can also learn from the social media what is very popular these days. Among the social media, television is a thing what can give us a lot of knowledge and can entertain us. We can get a lot of precious things by watching television if we can use it in good ways. Some of the people like to watch TV series and movies. Some like to watch Music program and some like to watch travelling program. Some people like to watch cooking program and designing program and so on. There are many interesting programs broadcasting on television channels. People can know many subject matters by just sitting. We can know what is happening around the world by just pressing a key.

Most of the people love to watch television because watching television can entertain them. Most of the people think watching television can just enter-

tain them, but actually, television can be called edutainment as it can give us a lot of knowledge by entertaining with many programs. We can know about places where we cannot reach easily. For example, the foreign countries. When we cannot get some places for our respective works, we can know that place from television. For example, people cannot give their time to observe about the MOGOK 800th anniversary by going there. They, however, can know about that by watching television. Likewise, people can explore their knowledge about underwater or about the planets.

People can also know how to cook by watching cooking programs. The cooks show the recipe of the meals and how to make the meals delicious by showing examples. Therefore, people who are interested in cooking can cook easily by watching television. Moreover, people who are interested in eating, can know about the good restaurants and how to get there. They can get these information by watching television.

Moreover, people who want to know what is happening around the world, can fulfill their wish by watching television. If they want to know the local news or international news, they can know about them by just sitting somewhere and watching

television. People can also know about the weather forecast or how to prevent the natural disaster before we confront it, by watching television. Or, if people would like to know about the celebrities around the world, they can know by watching television. By these means, television can give us pro.

Besides, people can learn foreign languages what they are interested in, by watching television. The teachers of English language, Japanese, Chinese

or Korean etc. are teaching these languages on television. Therefore, people who cannot afford to attend the language proficiency classes, can learn languages by watching television.

In many efficient ways, television is providing advantages to people. On the other hand, people can also rely on the television by using it in good ways. Therefore, what I would like to convey is that we can learn many precious things by watching television.

Not letting any condition ruin our belief

FROM PAGE S-1

SeeAs we all know that life is not a bed of roses,we must prepare to counter back upcoming problems and challenges. Success seldom comes at once and it comes to us as a result of trial and error. They come straight towards those who have industry,enthusiasm,perseverance plus mental –strength. So,it is essential to us not to let any condition ruin our belief.

To sum up,it is accepted that success and perfect life are what we all tend to have. The reason why we people are striving is nothing but because of our hopes and belief. We should not let them to be ruined;as our belief is just like 'a lantern' for our life. We can walk on with our 'belief';yet we have got nothing and no one by our side. But,we cannot continue our journey;yet we still have 'all' but not 'belief'. On our way to success,we will have to experience new challenges and problems which are difficult to solve. We need to give feedback to them and should not let any condition ruin our belief. Only then,will we be able to conquer the more seasons to come and ourselves!

(CONTINUED FROM THE LAST WEEK)

Last week, we have discussed about the different “Pillars of Learning” which are appearing according to the time and needs of the conditions. And we have read about the poem “Thu – Si- Pu- Bar- Wi – Li- Thi- Da” by the famous monk-poet his Venerable Ahin Mahar Rahtasara. (Here the author wants to make one correction in the last week writings, that the correct name of the poet is “Ashin Mahar Rahtasara” (not Ashin Mahar Silavamsa))

The origin of the poem goes like this in Myanmar, “သု စိ ပု ဘာ ၊ ဝိ လိ သိ ဓာ ၊ အက္ခရာ စွဲသုံး ဤ စ လုံးကို ၊ သိကုံး ပန်းသွင် ၊ နေတိုင်းဆင်လော့

ကဗျာ၏ အဓိပ္ပါယ်မှာ

- သု - သုဂ္ဂေယျ = နာကြား ရာ၏။
- စိ - စိန္တေယျ = ကြံစည် ရာ ၏။
- ပု - ပုဇ္ဇေယျ = မေးမြန်း ရာ၏။
- ဘာ - ဘာသေယျ = ပြောဆိုရာ၏။
- ဝိ - ဝိစာရေယျ = စူးစမ်းဆင်ခြင်ရာ၏။
- လိ - လိက္ခေယျ = ရေးသား ရာ၏ ။
- သိ - သိက္ခေယျ = လေ့ကျင့်ရာ၏ ။
- ဓာ - ဓာရေယျ = နှုတ်တတ် ဆောင်ရာ၏။

It shows that the above meaning shows what a learner should do to have effective learning. There are altogether eight steps to do.

A learner should listen to others’ (teachers’) teaching and his speech.

A learner should think by himself.

A learner should ask questions or inquire (if he is not sure or wants to know more).

A learner should discuss about or talk about what he has learnt. (so that he can get more from others’ discussions and others’ points of view)

A learner should inquire and think analytically. (Analysis)

A learner should write down what he has learnt or write on his own ideas about what he has learnt. (It is something like “interpretations” too.)

A learner should practice. (Practice maketh a full man.)

A learner should memorize what he has learnt. (Learning by heart)

Here by seeing these eight different steps (we can call it our Myanmar Philosophy of Learning) we Myanmar are never behind others concerning learning and all know it very well that we are intelligent people, originally and naturally intelligent indeed however we have to face such difficult conditions in our history.

We can also find some of the Pillars of Learning or Pillars of Education in our own way in our traditional Myanmar Education.

e.g. Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Think, Learning to Create

And we have more such as ... to inquire and discuss, to exchange ideas, to ask and inquire if it is necessary, to analyze, to interpret, to write down, to practice and to memorize by heart.

Everybody knows very well that these are very important stages in Learning.

And more, we have different stages in Learning, higher and higher one after another such as :

Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Assessment. For these

Learning Stages, we have not “Application, Synthesis and Assessment” steps openly.

But, as for a wise man (not only educated but wise), we have already thought of wisdom up

to these stages. For the last stage “Assessment” meant not only assess anything or any information as it is, but it means we should differentiate and decide well between what is right and what is wrong, what is true and what is false, what is valuable and what is valueless etc.

Among the Pillars of Education we Myanmar do not openly say about “to Learn to Learn” and “to Learn to Live together peacefully”, just because we Myanmar people loves “Learning” and have the will for our children to continue learning or to go on learning and studying as much as they can. We can see it daringly in our “Five Duties of Parents”, as the very first Duty of parents is “to educate their children”.

And for the Pillar, “to Learn to live peacefully together”, we Myanmar people (here the author means all our nation, all national races) practically do not discriminate among ourselves through all our long long historical days. That is why we do not need to pronounce it glaringly about that pillar. As to love peace and to live in peacefully and friendly and unitedly among all of us is our nature from the depth of our hearts, it is natural for all of us to live together peacefully.

That is why we need not to mention about that Pillar specifically through our days in history.

And our religions (may be Buddhism or others) usually emphasize on “Loving Kindness”. So it is so natural to all of us “to live together peacefully” by nature.

But, as there are changes according to time, development and so on, we have newer and newer Pillars of Education, so we all human beings have “to learn to live” and “to live to learn” these days.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

Life-long Learning

Dr. Nu Nu Win
(Retired Professor and Head of Department)



Photo: Phoe Khwar



Kadu ethnic cultural festival holds in Inndaw

By Mg Chit Lin (Inndaw)

We are duty bound to safeguard our races, which can be united through thick and thin. For now, we are in desperate need of unity, which can bring success for our race and regional development.



THE Kadu people, who belong to the Bamar ethnic group, held their cultural festival on a grand scale in In-Pin Village, Nant-Thar Village-tract, Inndaw Township in Sagaing Region.

At the opening ceremony, the signboard marking of the traditional festival was opened by the Deputy Speaker of Sagaing Regional Hluttaw U Boe Than Nyunt, Regional Minister for Chin Ethnic Affairs U La Htaung Htan, Chairman of Katha District Management Committee U Tint Wai Thone, Regional Hluttaw Representative U Than Win and Patron of Kadu National Organization U Pyae Thein.

Afterwards, Speaker of Sagaing Regional Hluttaw U Than pressed the button to open the signboard marking the traditional festival. The regional Hluttaw speaker delivered an address before the regional minister made a speech on behalf of the chief minister.

The Kadu community leaders U Chin Aung from Pinlebu Township, U Win Shwe from Bamauk Township and U Kan Aung from Indaw Township also spoke words of thanks and presented gifts to the local authorities. Afterwards, the guests were entertained with dance and song by traditional cultural troupes.

The three-day-festival was celebrated from March 25-27 and local ethnic communities such as Kanan, Red Shan, Kachin and Kadu participated in the event.

U Zaw Myo Tun, one of the committee members of the festival said, "This festival is the second celebration for Kadu ethnic people, which aims at promoting unity, conserving the customs and language. We also display Kadu cultural heritage and utensils at the festival. Competitions in rice pounding with foot-operated wooden pounders, cross-bow matches and tugs-of-war, among others, were held during the festival."

Member of Khachin State Hluttaw Daw

Mya Thwe San said, "We want to appoint a minister for our ethnic affair because we are duty bound to safeguard our races which can be united through thick and thin. For the time being now, we are in desperate need of unity which can bring success for our race and regional development. That's why we want to raise awareness of our fellow people that our Kadu race still belongs to 135 ethnic races in the country."

Ko Min Thone, a Kadu ethnic race said, "As far as I know that we Kadu ethnic people are striving to hold National Scrutiny Card. Also the process of taking census is being made to collect data and information for them. According to the census, it was learnt that the total population of Kadu ethnic race is 43787 people including some 731 people from five Kadu villages of Katha Township; some 2734 people from 12 Kadu villages of Pinlebu Township; some 15235 people from 31 villages of Bannmount Township; some 25087 people from 35 villages of Inndaw Township respectively. There may remain

some Kadu people who do not include in the census taking process."

A Kadu ethnic lady Daw Cho Hla said, "As for me, I want to stand tall our Kadu people in the country and appoint an Ethnic Minister for the benefits of our race. We want him to promote socio-economic situation of the region and regional development as well. Moreover I want to teach Kadu language in schools so that we can keep our own language and customs."

"We also have a committee which can enhance our language and traditions. There are many places where Kadu people are still residing, especially in Pinlebu Township, Bannmount Township and Inndaw Township. Among them, Inndaw Township is known as the place where only a few people can speak Kadu spoken language compared to the rest townships. That's why we are trying to promote our language and traditions as much as we can", said U Zaw Myo Tun, one of the committee members of the festival.

Translated by Nyi Nyi Aung



SUNDAY COMICS



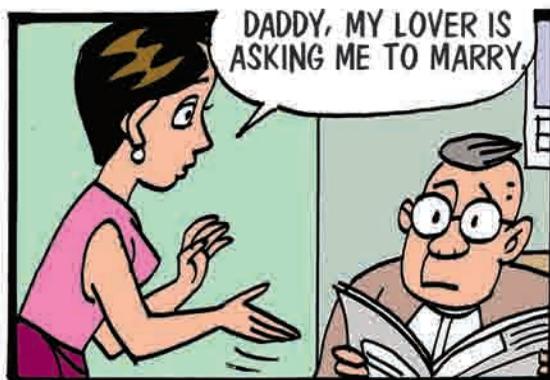
PEOPLE WILL BE PEOPLE

Cartoon
Maung Shwe Win



SUNDAY JOKE

Cartoon
Maung Maung Aung
2018





Makan Bracelets of Pyu

Makan =
legendary
mythical
mixed
crocodile-lion
creature

By Tin Win (Beikthano)

FINDING of gold accessories in Pyu era shows the high skills and the standards of Pyu people in goldsmith. People in that time were already wearing several types of accessories in gold such as beads, hairpin, rings, earplugs and the bracelets were made in high quality designs.

Among them all, people wore the Mekan bracelets in big skill and made them using loads of gold.

The accessories designed and decorated with the shape of Mekan creature were rarely found in Pyu era.

Makan head shaped embosses have been found along with the four Buddha statues on the silver hollow tube and on the left and right shoulder edges of the silver Buddha statue along with the throne pillar found at Khin Ba mound in Hmaw Zar village in 1972.

On each side of the bronze pillar in Pyu era found by the cowboys in Kan Oo Village in Pinyinman in 2012, was decorated in the shapes of a Galone (Garuda in Thai – the mythical bird officially adopted as the national emblem of Thai) riding on the head of Mekan and the other was a posture of nat (a guardian angel) came out from the mouth of Mekan.

Apart from that, the other stuffs in Pyu era are rarely found in Mekan shapes and were mostly on

with spiral shape. The tail part was curved in lotus and lotus leaf shapes and decorated with the detailed curves and the spiral shapes.

The other one was found in the excavation of cooperative fish pond nearby Ku Me, Myitthar Township in 1980. That one was only head with the body. And that head was the biggest in the findings and elegant with the very detailed decorations.

In 2012, a 16 Kyat Tha (256 g) (*1 kyat tha = 16 g) completed Mekan bracelet was found in Lat Khoke Pin Village, Min Buu Township from the excavation of petroleum pipeline.

Those all Mekan bracelets are collected and showed at the National Museum and the Zay Gabar Museum got collected a 20 kyat tha (320 g) completed Mekan bracelet in 2016.

All those excavations of Pyu Mekan bracelets were from the areas in Minn Bu and Myitthar in Mandalay Region, but not from the famous areas of Pyu ancient cities such as Pyi, Hmaw Zar, Taung Twin Gyi, Beikthano and Han Lin Gyi.

Especially, the villages in the Min Buu Township are the areas to find most Mekan bracelets in Myanmar and about 7 bracelets have been found from those areas.



Ibexes bracelet - Greece 16th Century

Lion bracelet - Greece 6th Century

the bracelets.

Some consider Mekan bracelets are made as the arms – ware as they are bigger to be fixed on wrists as the bracelet, so they call it the 'Bangle'.

There are some skeletons from the findings of the skeletons in Pyu graveyards found wearing the king size stone and bronze bracelets obviously on their wrist.

Gold Mekan bracelets in Pyu era are big in size but not that in width. So for me, I consider them as the bracelets as they cannot be fixed on arm but only on the wrist in above reason.

Gold bracelets in Rome and Greece in Europe are found in the similar shapes of Mekan bracelets in Pyu era. But they were in the head shapes of lion, ibexes and cheetah facing on the gold bracelets.

Pyu Mekan bracelets are more romantic/surrealist in the oriental styles decorated with the fangs, sprouts, wings, flowers and the flower runners. Very first Mekan bracelet has found in U Hnaung Gone Village in Myinn Mu Township in 1972 and that was also the completed and finest one.

The head sprouts are decorated in very details



Makan Bracelet (Zay Gabar Museum)



Makan Bracelet (Min Buu, Saku Township)

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