

NATIONAL

State Counsellor receives ambassadors of ROK and Australia

PAGE-3

**NATIONAL**

VP U Henry Van Thio inspects elephant camps in Bago Region

PAGE-3

**LOCAL NEWS**

Some 28 human trafficking cases recorded in Mdy

PAGE-4

LOCAL NEWS

Yangon-Mandalay highway to get more speed control devices

PAGE-4

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers a speech at the 7th Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting on the NCA in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

‘Nothing is better than peace’: State Counsellor

At 7th JICM in Nay Pyi Taw, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi urges ‘discussions with confidence’

THE Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong will be held in late April or early May, according to the 7th Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM) on the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement held

in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The decision was made at the meeting held at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, which began with a greeting by State Counsellor

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

In her speech, the State Counsellor, in her capacity as the Chair of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, called on participants to dare to dream for a peaceful federal Union.

“I believe that those who are here don’t want their grandchildren to grow up in surroundings which are not at peace. So, to all those delegates who are here who have a strong desire for peace, nothing is better than

peace. To build development, we need peace,” she said.

She also urged the participants of the meeting to take part in the discussions with confidence.

SEE PAGE-7



‘BEST BANK IN MYANMAR’

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Two new signatories become members of NCA

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approved the inclusion of two recent signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) yesterday, which had received the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's first approval on 8 December 2015.

The New Mon State Party (NMSP) and Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) signed an agreement to ink the NCA on 13 February 2018. Their signing must be approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, said U Tun Tun Oo, Union Attorney-General, during a clarification at the union parliament yesterday, in his capacity as a member of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre on behalf of the union government.

Earlier, the NCA between the government and eight ethnic organisations, signed on 15

October 2015, was approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 8 December 2015.

Paragraph 26 of the NCA, which came into effect on 15 October 2015, mentions that the agreement shall be submitted to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, in accordance with the rules to seek approval.

In the meeting yesterday, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw also approved part-1 of the Union Peace Conference 21st Century Panglong, signed by leaders of the groups that attended the conference on 29 May 2017.

Following this, Secretary of the Joint Bill Committee Dr. Myat Nyana Soe submitted the findings and remarks of the committee about the Union Tax Bill 2018.

After the clarification,

Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than invited the MPs to participate in the debate over the bill in the next meetings.

The union parliament also approved the National Planning Bill for six months, starting from April 2018.

Following some objections to the extension to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission, the issue was put to vote, and it was approved with 295 votes in favour and 179 against.

Later, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe urged the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to approve the memorandum of understanding between ASEAN and Australia for cooperation in fighting international terrorism, sent by the President.



Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

During the latter part of the meeting, the MPs debated over the issue submitted by the Ministry of Construction on borrowing

15 billion Japanese yen from the Japan International Cooperation Agency. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker pays obeisance head of Shwekyin Sasana Sayadaw

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint paid obeisance State Ovadacariya patron Sayadaw, the head chairman of Shwekyin Sasana Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maharatta Guru Bhaddanta Vizawta yesterday afternoon in the meeting hall of the Hluttaw.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint welcomed the chairman of Shwekyin Sasana Sayadaw and donated offertories. Afterwards, the chairman of Shwekyin Sasana Sayadaw administered sermons. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint and delegation pay homage to Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maharatta Guru Bhaddanta Vizawta yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Meeting held for implementing development in Rakhine

THE Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State held its meeting at the office of the Ministry for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday.

At the meeting, Union Minister and Committee Chairman Dr. Win Myat Aye said the committee will closely follow the recommendations of the advisory board to provide long-lasting solutions to problems in Rakhine State. He noted Rakhine State was facing obstacles to its development, human rights,

security and equality. The union minister said if these hardships are resolved, then lasting peace will be possible in Rakhine.

The union minister said that Rakhine was being given priority because it was one of the least developed states; however, the development of human rights is being pursued equally throughout the country. He said the union government is drafting laws and amending the existing ones to ensure equal human rights for all. He said the government is working to accelerate the na-

tional verification process and rehabilitation of the afflicted people. He said all the responsible ministries should announce their progress and plans to the public to improve transparency.

The union minister said he had discussed with the Ministry of Home Affairs about reducing travel restrictions in Rakhine State, in addition to national verification cards for people living there.

Dr. Win Myat Aye said youth volunteers had successfully conducted four Union Enterprise

for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development surveys and donations in Rakhine and will conduct the fifth one soon. He said work on the border fence was almost completed and improved security measures were being undertaken. He said returnees to Rakhine need to be carefully checked and development plans in the state must be conducted in a transparent manner.

The first report on the progress in Rakhine has been announced to the public, and these

reports will be given once every four months, he said. He then invited the public and other ministries to provide feedback on their progress.

Later, U Soe Aung, joint-secretary of the implementation committee, explained the tasks completed from the previous meeting and discussed further plans with the attendants. Next, the various ministries explained their processes in Rakhine State, followed by a collective general discussion. —Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Korean Ambassador Mr. Lee Sang-hwa in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor receives ROK Ambassador

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received Mr. Lee Sang-hwa, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at 11:00 am

on 28 February 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw. During the meeting, they discussed matters on promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Republic of Korea.—Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi receives Australian Ambassador Mr. Nicholas Coppel at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor, Australian Ambassador discuss bilateral cooperation

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received Mr. Nicholas Coppel, Ambassador of the

Commonwealth of Australia to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at 10:00 am on 28 February 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw. During the meeting, they

discussed matters pertaining to the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit and promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Australia.—Myanmar News Agency ■

VP U Henry Van Thio inspects elephant camps in Bago Region

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, who is also Chairman of the Central Committee for the Development of the National Tourism Industry, inspected the Phoe Kyar elephant camp and the Wingabaw elephant camp in Bago Region yesterday.

The Vice President and his entourage arrived first at the Phoe Kyar elephant camp and were welcomed by Dr. Saw Nyo Win, the Bago Region Minister for Natural Resources, Forestry and Environmental Conservation and official.

In the briefing hall of the elephant camp, Managing Director of Myanmar Timber Enterprise U Saw John Shwe Ba explained the condition of the protected elephants in Phoe Kyar camp and the number of tourists who visit the camp annually. Next, U Zaw Win Myint, the Director of the Forestry Department, explained the forest conservation efforts in the Bago-Yoma moun-

tain range, the progress of public forest reserves, the capture of illegal loggers in the area, the status of wild elephants in the forest, and the progress on identifying and arresting elephant poachers.

The Vice President then instructed the officials on carefully and effectively arresting illegal loggers and elephant poachers and also uncovering the ringleaders behind these illegal activities. He said that the entire world was going towards environmental conservation and reforestation, so Myanmar needed to put more emphasis in this area.

The Vice President then toured the elephant museum, bungalows, and the conservation and tourism efforts at the camp before watching the camp's elephants perform dances.

The Vice President then travelled to the Wingabaw elephant camp and was given a presentation by U Hla Moe Aung,



Vice President U Henry Van Thio feeds elephants as he visits the Phoe Kyar elephant camp in Bago Region on 28 February 2018. **PHOTO: MNA**

the General Manager of the Timber Production Division. Next, Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein explained tourism development and the Bago-Yoma range's conservation efforts.

The Vice President commented that there has been a gradual increase in the number of tourists visiting to the elephant camps. He said the camp

needs to do more advertising to raise more awareness and to cooperate with other agencies to further promote tourism. The Vice President then toured Wingabaw camp.

The Phoe Kyar elephant camp is located in Yedashe township, Taungoo District in Bago Region and is home to 14 elephants. Visitors can inter-

act with the elephants, bathing them, feeding them and observing them in their natural habitat.

The Wingabaw elephant camp was established in 2016 and is located 14 miles from Bago City. The camp is 86 acres wide and houses adult elephants orphaned wild elephants and orphaned baby elephants.—Myanmar News Agency ■

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Yangon-Mandalay highway to get more speed control devices

More speed control devices will be installed on the Yangon-Mandalay highway to reduce accidents, according to the highway police.

Although the department has already installed a few speed control devices on the highway, more such devices are needed, the police said.

Upon completion of the highway road upgradation project, 11 devices will be installed at dangerous locations. The upgradation of the asphalt road on the Yangon-Mandalay highway is being done at the rate of 20 miles per year.

The police have found excessive speed to be the major cause of accidents. Other causes include unsafe vehicles, dilapidated condition of the road surface and negligent driving.

"The highway traffic police are also providing awareness training about road safety measures on the Yangon-Mandalay



File photo of the Yangon-Mandalay highway. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

highway to the public. Drivers must be aware that they should stay within the speed limit, said an official from the highway police. Currently, some 16 traffic police stations have been con-

structed on the Yangon-Mandalay highway. Motorists who drive faster than 100 kilometres per hour on the highway will face fines and possible prison sentences, according to the

highway police.

Some 14,000 vehicles use the highway daily, and one to five accidents occur on a daily basis, according to statistics provided by the highway police.—GNLM

Myanmar contemporary art reaches its centennial

Art is the collective expression of human emotion and it reflects the soul of the country's culture. It plays a key role in disseminating the history of fine arts.

Myanmar art has existed since the prehistoric era and prominent ancient artworks remains a testament to ancient culture. Myanmar's contemporary art movement began in 1918, now Myanmar art is celebrating its 100 year old birthday this February.

The Centenary of Myanmar Contemporary Art exposition is

being held now from 27 to 28 February, at the National Theatre of Yangon. The event was organized by the Myanmar Painting and Sculpture Association headed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.

More than 1000 paintings of different genres such as watercolour painting, oils, acrylics and pencil drawings that artists throughout the country created are displayed at the event.

The paintings are the creations of deceased artists, international artists, famous painters

and sculptors and up and coming painters.

The event comprises artists who create installations, talks about biographies of well-known painters and displays of their artwork, and talks about other artistic subjects in Myanmar. Myanmar art has been divided into six eras; the prehistoric, Bagan, Nyaung Yan, Konebaung, Yadanabon Mandalay and 20th century Myanmar art. An example of prehistoric art is ancient paintings found in caves drawn by people from the Stone Age.

The methods employed in European style paintings diffused into the Myanmar art world after the first Anglo-Burmese war. Contemporary Myanmar art emerged afterwards.

People who were influenced by the European style painting in Myanmar were Mr. Martin John, chair of the Burma Art Club, and other founders of the club including Daw Mya May, who is called the mother of Myanmar Painting. The Myanmar Painting and Sculpturing Council was formed in 1918.—Khin Zar Li ■

Some 28 human trafficking cases recorded in Mdy in 2017

The Mandalay Region No. 11 anti-human trafficking police force has recorded some 28 cases from January to December 2017 in the Mandalay Region.

Of the 28 cases, five are local, five are related to sexual slavery, nine to trafficking to China, one to forced labour and eight to forced marriages, according to figures released by the anti-trafficking unit of Mandalay. In 2016, some 26 cases were recorded in Mandalay, with six being local cases, four

related to sexual slavery, seven to trafficking to China, two to forced labour and seven to forced marriages.

"We are trying to conduct more awareness training to reduce the number of trafficking cases. We are also distributing handouts and posters related to human trafficking awareness. Most of the people falling prey to trafficking are those going abroad to find work. We do not have an official contract concerning overseas employment

with the Chinese government. So, those who are working in China are doing it illegally. However, we have a contract with the Thai government for overseas employees. There are also many overseas employment agencies," said Police Inspector Myint Thein of the No. 11 anti-human trafficking police force.

The Mandalay Region has the easiest route to China. So, many cases of trafficking have been recorded here. Therefore, we are conducting an awareness

training in cooperation with the World Vision and Myanmar Women's Affairs Committee, he added.

From 2006 to 2017, there were 3,848 victims from 1,609 cases across the country. Most cases related to trafficking to China involved forced marriages (1,141), followed by forced marriages in Myanmar (256) and Thailand (177 cases). Human traffickers lure victims with attractive salary packages.—Khin Sett Wai ■

Bilateral trade between US, Myanmar valued at \$568million this FY



Rice, various types of pulses, forest products, fish, prawns, apparel, garments produced on cut-make-pack system and other finished industrial goods were shipped to the US. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAH**

Myanmar's trade with the United States (US) from 1 April to 31 December was worth some US\$568 million, including \$212 million in exports and \$356 million in imports, according to statistics provided by the Commerce Ministry.

Rice, various types of pulses, forest products, fish,

prawns, apparel, garments produced on cut-make-pack system and other finished industrial goods were shipped to the US. Meanwhile, Myanmar mainly imported personal goods, capital goods and industrial raw materials from the US.

Under Barack Obama's

government, the US reinstated Myanmar's eligibility for a generalised system of preferences benefits after the imposition of economic sanctions against Myanmar for more than two decades.

The US made investments worth \$129 million in Myanmar this fiscal year.—Mon Mon ■

Myanmar records trade deficit of \$3.8 billion this FY

Myanmar's trade balance in the last 10 months of this fiscal year (FY) showed a deficit of US\$3.8 billion, according to statistics provided by the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar's external trade with foreign countries between 1 April and 16 February in the current FY was valued at \$28.6 billion, including \$12.4 billion worth of exports and \$16.2 billion worth of imports.

Myanmar's trade deficit was \$91.9 million in the 2012-2013 FY, \$2.5 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, \$4.9 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, \$5.4 billion in the 2015-2016 FY and more than \$5.5 billion in the 2016-2017 FY,

respectively, according to the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO).

Concerted efforts are being made to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items, except essential goods. The government succeeded in reducing the trade deficit slightly this FY, as it was more than \$4 billion during the same period last FY.

Capital goods such as auto parts, vehicles, machines, steel and airplane parts are imported, but imports by the private sector were less this FY due to changes in the automobile policy. However, the total value of imports by the private and

public sectors increased slightly compared with last FY.

Raw materials such as petroleum-based products and plastic raw materials recorded the highest value in the import sector. Their import value was up by \$1.4 billion against last FY.

Consumer products, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and palm oil, also flowed into the domestic market, registering an increase of \$467 million compared with last FY.

Meanwhile, agro products, animal products, fisheries, forest products, minerals, finished industrial goods and other export products are shipped to foreign countries.—Ko Khant ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့တိုင်း **"Sunday Special"** အချုပ်ပို (၈)
မျက်နှာပေါ်သော The Global New Light of Myanmar
နေ့စဉ်ထုတ် သတင်းစာကို အောက်ပါမြို့များတွင် ဖတ်ရှုနိုင်ပါပြီ

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Independent journalists visit troubled areas in Maungdaw

Three dead, one hurt in IED explosion in Maungdaw Tsp

"Sunday Special"
အချုပ်ပို (၈) မျက်နှာ
ပေါ်ပါသည်

နေပြည်တော်
ပြန်ကြားရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ရုံးအမှတ် (၇) နေပြည်တော်၊
သတင်းနှင့်စာနယ်ဇင်းလုပ်ငန်း (ရုံးချုပ်)၊
စီမံခန့်ခွဲမှုဌာန၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၆၇၄၁၂၁၀၈

နေပြည်တော်
နေပြည်တော်သတင်းစာတိုက် (တပ်ကုန်း)
ဇယားသိမ်းခြွင်းမှု၊ ခရေပင်လမ်းခွဲ၊ နေပြည်တော်၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၆၇၃၆၁၄၈၊ ၀၆၇၃၆၁၂၉

ရန်ကုန်
The Global New Light of
Myanmar သတင်းစာတိုက်၊ အမှတ် ၁၅၀၊
ငါးထပ်ကြီးဘုရားလမ်း၊ ဗဟန်းမြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၁၀၆၀၄၅၃၂၊ ၀၉၅၄၄၄၄၄၄၄၄

မန္တလေး
လမ်း (၂၀ x ၂၀) ကြား၊ (၁၂ x ၁၂) လမ်းကြား၊ ပုလဲခွေ
ရောင်ရမ်း၊ မန္တလေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၂၃၂၇၂၉၊ ၀၂၃၂၇၅၀

တောင်ကြီး
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မကွေး
နတ်မောက်လမ်း၊ တပ်မ (၈၈) တပ်နယ်ဈေးအနီး၊
မကွေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၆၃၂၃၇၂၂

တချင်းတုံ
မြို့ပေါ် (၃-၈)၊ အမှတ် (၁) လမ်းသွယ်၊ မြို့ပေါ်လမ်း၊
ကျင်းတုံမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၈၄၂၂၄၉၂

ကလေး
အောင်ဇေယျရပ်ကွက်၊ မြို့နယ်အားကစားကွင်းအနီး၊
ကလေးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၇၃၂၂၁၃၃

မြင်းကြီးများ
အမှတ် (၄၁)၊ ရေရပ်ကွက်၊ အောင်ဆန်းလမ်း၊
မြင်းကြီးများမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၇၄၂၂၄၆၂

စစ်တွေ
ရထားဝင်လမ်းနှင့် တက္ကသိုလ်ရိပ်သာလမ်း၊
မိဆက်ကြီးအနီး၊ မန်းကျည်းမြိုင်ရပ်ကွက်၊ စစ်တွေမြို့၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၄၃၂၃၀၆၈

လားရှိုး
ဟူးမွန်ကျေးရွာထိပ်၊ ဟူးမွန်ဆည်ဘယ်ဘက်ခြမ်း၊
(၁၂) ရပ်ကွက်၊ မန်ဆူဘုရားရှေ့၊ အဝေပလမ်း၊
လားရှိုးမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၈၂၂၄၀၆၇

ခြောက်
မေတ္တာလမ်း၊ ရှမ်းချောင်းရပ်၊ ကလေးကျေးရွာအုပ်စု၊
ခြောက်မြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၅၉၄၂၁၃၃

မော်လမြိုင်
ကြာအင်းကျေးရွာ၊ မော်လမြိုင်မြို့၊
ဖုန်း - ၀၅၇၂၇၂၅၊ ၀၅၇၂၇၂၆

မုံရွာ
နန္ဒဝန်ရပ်ကွက်၊ ဆက်သွယ်ရေးတံတိုင်းအနီး၊
မုံရွာမြို့၊ ဖုန်း - ၀၇၁၂၆၅၃၅၊ ၀၇၁၂၆၅၃၃

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Myanmar places at bottom in ease of doing business ranking

MYANMAR's economy is moving at a slow pace, with it being placed a lowly 171 among 190 countries in the ease of doing business rankings.

Foreign investors have criticised the slower economic development in the country, attributing it to weak infrastructure and policy requirements.

To improve the ease of doing business ranking and provide precise answers to the tricky questions posed by the World Bank, a coordinating meeting of the public and private sectors was held at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry last Monday.

The meeting highlighted issues of construction permits and tax and trading across borders. U Aung Htoo, Deputy Minister for the Commerce Ministry,



Foreign investors have criticised the slower economic development in the country, attributing it to weak infrastructure and policy requirements. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR**

and other related officials and businessmen from the private sector discussed these key problems.

In 2009, the World Bank released a questionnaire for international businessmen to create a smooth business environment for investment.

Clear and proper responses have to be provided while answering the questionnaire released by the World Bank for the year 2019, said U Zeya Thura Mon from Zeya and Associates Co. Ltd. He also explained the research activities of the ease of doing business rank

and the scores of New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, India and Myanmar.

While filling out the questionnaire, businessmen can directly ask for a support group, including officials from the World Bank and the Commerce Ministry, if the questions are confusing.

The World Bank determines a country's ease of doing business rank based on 11 indicators; starting a business, dealing with the construction permit, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, resolving insolvency and labour management, all of which are incorporated into those indicators in 2018. Each indicator has 2-38 page questions.—GNLM ■

Australia bans importation of Myanmar's betel nut

Australia's Department of Agriculture and Water Resource prohibited the importation of Myanmar's half cut betel nut in January 2018, according to the Food Standards Code, the Commerce Ministry reported online.

Betel nut is included among the prohibited and restricted plants and fungi for importation, according to some provisions of Australia's Food Standards Code.

Australia will continue to ban betel nut imports and other similar goods as long as the importers do not fulfill the country's food requirements.

According to the commerce ministry's statistics, bilateral trade between Myanmar and Australia in the first nine months of the current fiscal year was valued at \$139 million. Myanmar's exports to Australia are much lower than its imports.—GNLM

Myawady gate sees record trade with ITCs

BORDER trade with the use of individual trading cards (ITCs) reached a record high of Ks29 billion at the Myawady checkpoint, as of mid-February of the current fiscal year (FY), according to statistics provided by the Commerce Ministry.

The trade department has issued 158 cards to individual traders so far. Individual trading card holders carried out trade worth Ks38.6 billion between 1 April 2017 and 16 February 2018. Exports were worth only Ks4 billion, while the import value hit more than Ks34 billion.

The value of trade conducted by individual card holders this FY was more than Ks2.2 billion in Tamu, more than Ks47

million in Muse, Ks29 billion in Myawady, Ks915 million in Tachilek, more than Ks70 million in Lweijel, more than Ks4 million in Chinshwehaw, more than Ks1.68 billion in Kanpikete, more than Ks743 million in Kawthoung, more than Ks10 billion in Reed, more than Ks628,000 at Htantalan Township, more than Ks26.5 billion in Mawtaung and Ks160 million in Kengtung, according to the official statistics of the commerce ministry. The value of trade conducted with ITCs was more than Ks737 million from 21 November 2012 to 31 March 2013, more than Ks6.6 billion in the 2013-2014 FY, more than Ks9.3 billion in the 2014-2015 FY,

more than Ks6.4 billion in the 2015-2016 FY and more than Ks18.9 billion in the 2016-2017 FY. The trade department has issued 1,422 cards so far, with 292 cards from 21 November 2012 to 31 March 2013, 261 cards in the 2013-2014 FY, 317 cards in the 2014-2015 FY, 146 cards in the 2015-2016 FY, 248 cards in the 2016-2017 FY and 158 cards as of 16 February this FY.

The trade department issued the ITC to boost border trade. A businessman can trade Ks3 million worth of goods per day using the ITC, while the trade department has granted a trade value of up to Ks15 million per day, which is a five-day trade value.—Ko Khant ■

Cattle exporters to face legal action for violating regulations

FARM owners working on a manageable and commercial scale need to strictly adhere to regulations enforced under the existing law for the export of live cattle. If exporters are found violating rules, the authorities will take action against them.

Before exporting live cattle, exporters have to go through a number of stages, such as seeking health certificates for the cattle, inspection of the export channel at stations established by the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and an acknowledgement that they will obey the existing laws of the department, according to a report in Myanmar Alinn yesterday.

Director-general U Yan Naing Tun told Myanmar Alinn that inspection checkpoints are located at 16th mile, Yebyu and Muse 105th mile gates along Mandalay-Muse Road and at Mayanchaung and Myawady trade zones along Yangon-Myawady Road. A hundred heads are permitted per shipment.

For the export of live cattle, they are bought and kept at the respective temporary inspection stations of the township live-

stock breeding and veterinary department in Mon and Shan states, and the Bago, Magway, Mandalay and Sagiang regions. Health certificates and recommendations from the region and state Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department, a permit to pass the towns along the export route and an export licence granted by the commerce ministry are a must for live cattle exports.

The transaction costs more than Ks1.6 million, but exporters get some Ks300,000 profit per head. However, the supply of live cattle cannot meet the demand, as Myanmar needs to improve its commercial farms. Only farms on a manageable scale are seen across the country.

Also, the export permit drove the prices of cattle up. A couple of draught cattle working for farming fetches more than Ks2 million, making the working process difficult for farmers.

The Commerce Ministry gave the green light to live cattle exports from 9 October 2017 to combat illegal cattle exports.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA) ■

Chin State chosen for tourism promotion

The Trade Promotion Organisation, operating under the Ministry of Commerce, has selected Chin State for tourism promotion this year.

"We will continue the ongoing tourism promotion plans in Kayah State. We will then work on new plans for Chin State. However, we are still conducting surveys in other states," U Aung Soe, Director-General of

the Trade Promotion Organisation, told Myawady Daily.

Tourism promotion plans were implemented under the guidance of the Ministry of Commerce last year. This year, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism will assume the major responsibility, in cooperation with the Ministry of Commerce.

Chin State has potential for

development but lacks a reliable means of transport. However, the tourism industry has great potential here, and so, the ministry plans to develop the state through tourism.

The tourism promotion project will be a three-year plan, including the building of information centres for tourism and developing tour packages, among others.—GNLM ■

‘Nothing is better than peace’: State Counsellor

FROM PAGE-1

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also expressed her belief that it is not helpful to have doubts about building a federal union without taking part in the peace process and discussing a federal system that is suitable for Myanmar.

On behalf of the Union Government, the State Counsellor also encouraged negotiations between the Tatmadaw and the ethnic armed organizations, urging those who want to sit at the negotiation table to accept the invitation.

The State Counsellor has also urged peacemakers to seize the opportunity of gaining understanding among participants whenever a meeting ends and to make the best use of the understanding in building a democratic union. In conclusion, the Chairperson of the NRPC has called for collaborative efforts of all stakeholders for peace to overcome the challenges being faced by them as part of efforts for building a union through the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong.

Following the speech of the State Counsellor, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General

Soe Win welcomed the representatives of the New Mon State Party and the Lahu Democratic Union, two recent signatories of the NCA.

Regarding the sending of representatives to JICM, he suggested the ethnic armed organizations to send decision makers of the organizations to the JICM, a political meeting of the highest-level.

The JICM is held every three months and the sixth meeting was held on 27th November 2017.

He also called on all organizations to abide by the decisions made at the JICMs to speed up the peace process.

On behalf of the 10 ethnic armed organizations which have signed the NCA, U Khaing Soe Naing Aung, Vice Chairman of the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP) pledged that all ethnic armed organizations are confident in bringing peace to the country, appreciating the step that was taken in 2010 for a nationwide ceasefire as part of efforts for solving the political problems in political ways.

He also stressed the importance of inclusiveness in making efforts for building a Democratic Federal Republic.—MNA ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrives to attend the 7th Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting on the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Trial for Reuters journalists continues

THE two Reuters reporters facing charges under the Official Secrets Act appeared in Northern District Court again yesterday, with the prosecution putting two civilian witnesses on the stand.

U Ohn Khaing, the Court's Information Officer, told reporters the witnesses were Daw

Htay Htay Myint, the owner of the restaurant where the two reporters were arrested, and U Kyaw Shein, the hundred-household head of Konetalabaung village, who was present when the reporters were arrested. Their testimony is being used to determine where the reporters were

when they were arrested.

The next hearing for Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo has been scheduled for 7 March, when another two witnesses are expected to testify. Officials say there are a total of 25 witnesses connected to the case. So far, eight have testified.—Zaw Gyi ■

MNHRC, Democracy Reporting International sign MoU

THE Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) and the Democracy Reporting International (DRI) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to cooperate on human rights issues at the MNHRC office yesterday.

The MoU was signed by MNHRC Chairman U Win Mar and DRI's Myanmar represent-



The two representatives sign the memorandum of understanding on human rights issues. PHOTO: MNA

ative Ms Eva Gil. The MoU included points on drafting the MNHRC's master strategic plan (2018-2021), planning observation trips, receiving technological support from DRI for capacity

building to carry out the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and other topics of cooperation related to human rights between the two entities.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Notification 15/2018

14th Waxing of Tabaung, 1379 ME
28 February 2018

Extending the term of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw has extended the term of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission which has been formed on 1-3-2016 by Notification No. (30/2016) by the Office of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, by one more year starting from 1-3-2018.

Sd/-
(Mahn Win Khaing Than)
Speaker

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.

Don't lose sight of people's desire for peace

WHEN we attempt to solve an issue at the table, there must be decision makers present. Regarding the peacemaking efforts in our country, every person and every organization has an important role. Every organization has to take responsibility for itself and for its members and colleagues. A group or organization should not go individually on the road to our goal because total peace for our country is the goal to which we must walk together, joining our hands.

For achieving peace, confidence is the key. Self-confidence is more important than confidence with others. Without self-confidence, without confidence in our organization, efforts for peace will end in vain.

Only when we take part in the peace process and in discussions with confidence over a system for a federal union, can you know who is not willing to build a federal democratic union. But without a pragmatic approach, casting doubt on others is not helpful for the country which is marching toward a federal union. In some cases which are in limbo, it is found that participants attempted to reach the end without taking steps for a beginning.

Hence, if we want to build a federation democratic republic, we must take part in the peace-making process and must discuss thoroughly what democracy is, what a federal system is and what kind of a federal democratic republic we want. At the same time, we can decide over "give and take" to reach consensus at the negotiation table.

Working together and joining hands with each other will help us to overcome our challenges on the road to our goal.

We need spiritual courage to confront ourselves and to dare to find the right solution for peace. Rightfully assessing whether we can find out the answers we want or not is also required when we try to solve issues. If all stakeholders for the peace process have strong aspirations for peace, there is no reason why we cannot accomplish our goal.

Our people who have experienced the consequences of a lack of peace want peace the most, more than anyone else.

We have to solve what must be solved and move forward another step or two steps if we need to, according to our negotiations, with the spirit of fulfilling people's needs, desires and expectations to which they have greatly aspired since the time of gaining independence.

Whatever challenges we face, we must not lose sight of our people's desire for total peace in our country.

Long-term restoration and sustainability of Inle Lake

By Dr. Khin Aung Than

INLE Lake is renowned for its unique floating villages, gardens and the Intha people, whose communities, culture and livelihoods rely almost entirely on the water.

Leg-rowers of the lake, with their unique way of propelling an oar through the water, are one of the chief attractions of the lake. The watershed area for the lake accounts for an extensive area of the lake's freshwater, which drains through the Balu Chaung on its southern end.

Location

Inle Lake is located in Nyaungshwe Township, Taunggyi District in Shan State. The Inle Lake wetlands ecosystem is home to 267 species of birds, of which 82 are wetland birds, 43 species of freshwater fish, otters and turtles. It is the second largest lake in Myanmar and is located in the heart of the Shan Plateau, 2,915 feet above sea level.

Socio-economic characteristics

Inle Lake is situated in the Nyaungshwe Township, which covers 36 village tracts comprising 446 villages and many ethnic races including Inthas, Shans, Pa-O and Da-nu.

The majority of the local people earn their income from traditional methods of floating island agriculture, a form of hydroponic farming and fishing.

Geographical facts

Inle Lake is a shallow lake located in an elongated, flat-bottomed valley bordered by parallel mountains that range up to 1,500 metres covered by hilly forest. It is estimated that the lake was formed more than 1.5 million years ago and constitutes a remnant of a much more extensive series of lakes. These lakes formed as water dissolved limestone in the landscape, resulting in many limestone features such as caves, sinkholes, springs, spurs and intermittent streams.

The watershed flowing into the Lake receives most of its run-off from four major sub-catchments containing 12 streams: Nanlet, Negya, Kalaw and Balu. The area consists of a network of freshwater wetlands and rivers including 527 species of medicinal plants, 11 species of bamboo, 184 species of orchids and 1,320 species of Angiosperms (Dicot).

Fauna species are diverse and, the lake is a nesting place of the sarus



A boat runs at Inle Lake in Nyaungshwe Township, Shan State. PHOTO: THWE THWE TUN



An Intha rowing his boat with legs in Inle Lake. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

crane (*Grus antigone*). Among the 16 endemic fish species, the Inle carp (*Cyprinus carpio intha*) is culturally symbolic and important as a source of food and income. Among the species recorded are 267 bird species, 43 fish species, 10 reptile species, nine mammal species, three species of turtle, 75 species of butterfly and 20 species of snails.

Popular tourist destinations

Inle Lake is popular among visitors who can travel leisurely around the lake and its scenic surroundings. There are many handicraft workshops which sell many kinds of items in the villages.

With Inle Lake being one of ma-

jor tourist attractions in Myanmar, a number of festivals are celebrated from August to October at the lake and its surrounding areas. The ceremonial Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda lasts for 18 days, closely followed by the Thadinyut Lighting festival. During the festival, Inthas and Shans wear their best clothes to take part in traditional boat races. These boat races are held at the Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda annually.

The Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda

The Phaung Daw Oo Padoda is a place of religious significance, visited by Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike from all around Myanmar. The shrine itself is huge and features five

ity, hand-woven silk fabrics of distinctive design called Inle longyi. Moreover, Inle Lake is the only place in the country that produces lotus robes. The local residents rely on eco-tourism, floating island agriculture and fisheries.

Preservation of Inle Lake

The Government is drawing up long-term action plans in order to preserve Inle Lake. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation has laid down plans to conserve Inle Lake because it is the main water supplier for the Lawpita hydropower dam.

Moreover, the decrease in the lake's size is not only due to low rainfall but also because of a buildup of sediment, with an estimated 310,000 metric tons of silt entering the lake each year from 29 creeks flowing through the watershed area.

The conservation and management of Inle Lake are long-term and ongoing processes, which are crucially needed to practice an integrated approach focusing on biodiversity conservation, integrity of the lake environment and improvement of the livelihoods of local communities.

The Inle Lake Conservation plans aim at ensuring a balanced approach between conservation and development of Inle Lake through the active participation of local communities and key stakeholders. The plan will also include monitoring and management systems to evaluate progress of conservation efforts. Efforts are being made to improve socio-economic conditions and protect livelihoods of local communities in the Inle Lake watershed.

It is of paramount importance to address the environmental issues as early as possible and a systematic, holistic and long-term approach is needed. This will require strong leadership and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders involved – government, non-governmental organisations and local communities.

It is vital to strengthen the governance of Inle Lake conservation efforts on the basis of a clear action plan that rallies private, civil and government actors at various levels and defines various roles. It is also equally important to develop local capacities to monitor the health of the lake's ecosystem and establish a baseline to measure water quality.

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung

Government Officials explore ways to strengthen Machinery of Government and Policy Development Processes in Myanmar

A PROFESSIONAL development programme on Improving the Machinery of Government and Policy Making for Better Service Delivery was conducted from 21 to 28 February in Nay Pyi Taw.

The programme targeted executive and senior government officials, and focused on raising awareness in four key areas: machinery of government; core government functions; principles of democratic governance; and parliamentary oversight. It was attended by 90 Deputy Directors General and Directors, who had the opportunity to work in groups on the policy development cycle and identify opportunities to improve the process in Government.

Machinery of government refers to the structures of government, their functions and governance arrangements, and how they work together to deliver results to the public. Machinery of government is therefore the basis of good governance and can be very important in contexts like Myanmar where the whole State and administration is in a state of change and reform.

Engaging the three branches of Government

At its launch last week, H.E Dr Win Thein, the Chairperson of Union Civil Service Board said, "This Professional Development Programme is conducted with the prospect of engaging all of you, representing the three branches of government in enhancing the machinery of government in Myanmar. I do hope that this training will allow you to identify current policy making processes and practices and develop objectives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative processes, which would ultimately aim at improving performance of the overall public sector."

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Director, Peter Batchelor said, "Regulating and improving the interaction between the three branches of government, and within the various levels of government – from Union to Township levels in the case of Myanmar – and ensuring a strong coordination within government institutions and between the government and civil society and the private sector is a pre-requisite of an effective Machinery of Government that allows for public policies to be developed for the good of all people."

Participants increase knowledge

Participants highlighted the relevance of the professional development programme and the importance of evidence-based policy making, cross-agency collaboration leading to a whole of government approach and public and stakeholders' participation, to improve public sector performance and service delivery.

One of the participants, U Ba Kaung, Deputy Director-General of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MON-REC) said the programme promoted a more open relationship between the officials.

"The younger generations in the civil service want to change the way we are performing, form very top-down style to an inclusive one. But we need to be assured that the leadership is willing to allow us to implement this change, only then the civil servants can become confident to change. I believe that this Professional Development Programme is one of such initiatives."

Daw Yin Yin Swe, Director in the Union Attorney General's Office joined the civil service in 1979. She appreciated the topics around policy development and effective implementation of policy, especially in relation to the Civil Service Reform Strategic Action Plan, launched in July last year. The Plan is a blueprint for extensive reforms which will ensure the civil service is more ethical, better reflects the diversity of the country, and is effectively able to help address the complex challenges of peace, national reconciliation, and development that confront Myanmar. "I will apply the knowledge about international benchmarks and standards to promote meritocracy in my department," she stated.

The professional development programme was delivered by a number of international experts including Ms. Janelle Saffin, Former Member of Parliament at State and Federal level in Australia, Professor Andrew Podger, Former Public Service Commissioner of Australia, and Mr. Ryan Orange, Former Deputy Commissioner of New Zealand's State Services Commission.

This activity is part of UNDP's Support to Effective and Responsive Institutions Project (SERIP); it was made possible with financial support from Australia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.—United Nations Development Programme, Myanmar

Republicans rebuff students' call for tough gun curbs

WASHINGTON — Republican leaders rebuffed calls for major changes to US gun laws on Tuesday following the mass shooting at a Florida high school, as students braced for their emotional return to the campus where 14 classmates and three staff were murdered.

Student survivors of the Valentine's Day assault met with members of Congress to urge curbs on firearm sales but found little enthusiasm for legislative action beyond closing gaps in a national background check system.

President Donald Trump has called for stronger background checks in the wake of the shooting, and the White House said he "still supports" raising the minimum age from 18 to 21 for some gun purchases, a policy opposed by the National Rifle Association, America's powerful gun lobby group.

Democrats hailed the students as an inspiration. But even with polls showing overwhelming public support for stricter gun laws, it would be a steep climb to achieve dramatic changes to gun laws in a Republican-dominated Congress.

Turning to the specifics of the Florida tragedy, Republicans put the blame on a "colossal breakdown" of law enforcement rather than the easy availability of assault rifles.

"Let me just say we shouldn't be banning guns for law-abiding citizens, we should be focusing on making sure citizens who should not get guns in the first place don't get those guns," House Speaker Paul Ryan told reporters.

Ryan and other Republican leaders until now have largely been absent from the debate that has raged since the assault in Parkland, Florida, by a troubled 19-year-old armed with a semi-automatic rifle.

The speaker met with students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, describing them afterwards as "smart and passionate" and saying that "we had an important discussion about how to keep our kids and our schools safe."

But in his remarks to reporters, he blamed the rampage on the failure of local authorities to heed numerous warnings about the shooter, Nikolas Cruz, a former student at the school, rather than lax US gun laws that have been sharply criticized by some survivors.

- 'Full debate' -

"There was a colossal breakdown in the system locally," Ryan said, citing lapses by the FBI and a deputy sheriff accused of failing to act when shooting broke out at the school. Ryan's argument echoed that of Trump, who asserted on Monday that he would have charged into the school after



House Speaker Paul Ryan says no to a ban on guns "for law-abiding citizens". **PHOTO: AFP**

the shooter, even without a gun. Trump was scheduled to meet with a bipartisan group of lawmakers on Wednesday to address gun laws.

He has pushed for arming teachers as a first line of defence, an approach favored by the NRA but widely criticized by teachers themselves as an impractical and unreasonable burden on them.

Trump also has called for building more mental hospitals, a ban on devices known as "bump stocks" that allow a semi-automatic weapon to be fired much more rapidly, and better background checks to keep guns out of the hands of "sickos."

A bipartisan "Fix NICS" bill currently before Congress would step up state and federal agency reporting to a national database of offenses that would bar an individual from purchasing a fire-

arm, but Democrats say that is insufficient.

"We want full debate, not just on Fix NICS but on legislation that would do the job," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, who also met with the student survivors.

- 'We are family' -

In Parkland, a community overcome with grief was preparing for the resumption of classes, including student Jenna Korsten, who was at the school when the shooting erupted but escaped unhurt. "I'm going to be strong," Korsten, 17, told AFP near a makeshift memorial adorned with flowers and anti-gun posters, and marked by 17 white crosses.

"I'm a little nervous, but we have to be strong in these kind of situations because we are family and we are all in this together."

Florida's legislature is weigh-

ing whether to raise the minimum age for gun purchases to 21, along with imposing a three-day waiting period, as part of a package of measures sponsored by the state's Republican governor.

An assault weapons ban is not part of the package.

With the NRA under fire in some quarters for its opposition to far-reaching reforms, several corporations including Delta Air Lines have abandoned their ties with the pro-gun group.

But that move prompted a backlash in the state of Georgia, where Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle threatened to "kill" a proposed tax cut for Delta — whose main hub is Atlanta — unless it reinstates its NRA discount program. "Corporations cannot attack conservatives and expect us not to fight back," Cagle tweeted.—AFP ■

Russia in 2017 prevented 25 terrorist attacks — National Anti-Terrorist Committee

MOSCOW — Twenty five terrorist attacks were prevented in Russia in 2017, the first deputy chief of staff of the National Anti-Terrorist Committee, Igor Kulyagin, told a news conference on Wednesday.

"Last year 25 terrorist attacks were prevented in the territory of our country. Pre-emptive work continues non-stop," he said.

"Sixty eight terrorism-related crimes, including attacks with the use of firearms, were prevented during the preparatory stage. More than 1,300 individuals were persuaded to refrain from terrorist activity," he said. "More than 17,500 foreigners suspect-

ed of involvement in terrorism activities were prohibited from entering our country's territory last year," he said.

At the same time, Kulyagin went on to say, ringleaders continued attempts to stage terrorist attacks at transport facilities and crowded places.

"In 2017 the NAC's priorities were prevention of growth in terrorist activity, exposure and elimination of underground terrorist cells and prevention of terrorist attacks in the country's territory. Special attention was paid to transport facilities and crowded places," he said. The activity of more than 50 terrorist cells was

quashed, 1,060 militants detained and 90 others, including 12 ringleaders put out action. Andrey Przhezdmsky, an advisor to the chairman of Russia's National Anti-Terrorism Committee said terrorists are actively recruited via the Internet. "Online recruitment is becoming global today, so the question of control over cyberspace is far from idle, rather, it is one of the most topical issues," he said.

According to the NAC representative, "now everything is done remotely, with cells being set up remotely." "The process can be very fast, and the impact sometimes occurs within just a

few months," he noted. Russia's special services last year prevented more than 80 Russians from going abroad for participation in combat operations on the side of illegal armed groups, he added.

"Last year more than 80 persons were prevented from leaving Russia for participation in terrorist activities. A firm obstruction has been placed to minimize this flow," he said.—AFP ■



The activity of more than 50 terrorist cells was quashed, 1,060 militants were detained. **PHOTO: TASS**

Church at Jesus's traditional burial site reopens after protest

JERUSALEM — The Jerusalem church built at the site many see as the holiest in Christianity reopened on Wednesday after a three-day closure to protest against Israeli measures had left thousands of visitors locked outside.

The two men who act as keepers of the key of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre opened its large wooden doors at around 4:00 am (0200 GMT), ending the protest that began on Sunday at noon.

Shortly afterwards, a group of pilgrims emerged from the still darkened corridors of Jerusalem's Old City to visit the sacred site.

"We prayed in front of the doors every day since Sunday," said Francois-Roch Ferlet, a 29-year-old visiting with a group of 50 people from France, standing near the ornate shrine encasing the traditional site of Jesus's tomb inside the church.

They were due to leave later on Wednesday and were relieved they were able to visit.

The church is built where Christians believe

Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected. Custody of it is shared by the Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Roman Catholic denominations.

The closure seemed to be the longest since at least 1990.

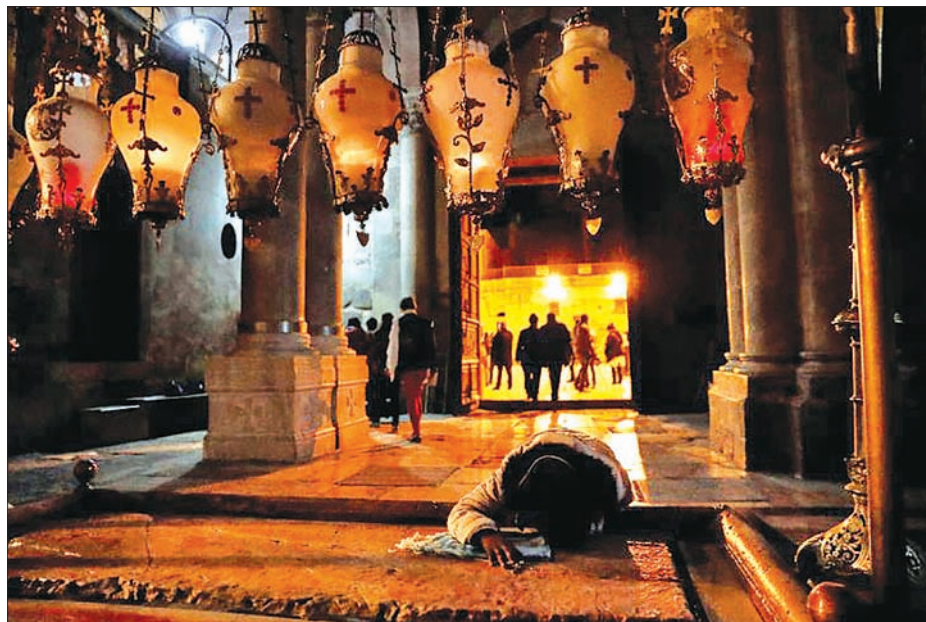
Christian leaders decided to reopen the church after Israel on Tuesday suspended tax measures they strongly oppose.

A proposed law that Christian leaders say would allow Israel to expropriate church land is also to be shelved.

A statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said a "professional team" would be appointed to come up with a solution to the tax measures imposed by Israeli authorities in Jerusalem.

Israeli Regional Cooperation Minister Tzachi Hanegbi will also look into the issue of land sales in Jerusalem by Christian bodies, which prompted the proposed law that is now also suspended.

Christian leaders are in part angry over attempts by Israeli authorities in Jerusalem to enforce tax collection on



The church is built where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected. Custody of it is shared by the Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Roman Catholic denominations. PHOTO: AFP

church property they consider commercial, saying exemptions only apply to places of worship or religious teaching.

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat says the city is due 650 million shekels (\$186 million/152 million euros) in uncollected taxes on church properties.

He stresses the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and all other churches are exempt, with the changes only affecting establishments like "hotels, halls and businesses" owned by churches.

Christian leaders say the measure jeopardises their ability to conduct their work, which also includes social services to those in need.

'Dark period'

A separate controversial bill seeks to allay fears of Israelis who live in homes on lands previously held by the Greek Orthodox Church and which were sold to private developers, according to the lawmaker proposing the legislation.

The bill would allow certain lands sold by the Greek Orthodox Church to be handed over to the state, which would then compensate those who bought it from the church.

"This reminds us all of laws of a similar nature which were enacted against the Jews during a dark period in Europe," Christian leaders said in a statement on Sunday.

Recent land sales by the Greek Orthodox Church — a major landowner in Jerusalem — to unknown buyers have

drawn fire from both Israelis and Palestinians.

Palestinians fear the sales will favour Israeli settlement construction in east Jerusalem, while Israelis are concerned over private developers' intentions for the land.

The dispute over the taxes and proposed law is also linked to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The church is located in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem, which the Palestinians see as the capital of their future state. Israel sees the whole city as its undivided capital.

Christians in Jerusalem are mainly Palestinians and Arab Israelis.

The decision to close the church was extremely rare. In 1990, Christian sites including the Holy Sepulchre were closed for a day to protest the installation of Jewish settlers near the church.

Christian sites were shut for two days in 1999 to protest at the planned construction of a mosque near Nazareth's Church of the Annunciation, where tradition holds the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary she was to become the mother of Jesus —AFP ■

Indonesia seizes yacht in Bali wanted by US investigators

DENPASAR (Indonesia) — A luxury yacht sought by US authorities was seized on Wednesday off the Indonesian tourist island of Bali, officials said, with the vessel reportedly linked to a corruption scandal at Malaysia's state investment fund.

Authorities boarded and searched the Cayman Island-registered vessel Equanimity, which is reportedly worth some \$250 million and is owned by Jho Low, a former unofficial adviser to the Malaysian

fund 1MDB. The US Justice Department alleges in civil lawsuits that \$4.5 billion was looted from 1MDB in an audacious campaign of fraud and money-laundering. "Based on the US investigation, part of the money was used to buy a yacht which has been sailing in Indonesia," said Daniel Silitonga, a senior Indonesian police official, who declined to specify whether the US hunt for the boat was linked to the 1MDB case. "We are still investigating who the owners of the yacht are."

Some Indonesian and Malaysian media reported that the boat was owned by Low. The ship's captain and 34 crew are being questioned, Silitonga said.

Metro TV showed footage of what it described as Indonesian and American investigators boarding the yacht and questioning the crew. The scandal surrounding 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) has rocked the administration of Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak.—AFP ■

Sincere Thanks

A grand event on Pongal Festival to honour the Farmers & Cultivators, was celebrated successfully on 18th February, 2018 at Thuwannabumi Event Park, Yangon, Organized by All Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (H.Q). On behalf of All Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (H.Q), we would like to express our post event sincere thanks to, Honorable Union Minister of Religious Affairs and Culture, **Thura U Aung Ko** who took time out of the busy Schedule to attend the event, opened the ceremony by ribbon-cutting and delivered advice speech, Honorable Chief Minister of Yangon Region Government **U Phyo Min Thein & Spouse**, Honorable Ambassador for Myanmar, Embassy of Singapore, **HE. Ms. Vanessa Chan**, Honorable Ambassador for Myanmar, Embassy of Nepal, **HE.Mr. Bhim K. Udas**, Cabinet Ministers of Yangon Region Government, Yangon Region Hluttaw Representatives, Region Advocate of Yangon Region Government **U Han Htun & Spouse**, Director General **U Myint Oo** and Members of Department of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Yangon Region Religious Affairs Officer **U Sein Maw** and Members, Honorable Government Departmental Guests, Chairman of Shwe Thanlwin Co.,Ltd **U Kyaw Win**, Honorable Patrons and Advisors of All Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (H.Q), Honorable Patron **U Aung San** of All Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation (H.Q) for making initial contribution, and all donors who also contributed for the grand event, branch President/ Secretary & Members of All Myanmar Tamil Hindu Foundation from **Bago, Thaton, Mawlamyine, Mandalay, Yangon Affairs Committee and Hpa-an**, Honorable guests from **All Myanmar Hindu Central Council**, Honorable guests from religious & social associations of all **Hindu multi-racial** community, Honorable guests from **Myanmar Interfaith Friendship and Unity Group**, and special thanks with honor to our brothers and sisters of all Hindu multi communities & whoever for thanks-worthy, for enjoying the event peacefully up to the end.

Eru.C. Chandrasekaran @ U Thein Lwin
President

A.Krishnan @ U Chit Win
General Secretary

TRADEMARK CAUTION

EZAKI GLICO KABUSHIKI KAISHA (also trading as **Ezaki Glico Co., Ltd**), a company incorporated in Japan and having its registered office at 6-5, 4-chome, Utajima, Nishiyodogawa-ku, Osaka, Japan is the owner and proprietor of the following Trademark:



Reg. No. 4/13408/2017 (8.12.2017)

In respect of "Biscuit sticks; confectionery; pastries; cakes; rice cakes; biscuits; cookies; crackers; chocolate; chewing gum; candy; caramels (candy); popcorn; fruit jellies (confectionery); bread; rusks; waffles; pancakes; pies; pizzas; sandwiches; puddings; ice cream; sherbets (ices); sorbets (ices); frozen yogurt (confectionery ices); edible ices; cocoa; coffee; coffee-based beverages; cocoa-based beverages; chocolate-based beverages; tea-based beverages; tea; iced tea; curry (spice); curry pastes; cereal-based snack food; rice-based snack food; chips (cereal products); noodles; corn flakes; tapioca; chocolate products; seasonings" in **International Class 30**.

Fraudulent or unauthorised use, or actual or colourable imitation of the said mark shall be dealt with according to law.

Daw La Min May, H.G.P
For **EZAKI GLICO KABUSHIKI KAISHA**
(also trading as **Ezaki Glico Co., Ltd**),
C/o Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.,

Level 8A, Union Financial Centre (UFC),
Corner of Mahabandoola Road and Thein Phyu Road,
Botahtaung Township, Yangon,
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated 1st March 2018

lmm@kcyangon.com

TRADEMARK CAUTION

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GLICODE

Reg. No. 4/11885/2017 (27.10.2017)

In respect of "Educational computer software; application software; downloadable computer programs; phonograph records; downloadable music files; audio and video tapes; video films; slide film, exposed; slide film mounts; electronic publications, downloadable" in **International Class 9**.

Fraudulent or unauthorised use, or actual or colourable imitation of the said mark shall be dealt with according to law.

Daw La Min May, H.G.P
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C/o Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd.,

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Dated 1st March 2018

lmm@kcyangon.com

Soyuz space capsule lands in Kazakhstan

KOROLYOV/Moscow region — The Soyuz MS-06 space capsule carrying three space travelers returning from the International Space Station (ISS) has landed in Kazakhstan 146 kilometers southeast of the city of Zhezkazgan, said a source in the Russian Mission Control Center located in the Moscow region.

"The space capsule carrying Russian cosmonaut Alexander Misurkin and two NASA astronauts — Joseph Acaba and Mark Vande Hei — landed at 05:31 Moscow

time (02:31)," the source said.

Recovery crew members have helped the space travelers, the source said.

According to the Russian Mission Control Centre source, all the three space travelers — Russian cosmonaut Alexander Misurkin and NASA astronauts Joseph Acaba and Mark Vande Hei — are well.

Russian Central Military District Assistant Commander Colonel Yaroslav Roshchupkin said earlier that the



The space capsule carrying Russian cosmonaut Alexander Misurkin and two NASA astronauts Joseph Acaba and Mark Vande Hei has landed in Kazakhstan 146 kilometres southeast of the city of Zhezkazgan. **PHOTO: TASS**

search operation would involve around 250 military servicemen, 12 Mil Mi-8 helicopters, two Antonov An-12 and one Antonov An-26 aircraft.—Tass ■

Manila hails US move to blacklist local IS-linked groups

MANILA — The Philippines hailed on Wednesday Washington's decision to blacklist two local pro-Islamic State groups, including one which occupied the southern city of Marawi last year, triggering a months-long battle.

The US State Department and the Department of Treasury designated the Maute group and the Dawlatul Islamiyah Waliyatul Masrik as "terrorist organisations" on Tuesday, blocking US-based assets belonging to them or their supporters and barring Americans from dealing with them. "The (move) is an affirmation of what Philippine authorities already know — that the Maute Group and the Dawlah-Islamiya are terrorist groups

that need to be dealt with decisively using the full force of the law," a statement by the defence ministry in Manila said. "They will be denied access to the US financial system and will face sanctions as may be deemed appropriate, making it more difficult for them to conduct their activities in the Philippines and abroad."

Militants from the Maute group were routed from Marawi last October after a five-month battle sparked by its bid to establish an IS caliphate in the largely Catholic country's southern Mindanao region.

The US, a long-time defence ally, helped Philippine forces with intelligence input, including reconnaissance flights,

during the fighting which claimed more than 1,100 lives and reduced large parts of the city to rubble.

However the Philippine military warned last week that remaining members of the group have recruited about 200 gunmen to mount another attempt.

The Dawlatul Islamiyah, or Dawlah-Islamiya as designated by the Philippine defence ministry, is a smaller faction also based in Mindanao. "We are profoundly committed to preventing ISIS from gaining (a) foothold in the Philippines and in Southeast Asia, and we should continue working together on this objective," Philippine Foreign Undersecretary Ernesto Abella told reporters, using an

acronym for IS.

Brigadier-General Bienvenido Datuin, spokesman for the Philippine military, said the US move would boost local counter-terrorism efforts. "(A) specific advantage... is the checking of money trail, financial sources, logistics lines and conduits of terror groups in foreign countries that may have connections with local violent extremists," he said. Other armed Philippine groups that have made the US terror blacklist in previous years include the New People's Army, waging a decades-old Maoist armed rebellion, and the Abu Sayyaf, which linked up with the Maute gunmen in Marawi last year. —AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MAX CRUSADER VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MAX CRUSADER VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTER ASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-3-2018 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.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CONTINENTAL
SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0091N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0091N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Economists see stability in Xi supremacy, Chinese eye exit

BELJING — As Xi Jinping marches toward presidency for life, economists are lauding the stability of his continued rule but the move has caused some Chinese people to consider moving assets, or themselves, abroad. The Communist Party’s move to scrap presidential term limits is the latest indication Xi is returning the country to strongman rule, undermining the consensus of technocrats that has governed China in recent years. But a lengthy period of stability under Xi, whose second term would normally end in 2023, will give him time to push through the much needed reforms he has championed, analysts say. Xi and his economic team have pledged to tackle China’s ballooning debt, move the economy towards sustainable consumption-based growth and taken aim at corruption

endemic in the Communist Party. The “measures are more likely to be successful with a strong and steady leadership”, said Robert Carnell, chief economist at ING Bank. “The ability to get stuff done is something that the weak coalitions that govern, for example, most of Europe, would give their eye-teeth for,” Carnell wrote in the note to investors quoted by Bloomberg News. At Davos in January, Xi’s top economic advisor Liu He told the crowd of global elites China would get financial risk under control within three years. “This reform agenda would last for decades,” economist Raymond Yeung at ANZ Bank wrote in a note to investors, which was largely positive on the raft of proposed constitutional changes. Concentration of power Liu, who analysts



While some say removing term limits will allow Xi Jinping to push through key reforms, there are fears about one-man rule, with the horrors of Mao Zedong’s Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward still remembered by many in China. **PHOTO: AFP**

believe could be in line to become the next central bank chief and also hold the title of vice premier, is in the United States this week dealing with the thorny trade issues rocking relations between the world’s two largest econo-

mies. A firmer grip on the country for his patron Xi may give him greater leeway to bargain with Donald Trump’s administration, analysts say, though others caution it could harden China’s positions. The United States and Europe

have also complained that Beijing has repeatedly failed to keep its word on opening up its market to foreign firms, which still face many obstacles. History shows one-man rule can hamper effective economic decision-making, though.

The horrors of Mao Zedong’s Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward are still remembered by many in China. Following the disastrous policies, the Communist leadership sought to prevent further chaos by tempering presidential power through a system in which major personnel and policy decisions were hashed out by the powerful Politburo Standing Committee. Economist Andrew Polk of Trivium Research said in a newsletter that the changes will strengthen Xi’s hand in implementing his policy agenda but invoked Deng Xiaoping to question the long-term wisdom of the moves. “To build the fate of a country on the renown of one or two people is very unhealthy and very dangerous,” Polk quoted Deng, the reformist leader who began the opening up of the country in the 1970s.—AFP ■

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of BSW where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI AMPLE VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BALI VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-3-2018 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.

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SILKAGO LOGISTICS
PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V NORDANA ANDREA

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NORDANA ANDREA are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-2 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S RK SHIPPING &
TRADING PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V CP SHEN ZHEN

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CP SHEN ZHEN are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-3 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING
LTD**

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V MAERSK WELLINGTON

VOY. NO. (1807-1808)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MAERSK WELLINGTON VOY. NO. (1807-1808) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-3-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/ 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.

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S’PORE) PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

Stars to wear #MeToo white ribbons at 'French Oscars'

PARIS — Stars attending the "French Oscars" — the Cesars — on Friday will wear a white ribbon in protest at violence against women, organizers said.

"We are all going to wear white ribbons," Alain Terzian, the head of the French Academy told AFP on Tuesday, after actors and directors at the Golden Globes and the British Bafta awards wore black in solidarity with the #MeToo movement.

The Berlin film festival, which wrapped up at the weekend, also came under pressure to replace its red carpet with a black one in support of victims of sexual harassment in Hollywood after the Harvey Weinstein scandal.

The Cesars sparked feminist fury last year by inviting controversial Franco-Polish director Roman Polanski to preside over the awards before he was forced to pull out.

The veteran filmmaker — who has been accused of sexual assault by several women — is wanted in the United States for the statutory rape of a 13-year-old girl in 1977.

Terzian said the Franco-American actress and director Tonie Marshall came up with the white ribbon idea to support a French foundation that works to stop violence against women.

"We will all wear the ribbon with conviction and determination," he added.

French Culture Minister Francoise Nyssen said film producers had a huge "responsibility to fight stereotypes, discrimination and harassment" both on



US actress Jennifer Lawrence was among the stars to wear black at the British Bafta awards in solidarity with the #Metoo movement. **PHOTO: AFP**

camera and behind it.

- 'Patriarchal gaze' -

"No matter who were are dealing with, we cannot have any tolerance or complacency about unacceptable behaviour," she added.

Nyssen also was highly critical of how few films directed by women get made.

"Certainly we have made some progress in recent years, but it is still not acceptable that there are fewer women film-makers, that they are less visible and less supported" than their male counterparts, she said. "In 42 years the Cesar for best director has only been won once by a woman," she added, referring to Marshall, who won in 2000 for "Venus Beauty".

She said only one in five feature films subsidised by the French state every year are made by women.

The situation is Hollywood is even worse, with only seven percent of the top 250 films in 2016 directed by women.

Several actors at Berlin launched a campaign to bring equal rights to the red carpet.

German star Anna Bruggemann urged actresses to ditch high heels and low-cut dresses to challenge the "patriarchal gaze" women face at award ceremonies.

She launched a Twitter hashtag #NobodysDoll and signed up a number of other mostly German stars to her causes.—AFP ■

India says farewell to Bollywood icon Sridevi

MUMBAI — Thousands of heart-broken fans lined the streets of Mumbai on Wednesday as India said farewell to Bollywood legend Sridevi Kapoor following her shock death from accidental drowning in a Dubai hotel bathtub aged just 54.

Some carried roses while others held photos of the late screen icon as they queued patiently to pay their final respects at a condolence service in the western Indian city.

"It's a shock to believe that she is no more. We want to pay her one last visit today and thank her for all her wonderful performances," Nandini Rao, a 32-year-old teacher, told AFP.

Legends of Hindi cinema, including actresses Aishwarya Rai and Kajol, were among the mourners at the Celebration Sports Club in the Andheri West area of Mumbai — the home of the Bollywood film industry.

Heavy security lined the streets to control the crowds, which included people who had travelled hundreds of kilometres to be there. Several fans chanted prayers as Sridevi's body was brought the short distance from her home to the club at 9:00 am (0330 GMT). "I'm an avid Sridevi fan. I loved her smiling personality. She had such a commanding presence in the Indian film industry. Her death was so sudden and I feel terrible," 45-year-old Kuldeep Singh told AFP.

Sridevi's body is due to leave the ground at 2:00pm to embark on its final journey. She will be cremated at a private Hindu ceremony later on Wednesday.



Sridevi took a 15-year break from the silver screen after marrying but returned in the 2012 hit comedy-drama "English Vinglish". **PHOTO: AFP**

Sridevi was considered to be one of the most influential Bollywood actresses of all time and her sudden death at the weekend sparked an outpouring of grief in India.

Tributes poured in from fans and fellow actors as well as Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

- Life in the spotlight -

The star of hit films such as "Chandi" and "Mr India" drowned in her bathtub after losing consciousness late Saturday in a hotel in Dubai, where she was attending a wedding.

Police in the emirate said a post-mortem examination found that she had drowned after losing consciousness. On Tuesday they ruled out any foul play and released the body to Sridevi's family. It arrived back in Mumbai on a private jet on Tuesday evening, accompanied by her husband, the filmmaker Boney Kapoor, and her stepson, actor Arjun Kapoor.—AFP ■

Egypt court sentences diva over Nile hygiene remarks

CAIRO — An Egyptian court sentenced pop star Sherine to six months in prison on Tuesday for suggesting drinking from the Nile River leads to illness, although she will remain free pending an appeal.

Sherine Abdel Wahab, known simply as Sherine, had apologised after being caught on tape joking with concert-goers that water from the Nile could give them parasites.

The Cairo misdemeanours

court convicted her of having spread "false news". Judicial officials said she would remain free on bail pending an appeal.

Sherine is one of the region's best known singers. She is also an actor and hosted the Arabic version of singing contest The Voice.

In the video recording of the concert, Sherine is asked by a fan to sing her tune "Have You Ever Drunk From the Nile."

She responds that drinking from the river could cause

"bilharzia", a name for the parasitic disease schistosomiasis which was once widespread in Egypt.

"Drink Evian instead," she joked.

She later apologised in a Facebook posting.

Later on Tuesday, a court in Cairo sentenced another singer, the little-known Leila Amer, to two years in jail for "inciting debauchery" in a music video with sexual connotations, a judicial official said.—AFP ■



Egyptian singer Sherine Abdel Wahab performs on stage during the final show of the pan-Arab song contest "Arab Idol" on 25 February, 2017 in Lebanon. **PHOTO: AFP**

Turkish tourists explore Myanmar

A group of 20 Turkish tourists, through an arrangement with the MAPPA TUR and Group Company, arrived in Myanmar yesterday afternoon.

“Not many Turkish tourists visit Myanmar, and it is a good chance for them to explore Myanmar. For the first time, they will stay in Myanmar for nine days,” said U Phyo Wai Yarzar, managing director of Diethelm Travel Co. Ltd.

“If we can show them that Myanmar is a wonderful and pleasant place, more Turkish tourists will surely visit the country,” he added.

During their nine-day visit to Myanmar, arrangements will

be made to explore many tourist destinations, such as Chauk Htat Gyi Pagoda, Pansodan Jetty, Botahtaung Pagoda, colonial buildings in downtown Yangon, China Town, India Quarters, Shwedagon Pagoda and Kandawgyi Lake.

Later, they will proceed to visit Sale, Heho, Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda and the renowned Inle Lake Nyaung Shwe Township.

Then, they will continue to visit several pagodas and interesting places in Mandalay, Amarapura, Innwa and Sagaing.

Mrs. Mayda Tuna, a tourist, said, “This is my second visit to Myanmar. The country has numerous historical monuments



Turkish tourists arrives at Yangon International Airport yesterday. PHOTO: HLA MOE

and places of religious significance which are worth visiting. I visited Myanmar seven years ago. A memorable place that I

like to visit in Myanmar is the Inle Lake.” Mr. Kenan Jay Tamer, who has been to more than 100 countries, said, “I am very

excited to visit Myanmar for the first time, and the purpose of my visit is to tour Bagan, an ancient city.” —Tayar ■

Innwa Bank opens Kyimyindine branch

INNWA BANK'S Kyimyindine Township bank branch was opened in Htitan Ward yesterday, becoming the 47th bank branch of the Innwa Bank.

The bank branch was formally opened by Yangon Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Aung Soe Moe, Director of Myanma Economic Cooperation Projects U Khin Maung Soe and Executive Director of the Innwa Bank Ltd U Aung Ngwe Oo.

Managing Director of the Myanma Economic Cooperation U Thant Swe pressed a button to unveil the signboard of the Innwa Bank.

The Kyimyindine bank branch started its operation following the opening ceremony providing monetary services including issuing payment orders, bank guarantees and debit cards. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Managing Director U Thant Swe and officials open Kyimyindine Township bank branch of Innwa Bank yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Graduation ceremony for diplomacy course of study held

THE Graduation Ceremony for the Course in Diplomacy (CID-6/2017) conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was held at Law Ka Nat Hall of the Ministry Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon, with a speech by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs U Myint Thu.

The 12-week course was comprised of studies in contemporary international affairs, holding and attending of international conferences, negotiation skills, international law, international economic relations, international etiquette, diplomatic and official correspondence and communication skills. The course was attended by 50 trainees. — Myanmar News Agency

German village votes to keep ‘Hitler bell’ as memorial

BERLIN — A German village has decided to keep a contentious Nazi-era church bell that bears a swastika and the words “All for the Fatherland — Adolf Hitler”, arguing it serves as a reminder of the country’s dark past.

The parish council of Herxheim voted 10-3 on Monday that the bronze bell from 1934 should remain as “an impetus for reconciliation and a memorial against violence and injustice”.

The council rejected an offer by the regional Protestant

Church to pay for taking down the 240 kilogramme (530 pound) bell and replacing it.

A memorial pointing to the bell’s history will now be fixed on the heritage-listed church, the Jakobskirche.

The village of just 700 people has repeatedly caught national attention for the controversial “Hitler bell” since a former church organist complained about the inscription.

Some church-goers were dismayed to find out that they

had got married, baptised their children or joined other religious ceremonies and events under the Hitler bell. Last year the former town mayor, Roland Becker, resigned over comments that appeared to defend not just the bell but the Nazi era.

Amid the controversy, the bell was silenced last September and a second one used, pending the municipal decision in the southwestern village near the university city of Heidelberg. —AFP ■



The German village of Herxheim has repeatedly caught national attention for the controversial “Hitler bell” since a former church organist complained about the inscription. PHOTO: AFP

Neymar faces 'at least six weeks out', set to miss Real clash

PARIS — Paris Saint-Germain's hopes of getting Neymar back for their crunch Champions League clash against Real Madrid next week look to be over after the Brazilian's father claimed the player would be out for "at least six weeks".

Speaking to ESPN in Brazil on Tuesday, Neymar Senior said: "PSG know that they will not be able to count on Neymar for the upcoming matches: his treatment will last six to eight weeks, whether there is an operation or not."

That was after PSG coach Unai Emery claimed earlier that "no decision" had been taken on whether Neymar would require surgery and that there remained a "small chance" of getting the world's most expensive player back in time to face Real next Tuesday, 6 March.

Tests confirmed that Neymar suffered a hairline fracture of the fifth metatarsal in his right foot as well as a twisted ankle late in PSG's 3-0 win over Marseille in Ligue 1 on Sunday.

He appeared to be in tears



Neymar is helped to his feet by Adrien Rabiot during PSG's win over Marseille on Sunday, in which he suffered a twisted ankle and a hairline metatarsal fracture. **PHOTO: AFP**

as he was stretchered off the field at the Parc des Princes, immediately raising fears that the 26-year-old could miss the Champions League last 16, second leg against Madrid.

PSG lost 3-1 in the first leg

in Spain two weeks ago and are in danger of being knocked out of the competition in the last 16 for the second season running.

Brazilian newspaper Globo Esporte had claimed Neymar would undergo surgery, and

that the former Barcelona player would be sidelined until May.

If his father's estimate is correct, Neymar would not return before the semi-final stage of the Champions League in late April.

On the possibility of rushing Neymar back for the Real second leg, experts say that PSG would be taking a huge risk, possibly even jeopardising Neymar's participation at the World Cup in Russia in June and July.

"It would be very risky as it's a fragile bone in the foot which is difficult to protect," Jean-Marcel Ferret, a former doctor with the French national team, told AFP.

"(Playing against Real) could compromise the rest of his season." In the meantime, PSG are preparing to do without Neymar for Wednesday's French Cup quarter-final at home to Marseille, the second meeting of the clubs in four days.

Argentine star Angel di Maria should replace the Brazilian at the Parc des Princes, with PSG hoping to stay on course to win the French Cup for the fourth season running.

Neymar has scored 28 goals in 30 appearances in all competitions for PSG since his 222 million-euro (\$264 million) move from Barcelona last August.—**AFP ■**

U Kyi Lwin named head coach for Myanmar national men's football team

U Kyi Lwin was named as a head coach for the Myanmar men's national football team yesterday, according to a statement from the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

U Kyi Lwin was assigned as a head coach of the U-22 Myanmar National Team yesterday at the headquarters of the MFF. His contract begins immediately and will extend until December 2019.

As a head coach of the U-22 national team, U Kyi Lwin promised to shape the team so that their performance will peak at the 2019 Southeast Asian Games, which will be held in the Philippines.

"For me, I will do my best in my duties as a head coach. The main thing is that I will train my team to get the best result in the 2019 Southeast Asian Games", said U Kyi Lwin.

U Kyi Lwin is a former Myanmar international footballer and the current head coach of



U Kyi Lwin (left) shakes hand with the MFF official yesterday after signing the contract to be head coach of National U-22 team. **PHOTO: MFF**

Magway FC of Myanmar National League. He also coached the Myanmar U-23 football team in the 2015 Southeast Asian Games.

He led the team to win the silver medal even with most of the key players given up to the Myanmar U-20 Team.

As a player, he was a silver medalist with the national team at the 1993 SEA Games.

U Kyi Lwin will work with Gerd Zeise, the Senior Coach for the national team and himself a former U-22 head coach.—**KyawZin Lin ■**

Southern Myanmar U-19 team tops MNL standings with win over Yangon

IN one of the significant Week 5 matches of the MPT Myanmar National League (U-19), Southern Myanmar beat Yangon United by a score of 2-1 at Salin Stadium in Yangon yesterday and retained their place at the top of the league rankings.

Southern Myanmar's goals were scored by the team's stars Zin Min and Min Khant Thein.

At the beginning, Yangon pressured Southern Myanmar's defenders their speedy passing.

Yangon strikers had chances to score in the early minutes of the match as Southern Myanmar defenders seemed to losing their concentration.

Yangon got the opening goal at the 42-minute mark from striker Lwan Moe Oo.

In the second half, with

substitutions and a change in tactics, Southern Myanmar's play improved. With the stable ball control along with accurate positioning, Southern Myanmar's Zin Min pulled back a goal at the 71-minute mark.

After gaining the equaliser, Southern Myanmar forced play back to Yangon.

With a speedy pass, the winning goal for Southern Myanmar was scored by young striker Min Khant Thein at the 87-minute mark.

In garnering the win, Southern Myanmar remains atop the standing table after playing five matches, winning four and losing one. Yangon United gets five points and stands in ninth place with one win, two draws, and two losses.—**KyawZin Lin ■**